



Minutes of the Northacre Resource Recovery Centre liaison committee meeting held at Northacre MBT plant on 26 May 2022

**Present**

**Wiltshire Council**

Gary Tomsett - Environmental Control & Protection Team (GT)  
Cllr Gordon King – Westbury East (GK)  
Cllr Carole King – Westbury North (CK)  
Cllr Matthew Dean – Westbury West (MD)  
Cllr Suzanne Wickham – Ethandune (SW)  
Jo Emery – Waste Manager, Technical (JE)

**Westbury Town Council**

Jane Russ (JR)

**Heywood Parish Council**

Cllr Francis Morland (FM)

**Environment Agency**

Tom Fowler (TF) – online via Teams following the site tour

**Arla (Westbury Dairies)**

No representative

**Hills Waste Solutions**

Simon Allen (SA)  
Paul Scriven (PS)

**The Hills Group**

Monique Hayes (MH)

	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1. Apologies</b>	
John Carter	
<b>2. Minutes of the previous meeting</b>	
Accepted	HILLS
<b>3. Update on site operations</b>	
<p>The meeting was started with a tour of the MBT facility following which members returned to the meeting room.</p> <p>Questions following the tour:</p> <p>CK asked if any other parts of the plant are due to be upgraded and whether improvements are planned in the maintenance process PS stated that the plant undergoes regular preventative scheduled maintenance and improvements would be identified in that process. Any suggested improvements would be discussed with Wiltshire Council and if appropriate they would be implemented. As an example of an improvement, PS stated that originally the plant was designed to produce SRF (solid recovered fuel) but has always made RDF (refuse derived fuel). This process did not require the use of equipment that used a significant power supply, and the decision was taken to change the process and bypass this equipment. Wiltshire Council benefited from the saving on energy costs.</p>	

SA stated that another improvement would be increasing the height of the stack and it is likely that a planning application will be submitted in the near future.  
 PS stated that Hills is waiting on the design work which will then go to a consultant for modelling  
 MD asked when the modelling would be completed.  
 PS estimated this could take up to 3 months.

SW asked if the RDF still goes to the Netherlands? Would it ever be used in the UK?  
 SA confirmed it did, and responded that there are not enough facilities in the UK  
 MD stated that it is cheaper to send to the Netherlands or Germany and that in his opinion it could be sent to a facility in the UK.

JR asked if the increase in the stack height a make-or-break situation was and if there was no increase in the stack would the plant be able to operate,  
 SA stated that this is not the case, and the plant could continue to operate, however Hills believe that increasing the stack height would help with emissions and potentially reduce the likelihood of odour off site.

MD asked if increasing the stack height was a precursor to increasing waste acceptance capacity at the site.  
 SA responded that there is already existing planning permission and EA permit in place to process waste over and above the Wiltshire Council contracted tonnage and the application to increase the stack height is based solely on environmental compliance.

GK asked if it was correct that the higher the stack, the more dispersal is achieved.  
 SA stated that this is correct, and that modelling will be undertaken and any increase in stack height would still be subject to a planning application.

Both MD and SW asked if the primary reason for the proposed increase in stack height was to disperse odour and not to increase material into the site which would then be used in the incinerator.  
 SA responded that Hills believe that increasing the stack height would help with emissions and potentially reduce the likelihood of odour off site.

**4. Environmental compliance**

SA stated that in the last couple of months 4 (four) complaints of odour had been received by the Environment Agency.

TF confirmed the four complaints but stated that these were not substantiated by the Environment Agency as officers were not in the area and therefore could not be substantiated

SA reminded committee members that residents should report any complaints to Hills in addition to reporting to the EA, in that way Hills can investigate them at the time.

FM asked if there was any issue with flies at the plant  
 PS responded that there are fly management procedures in place and Hills can see when there is a surge in numbers and can act quickly and also determine the reason for any increase. PS gave example as following a warm weekend the delivery of waste on the Monday would present with raised levels of flies as they originate from household waste bins.

MD directed a question to TF stating that residents had reported odours to EA officers when on site and asked what progress had been made into the investigations of the site being in breach of permit obligations.

TF replied that the information is still being put together by the EA to see if any breach had been committed and it is expected there will be an update in around one month's time and the details will be shared electronically.

<b>5. Planning applications</b>	
Discussed above	
<b>6. Any other business</b>	
<p>MD stated that it was surprising that the planning consent for the adjoining energy from waste plant is being exercised. SA responded that this meeting was to discuss the MBT plant specifically, and that these works did not affect the MBT plant.</p> <p>MD stated that committee members want to know about any further works on the energy from waste site. SA stated again that this liaison committee was to discuss the MBT plant specifically.</p> <p>MD stated that NRE and Hills were the 'same thing'. SA stated that this was not the case, and that Hills was not the major shareholder in NREL.</p> <p>MD stated that he had written 'numerous' letters to the chief executive of Hills regarding NREL and had never received a response. SA undertook to investigate. <i>Post meeting note: No correspondence between MD and Hills CEO has been found. Enquiries with NREL show that correspondence addressed to NREL Director, Alex Young was received by him on 23 June 2021 and a response was provided by NREL to MD on 24 June 2021. In addition, MD has been receiving correspondence from NREL since May 2021 following election as the Unitary Councillor for the Westbury Ward.</i></p> <p>FM asked why there had been a change in the way meetings were held (online Teams) and why Heywood PC was not included in the recently agreed Terms of Reference as most of the traffic for the plant passed through that parish council area. MH to investigate but confirmed that the meeting agendas and all committee reference forms had been shared with the Heywood PC parish clerk on the given email address as well as FM but that no response had been received requesting any changes at the time.</p> <p>MD asked why this committee meets, and if it is part of the contract that Wiltshire Council has with Hills to run the MBT plant. JE confirmed that it is stipulated in the contract. SA added that Hills has liaison committees as a matter of course for majority of its operational sites as part of its commitment to working with local communities.</p>	
<b>7. Next meeting</b>	
The next meeting will be held on 29 September at 16:00 at the MBT plant.	ALL