

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE IN SPELTHORNE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 21st September 2010 at Spelthorne Borough Council Offices, Knowle Green, Staines.

County Council Members:

Mrs Denise Turner-Stewart (Chairman)*
Mr Victor Agarwal*
Mr Ian Beardsmore*
Mrs Carol Coleman*
Mrs Caroline Nichols*
Mrs Denise Saliagopoulos*
Mr Richard Walsh*

Borough Council Members:

Councillor Denise Grant*
Councillor Gerry Forsbrey*
Councillor John Packman*
Councillor Jack Pinkerton
Councillor Robin Sider*
Councillor Richard Smith-Ainsley*
Councillor George Trussler

*** = present**

(All references to items refer to the Agenda for the meeting)

60/10**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (ITEM 1)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Trussler.

61/10**MINUTES (ITEM 2)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th July 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman made the following statement to update Members about Walton Bridge

“All the necessary permissions to build the new Walton Bridge are in place. However, the scheme has yet to receive ‘Full Approval’ from the Department for Transport, which would release the Government funding for the project. The approval process has been suspended pending the outcome of the Government’s comprehensive spending review.

An announcement on the review is expected on 20th October 2010. Only after the review will we know when or if the scheme will progress to the construction stage. If a positive decision is made on 20th October, and the Department for Transport

subsequently issues 'Full Approval' in October or November 2010, (thus releasing the funding for the project), construction could start in January 2011."

62/10

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (ITEM 3)

Declarations of interest were received from Mr Beardsmore and Mrs Turner Stewart as members of the County Council's Planning and Regulatory Committee. Councillors Forsbrey, Side and Smith-Ainsley, declared an interest as members of the Borough Planning Committee and therefore would not seek to comment on any planning matters relating to the Eco park proposals.

63/10

PETITIONS (ITEM 4)

Mr Malcolm Robertson presented a petition with 1,665 signatures which read: "We the undersigned object to having two untested industrial processing plants and power station at Charlton Waste Transfer Station in the Green Belt. These could pose threats to public health, visual amenity and wildlife habitat. We ask Surrey County Council to relook at their waste treatment and location policy."

Mr Robertson read out a statement to the Local Committee.

The Chairman thanked Mr Robertson and advised that the Local Committee would report the petition to the Cabinet meeting on 28th September when it would be considering the waste strategy.

64/10

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS (ITEM 5)

Seven questions were received and the answers are as set out in Annex 1 to these minutes.

65/10

PUBLIC QUESTIONS (ITEM 6)

Nine questions were received and the answers are as set out in Annex 2 to these minutes.

The Chairman had exercised her discretion within the Local Committee's protocol to allow more than the usual six public questions permitted.

66/10

PROPOSED ECO PARK AT CHARLTON LANE: UPDATE (ITEM 7)

The Chairman welcomed Ian Boast to the meeting who gave a presentation on the proposals giving particular attention to points of concern previously expressed by the Local Committee and residents as part of the consultation processes.

Resolved:

- (i) That the report be noted as part of the consultation process
- (ii) That further presentations would be offered to the Local Committee as required.

**67/10 £70,000 CAPITAL BUDGET FOR HIGHWAYS 2010/2011
(ITEM 8)**

Councillor Packman proposed and Mr Walsh seconded a second recommendation about the formula used for the allocation of these monies.

Resolved:

- (i) to approve the use of the £70,00 capital funds for Spelthorne as set out in paragraph 3.2 for Option 1 with the exception of the £5,000 A308 Kingston Road Cycle route and increasing Ashford footways to £10,000
- (ii) The Head of Highways be asked to review the formula employed for the allocation of the capital budget as the Local Committee was not satisfied that the amount of funding allocated to Spelthorne highways was sufficient in view of the volume of traffic and the associated impact this has on the condition of the roads within the Borough.

45/10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING (ITEM 9)

To be held on Monday 11th October 2010 in the Council Chamber, Spelthorne Council Offices, Knowle Green, Staines at 7pm.

The meeting, which commenced at 7.00pm, ended at 9.15pm.

Chairman.....

ANNEX 1

**SCC LOCAL COMMITTEE IN SPELTHORNE
21st September 2010****AGENDA ITEM 5****MEMBERS QUESTION TIME****Councillor Sider asked the following question:**

“ There are four businesses in Station Avenue, Shepperton who are finding it extremely difficult to trade due to commuters parking outside their premises. Shepperton High Street has a three hour parking limit. In order to assist these traders, can the Local Highway Manager inform me whether this three hour parking limit can be extended to encompass Station Avenue?”

