

COUNCIL MOTION
20 SEPTEMBER 2018

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Gannon

SECONDED BY: Councillor

FRACKING

Sefton Council notes:

- That in May this year Ministers outlined a proposal in a Written Ministerial Statement to redefine non-hydraulic fracturing shale gas exploration applications as permitted development and to redefine large scale shale gas production sites as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, thus removing any local authority control and community involvement in decision-making.
- That the Government consultation on both of these proposals began on 19th July 2018 and will run until 25th October 2018
- That on 5 July 2018, a report by the cross-party Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee warned the Government against its proposal to bring fracking applications under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) regime, concluding that Mineral Planning Authorities were best placed to understand the local area and how fracking could best take place.
- That the above report said the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime was unlikely to speed up the application process for fracking.

Sefton Council is committed to the principles of localism and the involvement of local communities in decisions that affect their environment, their health and safety and their well-being.

Sefton Council believes:

- That moving decisions about fracking, which have huge implications for local communities, to a national level would contradict the principles of localism.
- That 'Permitted Development' – the category of planning that the government wants to move Shale gas exploration drilling into – which was designed for developments with low environmental impacts, is an inappropriate category for drilling with such wide-reaching implications for local communities and climate change.
- That bringing fracking applications under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime will be harmful to local communities.
- That local authorities are best placed to continue to make decisions throughout the planning process for shale gas exploration drilling, appraisal and production.

Sefton Council resolves to respond to the forthcoming government consultation with the above views.