

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER, 2010 AT 4.00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors

Kraujalis, J. T. (Chairman)
Dixon, D. I. (Vice-Chairman)

Ansell, Mrs. P.	Jones, R.
Beddows, J.	Mitchell. C.
Bernard, J.D.	Rowley, J.
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Thomas, D.
Green, M.R.	

By invitation:

Mr. J. Rhodes, Biffa
Mr. C. Logan, SLR Consulting
Mr. M. Grundy, Staffordshire County Council
Ms. J. Castree-Denton, Staffordshire County Council

Councillor R. Todd, Heath Hayes and Wimblebury Parish Council
Councillor R. Denton, Cheslyn Hay Parish Council

The Chairman reported that he had extended an invite to Biffa, Town/Parish Council representatives, and Staffordshire County Council regarding Biffa's future plans for Poplars landfill site and Kingswood.

10. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. D. J. Bennett and Mrs. A.F. Bernard.

11. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restrictions on Voting by Members

<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>	<u>Type</u>
Kraujalis, J.T.	Member of Bridgtown Parish Council	Personal
Beddows, J.	Member of Norton Canes Parish Council	Personal

12. Party Whip Declarations

There were no Party Whip Declarations received.

13. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July, 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed.

14. Poplars Landfill Site – Emerging Staffordshire and Stoke-On-Trent Joint Waste Core Strategy

Presentation – Staffordshire County Council

The Chairman welcomed Ms. J. Castree-Denton, Staffordshire County Council to give a presentation to Members of the Committee on Emerging Staffordshire and Stoke-On-Trent Joint Waste Core Strategy.

She explained that the County and City Council's role was to act as Waste Planning Authority, Waste Disposal Authority and Waste Collection Authority.

Information was provided on the Strategic Framework for Waste Facilities which was currently provided by Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Waste Local Plan 1998 – 2011. A Review of waste policy was required as a result of EU legislation, changes to planning legislation were introduced in 2004 and national waste policy guidance in 2005 (PPS10).

She reported that the role of the Waste Core Strategy included encouraging facilities to increase, re-use, recycle and recover waste. She also advised that there was a need to address all types of waste with plans for 15 years to be flexible and deliverable.

Information was then provided to Members on Planning for Waste Facts together with the Spatial Vision for Waste Management in 2026.

The presentation highlighted draft policies and visuals were then shown which provided details of the enclosed facilities, the quality and design and how existing facilities could be enhanced.

The proposed timetable provided details on the Consultation in relation to the Emerging Joint Waste Core Strategy which would take place between 9 August and 1 October, 2010 with adoption being May 2012.

Members of the Committee were then afforded the opportunity of asking questions regarding the presentation.

The Chairman was keen to know if Staffordshire County Council were supportive of the proposals for an incinerator at Kingswood. Mr. M. Grundy, Staffordshire County Council stated that an application had been received by the County Council although he could not comment on the proposals at this stage.

A Member raised concern that there was a time limit on how long Poplars landfill site could operate which over time had been extended, and there was no indication of when the site would eventually close.

Mr. Grundy explained that Staffordshire County Council was the Waste Planning Authority and the permission in respect of the Poplars landfill site was old and based on restoration levels. He advised that the rate of infill had slowed which meant the life of the site would continue.

A Member asked if Staffordshire County Council received any payment for the transfer of waste from outside the Staffordshire area. Ms. J. Castree-Denton stated that there was no control over the movement of waste and other materials such as recycled materials went to Walsall whilst food waste was transported to Derby and other parts of the Country.

A Member was keen to know what materials were being taken to Poplars landfill site. Mr. Grundy stated that items from the 'green bin' collections would go to the site although he advised that recycling had been maximised and anaerobic digesting was also used.

Presentation - Biffa

The Chairman welcomed Mr. J. Rhodes, Biffa to give his presentation to Members of the Committee on future plans for Poplars landfill site and Kingswood.

He reported on the key drivers for change which were:

- Waste Management/Environmental (landfill division)
- Energy Policy (part environmental, part energy security)
- Economic Development and Investment

Mr. Rhodes provided capacity facts and figures and information on the Poplars Landfill which was once used as opencast coaling in the 70s and then turned into a landfill site.