The Parking Manager gave the following answer:

“ It may be possible to introduce parking controls at this location to assist these traders. As with all new parking controls, they will not be considered in isolation, but this request has been added to the list of sites to be looked at during the next parking review, which is currently scheduled to take place during February and March 2011.”

Councillor Sider asked the following question:

“The Highways bulletin for the month of September indicated that there were no highway works in Spelthorne. There are several potholes in Shepperton all of which are encircled with white paint and which cause regular damage to road vehicles. Can the Local Highway Manager inform me when these potholes will be repaired?”

The Local Highway Manager gave the following answer:

“The Highways Bulletin sets out the highway schemes and improvements that are programmed to be implemented during the following month. Minor maintenance work such as pothole repairs and the cutting back of vegetation are prioritised and rectified in accordance with our criteria.

I am unclear of the locations of the potholes that are referred to above but if the details are provided either my colleagues or I will advise accordingly. In general terms where potholes have been marked with white paint by SCC Officers they have been identified for repair, however we have had examples elsewhere across the Borough where parts of the highway have been marked by others.”

Councillor Sider asked the following question:

“Shepperton has again experienced a great deal of anti social behaviour accompanied by criminal damage at cost to local tax payers. Can the Director of Youth Services inform me of the times that Shepperton Youth Centre is open Monday to Friday and specify exactly what activities are taking place each evening?”

The Youth Development Officer gave the following answer:

“Shepperton Youth Centre is open Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays for Youth Development Service provision. The sessions provided are:

Monday, 7.15-9.30pm - Live and Direct. This is a music based provision split across both Shepperton and Ashford Youth Centres. Open for 13-19 yrs.

Wednesday, 7.00-9.30pm - Open Youth Club. Generic open access provision for local young people.

Thursday, 7.00-9.00pm - Targeted Youth Work evening, working with a targeted group of young people with identified needs.

From June 2010 all provision across Spelthorne is now free of charge.”

Councillor Sider asked the following question:

“The only footpath available from Shepperton to Walton on Thames is adjacent to the old Texaco garage in Walton Bridge Road. When it rains, water floods into the road to such an extent that pedestrians, mothers with prams, and those who are partially sighted are then drenched by passing vehicles showering water all over them. It is akin to running the gauntlet. I first drew this to the attention of the County Council prior to my being elected to Spelthorne Council in 1999. In view of the fact that the new Walton Bridge Scheme is now quoted from the project manager as 'Wait and See', will the local transportation manager agree with me that the County Council has a duty of care to those using this highway, and what plans are in place to alleviate this problem once and for all.”

The Local Highway Manager gave the following answer:

“I was disappointed to read your question as I had understood that following the extensive cleaning of the drainage system in this vicinity during October 2008, including some work at night, the problem had been resolved.

Neither colleagues nor I were aware that the ponding problem persists so our Maintenance Engineer has added the location to the list for inspection following the next heavy rainfall. He will then assess the extent of the problem and programme the gully cleaning machine to clean the system again.”

Cllr Ian Beardsmore (Sunbury Common and Ashford Common) asked the following question:

“Following a Freedom of Information request it has been widely reported in other parts of Surrey that senior officers of the County Council involved in the preparation of the County’s Minerals Plan enjoyed extensive hospitality supplied by minerals companies and minerals trade groups. How many of these groups and/or companies have interest in Spelthorne?”

Ian Boast Acting Head of Environment gave the following answer:

“The major event referred to by the press was the Minerals Products Association lunch, attended in 2009 by about four hundred and fifty guests. This event provides a forum for discussion for a wide range of organisations associated with the industry.

Clearly it is not possible to state definitively how many have interests in Spelthorne as many organisations are regional or national. However it is estimated that around twenty operators or consultants directly involved in minerals in Spelthorne attended the event.”

Mrs Nichols asked the following question:

“Charlton as the preferred site for Surrey’s ECOPARK

In the question that follows I am assuming that, notwithstanding the Capel Judgement, the Waste Plan is sound and that the proposed dual waste treatment facility proposed for Charlton complies with the Plan.

