

CABINET – 23 JULY 2013

ITEM 4(b) - PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Public Questions

Question (1) from Ms Debbie Pullen

Are you aware of the fiasco regarding Wallace Fields Junior (WFJS) and Infants (WFIS) schools' admissions over the past four years (please refer to letter emailed from Marsha Mclean-Anderson) and that as a result of this several local children (for whom WFJS is their closest school and within 740m) are highly likely to be displaced to their 13th nearest school after they leave WFIS and will be forced to leave the supportive school community that they are a part of? Are these six and seven year olds just expected to pay the price of the mistakes of Surrey Local Authority by jeopardizing their education and well-being or can something be done to help them, for example a guaranteed place in WFJS or a financially supported increase in the pan of WFJS for September 2014?

Question (2) from Mr Chris Netherclift

We have always said that the Charlton Lane site is too small for an efficient thermal treatment plant. Despite the specification in SiTA's tender advertisements being for a 60,000 tonne per year gasifier the selected design and build company could not come up with a proposal that could match that specification. The site is therefore clearly not large enough to accommodate an efficient ATT plant.

- (i) How small would the throughput of an incinerator on the Charlton Lane site have to be before SCC admitted that they have chosen a site that is too small?
- (ii) Any arguments from such places as Wisley that pollution will harm the plants cannot be considered valid as SiTA contend that there is negligible pollution. Will SCC now re-examine their site selection process to ensure that a site is chosen that is of sufficient size to be able to handle a significant amount of waste on one site using an incinerator that can actually do its job efficiently whilst actually providing heat and power to the local infrastructure?
- (iii) Alternatively, are SCC determined to put an incinerator on the Charlton Lane site no matter how efficient it is?
- (iv) The 2010 JMWMS includes the following "Table 4.3.1 Key Strategic Policies Policy 5 We will adhere to the waste hierarchy, with residual waste treatment preferred to landfill. Recovery and disposal facilities will be delivered to ensure compliance with the Landfill Directive. We will restrict the use of landfill to 0% by 2013/14". How can this Key Strategic Policy fit with the current proposed incinerator which by design will send approximately 8,000 tonnes per year back to landfill?
- (v) If Mott MacDonald's concerns are correct and the incinerator cannot be classified as a gasifier will Surrey County Council accept that they have yet again selected the wrong incinerator for the wrong site?

Question (3) from Mr Ian Robinson, Sunbury on Thames

Surrey County Council has admitted recently that the latest proposal for a continuous gasification system is more efficient than the earlier proposal for several batch gasification systems. This confirms my concerns that the optimal, proven system may not have been researched and identified yet. This, together with Cllr. Furey's regrettably misleading 24-page

report and presentation to your meeting on 25 June 2013, leads me to ask the following Question:-

How can you be fully satisfied that all the many concerns expressed by local residents have been resolved adequately?

It is no good simply saying that your officers and consultants have investigated the scope for optimum solutions "within the SITA contract". For a project life of 25 years, with major implications for local residents, such as my wife and I who live two miles downwind of any toxic emissions from the plant, the investigations should "think outside the box" and include all safe options in the fast-developing "Energy from Waste" industry.

Question (4) from Mr Malcolm Robertson, Charlton Lane Community Liaison Group Member

Contrary to information supplied previously to the Cabinet, the proposed new gasifier fails to accord with the Council's own Waste Strategy.

Public consultation and agreement with Surrey's 11 Boroughs and Districts produced a Waste Strategy specifying a 60,000 tonne capacity Batch Oxidation System gasifier.

What has now been proposed as a replacement is a 45,000 tonne net capacity continuous feed gasifier, which is totally different from the Batch system, has 25% less capacity, and lacks both the agreement of the Boroughs and any consultation with the public. (The gasifier has a gross capacity of 55,000 tonnes, but after removing recyclables and oversize items the capacity drops to 45,000 tonnes).

Surrey's own 'due diligence' mentions that stoppages may occur up to 6 times daily depending on the nature of the wastes being processed, but regrettably the document appears not to address the issue of 'tarring', a particular concern of DEFRA's, and the cause of the demise of the boiler of Surrey's reference plant in Dargavel, Dumfries, after just 4 months normal operation.

Furthermore the due diligence neglects to mention that both gasifiers in the UK burning municipal waste have required major re-engineering and on several occasions emitted carcinogenic dioxins substantially in excess of National and International limits. Both plants were regulated, but nevertheless these breaches occurred.

Bearing in mind these deficiencies and the failure to comply with the County's own Waste Strategy, should it not be recognised by the County Council that a comprehensive due diligence must be completed first, and the consultation and agreement to a new Waste Strategy obtained before it embarks on colossal expenditure, and yet another adventure into gasification?

Question (5) from Mr John Seaman

If residual waste is processed to make RDF (Refuse Derived Fuel) which is then combusted in a fluidised bed gasifier at the proposed Eco Park at Charlton Lane, Shepperton how much material in total will be sent to landfill each year? If the same amount of residual waste was burnt in an Energy from Waste incinerator how much material in total would be sent to landfill each year?

What does this mean for Surrey during the expected operational life of the Eco Park

including Surrey County Council's "zero waste to landfill" policy, landfill gate fees, landfill tax, transport costs and continued availability of scarce landfill capacity?

Question (6) from Mr Peter Crews, Sunbury

If the Waste PFI Contract is cancelled, how can Surrey County Council deliver Option 3 (waste disposal using existing infrastructure) for £94M less than Option 2 (Surrey builds the plant proposed for Charlton Lane)? If Surrey can deliver Option 3 for £94M less than Option 2, what is to stop SITA delivering an option which is £94M cheaper than Option 1 (SITA builds the plant proposed for Charlton Lane)?

Questions to receive written answers

Question (7) from Mr Adrian Corti, Shepperton

Regarding the possible variation of the contract for waste between Sita and Surrey CC, have likely changes in plant throughput, EU legislation, UK Government subsidies e.g. ROCs, etc. been taken into account in the financial assessments, especially regarding the new proposed gasification incinerator?

Question (8) from Mr Brian Catt

At June cabinet I asked if the proposed eco park options would be considered objectively and openly, and was assured they would - limited to within SITA's contract - but verbally that this restriction would not affect the choices, or the selection of best value options. The report now submitted is not consistent with the public data on MSW treatment costs I have sent to Cabinet members, and offers no like for like transparently costed comparison to support its conclusions. Given Surrey planning officer's ex-ante preference to impose Option 1 stated at public meetings, and the hundreds of Millions of ratepayers money involved, will the comparable costings be made available for public inspection, and for detail verification by independent auditors with the data necessary to make a thorough like for like comparison of value to ratepayers?