

Council should not rule on incinerator plan, says MP

# 'Let Government decide burner bid'

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UNPOPULAR plans for a huge waste incinerator in Newhaven should be 'called in' for a public inquiry and not left to East Sussex County Council to decide.

That is the view of local MP Norman Baker, who joined local councillors from Lewes, Newhaven and Seaford on Wednesday to hand in a petition to that effect to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Cllr Ann De Vecchi, leader of Lewes District Council, Cllr Eddie Collicot of Seaford Town Council and Cllr Rob Main of Newhaven Town Council, had the opportunity to make their representations to Minister Jim Fitzpatrick before the petition, containing more than 1,000 signatures, was handed over.

Mr Baker said: 'We have no confidence in

the county council in this matter.

'It cannot be allowed to be judge and jury on its own proposals.

'That is why we want the Government, which is independent, to review this matter.'

Cllr De Vecchi added: 'Unfortunately, East Sussex County Council cannot be trusted to produce a waste plan which is environmentally sustainable, or one which commands any real local public support.

## Grave shortcomings

'It is important that the Minister is aware of the grave shortcomings of the council's conduct throughout the course of the Waste Plan.

'The council has simply gone through the motions without any real sense of democracy or accountability toward the people it serves.

'This is a classic example of ivory tower arrogance.'

Cllr Collicot said: 'Seaford people have

made it very plain that they do not trust the Tory county council when it comes to waste matters.

'There is overwhelming opposition to the incinerator proposal, opposition the council has simply ignored.

'We are hoping the Government will intervene and put a brake on this most arrogant and un-green of councils.'

Cllr Main said: 'The proposal for the Newhaven incinerator is incredibly unpopular locally.

'This is why I have ensured that



Cllr Collicot, Cllr De Vecchi, Mr Baker, Minister Jim Fitzpatrick, Cllr Main

local Lib Dem councillors have had the chance to lobby the Planning Minister directly to let him know the strength of local concerns.'

Alistair Robson, council assistant director responsible for planning, said: 'The planning application is to the county council and it is up to our council to come to a decision.

'The merits of it are being assessed.

'The planning committee is perfectly competent to make a decision on it.'

County council leader Peter Jones said: 'They have the right to have it called in. I don't have a problem with that.

'We have a clear view of the situation but I do believe a lot of people have opposed the plans on the basis of dubious science.'