Surrey County Council, when questioned as to why Charlton is proposed for 100,000 tonnes of waste disposal using thermal technologies, has repeatedly replied that they are adopting the recommendations of the consulting group Enviro. I asked for the Enviro report to be published following the SCC Leader’s surprise announcement in December 2009 concerning the Charlton site. My request was initially refused by the Cabinet Member for Environment and the report was only made available after I submitted a Freedom of Information Request.

The Enviro report is surprising: one would expect it to detail various options for waste disposal with a view to identifying the choices that 1) are the most environmentally friendly and 2) achieve a fair distribution of waste facilities so that one area should not bear the brunt of disposing of all of Surrey’s residual waste. Instead the report simply weighs up the merits of six potential sites originally identified for thermal treatment in the Waste Plan against a given proposal, the principle of which seems to have been decided elsewhere. Furthermore, the Enviro report makes a number of assumptions about the Charlton site which are not in reality likely to be adopted. In particular 1) there is no intention to make use of the site’s proximity to the motorway or rail (which in any case is a branch line to London not serving Surrey) 2) there is no plan to use residual heat energy in the surrounding built environment making proximity to the area irrelevant for this purpose. Also, the report makes no assessment of the significant competing environmental pressures in the area around Charlton.

When these assumptions are adjusted it is not clear why Trumps Farm has ceased to be the preferred site as, in the Spring of 2009, it was identified to have a capacity to process 160,000 tonnes of waste and was being actively acquired for that purpose. At that time there was also a recommendation to process food waste in South West Surrey.

The last time a decision concerning methods of waste disposal and associated sites was placed in the public domain was in February 2009. The next time the decision process is accounted for is in February 2010 in a report to Cabinet in which the significant decisions concerning Charlton are described as existing in confidential reports.

Why has the decision making process behind the development of sites not been transparent since February 2009?

Why has Trumps Farm ceased to be the preferred site for thermal treatment (the definition of which includes the current proposed technology for Charlton) in North Surrey; what paperwork exists to show the changed decision and when will it be published?

Does Surrey County Council recognise that Spelthorne residents believe that they should have been consulted on the principle of a dual waste processing facility at Charlton and that SITA's communication around their commercial plan is not a sufficient substitute for consultation? "

Ian Boast Acting Head of Environment gave the following answer:

"It is understood that the selection of the Charlton Lane site for the proposed Eco Park is a matter of public concern. Therefore I have addressed this issue at some length to ensure that councillors and the public understand how the decision was taken and that there has been, and will continue to be, substantial provision for consultation with local residents.

In January 2006, the county council's Executive approved a draft Waste Disposal Authority Action Plan. The Council subsequently adopted this plan later that year. At that time the Waste Disposal Authority's preferred method of dealing with residual waste was through energy from waste incineration technology. The Action Plan identified the preferred sites for energy from waste technology as Clockhouse Brickworks, Capel; land at Trumps Farm, Longcross and Charlton Lane, Shepperton.

The report to the Executive in January 2006, went on to recommend that two energy from waste plants be developed to deal with residual municipal waste. The smaller of the two plants, some 100,000 tonnes per annum capacity, should be developed at Capel in the south of the county. A larger plant of 160,000 tonnes capacity should be developed in the north of the county at either Trumps Farm or Charlton Lane.

At the time the preference was to site the northern energy from waste incineration plant at Trumps Farm. Both the Charlton Lane and Trumps Farm sites had planning considerations. In addition, as the Executive report of January 2006 states, there were also 'some clear operational benefits in choosing the Trumps Farm site over the Charlton Lane site'.

Those 'clear operational benefits' related to the existing operational use of the Charlton Lane waste transfer station and community recycling centre and the fact that if a 160,000 tonne per year energy from waste facility were to be

developed on the Charlton Lane site, it would be necessary to close the site to the public and to local authority and trade customers for the duration of the building works.

The council's World Class Waste Solution proposes further reduction of waste arising as well as increased levels of recycling. This means that there will be less residual waste to be disposed of than was anticipated when the Waste Disposal Authority Action Plan was first drawn up in 2006. Some 160,000 tonnes instead of the 270,000 tonnes originally proposed.

The emergence of Batch Oxidation System gasification technology as a viable alternative to energy from waste incineration enables plant to be constructed on a much smaller scale. The plant proposed for Charlton Lane will deal with only 60,000 tonnes of waste per year rather than the 160,000 tonnes proposed for the energy from waste plant at Trumps Farm. The configuration of the plant also allows for a much smaller building to house the process. The maximum building height proposed for the Ecopark is just over 18 metres, compared with a height of around 40 metres that would be required for an energy from waste incineration plant. The height of the stack is also significantly less, 45-49 metres as compared to 80 to 90 metres for an energy from waste incineration plant.

