

## Minutes of the Liaison Meeting

### Held at Crown Pet Foods

On Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2009

Present:	Mrs J Cronie Chair	Ansford Parish Council
	Mrs D Pinions	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 J Hood	Castle Cary Town Council
	Mr N Weeks	Castle Cary Town Council
	Mr F Demauge	Crown Pet Foods
	Mr G Jefferson	Crown Pet Foods
Apologies:	Mr C Edwards	Ansford Parish Council
	Mr G Clothier	Ansford Parish Council
	Mr A Chadwick	Crown Pet Foods
In attendance:	Miss K Braunton	Minutes

#### **1 Introduction**

Mrs Cronie welcomed everyone to the meeting and read the apologies, which are noted above.

Mrs Cronie asked if everyone had seen the minutes of the last meeting and whether there were any comments, but everyone was happy with them as they were.

#### **2 Environment Agency Update**

The previous Liaison Committee meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008 was the last one to be attended by the Environment Agency (see minutes of 19/11/08) so Mr Tew of the Environment Agency had sent updated information to Mr Jefferson.

Mr Jefferson displayed the complaints report and explained that of the 5 complaints reported since the beginning of the year, only 1 had been substantiated by the Environment Agency. This could be due to the complaint not being attributed to Crown Pet Foods or there may not have been an opportunity for it to be verified. Mr Jefferson explained that he will be working alongside the Environment Agency to ensure that all complaints are verified.

Mrs Cronie asked if a complaint is made to the Environment Agency but they are not able to send an officer out, do Crown Pet Foods send someone to check it.

Mr Jefferson said that Crown Pet Foods do try to check all complaints where the Environment Agency cannot send an officer. Mr Jefferson added that he is due to have a meeting with Mr Tew and Mr Marlow from the Environment Agency next week to discuss this further.

Mr Moorhouse asked Mr Jefferson if a 'Yes' on the report meant that the complaint had been validated. Mr Jefferson agreed. Mr Jefferson confirmed that a 'No' on the report could mean that there was a complaint but that it may not have been verified.

Mr Hobhouse explained that Viridor Waste Management use the Caryford Environment Trust to check odours at Dimmer Dump. He explained that this could be an option for Crown Pet Foods and the Environment Agency as it would allow independent people to validate any complaints on their behalf.

Mr Jefferson said that this was a good suggestion. He added that in addition to confirming whether an odour is present it is also important to know where the odour is coming from.

Mr Hobhouse said that Caryford Environment Trust is only 5 minutes from the site and so would be a good resource.

Mr Demauge said that it is important that Crown Pet Foods and the Environment Agency can work from as many facts as possible, so it is important that all complaints are validated and that the source of the odour is confirmed.

Mr Moorhouse added that even if all of the complaints on the report were substantiated, the number of complaints is still very low.

Mr Demauge agreed and said that Crown Pet Foods still carry out many tests regarding odours and with good results.

Mr Moorhouse said that at the last council meeting on Monday, no one had any complaints about the odours.

Mr Hood added however that he had recently heard of a complaint in Clanville.

Mr Weeks agreed that there was a complaint last week and when the complainant had asked him what he should do about it, Mr Weeks had told him to follow the normal complaints procedure.

Mr Weeks also said that the report showed that there had never been more than 1 complaint on any particular day. Mr Weeks thought that if the odour had been bad then several people would have complained.

Mr Crossley observed from the report that the complaints all tended to be from one direction.

### 3 Production Facility Update

Mr Jefferson explained that the production facility had moved to 24-hour production in January and have not had any complaints about noise. Mr Jefferson explained that the production facility had a noise assessment last week and he would receive the report results next week. The preliminary results showed that the noise level was within all necessary guidelines.

Mr Jefferson said that the next step will be to transfer production from a co-packer to Castle Cary which will mean that they will be producing more products but that these will be very similar to those currently being produced, for example using the same protein sources. Mr Jefferson explained that they will be carrying out trials of these new products and that the Environment Agency will be involved.

Mr Moorhouse asked what the current tonnage at the production facility was.

Mr Jefferson said it was around 2000 tons a month.

Mr Demauge explained that the plan for this year is to produce 20,000 tonnes.

Mr Hobhouse asked if sales are good for Crown Pet Foods.

Mr Demauge said that sales are going well and that he has not yet seen the credit crunch affecting the business, which is good news.

Mrs Cronie added that she thought that people would feed their pet sometimes before themselves!

Mr Demauge added to Mr Jefferson's update of the production facility by explaining that they will continue mainly to produce James Wellbeloved products. Currently they are producing lamb & rice and turkey & rice products for dogs and will start to produce them for cats too. Duck products would be trialled in April.

Mr Crossley asked where the duck would come from.

Mr Demauge said that they are facing increasing difficulties in sourcing quality raw materials. Where possible they use local suppliers, for example UK lamb. There are some suppliers of duck in Europe, but they are mainly using UK sourced material.

Mr Demauge explained that the closest supplier of rice is Italy but that potatoes could be found locally and the majority of the cereals are from the local area.

Mr Weeks asked if the company uses lamb or mutton.

Mr Demauge said that the company purchases dried lamb protein.

Mr Weeks said that he was surprised that the company did not use mutton as it is a good price and quality. He suggested that the company should look into setting up a business slaughtering mutton as it is good meat.

Mr Demauge said that Royal Canin as a global group were looking at such options

as more and more attention needs to be paid to the sustainability of the raw materials.

