
MEETING	EXECUTIVE
DATE	25 SEPTEMBER 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), ASPDEN, SUE GALLOWAY, JAMIESON-BALL, REID, RUNCIMAN, SUNDERLAND, VASSIE AND WALLER

PART A - MATTERS DEALT WITH UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

62. Sale and Production of Foie Gras

Members received a report which responded to a notice of motion on the sale and production of foie gras, which was referred to the Executive for consideration by Full Council on 27 January 2007.

The notice of motion, proposed by Cllr Blanchard, read as follows:

“Council notes that:

- To produce foie gras, at just 12 weeks old ducks and geese are restrained and grain is forced down the throat through a tube or pipe, a process that often results in physical injury;
- They are forcibly fed the equivalent to an adult human eating 1-28 lbs (7-13 kg) of spaghetti a day; and, after two or three weeks, when they are ready for slaughter, their livers will have swollen to about ten times normal size. The swollen liver expands the abdomen and can make movement and breathing difficult, as well as causing other health problems;
- Most ducks are kept in wire cages so small they have no room to turn around or stretch their wings, and their feet are often injured by the wire floor;
- Many die before the force feeding cycle ends, and the mortality rate for ducks raised on foie gras farms is overwhelmingly the highest in the industry;
- The force-feeding of geese is already outlawed in Poland, Denmark, Germany, Norway and Israel.

Council believes that:

- This intolerably cruel and painful practice is unnecessary and should end;
- The city of Chicago, USA, has shown tremendous compassionate leadership in its brave decision to ban foie gras in its shops and restaurants;
- The torture of small innocent animals should not be a matter of personal dietary choice.

Council resolves to:

- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to Ben Bradshaw MP, Minister of State responsible for Animal Welfare, informing him of this motion and asking for the production and sale of foie gras to be banned in the UK;
- Do as much as reasonably possible to discourage or prohibit the sale of foie gras within the authority area, whether in shops or restaurants.”

The report presented the following options for consideration:

- Option 1 – to undertake all of the following actions:
 - (i) That a letter be sent by the Chief Executive to Lord Rooker, stating that the Council was opposed to the production and importing of foie gras in the UK;
 - (ii) That the procurement of foie gras be prohibited in the Council's own establishments;
 - (iii) That a link to the Compassion in World Farming website, which gave information on the discouragement of foie gras production, be placed on the Council's webpage;
 - (iv) That letters be sent by the Executive or the Group Leaders to either all registered food businesses in the city or only those registered food businesses in the city that have a reasonable likelihood of selling foie gras and/or using it as part of their menu offer, asking them to voluntarily withdraw foie gras from sale or use;
- Option 2 – to undertake any combination of these actions;
- Option 3 – not to undertake any of these actions.

The Executive favoured Option 2 and the following actions:

- A letter being sent by the Chief Executive to Lord Rooker, stating that the City of York Council was concerned about the production and importing of foie gras in the UK and requesting a review of central government policies on animal welfare issues;
- Foie gras not being offered for sale by the Council on its premises;
- A link to the *Compassion in World Farming* website being added to the Council's web site;
- The contents of the motion being circulated to representative hospitality organisations in the City.

Having considered the advice of the Shadow Executive, it was

RESOLVED: That the notice of motion be referred back to Council, with the officer report and the Executive's comments and advice (set out above).

REASON: To respond to the Council motion.

S F Galloway, Chair

[The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 3.05 pm].