The reduced scale of the buildings also means that it would be possible to continue to operate the Charlton Lane facility during the construction of both the gasification plant and anaerobic digestion plant. In addition the council has managed to secure short-term capacity for Spelthorne's residual waste at the Lakeside energy from waste facility at Colnbrook and therefore the operational pressure on the Charlton Lane site, during construction, is reduced.

Since the scale of the buildings, types of processes and footprint of the proposed Eco Park are very different to that of a 160,000 tonne per year energy from waste incineration facility and since there had been significant changes to the adopted Waste Plan as a result of the removal of Capel as a allocated site, Waste Disposal Authority officers considered that it was necessary to undertake a new planning assessment for the proposed Eco Park.

A firm of planning consultants, Enviro were therefore commissioned to undertake this assessment and this was used to inform the report to cabinet on the 'World Class Waste Solution' in February this year. The report, which was produced in November 2009 has been published on the council's website.

As a result of this detailed analysis, the Waste Disposal Authority believes that the Charlton Lane site is the most appropriate site for the development of an Eco Park.

The principle of using the Charlton Lane site for waste processing, including thermal treatment, was subject to extensive public consultation during the

development of Surrey Waste Plan. The council adopted the Waste Plan in May 2008 following an examination in public, with the inclusion of Charlton Lane as an allocated site

The planning application that is being developed by Surrey Waste Management will include a thorough and up to date alternative site assessment. The planning application will be subject to public consultation and residents will be able to make their views known with regard to all aspects of the application, including the suitability of the Charlton Lane site for the Eco Park.

The demonstration of the suitability of the site is a material consideration for the council's Planning and Regulatory Committee when they consider the planning application.

Therefore there has been and will continue to be further consultation with residents in relation to the principle of a waste processing facility at Charlton Lane."

Mrs Nichols asked the following question:

"In the legal decision which removed Capel Manor from the Waste Plan the judge was not asked to consider the suitability of Surrey's other preferred waste processing sites. However, consideration of the principles behind his judgement would presumably apply equally to the other sites in the Waste Plan thereby raising doubts over the legality of the Plan.

How confident is Surrey County Council that the Waste Plan is legally sound and what external legal advice has the Council been given on this matter?"

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services gave the following answer:

"The judicial review brought by the Capel Parish Council was limited to the Capel site and the period in which challenges could be made has long since expired. Following the High Court decision the Council took advice on the effect that the judgement would have on the plan from leading counsel in March 2009. He advised that all the other sites in the Plan remain as statutorily allocated sites. The Council therefore regards the plan as legally sound."

ANNEX 2

AGENDA ITEM 6

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Mr Keith Johnson asked the following question:

"We are informed by the Environment Agency that the UK is the worst Nitrogen Dioxide polluter in Europe and that it has failed to reach the pollution limits by the extended deadline which expired in June 2010.

Furthermore, Surrey County Council was fully aware of the evidence of Nitrogen Dioxide pollution - measured by Spelthorne BC's monitoring system across its borough - during the Waste Plan Consultation period.

The A308 and A244 plus other hotspots failed to comply with the pollution standard. **Therefore in Spelthorne's particular circumstances no additional nitrogen dioxide pollution can be tolerated.**

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) in their draft consultation for the 30,000 tons/p.a. Deerdykes anaerobic digester in Scotland - which is only $\frac{3}{4}$ the size proposed for Charlton - estimates there will be a 14% take-up of the $40\mu\text{ gm/m}^3$ nitrogen dioxide emission standard. They state:

"These predictions therefore suggest that the impact cannot be viewed as insignificant. The fact that background levels around the installation are likely to be elevated due to the close proximity of the A80 and feeder roads means that relatively modest contributions can have a deleterious impact on air quality and this could be relevant here."

Furthermore, the Charlton site lies under a take-off flight path only 6km from Heathrow and lies alongside the M3.

With the evidence background, how can SCC justify proceeding with a siting policy that is **knowingly unsustainable on air pollution grounds alone?"**

Ian Boast Acting Head of Environment gave the following answer:

"I am very aware of that the site is located in an air quality management area and considerable effort is going into the design of both the Batch Oxidation System gasification plant and the anaerobic digestion plant to ensure that emissions are reduced to the lowest possible levels.

