

MOTION ON NOTICE

Full Council | Tuesday, 23 September 2025

Slurry Spreading on Fields

Council notes that;

Farmers have always applied farmyard manure to their fields.

Residents acknowledge that this is an accepted practice and understand the need to fertilise the fields for better crops.

Council also notes that;

The smell coming off local fields in recent years have become increasingly unpleasant and that the odour is that of the sewer.

About 3.5 million tonnes of sewage sludge is spread over the fields of England and Wales each year. This is provided free by the water companies so that they do not have to dispose of it themselves.

This sludge is only treated for bacteria and heavy metals, unlike cleaned water which is screened for all potential hazards to human life. This means that "forever chemicals" and microplastics are in the sludge at levels that "may present a risk to human health" and may create soil that is "unsuitable for agriculture".

Some UK farmers and US states have already stopped putting this sludge on their land because of fears it will get into the food chain.

Council resolves to:

- Instruct the Chief Executive and Leader to write to the Environment Secretary Emma Reynolds and ask that;
 - The use of sewage sludge is banned in England and Wales.
 - That if it is to be continued to be used, it is screened to the same standard as cleaned water.

Councillor Michael H Charlesworth

Proposer

The above motion was duly received by the Legal & Democratic Services Manager / Monitoring Officer on 12 September 2025 in accordance with Rule 14, Section 1 of Part 4 of the Constitution of the Council.