

South West Devon Waste Partnership



Community Engagement Report – April 2015

This report provides a summary of project related communication activities and written queries made between October 2014 and April 2015.

I. Communication activities

The **Incinerator Liaison Committee (ILC)** continues to meet and members also receive regular updates from Jane Ford, MVV Community Liaison Manager. Three meetings were held; 16 Oct 14, 20 Nov 14 and 09 Apr 15.

These meetings are attended by representatives from SWDWP, MVV, the Ministry of Defence and the Environment Agency.

N.B This committee was initially known as the Local Liaison Committee whoever a similarly named committee already exists linked to Devonport Naval Base so the name was changed.

27 November / 1 December – **Local Ward and Portfolio Holder Councillor Briefing**

An update of current and forthcoming activities was given to local ward councillors and the portfolio holder member in preparation for the commissioning period.

19 January – **Local Ward Councillor** Communication

An email was distributed to local ward members providing a brief update on site activities during the commissioning process and alerting them to communications issued by MVV to local residents and media.

20 January – **All Councillor** Communication

An email was distributed to all members providing a brief update on site activities during the commissioning process and alerting them to communications issued by MVV to local residents and media.

22 January – **Joint Committee** Site Visit

The SWDWP Joint Committee members received a presentation from MVV and attended a site visit to review progress.

23 February – **Local Ward Councillor** Communication

An email was distributed to local ward members updating them on the commissioning process and highlighting that activities due that were expected to potentially cause concern to nearby residents.

26 March – **Plymouth Conservative Group** site visit

A group of Plymouth Conservative Councillors attended a site visit and received background information on the project and MVV.

26 March – **Devon County Council Leader** site visit

Councillor Hart attended a site visit and received an update on the project.

2. Summary of written queries received

One email query was received by the Partnership seeking information on the need for the facility, the democratic process, and potential health impacts from the stack emissions.

One request under the Freedom of Information Act was also received by the Partnership requesting the release of information following the publication of the Local Government Transparency Code 2014.

The partnership has responded to the all written queries received.

3. Media Enquiries and Liaison

The Partnership continues to work with and support MVV in their communication activities and MVV has now become the main contact for media and radio. A communications strategy was developed to transition from commissioning through to operations in conjunction with MVV Communications.

Enquiries have continued to come in from various sources: Plymouth Herald, Radio Plymouth Heart Radio, ITV, BBC Spotlight and Radio Devon, and much of the focus has been around the visible / audible activities on site such as the steam blow and the preparations for commencing operations. The other enquiries focused on the delay to the construction schedule, and the potential impact of costs to the council budget, specifically after the transition to a new collection regime.

In order to raise awareness and understanding of the cold and hot commissioning,, a video tour of the facility was produced by the Plymouth Herald in January 2015. MVV issued a broader media release to all media outlets explaining how the steam blowing process would work.

In addition to this coverage, 2127 letters and newsletters were posted to the residents of the local area (which was extended following consultation with local ward councillors). The MVV website was updated with details of the forthcoming works, any activities that would be noticeable and offering contact details for the Community Liaison Manager for any queries or concerns.

A small number of articles and photographs have been published in the local paper; however, no comments or complaints have come directly to the Partnership around any of the commissioning activities. MVV reports that since the start of the commissioning period it has received 6 enquiries in total; 5 relating to the visible steam and 1 requesting a site visit.

Jane Ford, MVV Community Liaison Manager, continues to work closely with the local community and primary schools and there have been a number of requests to her from various groups. These include opportunities of working with MVV, educational links and opportunities, interest in visits to the facility from local and professional groups, and support for applications to the North Yard Community Trust.