In relation to the specific question about the anaerobic digestion facility, Surrey Waste Management's technology experts have reviewed the Deerdykes decision document on the SEPA website, and note that the application was based on higher NOx emissions (500 mg/m^3 , rather than the 350 mg/m^3 proposed for the emissions from the AD gas engines at Charlton Lane) and, rather more importantly, a stack height of 5 metres. The Charlton Lane Eco Park will have a taller stack, which will be shared with the Batch Oxidation gasification facility, in order to improve dispersion of pollutants. As a result, the highest contribution to annual average ground level concentrations

due to the emissions from the AD plant and the Batch Oxidation gasifiers will be less than 1% of the air quality objective, which is defined by the Environment Agency as an insignificant contribution.”

Mr Richard Kennedy asked the following question:

“Question. Given the real risks involved, is it not irresponsible to site this installation within 250 metres of a residential area?”

In support I quote Officer Report to Cabinet (World Class Waste Solutions) 2nd February 2010:

“There are operational risks associated with Advanced Thermal Treatment relating to the need for pretreatment of waste and a high level of due diligence.

In addition, it is currently unlikely that banks will provide lending for this technology as there is not a history of effective operation, and commissioning tests to ensure effective performance and management of risks will be required.”

In mitigation, Mott Macdonald says risks are acceptable as:

The specific technology proposed by the waste contractor (Planet technology developed by Ascot Environmental) incorporates a batch loading system which reduces the complexity (and cost) of the technology by removing the need for pre-treatment and provides a more robust operation.

- Two plants are successfully in operation (in Iceland and Scotland) and the plant in Scotland has been tested on residual waste delivered from Surrey. Further inspection and discussion of the specific gasification technology has taken place with the technology providers and experts, providing further assurance to our advisers.

- SITA UK will provide funding for the plant (guaranteed by their parent company Suez Environnement), so there is no need for bank finance. SITA have signed a contract to develop six plants in the UK on a merchant basis, indicating a high degree of confidence in the technology. A planning permission has been achieved for the first plant, at Avonmouth, Bristol.

- Detailed negotiations with SITA have commenced to manage the risks associated with operating the plant, and to provide commercial and operational contingency plans in the event of unacceptable performance levels.

(In addition, Richard Parkinson, at the meeting at the Runnymede Centre said, given the use of leading edge technology, risk could not be ruled out.)

N.B. The plants in Scotland and Iceland have not been without problems, operationally in Scotland and with emissions in Iceland. Waste in Scotland is pretreated, Surrey’s is not. A small sample is not proof that this will work with Surrey’s waste – and what goes in determines what comes out. Is Planet technology proven operationally?

The fact that SITA is bankrolling the operation does not override the banks' concerns or mitigate the risk. Financial return often influences risk. The fact that Avonmouth has awarded planning permission should not influence Surrey. Circumstances could be vastly different (e.g. how far is the Avonmouth plant from the nearest residential area?). Finally, as a resident of Charlton Village I don't like the sound of 'unacceptable performance levels'.

Ian Boast Acting Head of Environment will give the following answer: "The Cabinet report of 2nd February 2010 made it clear that there were operational risks associated with gasification technology. The report also made it clear that what was being proposed was a particular type of gasification technology known as the Batch Oxidation System and that risks associated with this particular type of gasification technology were 'considered capable of acceptance.'

It is also important to draw a distinction between the operational risks, which effectively relate to the efficiency of the plant and health and safety risks, which relate to the effects on employees and the public.

The fact is that the Scottish plant has been operated successfully but inevitably there will be issues that need to be resolved during the commissioning phase. This is quite common with commissioning of all new plant. Engineers from Surrey Waste Management's parent company, SITA have been closely involved in the development of the plant and consider that problems that have been experienced can be rectified by fitting a redesigned boiler and that there is no concern with the actual Batch Oxidation gasification process. These design changes have been incorporated into the design of the plant proposed for Charlton Lane.

The proposed Batch Oxidation gasification plant would be strictly regulated by the Environment Agency under the terms of an Environmental Permit. Controls would include continuous monitoring of the process and of flue gas quality to ensure that at no time there was any danger to the environment or human health.

Quite simply, the Environment Agency would not issue a permit for the plant if it had concerns about the proximity of the plant to residential areas."

