

LANDFILL SITE LIAISON MEETING 14TH JANUARY 2004 at 3.30.pm.

Representatives from Wastego:-

Adam Share, Managing Director, Cliff Thurlow, Technical Director, Jon Rose, Public Relations Consultant.

Representatives from Environmental Agency:-

Jody Burnett and Jane Mossman

Representatives from Kings Cliffe Parish Council:-

Chairman Michael Day, Clerk Hilary Blunt, Cllrs. Laura Crane, A. Howard, Kevin Howard, Nigel Ford, Bob Wyles, Jenny Dixon, Brenda Wright

Apologies: Phil Watson, NCC Development, Liaison & Regulations Team Leader, Cllrs. Tracey Isaac, Bernard Howard, Daphne Sharpe

Cliff Thurlow introduced himself as the Manager of all the Wastego Landfill sites and handed over to Parish Council Chairman Michael Day.

Wastego had produced a brief agenda; however the most pressing points were discussed without delay. With this in mind, this report does lack continuity, but hopefully future meeting will follow a set agenda.

It was unanimously decided that Michael Day would be Chairman of the Liaison Group, the Parish Clerk would take minutes and all present and persons whose apologies had been received should serve on the committee. It was decided that as Kings Cliffe was the key village involved, the group would consist of Parish Council members and representatives from Wastego, NCC Development, the Environment Agency and ENC Environmental Health, as these were all the key players. Cliff Thurlow said whilst running a profitable and legal organisation, an essential part of the job was to form a good working relationship with local residents who are closely affected by the working of the site.

Cllr. A. Howard suggested communication was essential and that the issues addressed should be those which caused concern to the public

The first point was noxious smells and understanding what was causing this and the solutions available

The noxious odours which had plagued the area during the last month had badly affected the PC Howards depot, but almost undetectable on the actual site. Cliff Thurlow cautioned the meeting that Wastego had to be careful regarding this, as an abatement order had been served.

The smell detected in September had been a load of chicken feathers, which had been rejected by a Power Station; after three loads had been delivered, Wastego cancelled that particular contract and this should not happen again.

The present smell was caused by drums of the chemical which is used to give natural gas its' distinctive smell. As these drums were incorrectly labelled, the usual practice of crushing all drums dumped was inadvertently employed; although this did not breach any of the stringent rules it had

disturbing results. Wastego accept these were handled wrongly, but through no fault of theirs. When discovered, an enormous effort was made to "bury" the offending liquid very deeply, as it could no be removed, but to little avail, as the concentration ratio is 1 part per billion. Also, unfortunately this waste had been deposited in the nearest cell to the road. Therefore on 24th December a deodorising system was ordered and fitted.

Cllr. A. Howard said that at this point there was a decided lack of communication; in desperation, PC Howard rang ENC Environmental Health as workers at their depot were feeling ill from the effect of the fumes. He also felt that a representative from Wastego should always attend when asked, as dependant upon wind direction; the smell was frequently far more pungent at PCH. Cliff Thurlow replied that it is policy to try to make sure someone from Wastego does attend. He also explained that at Christmas the air was cold and still, then on the following Saturday very windy, but this made little difference. Medical advice was taken and the smell was considered not to be a health hazard.

Cllr. B. Wyles then raised the point of traffic and his thoughts that a 30mph speed limit was needed from the A47 turn to the site entrance. When the roads were wet, spray from lorries made it impossible to see clearly through car windscreens. Wastego replied that dangerous driving was totally unacceptable to them and addressed whenever a report was received. A new wheel washer and new road surfaces within the site had effected a great improvement, road conditions, although better, where not yet 100%.

Cllr. A. Howard stated that traffic coming through the village was much lessened, possible due to the direction signs at the bottom of Wansford Hill.

Cllr. J. Dixon raised the point of queuing vehicles early in the morning recently. Cliff Thurlow replied that there was now a larger turning and waiting area in the site which should relieve this, and that they had received no recent complaints in this direction. She also raised the point that several car owners in the village had reported punctures after running over metal which had fallen from vehicles; this complaint was received with some surprise, as this problem has not arisen before and Jody Burnett asked that vehicle registration numbers be taken, if items were seen falling from moving vehicles.

The question was also raised about site deliveries at night allegedly by foreign lorries; this is vehemently denied; the site opens at 6.30.am. and closes at 5.00.pm. No foreign waste is allowed onto the site by law.

Cllr. A. Howard raised the issue that although we are now in winter, spring is just around the corner, when the problem will again be dust, as opposed to mud, and asked what measures would be used to combat this. Wastego said they had asked Anglia Water up-grade the water supply to the site, which is still the equivalent of house-hold pressure; but this is a long-winded process. Jody Burnett said the possibility of a borehole was being investigated, added to which they are conserving rainwater to re-use for damping down dust, to which they are hoping to add a harmless gel to keep the roads damp for longer periods. Cllr. Dixon asked if there was any way the vegetation on the roadsides could be given "first-aid" to remove dust; the idea was put forward that the site fire engine could possibly be used to this purpose.

The discussion then returned to the odour problems. Cllr. N. Ford remarked that one of the tenants of the cottages had a baby; could the fumes be a danger to infant? Wastego replied that they have an employee living in the cottages who can obviously monitor the problem at first hand. Cllr. A. Howard again asked if there was any danger to the 125 employees of P C Howard either from the odour or the substance used in the deodoriser spray. Wastego explained all tests had been carried

out and there was no danger from either smell, but can understand fully the concerns of local people.

The question of fires in the past at the site was raised. It has been generally accepted that the first fire was arson; the second fire in the summer was due to a "hot load" and although spectacular, was not dangerous. As the Fire Brigade will not deal with fires at the site unless the cause is identified, there is now an on-site fire engine to deal with such problems. The Parish Clerk and Chairman Day asked that if there were further incidents, could they both be urgently informed of the probable cause, to fend off the endless phone calls. Cllr. K. Howard raised the matter of fires in tyre tips in the United States which raged for years, but was assured it was extremely unlikely to happen here.

Cliff Thurlow stated that the opening of the Thornhaugh site had resulted in a temporary reduction in traffic movement to the site, but from the beginning of February a large contaminated soil contract would begin, but every effort would be made to ensure an even flow of traffic to avoid queues; a new cell would be activated in the summer towards the rear of the site, which could hopefully contain the resultant dust within the site. There were no other major issues, but should any arise, the group will be kept informed through the Parish Council.

The Chairman asked Jody Burnett if the Environment Agency were content with the way the site was progressing; he replied that they made regular and un-announced inspections and were very satisfied with the way the site was being managed.

Chairman Michael Day thanked all concerned and it was agreed that meeting would be convened every 3 months – the next one will be at the beginning of April 04, unless any major issues arise in the meantime.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 5.05.pm.