

## RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### QUESTION PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 10

COUNCIL – 24 SEPTEMBER 2020

#### QUESTION A

**Councillor Mrs New to ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:**

“As the Badger Cull is now being extended to include Warwickshire, will the Leader/Portfolio holder give assurances that any badgers who manage to escape the cull, or are already living within our nature reserves, will find sanctuary on RBC land and our local reserves so they are protected from hunters intending to harm or distress them?”

**Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council, to reply as follows:**

“A badger cull is carried out pursuant to a Badger Disease Control Licence. These licences are granted by Natural England and Rugby Borough Council has no statutory role in whether such a licence is granted or not.

On 3 September 2020, a Badger Disease Control licence was granted by Natural England in respect of Area 52, Warwickshire. The licence has various conditions attached, including that the *“Annual Cull shall only take place on those areas of land within the Control Area that are the subject of an extant TB Management Agreement made pursuant to section 7 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.”*

A TB Management Agreement is an agreement entered into by landowners within the control area to which a Badger Disease Control Licence relates, through which a landowner permits access to their land for the purposes of the annual cull. A licensee is required to provide copies of those TB Management Agreements to Natural England no later than 14 days prior to the proposed start date of the licensed operations. The licensee is also required to secure TB Management Agreements for approximately 90% of the land to which the licence relates.

It therefore follows that landowners have a choice as to whether to permit access to their land for the purposes of the annual cull and, if they do, this must be agreed and documented at least 14 days prior to the start date of the licensed operations. To date, Rugby Borough Council has not been approached in relation to permitting access to any of its land or to enter into a TB Management Agreement in relation to the Warwickshire licence area.

The subject of badger culls is clearly an important and sensitive subject for our Members and our residents. At the moment a licensee cannot currently enter on to our land for the purposes of the annual cull, but it is important that we are clear on where Rugby Borough Council stands on this matter. To that end, I have asked officers to prepare a report on the options available to us in relation to the badger cull, to be brought to Cabinet, in order that the matter can be fully and appropriately considered.”