



South West Devon Waste Partnership

Communications and Community Engagement Report **October 2011 to January 2012**

MVV Environment's solution proposes a 245,000 tonne per annum capacity energy from waste facility located in North Yard, HM Naval Base Devonport, which is in the Weston Mill area of the Naval Base bordering Blackies Wood. The facility will be a combined heat and power plant providing environmentally sustainable electrical energy and heat to HM Naval Base Devonport.

The MVV planning application, submitted to the Plymouth City Council Planning department in May 2011, successfully gained approval in December 2011. A draft permit was also issued by the Environment Agency in December 2011.

The project is programmed to begin construction of the plant in 2012. Provided the Environmental Permit is issued as scheduled, operations will commence in late 2014.

This report provides a summary of project related communication activities and written queries made between 18 October 2011 and 16 January 2012.

1. Communication activities

The **Incinerator Liaison Committee (ILC)** was set up in March 2011 and meetings have continued, attended by representatives from SWDWP, MVV, the Ministry of Defence and the Environment Agency. The committee visited Plymouth's Materials Recycling Facility, Household Waste Recycling Centre and the Refuse Transfer Station at Chelson Meadow in October. The site manager took the committee around the facilities explaining how the recycling sorting system works and how negative pressure is used in the transfer station to help control any unpleasant odors.

All Councillor groups were offered briefings by the South West Devon Waste Partnership, as discussed in the last committee meeting, either in their individual groups or as a whole. The following briefings on the project took place:

14 November - **Plymouth Conservative group briefing, Council House Plymouth**

28 November – **Plymouth Labour group briefing, Council House Plymouth**

07 December - **Devon all Councillor briefing, Larkbeare House Exeter**

13 December - **Torbay all Councillor briefing, Town Hall Torquay**

09 and 16 December – **MP briefings**. All local Devon and SE Cornwall MPs were invited to an update briefing on the project in the Council House in Plymouth: Alison Sebeck and Gary Streeter attended. The Partnership offered this briefing to the MPs as an opportunity to air any questions regarding the project.

2 Summary of written queries received

Nine written enquiries have been specifically received by or referred to the partnership. The main concerns are around emissions, traffic, cost of the solution, the democratic process, ash

produced and visual impact. The partnership has responded to the all written queries received.

3. Media Enquiries and Liaison

Over the last 3 months, enquiries have received from various sources: Plymouth Herald, Heart Radio, BBC Spotlight, Radio Devon and ITV as well as trade and industry publications.

Coverage in November focused on the erection of a crane on site indicating the building and stack height for the planning committee visit. After irregularities were noted between the photo montages, this generated additional enquiries and coverage, followed by a second site visit prior to the planning committee.

An article produced in conjunction with Tony Norton, Director of the Centre for Energy and the Environment, highlighting the carbon benefits of Energy from Waste was featured in the Western Morning News in December 2011.

A piece focusing on the suitability of the technology and relevance of other forms of waste treatment was published in the Herald, after a specific briefing.

Further coverage was created after claims that the anaerobic digestion plant at Langage was a suitable treatment alternative for partnership's waste; advanced briefings ensured that the editorial reflected the inappropriateness of these suggestions for the partnership's residual waste.

Finally, in December there has been extensive coverage of the planning committee preparations and decision. All broadcast and local media were in attendance, with further interest by trade and industry press.

Briefings have been made informally on an ongoing basis with key journalists, editors and planning desks to ensure up to date and accurate information is available. In the main, this has resulted in a balanced and informative approach being taken by the local media and editors.