



Minutes of the Northacre Resource Recovery Centre extraordinary liaison committee meeting held on Microsoft Teams on 3 March 2022

Present

Wiltshire Council

John Carter (JC)
Cllr Gordon King – Westbury East (GK)
Cllr Carole King – Westbury North (CK)
Cllr Matthew Dean – Westbury West (MD)
Jo Emery – Waste Manager, Technical (JE)

Westbury Town Council

Jane Russ (JR)

Environment Agency

Tom Fowler (TF)

Arla (Westbury Dairies)

George Nicholls (GN)

Hills Waste Solutions

Simon Allen (SA)
Paul Scriven (PS)

The Hills Group

Monique Hayes (MH)

	ACTION
1. Apologies	
Francis Morland; Cllr Suzanne Wickham – Ethandune;	
2. Minutes of the previous meeting	
Accepted	HILLS
3. Update on site operations	
<p>PS stated that the performance of the biofilter had improved since the last meeting on 7 December and that Hills had not received any direct complaints on odours. PS asked if the Environment Agency had received any complaints.</p> <p>TF advised that one complaint had been received on 14 December and one on 2 March. TF stated the complaint on 2 March was unlikely to have come from the site. TF advised that there had been a significant reduction in the number of odour complaints and there were no odours from the site.</p> <p>PS advised that a routine maintenance shutdown had taken place in the past week without any issues.</p> <p>PS confirmed that waste inputs into the site had returned to 100% since 11 January with no issues.</p> <p>SA stated that Hills was exploring potentially increasing the stack height which is felt may help with dispersion of an odour emanating from the stack. Any increase in stack height would require planning permission and Hills is hoping for support from local councillors, of any application that might be submitted.</p>	

MD said that Hills contend that the design of the plant is appropriate and that the only issue was the biofilter being replaced. If this is the case, then what is the reason for the stack height increase? MD stated that people may be concerned that the stack will impede on amenity for local residents.

SA stated that MD is correct in that the biofilter exchange process was the likely cause of odours and confirmed that the biofilter is working correctly now. SA stated that Hills has conducted a review which suggests that it is likely the odour would come from the stack hence the need to increase the stack height. The footprint of the plant will not change and the stack will be lower than others in the area.

PS stated that the increase in stack height is expected to be less than 10 metres.

MD asked if this proposed change in stack height will allow the processing of more material through the plant.

PS confirmed that this is not being done to raise input volumes.

CK asked what the current stack height is? SA responded that it is the same as the height of the building.

MD stated that he will reserve position on his opinion and support.

SA stated that the objective is to give advance notice to liaison committee members of Hills intention to submit a planning application and the only reason this change was being proposed is to help local residents by further reducing any potential odours, which is why we are asking for support from local councillors

JR said that like MD, she is rather nervous about this option due to the proposed size of the stack. JR stated that whilst Hills say it is only for odour prevention, why was it not constructed at the increased size before. JR asked if Hills received planning permission initially because the stack was lower at the start.

SA stated that a decision has not been made by Hills yet, and nothing more is expected from Councillors at this stage other than to look at the application when it is submitted.

GK stated that all Councillors who are members of the Strategic Planning Committee have an obligation to view all applications in a fair way and do not give applicants an indication of their view beforehand as per the regulations.

4. Environmental compliance

Nothing further to report on following the comments above.

MD stated that whilst Hills report that there had been no odours complaints received since mid-December, on 13 February he had received a complaint from a resident regarding a smell from the site. MD arrived at the resident's house in Storridge Road and the smell was not that strong and nothing like what had been experienced last autumn. It was cold, wet day and MD did not think it was worthy of a complaint.

SA stated that it was difficult for Hills to comment on this report and requested that in future all complaints are sent to Hills so that this can be investigated at the time, and residents can also report it to the EA if they wanted to. SA asked what time of the day it was, MD replied 3pm

GK referred to TF regarding his previous report that Hills was in breach of its Environmental Permit and where the EA are with that, whether it had been resolved and if there was any further news?

TF replied that it is still being investigated by the EA and details will be shared when appropriate.

5. Planning applications	
Discussed above	
6. Any other business	
<p>MD enquired if there was any further development regarding the Northacre Renewable Energy project and the Secretary of State call in. SA responded that this meeting was to discuss the MBT plant specifically, but that there had been no response in relation to NRE so far.</p> <p>MD enquired if all committee members were happy for the contents of the minutes to be shared with the public. All agreed.</p> <p>MD asked if any serious accidents or fatalities had occurred on site last year or this year, and if the Fire Services had been in attendance. PS stated that there had been no such incidents.</p> <p>CK asked what contingencies had been put in place regarding potential strike action.</p> <p>SA stated that some employees would go on strike on Monday and that Hills has contingencies in place, but cannot give detailed information on who / when may be affected. We ask all residents to put their bins out as normal.</p> <p>MD asked if the staff at the MBT plant would go on strike. SA stated that this was unlikely.</p> <p>MD asked if large amounts of waste will be left around Wiltshire.</p> <p>SA we cannot control what people may do to deal with their waste if it not collected, but this site (MBT) will be open and treating waste as normal.</p>	
7. Next meeting	
<p>There were no further matters or questions raised.</p> <p>The next meeting is proposed to be held at the end of April (after Easter) / beginning of May with the request that it is held in person with a site tour offered to committee members.</p>	ALL