

## **EXETER CITY COUNCIL**

### **SECANIM (J L THOMAS) LIAISON GROUP**

Wednesday 15 April 2015

#### **Present:-**

Councillor John Winterbottom (Chair)  
Councillor Margaret Clark  
John Staddon (Residents Representative)  
Nigel Fitzhugh (Residents Representative)  
Nick Parsons (SecAnim)

Councillor Keith Owen  
Councillor Norman Shiel  
Councillor Lesley Robson

Simon Lane, Environmental Health Manager  
Alex Bulleid, Environmental Health Technician  
Richard Shears, Environmental Technical Officer  
Karina Marin, Student Placement  
Jo Quinnell, Assistant Democratic Services Officer (Committees)

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#### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Rod Ruffle (Residents Representative) and Rob Sargent (SecAnim)

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#### **NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10 NOVEMBER 2014**

The notes of the meeting held on 10 November 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

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#### **PROCESS UPDATE**

Nick Parsons reported that it was a very stable market at present, with production levels remaining constant.

Operationally the factory had been very reliable following the introduction of a new raw material feed system 18 months ago. There had been no significant breakdowns.

The boiler inspection had taken place over the Christmas period with no impact. The inspection went well and the factory was back up to full operation on the boilers.

A Member advised that she had received no further complaints from residents since the last meeting, but there were still odours from lorries travelling along Alphington Road.

Nick Parsons advised that all lorries are fully covered and leak proof and therefore there are no open gaps and it is sealed. The driver is responsible for the load and condition of the vehicle, although they are also required to abide by the factory's code of practice and scent the vehicle before entering the city. On average, the

factory receives 10 vehicles a day. The Environmental Health Technician added that there are no further legal requirements on the transport of raw material, and no legal powers to require the factory to use refrigerated lorries.

The majority of material is killed and collected in a short space of time and this is key to the process. However, knacker material can be stockpiled, but this is out of the factory's control. The speed at which the material is delivered to the factory is a national problem, controlled by market forces rather than legislation. It was suggested that representation could be made to MPs after the election.

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#### **COMPLAINTS RECEIVED SINCE THE LAST MEETING**

A complaints summary was circulated (attached).

Two complaints had been received since the agenda was circulated.

There had been a relatively small level of complaints during the winter which was expected.

The summary of the number of days where multiple complaints had been received showed no particular trend. There was one day with a significant number of complaints last year which was reported to the last meeting.

Complaints had been received on 69 days in 2014. There had been continual improvements on site, and the number of complaints did not correlate with that. It was suggested that people's expectations had perhaps become higher. Once a complaint is received, the wind direction is checked and if it is not in the direction of the complaint, it is not attributed to the site.

The number of complaints received by complainant and road were noted and each complainant is given a number, eg resident C2 in Rivermead Road has made a complaint on two occasions.

It was noted that vehicles are unsheeted and unloaded inside the factory and need to pass through an air lock before the lorry is inside the building. There is no activity outside the building that creates an odour. If there is a breakdown, material is diverted off site to prevent a build up.

Nigel Fitzhugh advised that having undertaken a tour of the factory, the treatment tower smell is likely to be the odour that residents smell. He felt that there was a hidden number of people who don't complain as they think that no action will be taken. It was noted that a newsletter had recently been distributed asking residents to contact the author about odours and it will be interesting to see the results.

The Environmental Health Manager advised that in the case of the first additional complaint received, he was in the vicinity on another call at the time and was able to visit the area shortly after the complaint was received. A clean tower odour was picked up. He further added that they make every effort to respond to complaints in a timely manner and referred to the amount of resource needed to take a pro-active approach to monitor and predict when complaints may be received, eg weather conditions. Each and every complaint is investigated and every endeavour is made to engage with residents.

A Member advised that she had phoned some residents to gauge the problem. Those contacted advised that although odours were a problem in the past, they were not interested in becoming a residents' representative on the Group as they felt that the problem no longer existed.

Reference was made to a local residual smell just outside the factory that was present on a site visit, which could be noticeable on the adjacent cycle path. Nick Parsons thanked him for his comments, and said that it would be investigated.

The Portfolio Holder added that these meetings were valuable in order for councillors and residents representatives to be educated and convey these messages back to residents, as it may alleviate some of their concerns if they are more informed. Residents' representation was important from the three wards.

5                    **COMPLAINTS REPORT - 22 OCTOBER TO 9 DECEMBER 2014**

The complaints were noted.

6                    **COMPLAINTS REPORT - 10 DECEMBER 2014 TO 26 MARCH 2015**

The complaints were noted.

7                    **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Residents Representatives**

It was noted that there were two residents representatives from St Leonards and one from Alphington. A request was put to Councillors to nominate two representatives for Priory ward and one from Alphington.

It was noted that a resident in Priory had come forward, although it was for the ward councillor to nominate as per the terms of reference.

**Councillors Winterbottom and Clark**

On behalf of the Group, the Environmental Health Technician thanked Councillors Winterbottom and Clark for their valued contribution to the group, as they were standing down at the forthcoming elections.

8                    **DATE OF NEXT MEETING - WEDNESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2015 AT 2PM**

The date of the next meeting was noted.

(The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and closed at 2.47 pm)

Chair