

## PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD 13 JANUARY 2009

#### The Mayor – Councillor Pat Nash

**Present:** Councillors Allen, Ash, Benton, C Burton, Cereste, Collins, Croft, M Dalton, S Dalton, C Day, D Day, Dobbs, Elsey, Fitzgerald, Fletcher, Fower, JA Fox, JR Fox, Goldspink, Harrington, Hiller, Hussain, Khan, Kreling, Lamb, Lane, Lee, Lowndes, Morley, Murphy, Nawaz, Newton, North, Over, Peach, Rush, Saltmarsh, Scott, Sharp, Swift, Thacker, Todd, Trueman, Wilkinson and Winslade.

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Burton, Fazal, Gilbert, Goodwin, Holdich, Miners, Sanders, Sandford, Seaton and Walsh.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor M Cereste declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 4. He stated that he was Chairman of the Board of the applicant: Peterborough Renewable Energy Limited and would therefore not be participating in the meeting.

*The Mayor advised those present of the intention to transmit the proceedings to the Town Hall Reception Room via video link in order to enable members of the public who had not been able to be seated in the public gallery to follow the proceedings. Members were further advised that the local press had expressed a wish to take photographs of the early part of the meeting.*

*Having received no objections to the above, the Mayor moved to agenda item 3.*

#### 3. AGREEMENT OF PROCEDURE – APPLICATION TO DEPARTMENT FOR ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DECC) BY PETERBOROUGH RENEWABLE ENERGY LIMITED

Members noted this report which sought agreement to the procedure to be followed at this Extraordinary Council meeting. The report further requested Members' approval to extend the guillotine to four hours, instead of two hours which was the usual time allowed for an Extraordinary Meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) Approve the speaking procedure to be followed during the meeting;
- (ii) Agree to the extension of the guillotine to four hours.

**4. PETERBOROUGH RENEWABLE ENERGY LIMITED – APPLICATION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ENERGY PARK AT LAND OFF STOREY’S BAR ROAD, FENGATE, PETERBOROUGH**

Members’ attention was drawn to the revised recommendations, a copy of which had been circulated to all present at the beginning of the meeting. It was noted that the following additional recommendations had also been included:

- (i) that a risk assessment should be undertaken to identify the likelihood of contamination mobilisation and spread. If contamination should be identified, then mitigation measures should be proposed where required; and
- (ii) that measures should be put in place during construction to protect areas of nature conservation interest.

Susan Marsh, Principal Planning Officer delivered a presentation which set out the details of the application and related proposals. Members were advised that the proposed Energy Park would provide an innovative approach to a range of waste and biomass that would specifically target recycling, reprocessing and recovery and would eliminate the need for landfill. Municipal, commercial and agricultural waste would be dealt with and there would be an opportunity to generate renewable energy, which might then be used to power new development proposed within the city.

The Principal Planning Officer outlined the site and surrounding area. Approximately 10 ha of the site would be built on land to the south of Storeys Bar Road adjacent to the power station to the west. The proposal included a further 3 to 4 ha of land to the north of Storeys Bar Road which would be required in order to undertake the proposed realignment of the road and establish a visitor centre.

Members were advised that once constructed, the facility would provide employment for approximately 129 people. The development would take in up to 650,000 tonnes of waste and biomass per annum, have the ability to produce 160,000 tonnes of recyclables per annum and would support the Council’s Environment City aspirations.

Councillor Goldspink informed Members that he wished to address the meeting in his capacity as a ward councillor for the area affected. He would not therefore, take part in the Cabinet meeting of 2 February 2009 when Cabinet Members would agree the Council’s response to the consultation document. He advised that he broadly supported the proposal and acknowledged that the report recognised the potential impact to traffic levels, however he drew attention to the importance of planning for the incremental affect the proposed development would have on the area, in particular the road network.

Councillor Todd, speaking as a ward councillor for the area affected, expressed concern with regard to the increased volume in traffic, particularly heavy vehicles.

