

Questions from Anne Henshaw, Chair of the CPRE.

Councillor Bridget Wayman – Cabinet member for Highways, Transport and Waste

RE: Everleigh Household Recycling Centre

At a meeting of the Pewsey Area Board held on 8th January 2018, Wiltshire Council provided an update in respect of the Everleigh HRC, which is known to be under scrutiny currently by the Environment Agency because of drainage problems. The update highlighted various issues as follows:

- a). Concerns expressed by the Council's new contractors, FCC Environment, who became responsible for the site on 2nd October 2017, that previous operation of the site did not conform with Environmental Regulations.
- b). As of 6th October 2017, local residents have been banned from recycling an extensive range of otherwise normally recyclable materials to the site. They have been directed to place these materials in the container for household waste.
- c). FCC Environment's further concerns relating to the condition of the sealed drainage tank, and potential leakage therefrom, could appear to be justified in the light of the Council's admission that the "concrete retaining walls are heavily cracked and a significant amount of corroded reinforcement bar is visible." Prima facie, this admission might be regarded as displaying negligence on the part of the Council, and/ or the previous Operator, due to failure to properly inspect and maintain the site. Such defects normally occur only over a considerable period of time, and concrete degradation in such circumstances is a common and widely known problem.
- d) The Council's update refers to estimated costs to rectify matters being established, prior to a submission to Cabinet to decide on priorities for capital investment. Information obtained informally by CPRE indicates that the sum involved to rectify the situation at Everleigh would be in the region of £80,000.

Question

1. Why was the fitness for purpose of the Everleigh site evidently not monitored properly over what is likely to have been a considerable period of time and timely work, maintenance and repairs not carried out?

Answer

Responses to be provided

Question

2. In order to establish who was ultimately responsible for this failure to act, what statutory, or other legal obligations applied to
 - a) Wiltshire Council, as the Owner of the site

And

- b) Hills Waste Management as the previous Operator thereof, and what, if any, were the provisions written into the contract between the Owner and the previous Operator with regard to responsibility for inspection, maintenance and repairs?

Answer

Responses to be provided

Question

3. Will Cabinet confirm that any necessary expenditure to rectify the situation will be funded by the Council and made available forthwith to restore this site to full function pending resolution of who may be legally liable and to what extent for the cost of rectification? Similarly, will Cabinet also confirm that it will fund any associated clean-up costs at the site should these be required?

Answer

Responses to be provided

Question

4. Can Cabinet confirm that a full and proper inspection has been made of all the other Council owned waste recycling sites, and that the Council, and FCC Environment, as the new incoming Operator, are fully satisfied that no similar (or different) problems exist at any of these sites, that would impede full operation in accordance with all existing regulations?

Answer

Responses to be provided

Question

5. Local residents are well aware that it has long been the Council's wish to close the Everleigh site down on the grounds of expense and usage, without, however, seemingly ever appreciating its value and importance to a very rural community. Will Cabinet provide an undertaking that Everleigh will NOT be closed down either because of its present problems, or for any associated drop in usage, given that these difficulties, prima facie, would seem to have been due to a serious lack of competence on the part of the Council, as the Owner of the site, and/or Hills Waste Management as the previous Operator?

Answer

Responses to be provided