

Minutes of the Liaison Meeting

Held at Crown Pet Foods

On Thursday 14th August 2008

Present:	Mrs J Cronie Chair	Ansford Parish Council
	Mr C Edwards	Ansford Parish Council
	Mr G Clothier	Ansford Parish Council
	Mrs H Merrifield	Ansford Parish Council
	Mr H Hobhouse	County & District Councillor
	Mr J Crossley	District Councillor
	Mr B Moorhouse	Castle Cary Town Council
	Mr K Hobson	Castle Cary Town Council
	Mr J Hood	Castle Cary Town Council
	Mr N Weeks	Castle Cary Town Council
	Mr A Gardiner	Environment Agency
	Mr A Chadwick	Crown Pet Foods
	Mr G Jefferson	Crown Pet Foods
	Ms G Furniss	Crown Pet Foods
Apologies:	Mr F Demauge	Crown Pet Foods
	Mr C Tew	Environment Agency
	Mr B Payne	Environment Agency
	Mr R Marlow	Environment Agency
	Miss L Tilling	Castle Cary Town Council
In attendance:	Miss K Braunton	Minutes

1 Introduction

Mrs Cronie welcomed everyone to the meeting and read the apologies. No one had any other apologies to add.

Mrs Cronie asked if everyone had seen the minutes of the last meeting and whether they were happy with them. Everyone had seen the minutes and did not have any extra comments to make.

2 Environment Agency Update

Mr Gardiner displayed a graph from the Environment Agency which showed results before the additional odour abatement system was in place (up to 5th August). Wind

direction was shown, which is useful to take into account when looking at complaint levels.

Mr Gardiner continued to say that as everyone was probably aware, there was a slight delay, of about a week, before the additional odour abatement system was up and running. This delay was in order for the Environment Agency to be reassured that monitoring systems were in place. The Environment Agency had a very productive meeting with Crown Pet Foods to discuss the monitoring system.

Mr Gardiner then explained that Crown Pet Foods did a dry run last weekend. On Monday they started production again with the additional odour abatement system in place. The Environment Agency has since been monitoring twice a day at various points around the town and so far the results have been very encouraging. The officers have detected no odour around the area of the plant, but a slight odour has been detected at one point within the plant (Mr Gardiner explained that Mr Jefferson would speak about this in more detail). Mr Gardiner went on to explain that this may be due to a slight leak from the condenser and the company is planning to seal this at the weekend.

Mr Gardiner confirmed that there have been no complaints since the additional system has been in place.

Mrs Cronie asked Mr Jefferson what products Crown Pet Foods are producing at the moment?

Mr Jefferson explained that they are continuing to produce the same products at the same rates, so at the moment they are producing Croc, one of the least odorous products. Mr Jefferson said that they will begin to produce other products the week after next.

Mr Gardiner said that the Environment Agency will continue to monitor odour levels based on the product runs and will obviously deal with any issues should they arise as they continue to work their way through the commissioning plan. Mr Gardiner said that this has been a very good start. The Environment Agency will update their website next week when Mr Payne is back from leave.

Mr Edwards asked Mr Jefferson whether he was confident that the new system would work when they are producing more odorous products?

Mr Jefferson explained that the current results are even better than expected, and he is confident that will be the case with the whole product range.

Mr Hood asked why are the most odorous products more popular in the UK, as one of the least odorous products (Croc) is not actually sold in this country?

Mr Jefferson explained that there is a large range of products and it is not necessarily the case that the dogs in the UK prefer the more odorous products.

Ms Furniss confirmed that Croc is not available in the UK but that the tastes of all European dogs are similar.

Mr Clothier said that dogs do recognise different flavours and explained about a situation where on two separate occasions they had offered a selection of different tins of dog food and the dog had chosen its preferred label each time.

3 Equipment Update

Mr Jefferson said that the most important thing was to ensure everything worked correctly and that everyone had worked very hard to achieve this.

He confirmed that testing had taken place on Monday and that this had been successful. Results have been very good, and even better than expected. He confirmed that, as mentioned by Mr Gardiner, that they had detected and identified an odour within the site and will resolve it over the weekend.

Mr Hood asked Mr Jefferson what tests were available other than sniff testing to check the lifespan of the carbon filters?

Mr Jefferson explained that sniff tests are carried out at 10 different points across the carbon filters and this odour test is the most reliable one. However, they are also analysing the odour going in and out of the filters and testing organic carbon levels in samples.

Mr Hood asked how long the delivery of carbon would take when it needs replacing? Mr Jefferson said that the carbon used in this system can be bought off the shelf and can be replaced within 7 days.

Mr Hood asked what happens to the 'used' carbon afterwards?

Mr Jefferson explained that it is recycled.

Mr Hobhouse asked whether the 2 carbon filters were working in series so that if the carbon is used up in one, the second one can be effective?

Mr Jefferson said that the 2 carbon filters are parallel to each other.

Mr Moorhouse asked whether you could use one filter at a time?

Mr Jefferson said that yes, one used on its own would be effective. Once they detected that the carbon needed changing, there would still be capacity left giving time to make the change and that one filter could work effectively whilst the carbon was being changed in the other one.

Mr Moorhouse mentioned that the variation of the permit stated that the APP could be used optionally, but will this be run all the time?

Mr Jefferson explained that the APP is being used continuously just now but analysis will then take place to find out whether the condenser is making the APP redundant.

Mr Gardiner added that the physics of this system are very complex and so will need to be looked into in depth.

Mr Moorhouse said that he had heard that the APP creates ozone?

Mr Jefferson explained that the APP does create ozone but that it is depleted almost instantaneously.

Mr Hood asked for confirmation that Crown Pet Foods will begin producing additional products week commencing 25th August?