The Mayor invited members of the public who had expressed a wish to speak against the proposals to put their objections forward. The following concerns were raised:

- The potential for health problems due to the burning of domestic and commercial waste products in large quantities, 24 hours a day – leading inevitably to the discharge of significant quantities of materials of unknown toxicity;
- Increased levels of traffic and the affect of diesel vehicles on residents' health and wellbeing;
- Risks relating to untested and unproven technology,
- Risk to the environment, e.g. land and water pollution and impact on climate change;
- Concerns regarding the true potential and benefit of selling energy produced

Chris Williams, representing the applicant, presented the application. Supporters of the proposal were then asked to address the meeting and the following points were raised in support of the application:

- Opportunity to help meet waste emissions and carbon targets, helping to promote Peterborough as a centre of environmental expertise;
- Potential to establish environmental leadership and to assist the Council in meeting its emissions and carbon targets;
- Proposal offers a host location for practical engineering, technology developments and information exchange needed to promote Peterborough as a centre of environmental expertise;
- Requires little or no financial input from local or central government;
- Potential to 'pull through' other green initiatives in wind and bio-energy which would benefit the local economy;
- Proposed location is in the correct quarter of the city to create a truly green industrial environment;
- Scheme would generate hydrogen as a by-product of the process – this would enable a significant step towards PP20 of the draft LDF DPDs: the realisation of a local Hydrogen Economy and support for distributed energy installations;
- Proposed scheme would reduce levels of waste going into landfill;
- Proposal would create employment opportunities and result in improvements to the local cycleway infrastructure;
- Proposal is unique in that it includes many innovative technologies to address environmental concerns. It will extract plastics for recycling which will reduce dioxin emissions and will include plasma enhanced melters which would atomise the waste normally produced by incinerators, turning it into useful material which can be reused.
- Production of power which would be from a genuine renewable source.

Members raised the following comments and questions:

- How the technology differed from alternatives;
- Affect on air quality;
- Percentage of waste that might be imported from other areas;
- Number of heavy goods vehicles accessing and exiting the site and the impact on road infrastructure both during and after construction;
- Benefits of generating renewable energy and the amount that would be produced.
- Technology in respect of the dry autoclave system. Was this technology new and is it proven?

It was suggested that the revised recommendations should be fully supported and that the submission of a holding objection rejected. During debate a number of Members expressed concern with regard to this course of action, emphasising that a number of issues remained unresolved. In response, the Principal Planning Officer advised that the advice received from the DECC had been for the Council to submit a holding objection if it had any unresolved queries or concerns.

Having noted all comments and views, and following consideration of the revised recommendations, a proposal was put forward that Council agree the revised recommendations, but reject the proposal to submit a holding objection. It was emphasised that officers should, in progressing this matter, ensure that concerns regarding the impact of additional traffic levels were investigated and properly addressed.

On putting the matter to the vote, it was **RESOLVED** (33 votes for, 2 against):

To recommend to Cabinet that:

1. Peterborough City Council, as the local planning authority, agrees to the proposals providing all matters set out in Appendix D are satisfactorily addressed by the applicant. The Council and the applicant to make every effort to resolve such issues and if they are not able to do so, the matter will be referred back to Council by 31 August 2009.
2. As soon as matters set out in Appendix D are resolved to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change and he is minded to grant permission for the proposal, it is requested that this is subject to:
  - a) the imposition of appropriate conditions including those set out in Appendix E, and;
  - b) a planning obligation with Peterborough City Council on the basis of the matters set out in Appendix F. (Waste catchment area and monitoring of waste imports, hydrological monitoring for Flag Fen, long term landscape management and maintenance, long term management of wildlife areas to maintain and enhance biodiversity interest, highway contribution, contribution and components of Travel Plan, creation of new cycleway as an extension to the Green Wheel and long term maintenance).

In addition:

Additional Condition – to be added to Appendix E (pages 44-47)

- Risk assessment should be undertaken to identify the likelihood of contamination mobilisation and spread. If contamination is identified then mitigation measures should be proposed where required.

Planning Obligation Issues – to be added to Appendix F (page 48)

The '**Waste Catchment Restriction**' should require that the waste sourced from within the proposed catchment area should arise within that area and not originate from any source outside the catchment area unless previously agreed with the MPA.

This is to limit the volumes of waste being sourced from outside the catchment area and which might pass through a waste transfer station within the area. This is to support the Environmental Capital, to support local industry and commercial waste treatment.

It was **FURTHER RESOLVED** to:

Request that officers investigate and properly address concerns regarding the impact of increased levels of traffic in the area.

Meeting closed at 10.45 p.m.