

PROSIECT GWYRDD JOINT SCRUTINY PANEL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH
ON FRIDAY, 13TH JULY 2012 AT 10.00 A.M.**

Present:

Councillor R. McKerlich - Chairman (Cardiff County Council)

Councillors:

Councillor J. Bevan (Caerphilly County Borough Council)

Councillor B. Derbyshire (Cardiff County Council)

Councillors S. Howarth and Ms V.E. Smith (Monmouthshire County Council)

Councillors P. Hannon and M. Spencer (Newport City Council)

Councillor Ms A. Moore and R. Traherne (Vale of Glamorgan Council)

Together with:

D. Perkins, J. Jones, and R.J. Thomas (Caerphilly County Borough Council), R Bowen (Cardiff County Council), H. Ilett (Monmouthshire County Council), E. Mulligan (Newport City Council) and J. Wyatt (Vale of Glamorgan Council)

Prosiect Gwyrdd Officers:

M. Williams (Project Director), I. Lloyd-Davies (Communications Officer), and M.S. Williams (Caerphilly County Borough Council)

1. TO ELECT CHAIR FOR THE JOINT SCRUTINY PANEL UNTIL MAY 2013

Nominations for the Chair until May 2013 were requested. Councillor Ms V.E. Smith nominated Councillor R. McKerlich, this was seconded and moved by the Panel.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S. Kent (Caerphilly County Borough Council) and J. Thomas (Newport City Council).

4. MINUTES – 30TH JANUARY 2012

It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 30th January 2012 be approved as a correct record.

5. JOINT SCRUTINY PANEL DRAFT REPORT

Mr J. Jones outlined the content of the Joint Scrutiny Panel's report into the health and environmental concerns associated with energy from waste incineration. He commented on the unique and thorough process that had been undertaken.

Following a public call for evidence, nineteen responses had been received. This had been followed by a number of organisations and individuals being invited to give oral evidence to the Joint Scrutiny Panel.

Mr Jones summarised the report and highlighted its conclusions and recommendations. While there was no doubt that waste incinerators are controversial, the Panel received different opinions about their safety. The Health Protection Agency offered the only validated scientific evidence which concluded that 'possible health effects are likely to be very small, if detectable'.

The report acknowledged the HPA's advice was disputed by some individuals and organisations and the impact of ultra fine and nano particles was not fully understood. This was an issue that required urgent additional research. The report also highlighted that incinerators emitted insignificant amounts of small particulate matter compared to many other transport and industrial processes.

In closing his presentation, Mr Jones advised that seven members of the previous Panel had endorsed the report. The Chairman thanked Mr Jones for his introduction, and welcomed comments from the Panel.

A concern was raised that no references to studies or peer cases had been given within the report to enable the reader to explore the contents further and a full discussion on the contents of the report followed.

When reviewing the recommendations within the report, Members commented on the level of monitoring carried out in Scotland, and data on Europe's monitoring processes was requested. Officers stated that the European Union members had introduced the Waste Incineration Directive. Therefore, it was unlikely that monitoring requirements in other European countries would be different from those operating in the UK.

Project Officers asked Members to note that the contract was flexible and could be adapted to respond to new legislation.

6. PRESENTATION: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND UPDATE

Mr M. Williams, Project Director, gave Members a presentation to outline action taken to date on the project; including, the five council's joint working relationship, Welsh Government funding and the procurement process.

Further clarification was given as to the selection process and the implications for the remaining authorities should a council withdraw from the Panel. Members were asked to note that no council had contacted the project team to confirm they wished to leave the procurement. Indeed consideration was being given to the process for councils to reaffirm their commitment to the project.

Members were informed of the remaining two bidders and a discussion took place about the locations of the two potential incinerators and the process of contract award and planning permission for the plants. Officers reported that checks and balances were in place to manage the procurement risks including the scenario of the successful contractor not being granted planning permission.

Members raised concerns regarding the gate fee for minimum tonnages, and questioned what guarantees Veolia and Viridor had given to ensure the project received preferential rates. Officers confirmed this had been the subject of numerous discussions and an agreement had now been reached with both bidders.

Members new to the Panel took on board the recommendations of previous Members and asked for the opportunity to visit existing facilities in Newhaven and Slough.

Action Point : MW/JJ to forward details of the agreed positions with respect to other Local Authority gate fee(s) to JSP Members

Action Point : JJ to arrange site visits with support of the project team

Action Point : MW/JJ to forward copy of the presentation to JSP Members

Mr J. Jones gave a presentation to outline the governance arrangements for the Prosiect Gwyrdd Partnership and the Joint Scrutiny Panel's key activities and achievements to date.

Mr Jones advised Members that the Panel would shortly be considering some very important issues and he asked that they continue to challenge the information provided by the Project Team.

The Panel were advised that Members Seminars were being held in the coming weeks for each partner authority.

In closing the meeting it was confirmed that meetings would continue to be held on Fridays at 10.00 a.m.

The meeting closed at 12.35 p.m.