

11. NOTICE OF MOTION - SUDDEN CANCELLATION OF CONTRACT BY WESTMINSTER GOVERNMENT TO DELIVER COVID-19 VACCINE BY VALNEVA LIVINGSTON - SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR JANET CAMPBELL

The Council considered a motion (copies of which had been circulated) submitted by Councillor Janet Campbell in the following terms :-

“The sudden and completely unexpected announcement by Sajid Javid, UK Government Health Secretary to cancel the contract with Valneva in Livingston has been a complete shock to everyone, including the company, the workforce, the Scottish Government, West Lothian Council and all elected representatives.

The UK Tory Health Minister has cited the company’s breaching of its obligations under the supply arrangements as the reason for the abrupt cancellation of the contract without any discussion with the company – which they strenuously deny.

The Valneva vaccine is the only inactivated, adjuvanted whole virus vaccine against Covid-19 in clinical trials in Europe – this point was made by the UK Vaccine Taskforce when it gave its backing to Valneva in 2020.

The MHRA approval of the vaccine will be based on the outcome of Phase 3 trials – these trials were due to end in October; the data collected is being analysed this month with the vaccine due for approval in December.

There is therefore absolutely no evidence on which Sajid Javid can state “the vaccine will not be approved”.

This decision is a hammer blow to the West Lothian community as we recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. Producing this vaccine, here in Livingston will create an additional 200 positions with many highly skilled, well paid jobs supplementing the West Lothian workforce

West Lothian Council therefore agrees to:

Write to Sajid Javid, Westminster Tory Health Secretary and demand he reconsider his decision and meet with Valneva management team to discuss reinstating the contract he has breached;

Write to Hannah Bardell MP and all West Lothian MSP’s and tell them that West Lothian Council are fully behind them in all efforts to ensure Valneva Covid-19 vaccine production in Livingston finds the widest possible marketplace; and support all efforts to put pressure on the Westminster Government to reinstate the contract with Valneva”.

- Moved by Councillor Janet Campbell and seconded by Councillor Tom Ullathorne

Amendment

“Council recognises and welcomes the 170 existing high value jobs created by Valneva in West Lothian.

The cancellation of the vaccine supply contract is currently subject to on-going discussion between Valneva and the UK Government. This is a complex issue which covers a number of commercially sensitive matters. Given this it would not be appropriate for the council to comment at this stage but officers continue to work closely with the company in order to offer whatever support they can in achieving a successful outcome”.

- Moved by Councillor Cathy Muldoon and seconded by Councillor David Dodds

A roll call was taken. The result was as follows :-

Motion

Frank Anderson
Willie Boyle
Diane Calder
Janet Campbell
Robert De Bold
Jim Dickson
Carl John
Sarah King
Maria MacAulay
Andrew Miller
Moir Shemilt
David Tait
Tom Ullathorne

Amendment

Alison Adamson
Stuart Borrowman
Harry Cartmill
Tom Conn
David Dodds
Angela Doran-Timson
Damian Doran-Timson
Bruce Fairbairn
Lawrence Fitzpatrick
Peter Heggie
Chris Horne
Charles Kennedy
Tom Kerr
John McGinty
Andrew McGuire
Dom McGuire
Cathy Muldoon
George Paul
Kirsteen Sullivan

Decision

Following a vote, the amendment was successful by 19 votes to 13, with 1 member absent and it was agreed accordingly.