

Cabinet Meeting: Monday, 17 March 2025

Question from: Clive Wilkinson

Question to: Councillor Durrans, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Services and Communities

QUESTION

Regarding my last question to cabinet on 10th February 2025, I again didn't receive an adequate or logical answer, at best it could have been deemed to be disingenuous.

I pointed out that in the past the same incinerator had been refused an environmental permit twice for the following reasons:

Impact on the Sowerby Bridge Air Quality Management Area

NOx levels

Conflicts when the site is managed by 2 regulators

Plume dispersal issues due to the proximity of nearby woodland

These reasons continue to apply at the Belmont site and so the decision the officers made to approve an environmental permit here was wrong.

Will cabinet now stop defending the indefensible and rescind the environmental permit?

If not, then would Cllr Durrans be prepared to meet with a small group of local residents and their councillors for them to explain to her why the permit approval was so wrong?

Response

The two permits are unfortunately not comparable. Although the locations are close in proximity, they are completely different sites, both operate differently and therefore need to be assessed in their own right.

Given that the sites operate differently the permits also differ regarding the fuel types to be burnt. The Mearclough application sought to burn wood waste whilst the Calder Valley Skip Hire SWIP permit allows refused derived fuel to be burnt. This will result in different pollutants being emitted at different levels so again they must be assessed individually.

It is relatively common given the nature of the waste management sites for operators to be regulated by different regulators so there is clear understanding between both the Environment Agency and the Local Authority of the differentiation of the two regulatory roles at play for this site. As regulators both the Environment Agency and the Local Authority have the same aim which is to protect the public health and the

environment and this is achieved by effective communication and information sharing and should a joint approach to any issues be required then this will be swiftly undertaken.

In respect to the question regarding Nox levels, the main contributor to Nox levels in the Sowerby Bridge AQMA is from road traffic contributions. The application submitted by Calder Valley Skip Hire has demonstrated as far as is practicable using air quality modelling that the effects on different receptors including one on the edge of the AQMA closest to the incinerator will be negligible.

AQMA's are closely monitored and reported on. This will continue in the Sowerby Bridge AQMA and as is standard practice across Calderdale action will be taken should air quality pollutant levels increase which will include an investigation into what is causing the increase.

The plume dispersal at CVSH has been thoroughly investigated as part of the determination process for the SWIP. Continuous monitoring is a requirement at the site and results will be audited by the Council quarterly and where required on demand. In addition, the Council will continue the air quality monitoring around the location and these results will be analysed to ensure air quality requirements are being met.