

Minutes of Waste Hub Liaison Group  
28th January 2021, 5.30pm, via Microsoft Teams

**Present:**

Paul Cassell, Local Representative	PC
Cllr Mike Hunter, Cheshire East Ward Councillor	MH
Cllr David Latham, Middlewich Town Council	DL
Cllr Graham Orme, Middlewich Town Council	GO
Kevin Melling, MD, Ansa Environmental Services Ltd	KM
Jane Thomason, Deputy MD, Ansa Environmental Services Ltd	JT
Simon McGrory, Local Representative	SM

**Other Attendees:**

Megan Bowyer, PA to Kevin Melling	MB
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**Apologies Received:**

None

**1. Welcome**

KM welcomed attendees declared the meeting open and chaired it throughout.

**2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising**

2.1. The Minutes from the meeting on 12th November 2020 were approved as an accurate and correct record.

2.2. Matters Arising

**Forge Mill Lane** – KM advised that there had been several different complaints regarding vehicles in this area and that he had viewed the main response which went back to the local MP explaining the situation and advising that Ansa is trying to balance the routes used throughout the Borough so that we minimise disruption across the network we travel on, while ensuring that our ability to provide an efficient collection service is not compromised. We have no record of accidents or a fatality.

**Air Quality** - GO sent an email today re the request for information and KM will touch base with him outside the meeting to understand how we can help with the work he is completing around air quality. Action MB to organise a Teams Meeting between KM and GO.

**Vehicle Movements** – KM said that unfortunately we have made no progress on re-routing due to bad weather, Christmas and Covid impacts, but we have now started looking at several hot spots including Cross Lane and Forge Mill Lane. JT advised that

we have encountered significant challenges since we last met; it has been Ansa's busiest time of year and we have been hampered by bad weather and staff shortages. Now we are over the challenges of dealing with the post-Christmas & New Year tonnages we will commence routing analysis on pinch points and network restrictions taking account of height and weight restrictions etc. Routes 1-16 are still being diverted each morning. She advised that there may be an opportunity for some of the garden waste collection vehicles to be diverted away from Cross Lane during the low season when tonnages are reduced.

MH asked when the changes will be instigated and where will the diversion route be? KM reminded him that the first 16 RCVs have already been diverted away from Cross Lane and Warmingham Lane via Sandbach. JT advised that from next week (1st Feb) the garden vehicles will be diverted as tonnages are not high now which allows extra time for the rounds to be completed. However, the full route analysis will take time and she gave an example of a diversion which would add 20 minutes per visit to the tipping facility, i.e. 3 tips would be equivalent to an additional hour per day on each round. There are knock-on effects to any adjustment to the rounds which makes this a large-scale piece of work. She said that realistically it will take between 6 to 10 weeks and during that time we need to consider the tonnages as they change depending upon the season.

MH remarked that there had been a lot of work carried out about twelve months ago diverting from Warmingham Lane and asked if that helped now. JT said that it did in some ways, but it still means that if we are to remove all vehicles from Cross Lane and Warmingham Lane we need to do a full analysis. KM said that the work was done prior to the opening of the composting site which then changed capacity and routing.

MH mentioned that he has a meeting shortly re traffic calming on Warmingham Lane which will be coming into effect and which could also affect the routes.

JT said there are other pinch points in the Borough, and it causes issues with capacity. MH agreed but said that these areas in Middlewich have been getting all the traffic except when the vehicles are going to the north of the Borough which JT acknowledged.

DL stated that the group had asked for vehicles to be re-routed off Cross Lane and Warmingham Lane last year and this was something to look at in the future. However, he understood that in the short term as per the minutes of the last meeting, we discussed Cross Lane as a short-term solution whilst considering re-routing the vehicles elsewhere. The expectation was that vehicles would continue to use Warmingham Lane and 'do the loop' in the meantime using Cross Lane on a one-way basis. He thought it was a two-pronged attack. KM agreed and stated that now

we are moving away from our peak period we can move forward in considering this along with other improvements before implementing.

The Viridor vehicle cleansing trial detail was put on to our Facebook page as agreed. JT updated the group that the bacterial spray trial has been so successful that Viridor has subsequently adopted it as part of their normal working practices, which is an excellent result. GO asked if Ansa was still monitoring the filter systems during this busy period? KM confirmed that this is still ongoing and asked if any smells had been reported recently. All confirmed that there were none at present which was as expected at this time of year.

Recycling rates – At the last meeting KM had promised to share the latest figures, however they are not yet in the public domain. JT advised that colleagues had recently JT attended a webinar and been told that they were delayed but are now imminent. We will share as soon as they come out.

### **3. Update on Ansa Covid 19 Operations**

JT advised that we continue to keep the site Covid secure and senior managers meet frequently to check on progress. We are expecting to see an increase in waste tonnages with people being at home due to the latest lockdown, but this has been masked by high levels over the Christmas/New Year period. Tonnages are still running higher than normal and the challenge is to keep all waste streams being collected and running as normally as possible despite staff absences through shielding and self-isolating. Ansa's Pandemic plan has now been in place for a full year and is currently being formally reviewed, although it has continued to evolve and change during the last year as events have occurred and more knowledge and best practice has been made available.