Mr Malcolm Robertson asked the following question:

"On the **12th January 2010**, the County's Environment and Economic Select Committee was told that gasification should form part of the County's "World Class Waste Solution".

Page 5 of the Committee report states that "**two plants are successfully in operation (in Iceland and Scotland)**". On the same page was the statement "**immediate combustion of gases avoids production of noxious by-products**".

The Surrey Cabinet received an almost identical report on the **2 February** containing the phrases mentioned above.

1. Prior to those Committees meeting, the Icelandic plant mentioned had already been checked by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (S.E.P.A.), which found that **Emissions of certain substances were found to be in excess of the required limit values.**

In other words, because of its emissions, such a plant would not have been allowed in the E.U.

2. Furthermore, according to S.E.P.A., **the Scottish gasifier, (near to Dumfries) was not even operational during January and February, as it had broken down.** After just three months of commissioning, major problems had been encountered with the superheater tubes of a boiler, attributed to fouling, high temperature and corrosion. (N.B. It should be remembered that the operational life of a gasifier will be twenty years, and for high pressure tubing to corrode after just a few months is extremely worrying).

Since the Committees met things have got decidedly worse.

3. A third gasifier started up on the Isle of Wight in late 2008. It was the only one in England to burn municipal waste. By the end of May 2010 it had shut down, having emitted more than eight times the legal limit for dioxins, some of the deadliest chemicals known.

4. During March 2010 the Dumfries gasifier started up again. About 47 breaches were recorded in the period up to the end of May. These included three operations of the by-pass stack, an emergency process, which allows unfiltered venting of the gas chamber to be made direct to air.

My question is therefore, will the County Council allow gasification plants within Surrey, and so put the health, and even the very lives of its constituents, at risk?"

Ian Boast Acting Head of Environment gave the following answer:

"The Cabinet report of 2nd February 2010 made it clear that there were operational risks associated with gasification technology. However it is important 1) to draw a distinction between the operational risks, which effectively relate to the efficiency of the plant and health and safety risks, which relate to the effects on employees and the public; and 2) to consider the use of the Batch Oxidation system which the council's technical advisors Mott MacDonald have described as having risks that are 'capable of acceptance'

The Scottish plant has been operated successfully but inevitably there will be issues that need to be resolved during the commissioning phase. This is quite common with commissioning of all new plant. Engineers from Surrey Waste Management's parent company, SITA have been closely involved in the development of the plant and consider that problems that have been experienced can be rectified by fitting a redesigned boiler and that there is no concern with the actual gasification process.

With regard to the plant in Iceland, you have quoted selectively from the non-technical summary of the decision to grant an Environmental Permit for the Scottish plant.

What the document actually says is ' The proposed emissions to air from the installation have been compared with the maximum limits specified by the Waste Incineration Directive and to other relevant benchmarks (and to the actual emissions from the plant in Iceland). In general, it is expected that the anticipated emissions will lie below the required limit values specified by the Waste Incineration Directive. Emissions of certain substances from the plant in Iceland were shown to be in excess of the required limit values. This was attributed to the specific operational conditions of this plant that do not reflect the configuration of this installation'

Having visited and taken into account data from the Icelandic plant, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency was sufficiently confident to grant a permit for the Scottish plant.

The Energos gasification plant in the Isle of Wight uses completely different technology to that being proposed for the Eco Park and therefore is not relevant as a comparison. As far as I understand, the problem at the Isle of Wight plant was not due to the gasification process itself but was in fact due to a failure of the air pollution control system, that had been carried over from the previous use of the site as an incineration plant.

I would re-iterate the point, that I made above, that officers and members are clear that there are operational risks associated with gasification technology. SITA's engineers are confident that the issues experienced at the commissioning phase of the Dumfries plant can be dealt with satisfactorily and that any design changes will be incorporated in subsequent plants.

The proposed gasification plant would be strictly regulated by the Environment Agency under the terms of an Environmental Permit. Controls would include continuous monitoring of the process and of flue gas quality to ensure that at no time there was any danger to the environment or human health."

Mrs Lesley Robertson asked the following question:

" Surrey's World Class Waste Solution aims at a recycling rate of 70% by 2013/14, based on a municipal waste figure of 540,000 tonnes per annum. The Cabinet report recognises that "no Authority in the top quartile of English authorities are currently achieving 70%, nor do they have recycling targets beyond 70%".

