

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

J L THOMAS LIAISON GROUP

Wednesday 18 April 2012

Present:-

Councillor Percy Prowse (Chair)
Councillor Vanessa Newcombe
Mr N Parsons, J L Thomas
Mr R Sargent, J L Thomas

John Leech, Environmental Health Manager (JL)
Alex Bulleid, Environmental Health Technician (AB)
Jo Quinnell, Assistant Member Services Officer

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APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Choules and John Staddon.

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NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2011

The notes of the meeting held on 16 November 2011 were agreed as a correct record.

Minute No. 61 – Any Other Business

It was noted that the Alphington Road closure had not caused any problems to the factory.

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PROCESS UPDATE

Nick Parsons reported that the period between November 2011 and March 2012 had seen stable tonnages processed by the factory. The normal seasonal peak (November/December) saw tonnages average at between 1,500 and 1,600 tonnes per week. The remainder of the period saw average tonnages at around 1,400 tonnes per week. This level of production is anticipated to continue through the remainder of 2012 although it is expected to see a slight fall in receipts during the months of July and August.

There were no other significant process changes carried out during this period.

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COMPLAINTS RECEIVED SINCE THE LAST MEETING

The summary of complaints was circulated.

It was noted that November was one of the busiest months at the factory. Alex advised that when investigating complaints, no processing problems were found at the factory, although there had been some odour present.

During February, problems had been identified with the effluent treatment plant, and odours were stronger than expected. The factory had been asked to consider how such an incident would be managed if it happened again in the future. The procedure will now be tightened up as a result.

It was noted that the number of complainants in each road had been identified in the report in a way to keep those persons details confidential.

As a comparison to last year's figures, Alex Bullied advised that they were fairly similar to last year.

When a complaint is received by the City Council, if possible, a site visit will be made. Complainants are usually contacted by telephone or visit to explain what is happening at the factory.

If a complaint is made direct to the factory, the company's complaints procedure is followed. The complainant will usually either speak to Nick Parsons or, if out of hours, the team leader. They were currently reviewing the procedure. The City Council are advised if a complaint has been made.

Councillor Newcombe commented on how well the complaints procedure was handled.

An article had been placed in St Leonards News in the Autumn to advise members of the public the process for dealing with complaints to the factory. This is distributed to approximately 2,500 houses, and did not seem to have generated any more complaints.

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ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Trial Procedure

Alex Bullied reported on a trial procedure relating to the operation of the boiler and stand-by incinerator. The most concentrated odours are incinerated by the boiler. The factory had made the request to reduce the firing rate in the boiler which will enable the factory to use the incinerator less often and in a more managed fashion. The trial would take place this summer, and if there were problems and it was found to be creating odours, the trial would stop.

During periods of breakdowns when the boiler stops, there will be more time to get the incinerator up to temperature to destroy vapours.

If the trial proved successful, it was hoped to agree this as a permanent change at the next meeting.

Scenting of vehicles

Councillor Newcombe requested details of scenting of vehicles.

Rob Sargent advised that rigid vehicles have a built-in industrial scent spray which is distributed over the top of the load. Drivers of articulated lorries stop outside of the city to spray their vehicles manually. The scent currently used is vanilla.

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DATE OF NEXT MEETING - WEDNESDAY 3 OCTOBER 2012 AT 2PM

The date of the next meeting was noted.

(The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and closed at 2.23 pm)

Chair