

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

SECANIM (J L THOMAS) LIAISON GROUP

Wednesday 17 October 2018

Present:-

Councillor Kate Hannan (Chair)
Councillor Natalie Vizard
Councillor Philip Bialyk
Rod Ruffle, Residents Representative
Nigel Fitzhugh, Residents Representative
Nick Parsons, SecAcnim (J L Thomas)

Alex Bulleid, Senior Environmental Technical Officer
Jonathan Knight, Environmental Technical Officer
Jo Quinnell, Assistant Democratic Services Officer

19 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

Councillor Hannan was appointed as Chair.

20 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Sills, Councillor Foale and John Staddon (Residents Representative).

21 **NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2018**

The notes of the meeting held on 21 March 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

22 **PROCESS UPDATE**

Nick Parsons reported that production volumes remained stable and in line with 2018 forecasts. Seasonal winter increases are expected to remain at targeted levels. Operational reliability continues to be good.

The new effluent cooling system was commissioned in April 2018 and has performed well and as designed. This has led to improved quality of effluent discharge from the site.

The new planned maintenance software has now been fully integrated to the site and is providing an improved facility for planning and recording of all operational maintenance including environmental critical assets.

The redundant water tank has now been removed from the front aspect of the site which improves aesthetics.

Future works, pending Board approval, include:

- Replacement and relocation of the large Flakt ducting and fan (moving to ground level)
- Installation of new electrical panels for the pressroom area
- Warehouse refurbishment

- Continued removal of redundant equipment, improving site aesthetics.

The hot summer was challenging for the whole industry, with the increase in degradation of raw material. The quick collection of carcasses is key as older and less consistent stock is much harder to process.

23

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED SINCE THE LAST MEETING

The report attached to the agenda details complaints made since the last meeting and the results of any investigations.

A complaints summary was circulated (attached) which details comparisons for each quarter back to 2002. The number of complaints received by complainant and road were noted and each complainant is given a number, eg resident C1 in Marsh Green Road North has made a complaint on nine occasions. This property is particularly close to the factory.

This summer saw exceptional weather and only compared to 2003 when a similar spell of hot weather was experienced.

50 complaints had been received to date, being higher than the last three years. However, it was noted that prior to that, complaint numbers had not been below 50 since 2002.

Particular reference was made to 12 June where five complaints had been made in one day. This related to a fault that the factory had notified the City Council of prior to any complaints being received. The incident meant odourous untreated air was being released. The factory ceased running for 30 minutes to investigate and rectify. Investigations carried out by the City Council identified that the factory could not have foreseen the event, and as a result increased checks had been put in place throughout all relevant Saria operations.

Furthermore, during the period of 27 July to 1 August, 16 complaints were made which was at the end of a very hot few weeks. Most complaints had been received over the weekend and evening so officers were not able to investigate at that time.

Discussions were continuing on how raw material quality can be improved and this needs to be looked at for the industry as a whole. The Senior Environmental Health Technician reported that she had recently attended a meeting which included the Environment Agency, operators and regulators to discuss a change to the guidance on how this can be regulated. It would go through the EU process over the next three years which may result in some recommendations on a national and EU scale. A further meeting with the factory's management was scheduled in November to identify any further improvements.

In terms of communicating any problems to residents, particular reference was made to the incident on 12 June. The factory had phoned Exeter City Council as soon as a problem was identified ensuring that all complainants phoning the City Council could be made aware of the issue and that the factory was in the process of rectifying it. This satisfied most complainants. A letter was now on record to explain what happened on this occasion.

A residents representative highlighted a particular complaint referring to the low number of complaints received, but that odours are still regularly present in a number of areas. Some residents are of the opinion that they cannot change the situation, so don't complain. Reassurance was sought that there is no complacency as there are a lot of residents who are unsatisfied with the situation.

The Senior Environmental Health Technician advised that the factory is not regulated using statutory nuisance legislation, but rather under an Environmental Permit. They were mindful of the extreme weather conditions which could result in more frequent complaints. Although the summer was challenging, operational practices had been optimised for hot weather and Environmental Health will discuss with the factory management whether there is merit in describing how this is done as part of an update to the site's documented procedures. Odour control systems and practices were under continuous review, the new effluent cooling system being an example of that. It was reiterated that they were not complacent in this issue.

