


# Search for operator to run Stoke-on-Trent's 1970s waste incinerator

Stoke-on-Trent City Council wants an operator to keep the Hanford plant running until at least 2030

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Council chiefs are looking for an operator to keep Stoke-on-Trent's incinerator running until at least 2030. The energy-from-waste plant at Hanford is due to be replaced with a brand new facility on the same site, but this is not expected to be operational until 2029.

Hanford Waste Services runs the existing incinerator, with the company's contract due to expire in March 2025. Cabinet members at [Stoke-on-Trent City Council](#) have now agreed to procure an 'interim' waste disposal contract for a minimum of five years beyond this date.

This contract will be for both the city council and Staffordshire County Council, with the incinerator accepting residual household waste from both areas. A report on the procurement was discussed by cabinet members in a private session, due to it 'relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person'.

But according to the minutes from the meeting, cabinet members approved 'in principle' the proposal to procure the contract, with a further report due to come back to seek authority to 'enter into final negotiations to secure the most economic outcome for the councils'.

They also granted officers delegated authority to hire consultants to give specialist technical, legal and financial advice, to support the procurement of a waste disposal contract waste 'for a minimum of five years beyond the end of the current contract commencing in March 2025'. A 'whole scope solution' will be outlined and agreed in a future cabinet report.

The existing incinerator has been in operation since the 1970s, but is now reaching the end of its useful economic life.

It burns around 173,000 tons of rubbish from Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire each year, producing electricity which is sold to the National Grid. It also saves the city council from having to pay landfill fees for the residual waste it collects.

The minutes from the cabinet meeting do not mention the replacement facility which is due to be built. But last year scrutiny committee members were told that a procurement process for the construction and operation of the new plant would start in 2023. They were also told that rocketing inflation rates would complicate this exercise.

A spokesperson for Stoke-on-Trent City Council said: "The process is in support of the original decision and to ensure continuity of service for the disposal of residual waste at the current plant, with a new plant anticipated by 2029.

"The new contract is required as procurement regulations do not allow an extension of the current contractor under the current operator. To be certain there is a sufficient contingency for the new build period and to allow Stoke-on-Trent City Council to obtain the best value outcome in the procurement of the new facility, a period up to 2030 has been set."