

EXETER CITY COUNCIL
SOUTH WEST WATER LIAISON GROUP

Wednesday 27 March 2019

Present:-

Councillor Rob Newby (Chair)
Councillor Philip Bialyk

Stephanie Jones, South West Water
Nigel Thomas-Childs, Environment Agency
Kevin Bingham, Residents Representative
John Orr, Residents Representative
Simon Ruddy, Principal Environmental Health Officer
Kelli Havill, Environmental Health Student
Jo Quinnell, Democratic Services

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APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Wardle.

The Group noted that Councillor Kate Hannan had resigned from her role as City Councillor. City Councillor representatives will be appointed to this Group at the Council's Executive meeting following elections.

The Group wished to express their thanks to Kate Hannan for her services to this Group and residents.

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2018 were agreed.

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MATTERS ARISING

Simon Ruddy reported that Housing Assets had requested a sticker to be placed on the Reed Walk pumping station for contact details to be made available in the event of any issues.

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OPERATIONAL UPDATE

Stephanie Jones reported on changes to the site manager position at SWW and would advise of the temporary replacement in due course.

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COMPLAINTS

Seven complaints had been received since the last meeting.

There had been an issue with the sludge processing plant in mid-September which had been resolved.

From mid-December to early March the works encountered a number of major operational issues on one of the primary tanks which had a knock-on effect to the

rest of the process, most of which related to the sludge holding. A decision was held to limit operations and to bring in support from other sites to assist.

The breakdowns were attributed to one of the wire ropes for the primary scraper tank which had started to fray. One tank was taken out of action and had to be drained completely. Contact had been made with the company that had provided the scraper system, who had reacted quickly to the breakdowns. The company had been maintaining the equipment in line with their specification at a cost to SWW which is standard practice. SWW would be challenging the engineering calculations and the rate of failure of the equipment which is replaced on a yearly basis and would be seeking accountability and a resolution.

The company would be visiting the site next week to meet with senior SWW team. Cost recovery would be followed up at a later date.

In response to a question, it was advised that a maintenance schedule is in place for every piece of equipment either to maintain or check on a daily/weekly basis and these are all logged.

The complaints made do coincide with the breakdowns.

A concern was raised from a resident that when phoning to SWW Call Centre, they had been told that the issue could not be fixed as there was no staff on duty. Stephanie Jones however confirmed that there are always staff on duty and there would be contractors on site fixing the issues. There needed to be a way to manage how to respond to complaints and Stephanie would use best endeavours to influence how calls are responded to.

Reference was made to the odour log sheet used to record incidents from a residents representative. A fishy odour had been noticed, and it was felt that this may be attributed to bio gas being burnt off via a flare stack as it has a distinctive odour. The dates and times for this particular odour would be cross referenced with when the flare stacks were running to try to identify the source of the odour. The lime plant may also be another possible source.

A comparison of complaints was reported:

- 12 complaints in 2018
- 22 complaints in 2017
- 79 complaints in 2016

It was noted that the Environment Agency had received a letter from the MP regarding odour and this had been responded to from an Environment Agency perspective.

It was agreed that SWW share the summary report and agreed actions to the Group as a result of this breakdown for information.

ODOUR MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Odour Management Plan had now been completed which was a requirement of the waste permit.

SWW had agreed to incorporate the whole process in the plan for the whole site and includes processes, odour control measures and actions.

If odour issues are reported or there are issues on site which has potential for impact, a polygon will be placed on the SWW system to advise customers. This is available on the SWW website.

It was agreed to share the Odour Management Plan with the Group, but advised that this is a live document which will be reviewed every year or in the event of an asset change.

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ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Nigel Thomas-Childs reported that he would be moving roles within the Environment Agency for the next nine months.

Any issues that arise will be reported to the team leader, although he will still be able to direct any queries.

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DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting would be arranged for September 2019, date to be confirmed.

(The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and closed at 1.45 pm)

Chair