But there seems to be no published target above 70% for Surrey either. A remark that is beginning to be heard is "get to 70% and burn the rest".

The latest plan, - gasification of residual waste, concentrates a considerable amount of effort and money into the disposal of just 60,000 tonnes of waste. WRAP confirms that incineration costs are by far the most expensive, probably double that of landfill gate fees (including tax). Then there is the choice of the process.

The Cabinet was told this particular system was chosen because it removed "the need for pre- treatment".

The Surrey Waste Plan is quite clear about thermal treatment and it unequivocally states;- "Firstly, it has to be demonstrated that the waste cannot practically and reasonably be re-used, recycled or processed to recover materials. Essentially this requires the sorting and separation of waste to enable 'front-end recycling". It continues "This requirement will ensure that the thermal treatment plant does not crowd out the potential for recycling or otherwise gaining benefit from the waste prior to its thermal treatment".

We have been told that unsorted black bin bag waste is destined for the gasifier, but this can contain many things, some hazardous, and some recyclable. Many items which could be recycled never are because they are collected in street cleaning, or from households that cannot use a two bin system, for example.

A Materials Recovery Facility would have helped separate these items, but unfortunately it seems the present MRF will be scrapped, and the promised state of the art one will never appear. It seems more likely that the recycling rate will drop.

My question is therefore why has Surrey County Council gone out of its way to choose a system (gasification/ incineration) which is extremely costly, potentially hazardous, and contravenes the County's Waste plan, when it could be using those funds for sorting and recycling?"

Ian Boast Acting Head of Environment gave the following answer:

"I do not accept the assertion that the Batch Oxidation System gasification technology is extremely costly, potentially hazardous or contravenes the Surrey Waste Plan.

In relation to recycling, I would reiterate what was said in the Cabinet paper on the World Class Waste Solution, that no Authority in the top quartile of English authorities are currently achieving 70%, nor do they have recycling targets beyond 70%.

The devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales have both recently set a recycling target of 70% but do not anticipate achieving this until 2025.

Whilst I agree it would be desirable if everything could be recycled, it is a fact that not all waste can be recycled and that not all residents will fully participate in recycling schemes.

The facility that is proposed for Charlton Lane will only deal with a proportion of the 160,000 tonnes per year of residual waste that will be left after 70% has been recycled. Recycling rates would need to rise to almost 90% in order for there to be less than 60,000 tonnes of waste to dispose of. There will therefore be no danger of the plant 'crowding out' recycling
The proposed Eco Park will include a bulking facility for recyclable materials that are collected at local Community Recycling Centres and recycling banks.

Ultimately any material that is not recycled must either be sent to landfill or to some sort of thermal treatment plant.

The number of landfill sites that are available for disposal of waste is declining and the cost of landfill is rising as result of the landfill tax escalator of £8 per tonne per year. By 2014, landfill tax alone will be £80 per tonne. In 2009/10 Surrey taxpayers paid out £8.4 million in landfill tax alone. If we continued to carry on landfilling waste at the same rate that bill would have doubled to £16.8 million by 2014.

The reason for the landfill tax escalator is to encourage waste producers and local authorities to consider other more sustainable methods for dealing with waste. Continuing to landfill waste in holes in the ground is unsustainable and it is far better to use that waste as a resource either to recycle into new products or to recover value in the form of energy. The proposed Eco Park will generate significant quantities of electricity, which will reduce the need for electricity to be generated from non-renewable fossil fuels.”

John Seaman asked the following question:

Proposed "Eco Park" at Charlton Lane, Shepperton

“When and how will the Environmental Impact Assessment for the Proposed "Eco Park" at Charlton Lane, Shepperton be published? Will there be adequate time, between publication and Surrey County Council's Planning Committee meeting when the planning application will be considered, for members of the public to consider the assessment and prepare presentations to the Planning Committee?”

Ian Boast Acting Head of Environment gave the following answer:

“The Environmental Assessment will form part of the planning application, which is due to be submitted by Surrey Waste Management at the end of October 2010. The planning application is unlikely to be determined until at least February 2011 and therefore there will be adequate time for the public to make representations.

In order to ensure residents are informed as early as possible, Surrey Waste Management is releasing information ahead of the formal submission of the application. For example information on highways and traffic has already been published as has the environmental assessment scoping report and the site layout plan.

Additional information will continue to be provided on issues such as drainage, odour and ecology ahead of the formal submission of the planning application.”

