

Council

Wednesday, 12 August 2020

Attendees:

Councillor Lewis Barber, Councillor Nick Barlow, Councillor Kevin Bentley, Councillor Tina Bourne, Councillor Roger Buston, Councillor Nigel Chapman, Councillor Peter Chillingworth, Councillor Helen Chuah, Councillor Nick Cope, Councillor Mark Cory, Councillor Robert Davidson, Councillor Paul Dundas, Councillor John Elliott, Councillor Adam Fox, Councillor Mark Goacher, Councillor Martin Goss, Councillor Dave Harris, Councillor Chris Hayter, Councillor Pauline Hazell, Councillor Theresa Higgins, Councillor Mike Hogg, Councillor Brian Jarvis, Councillor John Jowers, Councillor David King, Councillor Cyril Liddy, Councillor Michael Lilley, Councillor Sue Lissimore, Councillor Derek Loveland, Councillor Fiona Maclean, Councillor Jackie Maclean, Councillor Sam McCarthy, Councillor Gerard Oxford, Councillor Chris Pearson, Councillor Lee Scordis, Councillor Martyn Warnes, Councillor Lorcan Whitehead, Councillor Dennis Willetts, Councillor Barbara Wood, Councillor Julie Young, Councillor Tim Young

395 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Arnold, Barton, Coleman, Crow, Ellis, Luxford Vaughan, Moore, B. Oxford, P. Oxford and Scott-Boutell.

396 Have Your Say! (Virtual Meetings)

Councillor Banks of West Mersea Parish Council addressed the Council pursuant to the provisions of Remote Meetings Procedure Rule 5(1) to express the Town Council's support for the proposed motion. If Bradwell B were to go ahead there would be considerable impact on residents and visitors to Mersea, both from the industrial complex itself and from construction traffic. The Dengie Peninsula had a number of environmental designations including Triple SI, RAMSAR, National Nature Reserve, Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area. The estuary was in a Marine Conservation Zone. The cooling towers would deposit increased levels of saline back in the estuary. The claims by the industry that nuclear power produced zero carbon did not stand up to scrutiny. EDF was effectively a French state owned company and CGN was effectively a Chinese state owned company, who were desperate to have their unproven technology tested in a remote area. All Councillors, regardless of their political persuasion, should support the motion.

Theresa Schrier addressed the Council pursuant to the provisions of Remote Meetings Procedure Rule 5(1) to express her concern about the impact of Bradwell B on local communities. Of particular concern was the impact of construction traffic on the local villages. In addition the proposed site of the power station was very extensive and would completely dominate Bradwell village. There would be no benefit to the local area.

John Akker addressed the Council pursuant to the provisions of Remote Meetings Procedure Rule 5(1). The decision to hold this debate was welcomed. This was an opportunity for Colchester to unite and send a strong message of opposition to Bradwell B. There were sound environmental, climate and planning reasons to oppose it. If the motion was passed the Council should use its networks to publicise the decision and to influence neighbouring authorities and other partners, such as the University. Tribute was paid to the work of ward councillors representing West Mersea, who had supported residents in their concerns on the lack of consultation and their fears on the impact on the local environment, evacuation, impact on marine life, and on recreation and tourism. The new document needed to be robust and clear and the local community should be consulted as part of the process.

Robbie Spence addressed the Council pursuant to the provisions of Remote Meetings Procedure Rule 5(1). He drew Council's attention to work of Blackwater Against New Nuclear Group (BANNG), which showed that Bradwell was unsustainable, unsuitable and unacceptable as a site for a massive new nuclear power station. It was unsustainable because it was a low lying coastal site that would be subject to impacts of climate change as sea level rises, particularly storm surges. It was an unsuitable site as it would destroy the peaceful, low profile marshland and estuarine landscape. It was unacceptable because of the dangers it posed to communities around the Blackwater and beyond. An accident on the scale of Fukushima would potentially affect an area of half a million people. Bernard Jenkin MP had also expressed concern about the security concerns arising from the involvement of China General Nuclear.

Ian Clarke addressed the Council pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1) to stress the importance of the Bradwell B Stage 1 consultation. It was a statutory consultation for a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). The application would be decided by The Planning Inspectorate and not Maldon District Council although it was the "Host Authority". Under the NSIP process Colchester Borough Council as a "Neighbouring Authority" had an equal influence on the application to Maldon District Council. The Planning Inspectorate made clear that the Stage 1 Consultation provided the main opportunity for consultees to influence the project after which there was limited scope for a consultee to do that.

There was concern that in the context of Mersea Island and evacuation that under current regulatory protocol the applicant may obtain a Development Consent Order before a credible evacuation plan has been devised. The Council should insist for the

protection of both Mersea Island residents and visitors that no Development Consent Order was issued before the feasibility of a credible evacuation plan was determined. The Council should also object on the limitations in scope of the consultation during the pandemic and for various other reasons of which details had already been given. The Council should withdraw its recent limited and inconclusive response to the consultation and submit a comprehensive response objecting to the proposals reflecting but also updating its earlier Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel review and prepared in consultation with affected parishes and others.

Professor Blowers of Blackwater Against New Nuclear Group (BANNG) addressed the Council pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 5(1) of the Remote Meetings Procedure Rules. Since its inception in 2008 BANNG had held the view that Bradwell was an unsuitable site for a new nuclear power station. It had worked with the Council in 2010 on a consultation response to Government providing a robust rejection of the site's suitability. The argument's made then were still relevant, and changes since then reinforced the arguments against it. There was a declining need for nuclear power together with concerns on climate change, and the scale of the proposed station.

The site was inappropriate as the scale of the project would transform the Dengie Peninsula and the Blackwater Estuary into an industrial complex. The site was unsustainable as Bradwell was low lying, flat and liable to flooding. Climate change could render the site unviable in the course of its lifetime. The site was unacceptable as in the event of a major accident it was inconceivable that emergency plans could effectively protect large populations living in the range of radioactive impacts. The site was unsuitable as the environmental destruction, loss of habitats impacts on the estuary's fishing and tourism would transform a peaceful and precious area into a noisy, oppressive, polluting and dangerous nuclear complex. BANNG remained committed to providing its support for endeavours to reject Bradwell as a potentially suitable site for Bradwell B.

397 New Nuclear at Bradwell

It was PROPOSED by Councillor Cory that:

“Accepting different views may be held strategically about Nuclear Power for the UK, this Council should make clear its position on new nuclear at Bradwell and the impact of new nuclear upon the Borough of Colchester.

This Council objects to new nuclear at Bradwell due to the local environmental impacts and prefers a focus on renewable energy alternatives.

[The concern based upon 'local environmental impact' reflects Colchester Borough Council's investigations into Bradwell B in 2009/10 through the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel Task and Finish group on new nuclear at Bradwell]."

On being put to the vote the motion was approved and adopted (UNANIMOUS).