

STEWKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

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CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

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6th August 2009

Cllr Martin Tett
Cabinet member for Planning and Environment
Bucks County Council
mtett@buckscc.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Tett

Re BCC Integrated Waste Management Strategy

Stewkley Parish Council discussed your July 2009 Briefing to Parish Councils re EfW at its August meeting and wishes to respond, and for its concerns to influence the decision-making process for the proposed incinerator. The Parish of Stewkley is approximately north east of Calvert and would be subjected to emissions from any incinerator in that vicinity, hence our concern.

1. Even if the proposed incinerator were 'safe' per current science, the siting of an industrial facility in a rural area, that disgorges pollution of any nature over other rural areas and residents, is an unacceptable desecration of the countryside. The views would be more hazy, and the air less pure and fresh to breathe, changes that might go unnoticed in more urban areas but, as with noise, any increase in air-borne pollution would be much more noticeable in rural areas.
2. If Bucks does not create sufficient waste for incineration – as you admit might be the case – then an incinerator in Bucks is not a sustainable option. An alternative sustainable strategy would be to focus on lowering waste production and improving recycling (e.g. Somerset Waste Partnership) so that waste for incineration is minimised and exported to a partner authority that already has a suitable incinerator. By suitable incinerator, we mean one that is proven safe and is sensitively sited.
3. We note the current science cited in your publications, yet we remain unconvinced that incineration, as proposed, is safe:
 - a. The Health Protection Agency's acceptance of the safety of modern incinerators is peppered with too many provisos, caveats and conditions for

complete peace of mind

(http://www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAwebFile/HPAweb_C/1194947374730)

- b. There are tangible problems at incinerators, either because of the technology or the management (e.g. WRG in Kent)
- c. Even if a causal link has not been proved between incinerators and health problems, the statistical correlations are disturbing, (e.g., Epidemiology: September 2007 - Volume 18 - Issue 5 - p S125: Infant Mortality in 27 Italian Municipalities With Solid Waste Incinerators (1981-2001)
- d. There is strong circumstantial evidence against Bucks' favoured technology, e.g.:
 - i. The need for such a high chimney
 - ii. There was / is an incentive for the recent development of 'even safer' technology, e.g. plasma glasification
 - iii. Ireland is thinking about an incineration levy to encourage more composting and recycling
(<http://www.mrw.co.uk/page.cfm/Action=Archive/ContentID=1/EntryID=5436>)

4. In response to page 2 of your briefing note and your comments about the consultation process, we wish to point out that for most ordinary hard-working people, until we are confronted with a tangible proposal with actual dimensions on a defined piece of land, and asked a direct unambiguous question, the effect of an abstract strategy on our everyday lives appears unreal and inconsequential. Had you asked Stewkley in 2005, "Do you want an incinerator directly downwind of you with a gigantic chimney that will spew 'safe' pollutants towards your village," you would probably have received hundreds of negative responses.

If the evidence we have cited is unsound, we would be grateful for your advice.

Yours sincerely,
Alison Cooper

Mrs A.M Cooper
Clerk to Stewkley Parish Council

CC: John Bercow MP
Cllr Brenda Jennings, Bucks CC
Cllr Janet Blake, AVDC
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