#### **4 Blackworthy Road update**

Mr Jefferson explained that a meeting was held at the end of 2008 to discuss Health & Safety on Blackworthy Road. He explained that there had been a communication error between the traffic lights on the railway bridge and the Council site, which has now been resolved.

Mr Jefferson said that there will a meeting at the beginning of March to discuss the passing point and pedestrian safety at the traffic lights.

Mr Moorhouse asked if they have discussed the issue of lorries destroying the verges.

Mr Jefferson said that this was at the passing point area and will be discussed in March.

Mr Weeks asked Mr Jefferson if he could also discuss with the County Council the error in sequencing of the traffic lights. They seem to stay green on the Clanville site for longer, which makes people speed up along this road to get over the bridge. Mr Weeks explained that he had spoken to the Council about this, but nothing had been done about it yet.

Mr Jefferson said that there had been issues with the communication at the traffic lights, but now there is a phone line it should be better. Mr Jefferson said that he would talk about the error in sequencing at his meeting in March.

#### **5 Gritting of roads**

Mr Hobhouse explained that the gritting of roads needs to be carried out by someone with an insurance certificate and they must have had their gritting unit checked. The vehicle would also need snow chains. He said that the Highways Agency will not grit Blackworthy Road.

Mr Moorhouse asked if this meant that they need to arrange the gritting themselves.

Mr Crossley said that he was sure that an area with a trading estate should be gritted by the Highways Agency.

Mr Hobhouse explained that this was not the case.

Mr Weeks said that the Town Council have liaised with the County Council which has suggested that to make any changes it would be beneficial to show a unified front.

Mr Moorhouse said that Centaur grit the roads.

Mr Demauge said that he has a meeting with Centaur tomorrow so will talk to them about a unified approach to the gritting issues.

Mr Weeks said that it was not their job to do someone else's job!

Mr Demauge said that he felt that they needed a unified approach to make people listen to their needs and to discover why the Council do not grit Blackworthy Road. They would then know what further action to take. Mr Demauge said that this needs to be a community decision to help find a solution for everyone.

Mrs Cronie mentioned that as this would be a unified approach she thought that the bus companies would need to be included as well as there are issues with gritting all over Castle Cary & Ansford.

Mr Hood said that he felt that the gritting of the roads around the town was not an item for the liaison committee to discuss.

Mrs Cronie felt that as they were talking about a united front, all issues need to be discussed.

Mrs Merrifield asked Mr Jefferson how many days the gritting issue had caused problems for them.

Mr Jefferson said that the recent weather conditions have not caused many problems, but they do have a large number of staff on the site and so ensuring that Blackworthy Road is safe is very important to them.

Mr Moorhouse said that Centaur has a large number of staff too so it is something that needs to be resolved.

Mr Demauge said that he will speak to Centaur tomorrow.

Mr Hobhouse suggested that it may be useful to arrange a meeting with the County Council and Centaur to discuss the matter further.

Mr Weeks said that the Town Council have sent letters to the County Council before, but they are not being acknowledged.

Mr Hobhouse replied by saying that he would look into this in the morning.

## **6 Planting at the Crown Pet Foods site entrance**

Mr Jefferson said that the Crown Pet Foods site entrance looks rather bare at the moment but that the landscapers have provided a proposal for improving this area. The proposal will be taken to the County Council for approval.

Mr Weeks said that although there is nothing special at the entrance, it does at least look tidy.

Mr Demauge then said that they plan to improve the area but as this was not part of the original planning application, they need to follow the correct procedures for approval of the proposal.

## **6 Vandalised dog bins**

Mr Weeks explained that some dog bins in the town have been vandalised and that Crown Pet Foods have kindly offered to fund new ones. Mr Weeks said the Town Council would prefer it if there were no Crown Pet Foods marketing campaigns on these bins but that they would be happy for mention in the local paper to show that Crown Pet Foods had supported the dog bins.

Mr Demauge replied by saying that the objective is not to put their logo everywhere, but to be part of the community. Mr Demauge explained that he wanted to help provide a better service for the community and that this was not a marketing exercise.

Mr Weeks thanked Mr Demauge very much and said that he would arrange a meeting to discuss this soon.

## **7 Any Other Business**

Mr Weeks thanked Crown Pet Foods on behalf of the Town Council for donating £250 towards the restoration of the Market House town clock.

Mr Demauge asked Mr Weeks to pass on his thanks to Mr Jeffs as he had received a wonderful thank you letter today.

## **8 Date of the next meeting**

Mrs Cronie suggested that the next meeting could be in 6 months time.

Mr Demauge said that if anyone had any issues that they would like to discuss in the meantime, contact Crown Pet Foods as a meeting could be arranged at anytime.

Mr Hood asked Mr Demauge how long the carbon filter has now been in place.

Mr Demauge said it had been in place since the 14<sup>th</sup> August 2008.

Mr Hood asked what guarantees are in place for its effectiveness.

Mr Demauge explained that the lifespan of the carbon filter should be around 11-13 months, but as the other equipment is also working so effectively, it is expected that the carbon filter will last longer. Mr Demauge said that they are continuously taking samples from the carbon filter to check effectiveness.

Mr Moorhouse asked if the plasma unit is also still running as it was mentioned in the last meeting that Crown Pet Foods may stop using it.

Mr Jefferson explained that they will carry out a test on this at the end of March.

### **Date of the next meeting:**

**Date: Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2009.**

**Time: 18:30pm.**

**Venue: Crown Pet Foods.**

The meeting closed at 19.17pm.