

Minutes of Waste Hub Liaison Group

12th November 2020, 5.30pm, via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Paul Cassell, Local Representative	PC
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
Apologies Received:	
Cllr Mike Hunter, Cheshire East Ward Councillor	MH

1. Welcome

KM apologised for the two-week delay in holding this meeting due to annual leave. He 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 30th July 2020 were approved as an accurate and correct record.

2.2 Matters Arising

Site Video and Group Minutes - KM confirmed that the video of the site is live on the Facebook site together with a series of photos and a rolling slide show of the presentation he gave at the last meeting. We have embedded the weblink on Facebook and have also put on links to the hydrogen project together with Minutes from the Community Liaison Group. The goal is to put information on as requested by this group and ensure it remains current.

Forge Mill Lane – KM confirmed information was sent. DL wanted to check what was agreed and KM will find the relevant information and share with the group. Action KM. He said that there were limited routes to reach the composting site at Leighton but is hopeful that in the next twelve months we will have more opportunities to look at alternative routes once Covid impacts have diminished.

DL commented that there must have been knowledge for several years that the Ansa plant in Middlewich would have to send vehicles to and from the Leighton site so routing should have been considered much sooner.

SM advised that there were 3 other sites that were considered and although there was some planning in place for routing it was not such a long time in advance that the composting location was decided.

KM said that the location of the Ansa site was determined much sooner than the composting site location when an opportunity to acquire the farm and locate near the sewerage treatment site much more remotely presented itself. KM is confident that it will be achieved but it will take time to balance the routes over the next twelve months.

Middlewich TC Queries - GO thanked KM for the time he had taken to respond to the questions raised on behalf of the Town Council. He has reviewed with them and at some point would like to come back with further queries. KM confirmed that would be fine.

3 Update on Project Vanguard

KM advised that Ansa has now committed to using two of its newest Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCVs) in the project. One has already been sent to be converted and the second will go after Christmas, so that by March 2021 we will be ready to use the converted vehicles. The target is for a 30% reduction in emissions. The vehicles will still use diesel as a backup in addition to hydrogen and the hydrogen emissions will be in the form of water.

The project is on track to start drawing hydrogen fuel in March 2021. The converted vehicles will be monitored closely so that we can benchmark against our standard ones. The plan is to roll out to more vehicles if successful. We are also looking at electric vehicles and one was lined up for a trial, but there were delays with the manufacturer and it hasn't proceeded. However, JT advised that we have a hybrid lithium ion battery and diesel RCV on trial for one week during December and we will be monitoring that closely.

SM asked if the aspiration to be carbon neutral by 2025 was Cheshire East Council's objective or Ansa's. KM advised that Ansa's target is rolled into Cheshire East's. Ansa's fleet is used for CE operations so is a big contributor to their emissions. Within Ansa we also have our own separate targets internally – we have a gas-powered vehicle which is working well in the parks and grounds team, although there are constraints on distance it can travel as the fuelling station is located in Crewe. Ansa's latest procurement of RCVs focused on low emission vehicles and we are waiting for more market developments.

KM advised that Project Vanguard is getting a lot of interest nationally from local authorities and as time goes on this will continue. He is excited to see if it will deliver the expected emission savings. The technology will remain in the two Ansa vehicles and as we have used new vehicles, the expected life span is ten years and we will be able to use them on a long-term basis

GO remarked that if it is a positive trial and it will reduce emissions that's good news. However, will Ansa need a larger fuelling station if more vehicles are to be converted to hydrogen fuelling. KM said that if the technology takes-off, he would anticipate more fuelling stations to be available within the area. Once the fuelling station is built, we will arrange a visit for CLG members to view the hydrogen filling station.

4 Update on Ansa Covid 19 Operations

JT reported that it appears to be business as usual at the moment. Green waste is diminishing as you would expect at this time of year but everything else is continuing as normal. There were a lot of lessons learned from the first lockdown and apart from the uncertainty around self-isolation which is a real risk to having sufficient employees in work, she is hopeful that we can keep services open as planned including Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) which were closed last time.

5 Consultation re Middlewich Household Waste Centre (HWRC)

KM had added this extra item to the agenda following reading an article that morning in this week's Middlewich Guardian re a consultation for the Middlewich HWRC to close.

He advised that similar versions appeared in local papers for other towns across the Borough.

The Council is looking at a review of the HWRC provision across the whole Borough and it appears from the article that a consultation will take place based on four different scenarios. The proposal is for sites to be closed with the preferred outcome to reduce the number of facilities three (Crewe, Macclesfield and Knutsford) which allow the full range of recycling with no satellite smaller sites. Middlewich site would only be maintained under scenario 4. KM stressed that as a local residents group members need to ensure their views and those of other residents are given especially if the Middlewich site is valued and their wish is for it to remain open.

SM asked for clarification of the impact on Ansa. KM confirmed that Ansa currently manages the sites through HW Martin, a sub-contractor. The current contract ends in 2023 but there is provision to remove sites in the meantime.

The impact of fly tipping was discussed. KM advised that from experience of previous closures, (Arclid being the most recent) there is no real impact in the vicinity although there is short-term frustration.

DL suggested that this will be very badly taken by local residents.

He asked what could be done and KM encouraged him to get members of the public to participate in the consultation.

