



Little Marlow Sewage Treatment Works Liaison Committee minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Little Marlow Sewage Treatment Works Liaison Committee held on Monday 11 April 2022 in MS Teams, commencing at 11.05 am and concluding at 11.53 am.

Members present

Mr M Braint, M Overall and D Watson

Others in attendance

L Bee and A-M Kenward (sectary), Ms J Outhwaite (EA), Mr N Rowcliffe (member of the public) and Mr A Scott (TW)

Agenda Item

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr P Emmett (LMPC), Ms F Fisher (BC Flood Management Officer) and Mr J Morley (TW).

2 Minutes of the previous meeting

The Chairman gave the following update on actions since the last meeting.

- The Chairman had been in contact with local MP Joy Morrissey.
- Dominic Collyer had left Thames Water (TW) and had been replaced by Jake Morley.
- A motion was passed at the November 2021 Full Council where it was decided the Leader of the Council would write to Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Chief Executive of water companies “with sewage treatment works discharging raw sewage into the Thames, Ouse, Wye and other waterways across Buckinghamshire”. A copy of the full motion could be viewed on the [Buckinghamshire Council website](#). A copy of correspondence including responses could be viewed on the online directory.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held 2 August 2021 were AGREED as an accurate record.

3 Action Log

The Chairman referred to the action log circulated with the agenda and asked those

present to review their outstanding actions.

The action log would be circulated once a quarter to keep attendees up to date. A copy of the latest action log would be uploaded to the online directory.

4 Update on the July 2021 Compliance Incident

Ms J Outhwaite and Ms L Bee were present from the Environment Agency (EA).

Ms Outhwaite gave the following updates:

The following points were discussed:

- Following investigation, the EA had concluded no breach of the environmental permit had taken place, therefore no Compliance Assessment Report (CAR) was necessary. This was due to there being no management condition within the current permit.
- However the matter was still considered a pollution incident needing further investigation. Ms Outhwaite was unable to comment further on the ongoing investigation. Final action would be taken by the Enforcement Management Team.
- A Member of the Committee queried the minutes of the last meeting which stated sewage had not reached Spade Oaks Lake. Ms Outhwaite explained that officers had visited the site but had been unable to substantiate whether the sewage had reached the lake. Officers had copies of videos taken by members of the local Bird and Anglers Clubs but no witness statements at this time. No firm decision had been reached and as above the investigation was still ongoing.
- The current permit was under review. This was not expected to result in new powers for the EA but would broaden the remit with new inclusions such as a management condition.
- Regarding environmental health on the site it was confirmed that workers safety was overseen by the Health and Safety Executive and public safety was overseen by Public Health. Ms Outhwaite would confirm if/how Public Health were made aware of the July incident. **ACTION Ms Outhwaite.**
- Ms Outhwaite stated the EA used “dry weather flow” as an indication of an increase in demand. When dry weather flow increased year on year this was an indication that demand was increasing. Ms Outhwaite would share details of the dry weather flow at Little Marlow. **ACTION Ms Outhwaite.**

5 Thames Water Price Review Group

Mr A Scott, Regional Operations Manager for Thames Valley, Thames Water (TW), gave the following updates:

- The Price Review Group (PRG) was in the process of reviewing the Assets Management Plan (AMP) which currently ran from 2019 to 2024.
- The Asset Planning Team (AMT) believed that even with planned growth within the catchment area the current site capacity would be adequate until 2030 (the next PRG period). However, the AMT acknowledged the need to improve resilience at Little Marlow around sufficient asset redundancy. The

cost of this work was estimated in the region of £15m.

- TW were approximately £500m behind on their current capital programme due to rises in material and utility costs as well as issues with the availability of parts and labour. This would mean the approved work programme set to start at Little Marlow in 2024 would likely be delayed. Mr Scott noted that this Committees continued support for resilience would be important. Ms Outhwaite, Environment Agency (EA) confirmed they would also be working with TW to ensure adequate resilience.
- TW would be talking with the Environment Agency (EA) regarding acceptable temporary resilience measures that could be introduced on site in the meantime. **ACTION A Scott to provide update on talks with the EA.**
- Due to incidents in 2015/16 Little Marlow was in the TW top 13 most polluting sites in the Thames Water area and would be eligible for funding priority on this basis. This was a grouping of 13 rather than individual numbers being assigned.
- The March 2021 incident had been found to be due to a misaligned piece of rotating equipment one of the four tanks. It is possible this misalignment had occurred at installation causing deterioration over the long term. The other 3 tanks shown no signs of misalignment or associated deterioration. All testing and maintenance of equipment was taking place in line with manufacturers recommendations.
- The site had performed well over Winter to date. Mr Scott would provide details of all spills by month. **ACTION Mr Scott**

A Committee Member had previously asked about the possibility for mitigation actions, for example sand boards at the perimeter and an entrance ramp, to prevent sewage from escaping the site in the event of a spillage. Mr Scott would speak to colleagues and provide feedback. **ACTION Mr Scott.**

Mr Scott confirmed that TW used the measurement “population equivalent” when calculating whether capacity would be sufficient which included trade effluent. The current site capacity was 186,000 population equivalent. Mr Scott would provide further details of the current and projected figures. **ACTION Mr Scott.**

6 Site Updates

Mr J Morley, Local Government Lead for North Thames Valley, Thames Water, was not present to give an update on the site.

7 Questions

Cllr S Wilson had previously submitted several written questions. Answers would be circulated with these minutes. His questions submitted 13 April 2022 would be circulated to Thames Water for response.

8 Date of next meeting

The Chairman proposed meeting again in September 2022 and asked those present to provide suitable dates.