An email had been sent to the complainant providing contact details and to call at the time any odour is noticed in order to investigate. No response had been received. A further letter would be sent to the complainant following discussions at this meeting. The importance of encouraging complaints was recognised in order to act quickly in terms of investigating. Ideally complaints should be given via phone as emails may not be picked up immediately.

Following the spillage of a small amount of raw material, Councillor Sills had visited the factory to talk through issues. No vehicle complaints had been received since that time.

In response to a question around improvements to transportation, it was noted that carriers have to be leak proof, sheeted and some have metal lids. The Senior Environmental Technical Officer understands that consideration had been given nationally to freezing, but trying to chill an entire animal was difficult and would also take longer to deliver to the factory. Management provisions are in place to ensure appropriate deliveries to the site, and adjustments can be made in the event of severe congestion (such as caused by major incidents to the highway network).

Discussion was held over timelines for collection and transportation of fallen stock to the factory. This is not a practice that can be controlled by the City Council as it is not the regulator, although discussions could be held with Trading Standards.

If a minor breakdown occurs at the factory, they have the capacity to store raw material. However, material would be diverted to the Widnes factory for any matter that would take longer to rectify.

24

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

25

DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 20 MARCH 2019

The date of the next meeting was noted.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.21 pm)

This page is intentionally left blank

Minute Item 23

Complaints summary:

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Total
2018	0	20 + 1 vehicle	30 + 3 vehicle	0	50 (+ 4 vehicle)
2017	1 vehicle	7	17	3	28
2016	1	6	20 (+3 vehicle)	1	28 (+3 vehicle)
2015	4	5 (+1 noise)	25	3	37 (+ 1 noise)
2014	4	33 (+1 vehicle)	73	17 (+ 1 vehicle)	126 (+2 vehicle)
2013	3 (+1 noise)	23 (+4 noise)	53 (+2 vehicle)	14	93 (+5 noise and 2 vehicle)
2012	7	39	90	20	156
2011	6	22	42	24	94
2010	4	31 (+ 1 noise)	44 (+ 1 noise)	15 (+1 noise)	94 (+3 noise)
2009	4	21	70	19 (+ 1 noise)	114 (+1 noise)
2008	4	30	108	39	181
2007	17	31	24	10	82
2006	2	35	36	37	110
2005	8	40	54	8	110
2004	13	16	51	2	82
2003	6	21	198	26	251
2002	2	19	8	5	34

Number of complaints received by complainant and road (since last meeting):

	C1	C2	C3
Gras Lawn	1		
Rivermead Road	2	1	
Matford Avenue	2	1	
Trews Weir Reach	1		
Cotfield Street	1		
Marsh Green Road North	9	1	2
Ebrington Road	1	3	
Trusham Road	1	1	
Alphinbrook Road	1		
Bagshot Avenue	5		
Water Lane	2	1	
Grace Road West	2		
Jennifer Close	1		
Alphington Road	1	1	1
Ashwood Road	1		
Old Mill Close	1	1	
Roberts Road	1		
St Bernards Close	3	1	
Okehampton Street	1		
Salmonpool Lane	1		
Glenwood Rise	1		
Topsham Road	1		

Days on which there were more than one complaint:

23/04/18	3	No process problems. Two occasions during day when lorries had to wait outside to tip but times of complaints do not all correlate with these occasions
05/06/18	2	No process problems
06/06/18	2	Breakdown earlier in day but rectified by time of complaints
07/06/18	2	No process problems
12/06/18	5	Bursting disc fault
02/07/18	4	No process problems
23/07/18	3	No process problems
27/07/18	5	No process problems, however raw material stocks high and process conditions were difficult
28/07/18	3	No process problems, however raw material stocks high and process conditions were difficult
29/07/18	1	No process problems, however raw material stocks high and process conditions were difficult
30/07/18	3	No process problems, however raw material stocks high and process conditions were difficult
31/07/18	1	No process problems, however raw material stocks high and process conditions were difficult
01/08/18	3	No process problems, however raw material stocks high and process conditions were difficult