

[email address removed]

Sent: Monday, March 14, 2016 at 11:39 AM

From: "David Ashton" ...

To: [Cllr Gordon]

Cc: [the Executive Members, HCC Waste Managers & HWP Co-ordinator; Democratic Services]

Subject: Re: Cabinet Meeting 14 March 2016: Veolia's RPP for a Waste Incinerator

Dear Cllr Gordon and fellow cabinet members.

Thank you for your considered reply to John Webb and others yesterday re your position regarding the e-mails that you have received. I am writing to you as someone who has been involved for over 20 years now with trying to steer the Council away from building a waste incinerator and towards a less expensive and more environmentally friendly way of dealing with the county's waste.

I very much support the reply that John has sent this morning and would like to add some comments and a sheet (attached) with information which runs counter to the claims made by Veolia and which you may not be aware of.

You say:-

'the County Council has to face up to this challenge because we are incurring substantial annual costs of disposal and using landfill which is expensive and environmentally unsound. The intention of the contract entered into with Veolia in 2011 is to identify an approach which is both environmentally appropriate and costs local taxpayers less. Elected members are familiar with the rationale and financial context for the project, although this has had to be reviewed in the light of the revised proposal.'

Please see the attached brief document which gives independent and authoritative information from government sources which shows that incineration is NOT environmentally appropriate and that landfill of properly sorted and (if necessary) treated waste is actually environmentally less damaging and less expensive in the short to medium term. As regards the comparative costs we are not aware that the Council or its officers have done a properly costed comparison of the alternatives to EFW incineration. The very redacted information which we have seen comparing the incinerator option with continued use

of landfill (NOT an option which we would support without the use of MBT and AD) used out of date and misleading information about the costs of landfill. **This is what really concerns us - that no transparent level playing field analysis of the alternative waste strategies has been done or made available.**

'The resulting calculation is that there will be something of the order of 180,000 tonnes a year to be disposed of (although we would hope it would be significantly less). Using the residual waste as a fuel to generate electricity (enough for 69,000 homes) is an effective means of energy recovery consistent with the waste strategy and national requirements.'

We believe that with up coming policies on the circular economy, the implementation of much better collection procedures and MBT /AD the 180.000 tonnes a year can be substantially reduced and that the costs of landfilling the treated residual will be far less than a 30 year contract for the proposed EFW plant. Can you provide the figures to show otherwise?

'Their expert, considered judgement (informed by known, but confidential financial data) is that a mid-position is that the plant would save local taxpayers Â£210m over the 30-year period. It may be more (or less) but is professionally assessed as being excellent value for money when compared with credible alternatives.'

See our comments above, the published evidence from around the world would seem to indicate the exact opposite i.e. that incineration is the most expensive option (see e.g. 'The Zero Waste Solution' by Paul Connett, 'Zero Waste' by Robin Murray). Note that cost is frequently the main driver for the move towards zero waste because there is then virtually no disposal cost.

With my colleagues and many concerned residents of Hertfordshire we urge you and your fellow councillors to reject the revised project plan.

Yours sincerely,

David Ashton
David Ashton

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'The realistic is what happens. When you make it happen it becomes realistic.' George Monbiot