

## **Why the Council should stop trying to help Viridor build an Incinerator In Beddington and try and live up to its core Liberal Democrat Values of treating all communities fairly and protecting our planet.**

**Nick Matthey**

On the 28th of April the Stop the Incinerator Campaign is going to the Royal Courts of Justice for an oral hearing to try and prevent Viridor building the Beddington Incinerator. Sutton Council have been standing shoulder to shoulder with Viridor to allow this incinerator to go ahead. I will not be lending my support to the Council on this matter and instead I am backing the Stop the Incinerator Campaign. As a Liberal Democrat I think that the councils support for Viridor and its subservience to the demands of the South London Waste Partnership is wrong. Why are Liberal Democrats spending tax payer's money to defend Viridor's right to burn other peoples rubbish in our Borough? Less than 20% of the rubbish comes from LBS, we are being played for fools. .

I urge councillors to forget behaving as a group and to begin thinking independently and critically about air pollution... Why did you become councillors? Do you think your overriding role is to help a company that is based in the West Country to make profits?

Air quality in our country deteriorates year on year our hospitals are having to deal with the damage it causes. 30,000 premature deaths a year are directly attributable to air pollution. Asthma amongst Children in Beddington is rife, the Beddington Cluster has been given permits for 2.25 million tonnes of waste transfer a year

We must realise that this unconditional backing for the Viridor incinerator must end today. Another more environmentally sustainable solution to dealing with waste must be found. Allowing Viridor to Burn 7.5 million tonnes of waste over 25 years irrespective of improvements in recycling is unjustifiable and an environmental catastrophe . The Borough will become a laughing stock as we try and tell people we are a green borough. Beddington already deals with the sewage from 400,000 people having to burn their rubbish as well will show total contempt.

### **Dangers posed by the incinerator**

We should refuse to call the Viridor Incinerator an energy recovery facility, its primary function is to burn Viridor sourced trade waste and municipal solid waste that Sutton and three other boroughs have failed to pre-sort or consolidate. Locating this Incinerator in the middle of a densely populated area with inadequate road infrastructure will release vast amounts of pollution into the atmosphere. The exhaust fumes coming from the vehicles bringing in the waste and ferrying out the ash will inevitably find its way into the lungs of the population we are elected to protect. LBS as part of the South London Partnership have for reasons yet to be explained allowed Viridor to burn 25% Trade waste in this incinerator. This will be burnt alongside the municipal solid waste from four boroughs .Sutton is the junior partner in this arrangement which means less than 20% of the waste that will be incinerated will come from Sutton households. As a householder would you welcome the idea that neighbours who refused to burn rubbish in their own gardens brought it to your garden for incineration instead? Many residents in Beddington describe it as the toilet of Sutton. How many Councillors live or would want to live within a mile of the incinerator?

**Do the Benefits to Beddington from having the Viridor Incinerator outweigh its disadvantages?**

The Answer is no Viridor will keep all the profits from electricity generated by the incinerator. The millions of pounds of income each year will bring no financial benefits to any Sutton residents unless they are Viridor shareholders. All Beddington and residents will receive is the noise and exhaust fumes from a continuous stream of lorries bringing rubbish in and taking away ash from the Viridor Incinerator

### **Opportunity Sutton Limited**

Sutton Council may worry that its unequivocal support for Viridor's right to burn other people's rubbish on Metropolitan Open Land may be viewed by some voters as irresponsible and reckless. This may have prompted the Council to go into the pumped hot water energy from incinerator supply business. The logic behind this decision being that they can show the world that some environmental good will be derived from burning millions of tonnes of rubbish largely sourced from outside the borough. The Council's decision to create Opportunity Sutton Limited could be viewed by cynics as trying to defend the indefensible and help win the Judicial Review for Viridor... Perhaps bolstered by an alleged £50,000 Viridor contribution to investigate a district heating scheme and an initial optimistic report by Viridor's consulting engineers Fichtner. Opportunity Sutton Limited. Is ready to begin supplying the Felnax Development with heat. This new company if successful in its aims will enjoy a monopoly and all residents will have to get their heat from OSL. They will be forbidden to use other forms of heating and probably pay the premium price normally associated with District Heating Schemes. I have always believed that monopolies are not normally associated with a liberal approach to economics and business

### **Why do many residents in Beddington believe that the Council treat them unfairly compared to the rest of the Borough?**

Sutton Council has allowed Beddington to be a dumping ground for waste for over 25 years. Sutton Council originally promised residents that when The Thames Water farm land was going to be made into a Landfill this arrangement would only last for 25 years. After a quarter of a century the landfill would become a country park. The Council organised a road show and an elaborate scale model of the landscaped country park that would replace the landfill to assuage residents' fears. There was never any mention of a giant incinerator in the plans.

I find this reneging by the council's on promises albeit by a different administration as repugnant and ample justification for the belief that politicians should not be trusted. Had a company carried out a similar deceit then the directors would be dealt with by the law. The residents at the time who attended meetings about the proposed landfill were not told about the toxic gases coming from the millions of tonnes of waste decomposing in the landfill. Eventually 5 large landfill gas engines had to be installed to deal with the gases that leach out the landfill site; these generate and will continue to generate Carbon Monoxide, Carbon Dioxide and oxides of Nitrogen for many years to come. There will be 12 energy from waste plants and incinerators operating in Beddington if we do nothing, each one sending out plumes of toxic gases.

The people of Beddington and Hackbridge have been cruelly deceived for believing that Sutton Council could or would honour the promises made to return the Landfill to

a Country Park. Beddington and Hackbridge residents have endured year on year the detritus that blows off the landfill only to find that when this ends incineration begins. I doubt that these events are being remembered in London Borough of Suttons 50 year anniversary celebrations.

## **An Injustice needs to be put right**

Why should Beddington and Hackbridge Residents who have endured so much and believed that there was an end in sight to burying waste now have a 302,000 tonne a year incinerator imposed on them? Have they done anything wrong to merit such callous treatment?

I try and lead a morally decent life and I take the health and well being of the people I represent as a duty and I will protect them whatever the consequences. I will not be cow towed into retracting emails that question the propriety of the planning process for the incinerator. Neither will I be intimidated by threats that should I derail the Judicial Review, Viridor will take action against me and lead to my financial ruin. When the cause is just no amount of pressure from Viridor or from within the council will stop me fighting for the people who have entrusted me to look after their interests

Councillors you owe nothing to Viridor or the South London Waste partnership you owe everything to helping the disadvantaged the vulnerable and the people who elected you.

Please come and show your support, stop this incinerator. Let us concentrate on helping all our residents not causing irreversible damage to their health and well being.