

TO: ADULTS & HEALTH COMMITTEE

FOR: SCRUTINY SESSION: 5TH October 2022

SUBJECT: NHS Green Plan Response to waste (ITEM X)

25.01.22	<p>Motion from Councillor Steve Criswell</p> <p>This Council is in receipt of a planning application to construct a healthcare waste energy recovery facility [incinerator] at the Envar Composting site in Somersham. In light of the Council's motion approved in relation to the incinerator proposed in Wisbech on 21st July 2020, that raised similar concerns to those raised for this proposal, it is vital that we as a Council act now to highlight concerns on the use of incineration at this site and support the issues and objections raised by our local residents.</p> <p>The Council recognises that its Planning Committee will need to consider this proposal in due course on purely material planning related matters and that members of that committee and their substitutes will need to leave this meeting and take no part in the debate of this motion to demonstrate that they are not pre-determined in that decision.</p> <p>Incinerators can be wasteful. We should be reducing waste wherever possible. The huge increase in the use of plastic during the pandemic should act as a catalyst to increase efforts to provide reusable, recyclable and sterilisable alternatives. An incinerator's continuous demand for fuel does nothing to incentivise waste reduction.</p> <p>Incineration is a reaction to a problem rather than a solution. We do not need another one.</p> <p>Energy from waste is not 'green energy' unless it is derived from renewable rather than finite resources.</p>	
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	<p>Burning waste produces emissions. This is demonstrated by the need for strict controls and monitoring. However, it is impossible to guarantee the removal of all harmful pollutants, such as dioxins from those emissions. The Environment Agency's role is to ensure legal standards are met, not to ensure the elimination of risk. Public Health England guidance states that "While it is not possible to rule out adverse health effects from these incinerators completely, any potential effect for people living close by is likely to be very small". 'Very small' is too big if it is avoidable. Constructing an additional incinerator is avoidable.</p> <p>Transporting waste further than necessary is harmful. The need to keep fuelling a new incinerator will create pressure to transport waste from far and wide. This uses fuel, increases road congestion and creates air pollution, which is contrary to this Council's climate change and Net Zero aspirations for the County. Climate Change and Environment Strategy</p> <p>It is important that local people see that the elected councillors of Cambridgeshire County Council understand the strength of public opinion against the incineration proposed at this site.</p> <p>In doing so, Council notes the motion proposed by Councillor Count and passed by Council in December 2019 acknowledging the part the Council can play in improving air quality throughout the county.</p> <p>It also notes the motion proposed by Councillor Tierney and passed by Council in July 2020 objecting to the building of a waste incinerator in Wisbech.</p> <p>This Council supports the concerns raised by numerous local residents against the construction of a healthcare waste energy recovery facility [incinerator] at Envar Composting in Somersham.</p>	
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	<p>In supporting the above this Council states that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This Council will send a letter to the Secretary of State for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to raise the concerns being made by local residents on these proposals and to lobby Government to move away from incineration and instead, focus on the circular economy and using green solutions for energy generation. 2. This Council encourages the healthcare industry to move away from the use of plastics in favour of more sustainable alternatives. 3. Furthermore, in the meantime, the Council encourages those giving rise to clinical waste in this county to fully utilise existing facilities including the incinerator located at the Addenbrooke's Hospital site. 	<p>Update 28.04.22</p> <p>This letter was sent to the Secretary of State for DLUHC in line with part 1 on 29 April 2022.</p> <p>This part of the motion is assigned to Jyoti Atri</p> <p>This part of the motion is assigned to Jyoti Atri</p>
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