Clare Robinson gave the following question:

“On 1st September 2010 Shropshire CC Planning Committee voted unanimously to block a proposal by VEOLIA Environment Services to develop a 90000 tpa energy from waste facility at Battlefield in Shropshire.

Has Surrey CC been advised why the proposal was refused and will this have any impact on the planned Eco Park at Charlton Lane?"

Ian Boast Acting Head of Environment gave the following answer:

"I am aware from published documents of the reasons why planning consent was refused for the Shropshire Plant. However the type of plant, the proposed site and the local circumstances are completely different to what is proposed for Charlton Lane, I therefore think that it is extremely unlikely that this decision will have any bearing on a planning application for an Eco Park at the Charlton Lane site."

Mr P Francis asked the following question:

"In view of the compact layout of the Eco Park proposed for Charlton Lane, what precautions are being built into the design to protect the public (men, women and children) using the waste transfer facilities from the adjacent industrial processes? These processes will generate high temperature and pressure, risk of exposure to toxic gases and steam, along with the potential danger of fire and explosion."

Ian Boast Acting Head of Environment gave the following answer:

"As with the current operation, the biggest risk to members of the public is from Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) movements into and out of the site. In this respect the public areas will be completely separated from those areas used by HGVs and changes would be made to the site entrance in order to further improve segregation.

Both the gasification and anaerobic digestion processes will be regulated by the Environment Agency under the terms of an Environmental Permit. The design of the plant will incorporate measures to control emissions and prevent the risk of explosion or fire."

Mr McLuskey asked the following question:

"As a resident in an area very prone to flooding I took considerable interest in the recent report to the Local Committee on flooding. As I gather that the Committee was not able to devote much time to its meeting I would like to ask (1) What is the planned programme of (flood) works SBC has in hand and (2) Could we have more details of the Local Resilience Forum the report talks about?"

A joint answer from Surrey County Council and Spelthorne Borough Council was as follows:

"The planned works are for the on-going maintenance of ordinary watercourses that Spelthorne have riparian responsibility for. To be completed in the Autumn is clearance work on critical ditches running along Moor Lane, Staines; Shortwood Avenue; Shortwood Common, by Sykes Drive and a ditch running parallel to Church Lammas, Staines. Checks will also be made on critical ditches that were cleared earlier this year/end of last year.

The Surrey Local Resilience Forum (SLRF) coordinates the response of Surrey's emergency services, health authorities, and local authorities to major

incidents. Membership consists of the Chief Constable of Surrey Police, the Chief Executive of Surrey County Council, the Chief Fire Officer, the Chief Executive of Surrey Ambulance Service, a representative Chief Executive of the Primary Health Care Trusts, a representative of Surrey Borough and District Chief Executives and senior representatives from Hospital Trusts, the Armed Services, the Environment Agency and the Government Office for the South East (GOSE). The SLRF agencies are involved in joint emergency planning, training and exercises.

SLRF has produced a number of leaflets to provide information to both residents and businesses in Surrey during times of emergency. This includes advice on business continuity, emergency rest centres, the Surrey Trauma Support Service and emergency planning and preparedness. These can be found on the Surrey County Council website at:

http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/sccwebsite/sccwspages.nsf/LookupWebPagesByTITLE_RTF/Surrey's+Local+Resilience+Forum+Leaflets?opendocument

Should you require any further information please contact SLRF business support group: **Telephone:** 01483 630078 **Fax:** 01483 634847 **Email:** slrf.business.support@surrey.pnn.police.uk. You can also visit the website <http://surreyalert.info>

Mr Eric Ollington asked the following question:

"Planning blight is when you are unable to sell your home or other property because of a road or airport is possibly going to be built nearby. Houses in Charlton and Halliford will find it difficult or impossible to sell because of the "so called" Eco Park. What is the current protection in planning law? What provision has been made?"

Ian Boast Acting Head of Environment gave the following answer:

"Planning blight applies when people cannot sell their properties because they are going to be acquired for redevelopment by a public body some time in the future. The channel tunnel rail link was an example of this situation. In relation to the Eco Park this situation does not arise.

There are provisions to pay compensation under the Land Compensation Act if smell, fumes, noise or vibration affect a property. Again, this situation will not arise in relation to the Eco Park, therefore no provision is required.

The Eco Park is designed to be an attractive, landscaped development, reducing local traffic and securing adjacent land as retained meadow. I therefore do not accept the assertion made in the question."