



Minutes of Waste Hub Liaison Group

3rd November 2022, 5.30pm, via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Paul Cassell, Local Representative	PC
Cllr Garnet Marshall, Middlewich Town Council	GM
Simon McGrory, Local Representative	SM
Kevin Melling, MD, Ansa Environmental Services Ltd	KM
Jane Thomason, Deputy MD, Ansa Environmental Services Ltd	JT
Cllr Graham Orme, Middlewich Town Council	GO

Other Attendees:

Megan Bowyer, PA to Kevin Melling (Minutes)	MB
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Apologies Received:

Cllr Mike Hunter, Cheshire East Ward Councillor	MH
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Agenda Item	Notes	Action
1.	Welcome KM welcomed attendees declared the meeting open and chaired it throughout.	
2	<p>Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising</p> <p>2.1 The Minutes from the meeting on 18 August 2022 were approved as an accurate and correct record apart from item 2 page 2 where JT's action was to provide details of the in-cab technology in refuse collection vehicles rather than about missed bins, and item 3 page 3 where it was GM and not GO who asked about the weakest part in the system.</p> <p>2.2 Matters Arising</p> <p>A tour of the site for this group has not yet been arranged and KM said that it was probably more appropriate to schedule it for after Christmas. Action MB</p> <p>JT advised that her action about in-cab technology is still on the list of things to do but has not yet been actioned. Action JT</p> <p>Response to CEC Minerals and Waste Plan –GO updated that he has almost completed his review of the Council's Minerals and Waste Plan with the help of a local resident with knowledge of the subject matter, and he hopes to be able to share this with the</p>	<p>MB</p> <p>JT</p>

	<p>group in the next few weeks. KM would be really interested in the findings and will keep the group abreast of changes associated with the National Waste Strategy Review that are expected, as and when further details are received from the government.</p> <p>Communication with Middlewich Residents – we did post updates on social media following the suggestions made at the last meeting.</p> <p>Removal of planters – completed. GM thanked Ansa.</p> <p>ID numbers on new refuse collection vehicles – KM advised these are now in place.</p>	
3	<p>Operational Update</p> <p>JT advised that on Friday, 28th October, the Environment Agency and CE Environmental Health did an unannounced inspection of the site to check Ansa is complying with the terms of its permit. There were no issues identified.</p> <p>Street Cleansing services – we have now entered a busy time as it is ‘leaf season’ and the team is working hard to clear the leaves. JT asked attendees if any issues are identified please contact Caroline Griffies and she will arrange for the team to attend to matters as soon as possible.</p> <p>Refuse Collection – Due to employee shortages in the summer we had to delay some collections. Since then, we have completed further recruitment and are now fully staffed. Things are back to normal and have been since September with all rounds going out fully crewed.</p> <p>GO asked about brown bins being missed. JT was surprised to hear this and asked when this occurred. He explained that it was in September. JT advised that Ansa’s data doesn’t reflect this, and she asked if Councillors are getting emails or phone calls about such matters, please advise her straight away as she wants to hear about it and respond immediately to put things right.</p> <p>KM mentioned that Ansa arborists plan to work on the large conifers at the canal side of the site shortly – he displayed a map to identify them. He advised we could not do the work previously due to the nesting season. GO asked for further clarification. KM explained the team would just carry out essential maintenance and would not be cutting down the trees.</p>	
4	<p>Project Vanguard Update</p> <p>There was not much to report since the last meeting when KM advised that there had been a problem which had stopped us going live. It has since been identified that some of the components were defective and orders have been made by the supplier to replace them. At the moment, there is no estimated date for delivery.</p> <p>When we do go live, we will let this group know. KM explained that in the long-term hydrogen is seen as the solution for our type of vehicles, rather than electricity which is more suitable for vans and smaller cars. We have two refuse vehicles which have been adapted to run off hydrogen, but it is probably several years before we would have a larger hydrogen-powered fleet and meanwhile we are exploring other options.</p>	