The presentation included visuals and highlighted the future plans of Biffa which included £200 million private sector investment into the area, community funding and reduced landfill impacts such as traffic and operations.

Information was provided to Members of the Committee in respect of an additional Anaerobic Digester capacity at the Poplars landfill site, the revised landfill phasing and also proposals at Kingswood for an energy recovery facility which would provide energy from residual waste and also create jobs whilst under construction.

Mr. Rhodes discussed with Members of the Committee the proposals for Kingswood and why the area had been selected which was an industrial site, complied with planning policy and had excellent access which was further away from housing than the landfill site.

He provided visuals of the architectural design of the building, layout and landscaping and also the components of the proposed plant.

Further information was supplied to Members of the Committee regarding issues surrounding air quality/health, noise and odour and organisations where independent information from regulators could be sought.

Members of the Committee were then afforded the opportunity of asking questions regarding

the presentation.

A Member was keen to know what the difference was in the amount of energy between the energy recovery facility and anaerobic digestion. Mr. Rhodes advised Members that the difference was 6MW which equated to supplying energy to 12,000 homes or 68,000 from the proposed plant.

Members raised concern regarding the current traffic situation at the Poplars Landfill site. Mr. Rhodes advised Members that if the proposals for the new facility were agreed the traffic would be significantly reduced due to the new access arrangements at Kingswood.

A Member was keen to know how odours from the site would be controlled. Mr. Rhodes stated that the proposed facility would be under cover and controlled with sophisticated air vents and real time monitoring. He also advised that spot checks were carried out by the Environment Agency to make sure that the business was complying with regulations.

Members discussed a range of issues including residents concerns with pollution, the proposed plant being situated opposite Sainsbury's, whether the proposed facility was similar to Stoke and a question regarding how the issue of ash from the plant would be removed. Mr. Rhodes advised that there were emissions standards and went on to explain that there were different types of ash, that of bottom ash which could be recycled and re-used and fly ash which could be filtered and sent to an off site disposal specialist. He commented that the proposed facility would create around 400 jobs during the construction phase and that it was similar to the facility in Stoke-On-Trent.

The Chairman then invited each Parish/Town Councillor to present their case regarding the proposed facility.

Councillor R. Todd, Health Hayes Parish Council felt that in his opinion the proposal was unfair. He claimed that the Poplars landfill site was growing in size and its life had been extended, and that it was purely a 'dumping ground' for waste coming from around the Country. He reported that the pollution problem was getting worse especially in the summer months and advised that the death rate in the area was higher than anywhere else in the West Midlands. He was also of the opinion that the site should have been closed down a number of years ago.

Councillor R. Denton, Cheslyn Hay Parish Council stated that Cheslyn Hay residents were against the proposal. He advised the Committee that Cheslyn Hay's boundaries fell between a number of other areas where there were various proposals. The proposals included building a waste facility at the Four Ashes Industrial estate which would be a commercial activity, and Jack Moody's site was also within the boundary which currently ran a recycling facility. Mr. Denton was of the opinion that local people would suffer due to Biffa wanting to make a profit. He went on to state that there was concern regarding air pollution particularly around the A5 together with noise and vibration and raised concern regarding the visual aspect of the current landfill site

The Chairman advised the Committee that Councillor E. Smith, Bridgtown Council was unable to attend the meeting however he had raised similar concerns to other Parish/Town Councillors and concern regarding pollution and emissions.

The Chairman then gave Members of the Committee the opportunity to comment on the statements that had been made.

Again, Members raised concern that there was no time limit for the end of the life of the Poplars landfill site. Mr. J. Rhodes reported that no end date was ever given and advised that the Landfill was heavily regulated and it was operated correctly.

RESOLVED:

That the Scrutiny Committee supports the recommendations contained within the 'Emerging Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Waste Core Strategy' report to be considered by Cabinet on 16 September, 2010.

CHAIRMAN

The meeting closed at 5.50 p.m.