

**Council 13 September, 2018**

**Permitted Development for Shale Gas Exploration and Inclusion of Shale Gas Production in the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project Regime**

**Labour Group to move:**

**Council notes that:**

- 1** Currently fracking companies are required to apply for planning permission from the local authority to drill or sample a well. They also have to apply for planning permission from the local authority to undertake shale gas production.
- 2** The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is consulting on whether proposals for non-hydraulic shale gas exploration should be granted planning permission through a permitted development right.
- 3** The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is also consulting on whether to include major shale gas production projects in the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project regime. This would mean that the Secretary of State would automatically become the decision-maker for determining an application for future shale gas production projects meeting certain criteria.

**Council believes that:**

- 4** The local planning process is one of the main ways in which communities can express their views about what happens in their area. Permitted development significantly reduces the potential for local people to comment on a development.
- 5** It is important that local councils have a say in whether shale gas exploration goes ahead as this activity could result in significant local impacts such as increased traffic, noise and lighting as well as damage to the ecology and visual landscape of an area.
- 6** Shale gas production is highly controversial with the potential to significantly impact on local communities. Decisions about these developments should continue to be made by democratically accountable local planning authorities and not as part of the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project regime.

**Council agrees:**

- 7** To ask the Leader of Council to:
  - a) Respond to the consultation with the view that, for the reasons above, this Council opposes permitted development rights for shale gas exploration and the inclusion of major shale gas production projects in the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project regime; and
  - b) Write to our local MPs asking for their support in opposing these proposals.
- 8** In the event that permitted development rights for shale gas exploration are introduced, to explore the potential for an Article 4 Direction to remove these permitted development rights from shale gas exploration in this area.