

DRAFT

Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY GROUP OPEN FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 25 MARCH 2024

Councillors Present: Stuart Gourley (Chairman), Nick Carter, Carlyne Culver, Martha Vickers and Joanne Stewart (Substitute) (In place of Richard Somner)

Also Present: Kofi Adu-Gyamfi, Jenny Graham, Jo Watt, Stephen Chard, Thomas Radbourne, Daniel Warne

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Richard Somner and Councillor Owen Jeffery

Councillors Absent: Councillor Dennis Benneyworth, Councillor Paul Kander, Councillor Geoff Mayes and Councillor Vicky Poole

PART I

1 Apologies

Apologies received from Councillor Richard Somner (Vice Chairman), Councillor Owen Jeffery, Jon Winstanley.

2 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

3 Minutes of the Previous EAG Open Forum Meeting 29 January 2024

Resolved: The Clerk would create an Action Log for EAG Meetings.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

4 Veolia's Sustainability Initiatives at the Padworth Integrated Waste Facility: Dave Matthews, GM Veolia West Berkshire

Dave Matthews – GM Veolia West Berkshire, gave a presentation on the following subjects:

- Padworth Site, Environmental and Ecological Enhancements
- Padworth Biodiversity Action Plan
- Veolia Annual Sustainability Fund
- Energy and Water Savings Projects.

Members asked a number of questions, and Dave Matthews responded as follows:

- An energy audit could provide West Berkshire Council with cost savings and emissions savings.
- The long-term plan for Veolia globally would be for carbon neutrality with strong targets, as well as for the West Berkshire contract.

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- New applications for Veolia's Annual Sustainability fund would begin in May 2024, with a communication pack sent to Daniel Warne and Kofi Adu-Gyamfi, and an application form on the Veolia Website.

Kofi Adu-Gyamfi stated that West Berkshire Council would provide the funding for the Solar Panel and Hydro-treated Vegetable Oil (HVO) project. The HVO would be investigated for the cost-benefit analysis and would be taken forward if pertinent.

Jo Watt stated that the Veolia Annual Sustainability fund had been well received.

The Chairman highlighted the benefits of the soil conditioner giveaway.

Kofi Adu-Gyamfi thanked Veolia for their partnership and their long-term approach to projects in West Berkshire.

Resolved: Kofi Adu-Gyamfi to share details of solar panel and HVO project with Councillor Culver.

Resolved: Kofi Adu-Gyamfi to share the communications pack regarding Veolia's Annual Sustainability Fund with all Members.

5 **Proposed Advanced Conversion and Recovery Facility at Theale Quarry: Mike Roberts, Vertigo**

Mike Roberts – Vertigo, and Mark Collins-Thomas – EPI, gave a presentation on the following topics:

- EPI's pure pyrolysis technology
- Hydrogen Bioenergy Carbon Capture and Storage – Pure Pyrolysis refined.
- Pure Pyrolysis refined outputs per tonne of feedstock
- Site of Theale Quarry
- Theale Quarry advanced conversion and recovery facility
- Benefits of advanced conversion and recovery

Mike Roberts and Mark Collins-Thomas were asked a number of questions by Members, and responded as follows:

- The site would take small pieces of card, wood, or other organics, plastic or films – Refuse derived fuel (RDF), that other Materials Recycling Facilities would not take.
- The site would take sustainable biomass, forestry, and agricultural waste. Such as short rotation willow, miscanthus.
- The modules would be moveable and could be transported to other facilities.
- The facility would not take large scale forestry.
- The facility would be sized to meet local need.
- The carbon captured would be in a solid form.
- The hydrogen phase would be expensive, but other processes were underway.
- The facility would have a better cost-benefit analysis than an incinerator by 2028 with the increase in cost per tonne of waste.
- The commercial structuring would allow partnering in waste treatment.
- The Plant would have a total capacity of 96,000 tonnes, with the opportunity for using oversized organic materials from composting facilities (sticks, twigs and leaves).
- Target the commercial and industrial construction and demolition markets run by private companies.
- They intend to introduce a community benefits fund, for projects that provided social and environmental benefits.
- Carbon black and carbon char would be stored, or used, and markets would be created due to the quantities.

6 **Achieving Sustainability Within the Community: Nikki Coome, Eco Friends West Berkshire**

Nikki Coome – Eco Friends West Berkshire gave a presentation on the following subjects:

- Plastic Free Communities
- 2024 Objectives: Local government business champions, community Allies, community events and actions, set up steering group.
- Increasing visibility, single use plastic alternatives, creation of West Berkshire Hub.
- Events Charter, audit of plastic free, introduction of single use plastic alternative.

Nikki Coome was asked a number of questions by Members, and responded as follows:

- Return schemes would provide a positive impact.
- Blister packs would be accepted at GKG Vets in Wash Common and Thatcham.

Resolved: Councillor Stewart would invite Nikki Coome to speak at Tilehurst Parish Council.

Resolved: Dave Matthews invited Nikki Coome to Veolia's Padworth site to run a single use plastic audit.

Resolved: Councillor Culver would investigate the Events Charter to see how they would be able to help. The Sheep Fayre in East Illsley could fit with the Events Charter.

Resolved: Councillor Culver suggested Nikki Coome visit Hungerford Town Council and other Parish Councils to see if they would get involved.

Daniel Warne stated that a pots, tubs, and trays initiative at two recycling centres and several mini recycling centres had been established to investigate the market. Veolia had been contacted to investigate collection at the kerbside. Daniel Warne stated that there would be news on this in the near future.

Councillor Carter stated that Ali's Recycling would accept Terracycle plastics.

7 **WBC Environment Updates: Jenny Graham, Environment Delivery Manager**

Jenny Graham (Environment Delivery Manager) gave a presentation on the following:

- West Berkshire Car Club
- Energy efficiency related information (Rural England Prosperity Fund) (HUG2) (ECO4) (Great British Insulation Scheme)
- Natural Capital and Bio-Diversity Net Gain
- Sustainability Assessment Tool
- How to find out more and engage.

Members asked a number of questions, and Jenny Graham responded as follows:

- Jenny Graham had been in contact with Alec from the Transport Policy team regarding the Car Club at Newbury Racecourse.
- Village Hall and Community Buildings Grant had been aimed at energy efficiency and supporting community facilities in a sustainable way – with restrictions on location.

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8 WBC Waste Updates: Daniel Warne, Waste Manager

Daniel Warne (Waste manager) gave a presentation on the following:

- Waste Service Update
- Soil Conditioner Giveaway
- Great British Spring Clean
- Recycling Centre Opening Hours
- Easter waste collections

9 Any Other Business

No items were raised under Any Other Business

10 Future Meeting Dates

The next meeting date would be Monday 20 May 2024 at 5.30pm.

(The meeting commenced at 17:30pm and closed at 19:28pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature