



BRYN COMPOST LIAISON GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON WEDNESDAY 24TH APRIL 2013 AT 4:00PM.

PRESENT:

Councillor D. V. Poole Chairman

Councillors:

Mrs A. Blackman, W. David, S. Morgan, J.A. Pritchard.

Together with:

Residents: Mr. M. Davies, Mr. W. Griffiths, Mrs G. Davies, Mrs A. Gray, Mrs P. Lapsa.

Gelliargwellt Farm: Mr. P. Colley and Mr. R. Thomas

Natural Resources Wales: Mr. J. Harrison and Mr. A. Carter

Environmental Health: Ms C. Edwards

Officers: Mrs E. Sullivan (Democratic Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A. Angel, D. Bolter, H.W. David, G.J. Hughes and M.P. James. Residents: Mr J. Cuthbert, Mr G. Reynolds, Mrs C. Woods, Mr. T. Matthews and Mr R. Matthews and from Mr H. Brunt (Public Health Wales), Ms M. Bowley (Public Health Wales), and Dr G. Richardson (Public Health Wales) and Mr G. Mumford (Environmental Health Officer).

1. MINUTES 13TH FEBRUARY 2013

Subject to the amendment (minute no. 2, page no. 2) that the investigation report had been presented to the Area Enforcement Panel in the first instance and then progressed to the Natural Resources Wales Legal Team and Area Manager it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Bryn Compost Liaison Group held on the 13th February 2013 be approved as a correct record.

2. MATTERS ARISING

At the request of Members at the last meeting Mr Harrison confirmed the figures for materials entering and leaving the site and advised that in 2011 the permit allowed Bryn Compost to process 22,600 tonnes of waste material, which was made up of a combination of food and green waste and 9,700 tonnes of finished compost was shipped out.

It was noted that the permit changed in 2012, which reduced the amount of material the facility was allowed to process to 20,000 tonnes and approximately 9000 tonnes of finished compost shipped out. Members noted that as the output figures formed part of the ongoing investigation further detail could not be provided at this time.

Clarification was sought with regard to the number of local authorities utilising the site. Mr Thomas (Bryn Compost) advised that presently Merthyr Tydfil and Caerphilly were the only Councils contracted to the site. However over the six years of the sites operations the number of Councils using the site had varied subject to length of the contracts awarded. It was confirmed that approximately 6000 tonnes of food waste originated from Caerphilly. In relation to joint waste tonnage figures, Caerphilly generated an estimated 9,000 tonnes of co-mingled waste. The operator was currently working with colleagues at a plant in Cambridge looking into techniques that would enable the separation of co-mingled waste.

Members queried how the estimated weights referenced were calculated and Mr Thomas confirmed the procedure. Clarification was sought in relation to the validation processes applied to check the figures provided by Bryn Compost. Mr Harrison confirmed that two data sets based on the amount of waste brought in and the finished compost sent out were rationalised in order to identify any anomalies and confirmed that Waste Transfer notices agreed with the figures supplied by Bryn Compost.

Clarification was sought with regard to the practice of bulking-up extra material for shipping to other plants. Mr Thomas confirmed that the operator was not allowed to do this under the confines of the permit; no materials other than those processed on site could be taken in and advised that the site could not operate as a waste transfer station.

3. UPDATE FROM NATURAL RESOURCES WALES

Mr John Harrison provided an update on the Natural Resources Wales (NRW) reorganisation process and provided reassurances that the present team would remain unchanged over the next 12 months. Members noted that services would be looked at in order to improve responses and this would include the Customer Contract Centre. It was hoped that this would see an end to complaint calls being diverted to English call centres during busy periods.

Mr Alex Carter confirmed that as a result of the information received at the last meeting, the way in which complaints data would be presented to the Liaison Group had been revised. The data presented would give a more accurate picture of the nature and extent of the complaints received. The analysis was circulated and contained a breakdown of complaints from June 2012 to March 2013, the number of substantiated odour complaints in relation to the number of odour events, complaints substantiated as farm odour, site attendance analysis and finally the number of complaints and complainants by location. It was noted that the total number of complaints shown on the first graph circulated incorporated all areas and all odours. Reassurances were given that Natural Resource Wales would be working with Bryn Compost in order to ensure the continuity of the data gathered.

For the first time the figures relating to the number of complaints not attended had been analysed and the substantiated odours had been noted and broken down further in order to show their association to a particular odour event. Members were advised that the general trend had reduced and the last four months had shown a continued improvement. The final graph illustrating the number of complaints and complainants by location was referenced and highlighted those areas most affected.

Members welcomed the improvements noted and sought clarification as to whether these stemmed from improved managerial practices or simply because of the recent weather conditions. Mr Harrison agreed that weather conditions did have an impact on odour dispersal, however the Operator had focused on operational practices and complying with the odour management plan and was satisfied that improvements had been made and would now work to ensure their sustainability.

Members noted the number of incidents reported not attended and sought clarification in this regard. Mr Carter confirmed that Officers were not able to respond to every complaint but they were used to build a bigger picture of the nature of the odour event and then substantiate the type of odour causing the issue.

Members requested an update on the progress of the ongoing investigation and Mr Harrison confirmed that the report was currently with the NRW Legal Team for deliberation and gave assurances that as soon as the outcome was known they would be advised. Clarification was sought with regard to the number of breaches at the site since the last meeting were advised that there had been no breaches in the last four months.

Finally an update on the monitoring of bio-aerosols was given and Mr Carter referred to the findings of the Cardiff University report, which concluded that all concentrations of bio-aerosols were low and well below guidance levels. The full report would be made available to Members on request.

Reference was made to outcome of the Bryn Compost planning appeal for the development of an enclosed anaerobic digester facility and clarification was sought as to when works would commence. Mr Thomas confirmed that this would be entirely dependent on the success of future tendering bids.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 16:51