### **4. Project Vanguard Update/Green Vehicles and Machinery**

As planned, two RCVs have now been adapted to run on hydrogen as well as diesel and are back in service as normal, not yet using hydrogen. We are advised that there have been delays in the supply chain and it is likely to be late spring or early summer before the hydrogen filling station is in place and the trial commences.

GO explained that he had seen some detail relating to the CE Planning application and asked if there have been any changes to the design. KM said he believes it is the configuration of how to get the vehicles to the pumps, but it is still using the same agreed system and capacity. The vehicles that will be fuelling are one Ford Ranger pick-up truck, which will be trialled by Storenergy, and Ansa's two refuse vehicles as previously mentioned.

KM advised that Ansa is researching other ideas to become more environmentally friendly and we are actively pursuing a green fleet including electric RCVs. Because of our rural network we are facing challenges on finding vehicles with sufficient range, but we are working with the Council and have a couple on trial in the next few months; the

latest ones may only give a maximum range of 150 km which is slightly under what we need (which would be nearer to 200 km).

The likelihood for the future is that we would install electric charging points along the side of the Waste Transfer Station. Additionally, we are hopeful that the large shredder in that building could be run on electricity and that is something which is currently under development with a company and which we may trial in due course.

JT advised that the PV panels are starting to be installed on the Waste Transfer station roof today, (28/1) ready for the start of Project Vanguard.

#### **5. Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) Consultation - update**

KM said a big 'well done' to everyone; he had reviewed the local press coverage which was good and showed that community participation has been excellent. He believes that this consultation has had the biggest community participation of all those initiated by Cheshire East Council. MH commented that a great majority came from Middlewich. There is a 'Save our Tip' Facebook page established and lots of emails from Middlewich residents have been sent to the CEC Portfolio holder and Leader. KM remarked that there is some constructive information contained in the articles and that is a good way to respond. A report is currently being prepared following the end of the consultation period. GO added that he had carried out a review of the additional travel that people would need to undertake to visit neighbouring HWRCs and the pinch points involved, and his conclusion was that the proposals do not make logical sense.

#### **6. Group Terms of Reference**

SM had requested that the Group's Terms of Reference (ToR) were reviewed at this meeting to ensure that they are still current. He also wanted to double-check that the group objectives were in line with the original planning condition. MH read out the relevant section of the planning condition relating to the formation and purpose of the group which said that it was to ensure the local community is fully informed about Ansa's operations and the term 'neighbours' is used. On that basis it confirms that the scope of this group is for Ansa's operations in Middlewich and how they affect the Middlewich Community.

Anything further afield including transport, is out of scope. KM agreed but added that he is always willing to speak to residents elsewhere in the borough should there be any issues, but that would be conducted outside this group.

He agreed to review the ToR to ensure it was up to date as there may be some minor changes required, and to bring back to the next meeting for agreement and sign-off. There was also a detailed discussion about how information should flow back to the community regarding the achievements of the group including the appropriate communication channels that should be used. Group members agreed that Facebook generally seems to be a forum which often attracts unhelpful, negative comments from

the minority and there was a discussion about whether comments should be turned off. It was decided that was not appropriate in the interests of transparency and democracy. However, KM suggested that in the main, Facebook should be used to provide links to detailed information which would appear on the Ansa website. This will redirect people there and will allow the Ansa communication team to view data about engagement, number of hits on each subject and so on.

A number of different ways of engagement were discussed including setting up key performance indicators for the group and publishing results on a quarterly basis. Press releases could be agreed by the group at their meetings and they could appear in the local press. All agreed that it was important to keep residents informed in a factual way which still allows them recourse by emailing or speaking to their local councillors or group members.

## **7. Middlewich Community Concerns**

- 7.1. SM said that over December and January a lot of people have been saying how pleased they have been with the continuation of all streams of the waste collection service. KM said that it had been difficult to achieve, and he appreciated the feedback.
- 7.2. MH mentioned two incidents which had been reported to him. They related to allegations of poor behaviour from Ansa staff at the Tesco Express and Chip shop on Warmingham Lane. KM said that we take this sort of allegations extremely seriously. JT stated that she wanted to deal with it straight away and asked if there was cctv footage that we could access that would support an investigation. Action MH agreed to speak to the shop manager with a view to obtaining footage. JT emphasised that we will MH & JT communicate with the appropriate staff and remind them of the behaviours expected.
- 7.3. In connection to the Covid vaccination programme locally, GO asked whether Ansa has any spare traffic cones that can be used for the Victoria Hall parking when it gets busy. KM will arrange for one of the Ansa managers to contact GO direct to try to help; we do not have large supplies and it may be that Highways will need to be approached.

## **8. Any Other Business**

### **8.1. Driver CPC Training**

PC advised that he had been approached, due to his previous role, by several drivers who wanted this training. He asked if Ansa provides training for external people and whether they would be able to get in their full 35 hours. JT advised that it is something we provide and, she believes that the 35-hour requirement may have been eased during Covid. She asked PC to direct the drivers to her email and she will research and respond to them personally. Action PC and JT PC&JT.

**The meeting closed at 18.45. Next Meeting to be held on 29th April 2021 at 17.30**