

Hills Resource Recovery Centre Liaison Committee

Minutes of a liaison committee meeting held at Compton Bassett Village Hall on Monday 5th June 2006.

PRESENT

Wiltshire County Council

Councillor Nancy Bryant (Chairman)

North Wiltshire District Council

Councillor David Evans

Compton Bassett Parish Council

Councillor Peter Szczesiak

Councillor Serena Henly

Cherhill Parish Council

Councillor Dave Grafton

Friends of Compton and Surrounds (FOCAS)

Michael Ransom

Wiltshire County Council (officers)

David Rose, development control manager

Andy Conn, waste services manager

Jo Freyther, planning officer

Hills Group

Peter Andrew, waste disposal manager

Andrew Liddle, aggregates production manager

Barrie Hedges, communications adviser

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor John Henley (Hilmarton PC), Councillor Fran Creasey (Compton Bassett PC), Councillor Peter Barnett (Compton Bassett PC) and Steve Burns (Hills).

LOW LANE PLANNING APPLICATION

Mr Rose reported that WCC was going through the process of determination. A number of issues had arisen and further information sought from the applicant. A holding objection had been received from the Environment Agency on water issues and from the environmental health officer at NWDC on noise. The county would go out to further consultation with new information when received from Hills. The company had willingly agreed to an extension of time for determination in order to facilitate public comment. Councillor Szczesiak said the public meeting at Compton Bassett had been helpful in achieving an understanding of the issues.

Notes:

1: Mr Rose has advised subsequent to the meeting that responses have been received (to date) from North Wiltshire District Council, Cherhill PC and Compton Bassett PC. No response has been received from Calne Without PC.

2: Mr Rose has also confirmed that, under Regulation 19 (further information requested from the applicant under the EIA Regulations), WCC is required to advertise the fact that information has been received. An advert would be placed in the local press, on site, and a copy of the information received put in the public library at Calne, at NWDC Offices and at County Hall for 21 days for comment. All consultees would be sent a copy of the information for comment within 21 days. This would include Mr Ransome as a representative of a local pressure group with an interest in the project.

EXTENDED HOURS PLANNING APPLICATION

Hills has submitted a series of applications to WCC seeking extended hours for the various operations at the site. These would include provision for opening on weekdays until 8pm and on Sundays between 7am and 6pm. Mr Conn explained that the impetus for the change had come not from Hills but from WCC as the waste disposal authority. He said that the pattern of waste / recycling collections had changed greatly over recent years and often included bank holidays, and also Saturdays as a means of catching up following a bank holiday. This necessitated greater availability of the various operations at Lower Compton.

Mr Ransom said he accepted the need for some revised hours but failed to understand the justification for opening until 8pm during the week and throughout Sundays.

Notes: Hills has provided the following subsequent to the meeting.

1: Further to the meeting and after discussions with the planning authority a revision to the proposed hours for the landfill has been made. This would involve permitted hours on the landfill of 6am to 8pm Mondays to Saturdays and bank holidays but no working on Sundays.

2: Further justification has also been provided in support of the other waste management facilities applications on the need for increased hours relating not just to the kerbside collection vehicles, but also to servicing the HRCs, whose use has continued to grow, and created the need to remove containers seven days a week.

3: The hours are sought to provide the flexibility to meet changing needs of the waste collection service and it is not proposed that the site will be operational as a rule on Sundays or before 7am and after 6pm. Normal working hours will be until 6pm and not on Sundays. However, things do go wrong and sometimes a load of waste may need to be delivered later than 6pm if there has been a vehicle breakdown earlier in the day or cleared from the HRCs on a Sunday, perhaps when a compactor has broken. These scenarios are not “emergencies” but are still issues which if they can’t be accommodated would cause problems to build and run into the next day. It is not in Hills interests to operate the site either after 6pm or on Sundays as effectively this creates the need for a full second shift of staff, with associated costs.

AGGREGATES UPDATE

Mr Liddle said that another phase of sand extraction had been completed, producing a stockpile of some 130,000 tonnes which would last until around February 2007. This had also created the necessary void for a further landfill cell which would be engineered in due course.

COMPOSTING UPDATE

Mr Andrew said that compost produced at the site from Wiltshire’s green waste was proving a great success and running at a level of some 27,000 tonnes a year. Some 197 bulk sacks on pallets had been sold in May. The company was investing in further machinery which would enable it to produce finer grades of compost and so extend the market for wider professional uses.

LANDFILL UPDATE

Mr Andrew confirmed that the current landfill tipping area had reached its highest point. This would ultimately settle by an estimated 25 per cent over 30 years. The restored area would be capped, sub-soiled and top-soiled and then sown with grass to make it available for grazing.

Action: It was agreed that the company should provide further general information on landfill settlement for the next meeting.

RECYCLING UPDATE

Peter Andrew read a report on recycling activity prepared by Steve Burns. Summary as follows:

The Wiltshire recycling percentage hit 39% in May, a 7% increase on May 05. A total of nearly 9,000 tonnes was collected from 22 kerbside collection vehicles and 10 household recycling centres (HRCs). A total of 130,000 homes are now being served by the kerbside scheme and more will be added with the further roll-out to rural areas in North and West Wiltshire in June.

Alternate weekly collections of refuse and recycling (inc green waste) in West Wiltshire is proving effective in encouraging householders to use the black box scheme. A similar

scheme is being considered for Kennet in July this year and North Wiltshire next year.

New initiatives at HRCs include a national trial of recycling plasterboard which will be processed to extract gypsum. A review is underway of mini recycling sites to determine whether it is feasible to collect plastics using containers no longer needed for other materials. Cardboard is similarly under consideration.

Mr Andrew was asked whether it was possible to encourage drivers to turn off their engines while offloading at the Household Recycling Centres. Hills has promised to investigate whether signs would help.

Hills was asked whether it would be possible to rescue items such as toys from general waste bins at the HRCs so that they could be re-used. Mr Conn explained that opportunities to recover such items were limited by health and safety considerations and by space for additional bins. Facilities were increasingly being offered to recycle items such as printer cartridges and mobile phones.

OTHER ISSUES

Mr Ransom provided the registration number of a Hills lorry which he had seen passing through Compton Bassett, apparently in breach of the weight limit through the village. Mr Andrew promised to investigate.

Note: A check has shown that the vehicle in question weighed 7.5 tonnes and was not, therefore, in contravention of the limit. The driver has, however, been asked to avoid the village in future.

There was concern that no response had been received to the telephone "hotline" provided by the company for community complaints.

Action: Committee members to provide information to Barrie Hedges (07899 923756) on any failure to respond to the hotline. Hills will then investigate.

Mr Andrew was asked if it was possible for Compton Bassett Village Hall to be included in kerbside recycling collections.

Action: While the hall is not technically classified as producing household waste and is not covered by the kerbside service, Hills recycling manager has promised to see what he can do.

NEXT MEETING

The date and venue of the next meeting will be confirmed. Please keep 11 September at 7pm free in your diaries. The village hall at Compton Bassett is fully booked through September due to drama group rehearsals, so another venue is being sought.