PC observed CEC's ambition for zero carbon emissions by 2025, but an impact of closing local HWRCs is that residents will be travelling further in diesel cars generating a lot more extra carbon than is generated at present. That emission won't be assigned back to CEC but it should be. He feels it is important that this is included in the consultation response.

GO fully supported PC's remarks. Additionally, he noted that traffic waiting times will increase throughout the day which will increase the bottleneck in and out of Middlewich and also increase emissions.

SM advised that October 2016 was the last consultation and at that time 10 to 15 minutes travel time was considered acceptable whereas this has now increased to 20 minutes.

DL- air quality is affected within the town due to the extra traffic movements and this is something else that needs consideration. It will also increase waste tonnages in household waste bins and can have a negative effect on Ansa. reiterated that it is well worth all group members participating in the consultation and encouraging others to do so.

6 Middlewich Community Concerns

DL advised that he receives a regular stream of letters and emails from local residents. He read out one of them to the group. He advised that a large proportion are from Cross Lane and Booth Lane residents and they aren't reducing. He accepts that action has been taken, for example vehicles have been numbered but now that it's dark in winter residents can't see the numbers clearly. There are still major concerns and the Middlewich public don't feel that they are being heard.

JT hoped that we've demonstrated that we do take things seriously. She gave a long list of measures that we have taken including:

- Randomly monitoring our vehicles,
- Adding identification numbers
- Reviewing the phases on the traffic lights on Cledford Lane
- Disciplining and Investigating complaints against staff
- Giving 'toolbox talks' to staff
- Carrying out litter picking
- Supporting Community groups
- Putting additional resources into the local area.

She also mentioned litter - we are asking the Ansa road sweepers to focus on Middlewich as the vehicles return to the depot. We are open to any suggestions like that.

We want to do the best we can and we don't want to offend residents. She would welcome any suggestions from group members.

DL suggested not using Cross Lane would help enormously – take this completely out of the routes. This would remove a large proportion of the complaints. The extra time it would take would be minimal against the goodwill it could generate, and we would need to publicise if we do it. JT agreed that she would take away this suggestion and commit to look at if this is possible. It would take some time to achieve. KM supported the suggestion and advised that it may be done in incremental stages.

GO advised he is looking at a survey into air quality in the town in particular traffic pinch points. Is there any information about traffic movement in and out of the depot as that would help. KM advised that there is different movement on different days of the week but asked GO to send him an email explaining what is needed and he will try to assist. Action GO.

PC suggested that the vehicles could use Cross Lane as a one-way street as this would halve the number of vehicles immediately. SM considered PC's suggestion a good one. Outward bound could be one way and inward bound another and the impact could be monitored. This would halve traffic flow and would show that effort is being made and it could be monitored. SM – we think you should do that. GO seconded that. KM confirmed we will take that seriously and review. Action KM & JT

Vehicle smells from Viridor vehicles. DL asked about the latest situation. He said that some kind of cleaning would be appreciated to combat the smells.

JT advised that Viridor has increased the frequency of washing vehicles at the truck stop and this had doubled. Invoices for cleaning in September were £400 and this has increased to £900 in October. Additionally, they are trialling a 30 second anti-bacterial product at the rear of the trailer. We will monitor how that goes. DL asked if this information could be placed on the Facebook page as it is such a positive step for the public. Action JT to arrange.

There was a brief discussion about how best to share the positive effects made by the group and a resolution log and/or impact statement were both mentioned. It was agreed that something that could be loaded to the Facebook page would be welcome and this could show measures that are in place or that are being worked upon so that the public can appreciate the efforts that are being made. KM agreed that this would be useful. Action JT to oversee.

5 Any Other Business

5.1 Site Filter Scheme

GO asked for an update re the Camphil filter and the repair work. KM confirmed that all is working well, Back in August he committed to quarterly monitoring of the carbon pellets and he can advise that actually we have been sampling them monthly and at the moment there is no real evidence of deterioration which is as expected as they were only recently replaced.

5.2 Battery Fires

PC commented that during the recent tour of the recycling shed KM had highlighted a problem when people dispose of batteries in their bins which can cause problems with small fires. He had spotted in a transport magazine a report on fires in the back of RCVs where there was smouldering material in the rear. A Fire Brigade recommendation was for RCVs to be equipped with fire extinguishers. KM confirmed that we have experienced battery fires in the back of RCVs. We do campaigns to residents on the safe disposal of batteries. Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service's advice is not for us to try to put the fire out ourselves but to contact them immediately on detecting a fire in an RCV and they will direct us to a site to unload supervised by them.

There has been a lot of social media work focusing on don't put batteries in the bin. It is always included when we go out to give talks to schools, WI groups etc.

5.3 Recycling Rate - SM noted that in 2015 CE achieved 18th highest recycling rate in the country. Where are we now? Can this figure be shared? KM advised that figures are due to be released sometime in December 2020 and he would circulate to the group KM once published. Action KM.

5.4 Terms of Reference - SM asked if this document could be circulated to the whole group and asked for it to be put on next time's agenda for discussion to include frequency of meetings. Action MB

5.5. Football Team Sponsorship – JT advised that Ansa has agreed to sponsor the Middlewich Under 18 Football Team and have asked them to commit to some community work as part of the deal.

The meeting closed at 19:00. Next Meeting to be held on 28th January 2021.