	<p>The goal is to get our smaller vehicles electrified and do whatever we can to reduce our carbon footprint including the possibility of using HVO (hydrolysed vegetable oil). Long-term this will be a benefit for the community.</p> <p>There was a discussion re the costs to buy and maintain electric or hydrogen powered vehicles and their current capabilities. KM explained that the lifts at the back of our refuse collection vehicles now run on electricity rather than diesel, so this is an improvement. Project Vanguard means that we will produce hydrogen on site to power the two converted vehicles, making that solution greener than other options.</p>	
5	<p>Middlewich Community Matters –</p> <p>5.1 Middlewich Council visit to site KM was happy to extend the offer for the Town Council to visit, subject to operational needs around timing. Action GO to arrange for the Town Mayor, Cllr Colin Coules to contact KM to arrange.</p> <p>5.2 Residents concerns regarding missed brown bins See item 3 above</p> <p>5.3 Middlewich Traffic/LGV movement implications associated with the HWRC operations. PC raised the matter as he had read an article which seemed to imply that Ansa would be running the contract themselves in future rather than sub-contracting it.</p> <p>KM explained this is not the case; it is a contract that Ansa already runs and sub-contracts but the current one is due to expire, and we have been conducting a re-procurement exercise.</p> <p>Under the current contract, residual waste comes to our site and includes mattresses. We are now looking for them to be recycled so they will go direct to organisations that can recycle them, which will reduce the amount of waste coming to the Ansa site. The number of old, tipped mattresses is substantial, so that is good news.</p> <p>GO mentioned a planning application for new houses on Croxton Lane near to the HWRC in Middlewich which would potentially affect operations. KM thanked him for the information.</p> <p>SM mentioned a national campaign about Vape and E-cigarette recycling following a recent Radio 5 debate and asked whether Ansa is aware. Some vape kits include disposable batteries which should be removed and recycled separately, whereas others are electrical and the whole kit can be recycled. JT said at the moment Ansa has not been involved but it is a subject that needs to be looked at. Designated battery drop-off places are in place at HWRCs and supermarkets. KM added that at the HWRC sites themselves there are already segregated drop-off points. Ansa has education campaigns, but we have never focused specifically on this subject, which would make a good social media campaign.</p>	GO

5.4 Ansa Waste and Recycling Collection Vehicles – Close Shaves, Near Misses, Inappropriate Speeds and Routes.

GM explained that he and GO had worked together to formulate questions so that they could get a clear picture and explain things confidently to others.

Their statement and questions were as follows:

Refuse collection vehicles are being seen to be using routes designated 'no go areas' as well as close shaves and near misses with their vehicles and other road users, inappropriate speed in built-up areas is also a common theme.

What if anything do you think is encouraging the drivers and operators to take short cuts and more risks to get the job done? Why do these issues, when the spotlight is put on them, calm down but then flare up again soon after? How are Ansa Drivers and operators incentivised to get the job done and is this in any way contributing toward these outcomes?

JT responded first about the inference that crews are incentivised to rush and take shortcuts, by saying that nothing could be further from the truth. She explained that Waste Crews work on a group task and finish basis, so if one round finishes their round early, they must jump on to another work package and help another crew to finish their round. If you finish early, you must help your colleagues, so it doesn't encourage people to rush to finish. This is common practice throughout the industry.

Routes are scheduled using technology, and all the routes that have weight or height restrictions are highlighted in the in-cab technology as 'no go' areas, so if a driver does proceed along that route, they are making a conscious decision not to follow the rules. They are thoroughly trained and if they are not complying, Ansa is happy to talk to them.

In the first instance, we explain the impact of their actions on the Company and residents. If they repeat, formal action is taken in accordance with Company policies. Additionally, we do toolbox talks to all the crew and focus on different topics including speeding. Also, we have stickers in cabs to remind them they are being watched and they are ambassadors for the Company.

If there are still issues after all that, we need to know dates and times. Tell us promptly and we will look at cctv footage on the same or next day. We can see speeding and the nature of their driving behaviour and will use this as a training aid. PC asked if there is cctv within the vehicles. JT confirmed there are 360 degree in-cab cameras which show an external view of what the driver sees, and that the technology also allows us to tell the speed they are driving at.

JT remarked that everything we do has to be auditable including that crews have enough time to take their breaks. Manual handling is considered, and risk assessments are in place for each route. Please phone us with the date, time and vehicle number (from the side rather than the registration number) and we will investigate, bring in the crew, look at evidence and remind them of their responsibilities. We are proactive not reactive and carry out training and toolbox talks on a regular basis. We have taken on a lot of new members of staff recently and some have left during their probationary period because their standards are not as high as we would wish.

	<p>KM added that it was also worth mentioning that the level of roadworks in the area recently has been high and, in those instances, we may need to re-route away from the normal routes.</p> <p>5.5 Camfil update (pellets grading and replacement review/trial)</p> <p>KM recapped that when the group last met it was at the time of the odour issues. We had a change of carbon scheduled for the first week in September and it happened then. We took on board GM's comments to communicate about the action we had taken on social media. We haven't had any complaints since re odours.</p> <p>There is a sampling regime in place to sample the carbon pellets monthly and there is a lag before we get the results. We have now scheduled four complete carbon replacements over the year. This year was uncharacteristically hot, but we hope that the regime we now have in place will be robust.</p> <p>We also looked at the composition of the carbon pellets. The results came back to say we have the optimum mix, but there is a further modification that we are considering that may extend the serviceable life of the carbon pellets. We will keep the group posted on how this develops, but meanwhile will proceed with the scheduled changes.</p>	
6	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>It was agreed in future to circulate the Minutes and allow a week for attendees to confirm their accuracy before MB arranges for publication on the appropriate websites.</p> <p>Action MB</p> <p>GM asked about Ansa's trading results for year ended 31/3/2022. KM confirmed that these are due to be published at Companies House by 31/12/2022 and said that following GM's previous suggestion an explanation about Research and Development investment had been added this year and he is looking forward to posting them on Companies House.</p>	MB

The meeting closed at 18.45. Next meeting to be held on Thursday, 26 January 2023 at 17.30.