Mr Jefferson said that it would be around this time as they are initially producing Hypoallergenic and will then begin with 16 hour trials of additional products.

Mr Moorhouse asked when will Crown Pet Foods be producing the most odorous products at full rates of production?

Mr Jefferson said that they were working with the Environment Agency on timing of

introducing additional products.

Mr Gardiner added that this is planned within the pre-operational conditions in order to protect the Company and the public.

Mr Crossley then asked about traffic as there have been some issues.

Mr Jefferson confirmed that there have been some issues with hauliers and their drivers not abiding by the site entry rules. There are specific agreements in place and security knows to reject lorries outside of the specified delivery hours. They are currently giving multilingual forms direct to drivers to confirm the rules and not just relying on the haulier company informing the drivers. This appears to already be making a difference.

Mr Jefferson said that they are looking at improved signage for lorries to ensure they do not go through the town.

Mr Crossley said that this seems to be working as traffic into Torbay road has reduced.

Mr Moorhouse explained that they have the same issue at Centaur as you cannot control a 3rd party driver and there are frequently new drivers. Mr Moorhouse also pointed out that even though the surface of Blackworthy road has been improved, it is extremely narrow and it is also narrow through the town, which is an issue.

Mr Weeks said a lot of drivers asked for Oak Tree Meadow and 90% of people living in Castle Cary do not know where this is (or James Wellbeloved, for example). They know where Crown Pet Foods is. Mr Weeks asked whether the address could reflect this?

Mr Weeks also asked if a sign for Crown Pet Foods could be put at the bottom of the road and move the sign at the entrance so it is more visible?

Mr Jefferson said that they are currently looking into this.

Ms Furniss added that they will check with accounts the address shown on invoices. [Please note that having checked this point, all invoices are for Crown Pet Foods, Oak Tree Meadow, Blackworthy Road, Castle Cary BA7 7PH]

Mr Weeks remembered that the Town Council had previously improved signage to discourage lorries going up Station road, as once lorries have committed themselves there is nowhere to turn round.

Mr Weeks asked whether once the factory is operating 24/7, will Crown Pet Foods let in lorries that arrive at the wrong time of night, but let the driver know that they will not be admitted again at that time? If they are turned away, they will try to find somewhere to park, perhaps on Blackworthy Road which would be dangerous.

Mr Jefferson explained that if they let some drivers on site out of hours, then other drivers will soon hear about it as they all talk to each other. Also, because of their shifts, the security guards might not know if a driver had been on site out of hours before. Mr Jefferson agreed that there are not many parking places in the area, but if they allow some drivers in, then more will do it. It is best to stop it completely.

Mr Hobhouse suggested that the opening hours could be put on the bottom of the haulier invoice?

Mr Jefferson said that this was a good idea, but the multilingual handout given to the drivers contains this information.

Mr Moorhouse confirmed that Centaur also has this problem.

Mrs Cronie asked whether any of the lorries are refrigerated?

Mr Jefferson confirmed that they are not. He said some lorries arriving at night and were leaving their engines running and their lights on but security was asking them to turn these off whilst advising them when to return. Mr Jefferson is sure that word is already spreading that they do not allow lorries on site out of hours and that he expects these issues to be successfully resolved.

Mr Weeks suggested that there should be areas nearby for lorries to park up.

Mr Crossley confirmed that this has been looked into before. There are 2 lorry parks, including one at Podimore. Lorry drivers do not like to stop in lay-bys because of the risk of break-ins. Some park on the industrial estate at Wincanton as it is well lit, but this causes problems with blocked access. Mr Crossley said that this is something to bear in mind for Castle Cary.

4 Any Other Business

Mr Hobhouse thanked everyone for working hard to resolve the current issues.

Mr Hood asked where Eric Lefevre was and wanted to give his regards to Eric.

Mr Jefferson said that Eric was now back in France and that he would pass on Mr Hoods regards.

Mr Gardiner confirmed that the Environment Agency also monitor noise levels from Crown Pet Foods.

Mr Weeks then asked for lighting to be discussed as an item at the next meeting.

Ms Furniss agreed and said that it would be best to discuss it at the next meeting, because although it was something they were looking at, they did not have sufficient details with them today.

Mr Jefferson also confirmed that they are looking at the lighting.

Mr Gardiner thanked people for the responses that the Environment Agency received during the consultation period.

Mr Chadwick gave a brief update about recruitment as all 3 apprenticeships have now been filled by local young people who all started work in the last couple of weeks. In addition to the 10 people just employed, there is currently one more position to fill within the factory.

Mrs Cronie reminded everyone about the Castle Cary Traditional Market on the 30th August and also the Crown Pet Foods Open Day on the 6th September.

Ms Furniss gave brief details about the Open Day:

- Time: 11am – 3pm.
- Continuous tours of the production facility.
- Family orientated, with a bouncy castle, face painting and children's entertainer.
- Food provided - hog roast or vegetarian alternative, and soft drink.
- If it rains, all activities will take place under cover.
- Free parking on site and dedicated parking for disabled people.
- Wheelchair access.

- For health & safety reasons, Ms Furniss regretted that they cannot accept any dogs on site or allow push chairs on the tour.

Mrs Cronie asked whether guide dogs or other assistance dogs would not be allowed on site?

Mr Chadwick confirmed that they will need to discuss this further before giving confirmation.

Mrs Cronie said that she knew of at least one blind gentleman in the town who may need to bring a guide dog.

Mr Jefferson asked whether someone may be able to guide the gentleman on the tour.

Mrs Cronie said that this could be a possibility.

Mrs Merrifield confirmed that this had happened at another event.

Mr Chadwick said he would confirm the solution.

5 Date of next meeting

Date: Wednesday 17th September.

Time: 18:30pm.

Venue: Crown Pet Foods.

The meeting closed at 19:11pm.