

Motion on Fracking in Bath and North East Somerset

To be moved by Cllr Tim Warren on behalf of the Conservative Group

This Council:

- Notes the work already undertaken by the Council in relation to Fracking within Bath and North East Somerset and neighbouring areas, including the Council's response to Somerset's Minerals Preferred Planning Options, agreed by Cabinet in April 2013.
- Understands that the use of shale gas and coal bed methane has the potential to make a significant contribution to the UK's energy needs in the coming decades during the period of transition from use of fossil fuels to renewable energy sources, and could enable Britain to become more energy independent.
- Supports the Government's overall policy on Unconventional Gas and Oil and welcomes the additional safeguards as set out by the Secretary of State in December 2012.
(Ref: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/written-ministerial-statement-by-edward-davey-exploration-for-shale-gas>)
- Nevertheless has serious concerns about the potential impact of unconventional gas exploration and extraction, as well as geothermal exploitation, within Bath and North East Somerset, in particular relating to:
 - the vulnerability of the hot springs which supply Bath's spa water and the potential risk to the supply of hot spring water;
 - its potential impact in an area significantly covered by Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a World Heritage Site;
 - the importance of protecting the reservoir water supply in the Chew Valley.
- Believes the Council should seek to adopt whatever measures available to control, and if appropriate prevent, the use of unconventional gas exploration and extraction, as well as geothermal exploitation, within Bath and North East Somerset.

Council resolves:

1. To request that the Leader of Council and Chief Executive formally register the concerns of Council relating to the use of unconventional gas extraction and geothermal exploitation within Bath and North East Somerset and neighbouring areas with the Department for Energy & Climate Change.

2. To request that Cabinet ask Officers to produce a summary report on the potential impact and risks of unconventional gas exploration and extraction, as well as geothermal exploitation, within Bath and North East Somerset and relevant neighbouring areas, utilising the report produced for B&NES by the British Geological Survey in October last year, and report back to Full Council.
3. As part of the report referred to in (2), requests that Cabinet report back to Full Council on measures available to the Council to control, and if appropriate prevent, the use of unconventional gas exploration and extraction and geothermal exploitation within Bath and North East Somerset.