

Thousands sign petition calling for recycling centre to reopen

More than 2,500 people have signed a petition calling for a recycling centre to reopen in East Lothian amid claims fly-tipping has increased since it shut its doors.

Local MSP Craig Hoy launched the petition calling for the decision to 'temporarily' close Macmerry Recycling Centre to be reversed by East Lothian Council.

He said residents had reported more incidents of fly-tipping and additional traffic on one town main street as drivers are diverted to alternative sites.

Mr Hoy's petition, which has now gathered 2,592 signatures will be considered by the council's petitions committee later this week.

It states: "Macmerry Recycling Centre served residents of Macmerry, Haddington and surrounding villages including Gifford, Pencaitland, East Saltoun, West Saltoun and Longniddry until it was temporarily closed in October 2023.

"Since its closure, residents have raised concerns about increased fly-tipping and diversion of traffic through Tranent High Street.

"I am calling for a reversal of the 2024-25 Council budget to retain this vital service at a time where East Lothian's

population is growing as a result of house-building.”

The local authority’s elected members agreed to keep the centre shut as part of cost cutting measures introduced at the start of the current financial year.

The council has pointed out there are three other centres in the county at North Berwick, Dunbar and Wallyford.

Launching his petition earlier this year Mr Hoy, whose has local offices in Haddington, said the council’s Conservative group had put forward an alternative to closing the Macmerry centre at a budget meeting earlier this year which were rejected.

They included closing area partnerships, which distribute funding to local projects, reducing the number of manager at the council’s headquarters and scrapping a £109million Musselburgh Flood Protection scheme.

Mr Hoy said: “This alternative budget would have allowed for a £1.2 million investment into the county’s education services and result in £6.5million less borrowing, while ensuring the protection of frontline services such as reversing Labour’s plan to permanently close Macmerry Recycling Centre, protecting libraries from closure and preventing the withdrawal of police from the streets.”

The petition will be discussed at committee on Thursday.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter