

# News from Buckinghamshire County Council

**PR 1967**

**11 January 2011**

**For Immediate Release**

## **Cabinet must reconsider Energy from Waste preferred bidder decision**

The decision to award preferred bidder status to Waste Recycling Group (WRG) to provide Buckinghamshire County Council with an Energy from Waste facility was today (Tuesday January 11) referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration, by members of the Overview and Scrutiny Commissioning Committee.

The Cabinet will review its decision at a meeting on Monday January 17.

The scrutiny committee had decided there were sufficient grounds to undertake a full examination of the Cabinet decision after county councillor John Cartwright (Grendon Underwood) presented his case for a call-in on December 14.

Today, Mr Cartwright made his submission to the committee challenging the decision. Martin Tett, Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment outlined his reasons why the preferred bidder status should be awarded to WRG. Each had witnesses to support their cases.

After giving full consideration to the evidence, the committee decided to ask the Cabinet to reconsider its decision to award preferred bidder status to the WRG on 29 November 2010. In particular, the committee asked that the Cabinet fully considers all the options, including not to proceed with either WRG or Covanta's proposals at this stage.

Scrutiny committee chairman Trevor Egleton said: 'Today we have seen an important part of the transparent democratic process, and one the County Council is strongly committed to. It's



a robust process and we've given both sides a fair hearing. Residents can be assured that their voices were heard, listened to, and taken into account in reaching our decision. We are very grateful to residents for taking the time to attend today's meeting.'

WRG proposes an Energy from Waste facility at Greatmoor, near Calvert in north Buckinghamshire.

ENDS

### **Notes to the Editor**

The Overview and Scrutiny Commissioning Committee (OSCC) asks Cabinet to reconsider its decision to award preferred bidder status to the Waste Recycling Group (WRG) on 29 November 2010.

We recommend that the Cabinet reconsiders its decision in light of the issues that have come to the attention of the OSCC during the call-in process. In particular, we ask that Cabinet fully considers all the options, including not to proceed with either WRG or Covanta's proposals at this stage.

We seek clarification and reassurance in relation to the points set out below:

- The high long-term financial risk relating to the costs associated with a 30 year contract.
- The high risk associated with going ahead with the procurement process at this point, prior to the granting of planning permission. There is no guarantee that planning permission will be granted and there may be considerable delay.
- That the robustness of the financial case is not sufficient to justify the risk to the County Council of proceeding at this point.
- Assurance that the bidders are sufficiently experienced to meet the Council's requirements.
- That sufficient weight has been given to public feeling and the level of consultation and public engagement.

- That there may be a significant risk of legal challenge to the procurement process at this point. We ask the Cabinet to consider the legal case of Capel Parish Council vs Surrey County Council 2009 to learn from their experience.
- Given the time lapse between the original decision to proceed with Energy from Waste (EfW) technology and the proposed decision to award preferred bidder status, we ask for Cabinet to satisfy itself that that EfW continues to be the most appropriate solution.

In light of proximity of other potential EfW sites in neighbouring counties, we ask Cabinet to look again at the capacity assumptions made.

