

Full Council – 4 December 2025
Questions submitted by the Public

Question 1 - submitted by Giovanna Lewis

As all planning legal challenges to the incinerator are now exhausted, Stop Portland Waste Incinerator will close its campaign around the end of the year - after 6 long years where we raised almost £240,000 to pay for consultants, expert reports, lawyers and barristers – even from one elderly lady who dropped in £5 cash every week.

Although we lost through legal routes, our actions have, without doubt, been successful in delaying the project, from a time when, through lack of information, people could be convinced that incineration might be a good idea, to now, when we all realise it's not, and public opinion and politicians are turning against its proliferation. Drastic waste reduction and improved recycling are the order of the day. We commend Dorset Council's excellent recycling rates.

Just over a year ago, a second campaign group was formed, SPIC (Stop Portland Incinerator Campaign), and last week we organised a public meeting, attended by over 100 people to think about what we can do. Several local Dorset Councillors attended – thank you.

Monitoring emissions came high on the list! You may not know that incineration companies self-monitor emissions and provide the data which is used by the Environment Agency. You may also not know that there is a flaw in the monitoring requirements. When incinerators power down and power back up for maintenance – a time of high filthy emission rates – there is no monitoring by anyone. No wonder it's not monitored then. Commissioning is also a high-risk emission time.

So, Dorset needs to take care of ourselves and monitor the emissions ourselves, so we know what's going on. We say this because also we know that even with the 'best available technology' things go wrong and currently around 60 hours per year 'leeway' is given to companies, who only have to report breaches over this limit. Whilst business may rationalise this, it's a whole different ball game if you have to live and breathe next to one.

So, tonight, SPIC asks Nick Ireland as Council Leader to please support our call for Dorset's own emission monitoring, should this ever be built. Please help ensure that the right equipment is purchased and placed correctly in order to provide the credible and usable data the Environment Agency will use. We ask that you involve and include use our manpower and willingness to help. We would also like to fund raise to help with costs.