

**Advanced Proteins Liaison Group Meeting
4.00pm Friday 9th October 2020.**

The following members were present:

Chair	Karen Bradley (Member of Parliament) Rebecca Kirby - Karen Bradley's Office
Environment Agency	Steve Thomason – Site Inspector
Councillors:	Cllr Mike Bowen- SMDC District Council Jack Brereton (Member of Parliament)
Advanced Proteins:	Barney Williams - Technical Director Charlotte Wood - Minutes
Animal Health:	See apologies
Representing Residents:	Patricia Duffy Ian Dakin Joe Smith
Apologies:	Stephanie Young (Trading Standards) Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) Stafford Office Cllr Harold Jennings - Cheddleton Parish Council

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Karen Bradley (KB) welcomed all to the meeting.

KB offered apologies from the Trading Standards representative, the APHA representative, Cllr Harold Jennings.

2. Updates from:

Environment Agency

Steve Thomason (ST) explained that since the last liaison meeting on 24 April 2020, 31 reports had been made to the Environment Agency, 25 of which related to odour and 6 relating to noise. The majority of these were towards the end of April and the start of May and were reported as raw material type odours. Mike Bowen (MB) asked if these odours were directly related to the factory or could be farm smells and ST responded that indeed slurry spreading activities did coincide with the increase in complaints and therefore they cannot be ruled out.

ST added that the noise reports were not able to be substantiated or identified, other than being described as humming noise.

ST added that the Environment Agency were also notified of a spillage on Weston Road, Meir which was outside of their jurisdiction but did involve the regulators.

Ian Dakin (ID) raised that a resident had sent a complaint to him about a buzzing noise back in May. BW asked what date this was and ID responded that it was since Advanced Proteins took over but he is unsure on any further details. ID to establish more information. ST clarified that the complaint reporting procedure was still the same and should be followed to allow it to be investigated.

ST explained that there had been one Schedule 5 notification since the last liaison meeting, which Advanced Proteins are obliged by permit to report. This was due to power loss which effected the Thermal Oxidizer and Bio Bed. The oxidizer reset immediately and there were no odour reports when the power blip happened.

ST added that the action tracker was being actioned with progress back on track following lock down. All smoke testing had been continued, and the output was proven to be good.

ST added that there has been an increase to incoming raw material to site which is comparable to levels seen in previous years, which is within the permit. ST explained that the new site owners are now processing their own materials.

ST confirmed that there were no non-compliances in terms of odour management and the plan is being maintained effectively.

ID stated that he had feedback from residents which indicate they have still got an ongoing problem with odour but this seems to be attributed to road vehicles and one resident in Kingsley expressed that there is a protein smell when the wind is in a certain direction.

Jack Brereton (JB) stated that his main concern is regarding the significant spillage which happened on 22 June 2020 whereby an Advanced Proteins vehicle braked sharply which resulted in offal landing in a number of gardens. JB continued that it is a significant concern and although there was respite of 12 months without a spillage, it does seem to be an issue. JB asked what further action can be taken to attack these spillages.

Barney Williams (BW) explained that the spillage was caused due to a member of public pulling across an Advanced Proteins vehicle from a junction, resulting in the Advanced Proteins driver having no alternative than to break quickly; in-cab CCTV footage confirmed this series of events. Around 15kg of product did unfortunately spill onto the road and pavement but BW is not aware of any product going into any gardens. BW confirmed he visited the location with the clean up team. BW confirmed that a full and effective clean up was carried out, including revisiting the site late in the day to ensure that any residual odours had gone. The Company reacted in a comprehensive manner and BW did speak to residents at the time, including covering the cost of valets of vehicles that drove through the spillage.

BW explained that the trailers must have breathable element to them because of the nature of the expansion of offal and the catastrophic potential if a vessel was sealed in warm weather and the impact of the decomposition process. BW added that refrigerated vehicles had been discussed at Government level in 2008, 2013 and 2015.

This is a regulatory matter, however there was no buy in from the meat industry in previous years due to the cost and the negative impact on carbon footprint.

JB added that the final journey route into the site is a congested part of the road network and these vehicles come into conflict with the local traffic. JB explained that this is a highway safety issue with the need to consider what safety measures could be improved on the road network.

BW explained that to give context, the fleet does over 3 million miles per year with only 2 incidents in the past 18 months, one of which was a vehicle owned by another rendering factory, which Advanced Proteins attended and carried out the cleanup.

BW acknowledged that even a single spillage is taken very seriously by the Company.

KB stated that she was willing to table a written question regarding an amendment to environmental bill for transport if this would help to raise the issue and asked BW to email the name of the regulation it would come under. Perhaps this would support the potential for refrigerated sealed vessels.

BW explained that the transportation of animal by-product trailers is a European issue (Reg., 1069/2009 & 142/2011) which has been brought to the house of commons on previous occasions.

Advanced Proteins

BW explained the Company has been under new ownership for around 8 months and although it has been an extremely unusual period due to the current pandemic, the site has remained fully operational.

BW explained that stringent environmental controls are still in place at the factory such as perimeter temperature checks, restrictions on visitors and measures to make the workplace covid-secure.

BW added that the owners are investing in the business and they have some very exciting projects planned for the future.

A new state of the art process is being considered for the factory which adapts one of the current animal by product materials which the Company collects, to produce innovative products that will compliment the core business. The technology is very advanced and the process design ensures that all environmental controls have been considered to ensure there is no impact on the local community. BW added that this is a very significant investment for the site and will not only protect the livelihoods of existing staff but will also provide a significant number of employment opportunities going forwards. Advanced Proteins will continue to consult with the group as the projects develops and a planning application will also be submitted to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council. Should plans be approved by SMDC, the project will provide a significant boost for the local economy.

BW explained that Advanced Proteins are working through the action tracker, although there are no significant plans this side of Christmas.

BW explained that he and ID were working with Paul Jones on the app but had not yet been able to secure date for a demonstration from the local resident. ID added that he will get a cost from some app developers in the health and safety field to try and move the project forwards.

ID asked if Advanced Proteins would consider planting wild flowers on the grassy areas of the land. Joe Smith (JS) explained that there was no reason from a cultural point of view why this could not be furthered. MB added that a climate change portfolio holder wants to advocate orchards which would make sense for them to go alongside wild flowers. JS confirmed that that might be possible if the operational factors are considered.

Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)

BW explained that there had been no direct reports other than avian flu season picking up with a strain present in Europe and testing taking place in the UK.

Trading Standards

ST confirmed that there were no further reports to add to the meeting.

3. Any other business

MB raised that a resident had noted an increase in road usage by wagons on Rownall Road. BW confirmed that a site called Sylvesters which is on Rownall Road has been used for storage purposes so there will be a small increase in traffic.

Approval was sought and granted from Animal Health for this operation. BW asked MB when this issue was raised and MB confirmed he did not know the timescale but it was within lockdown. BW confirmed that the drivers are not allowed to use Mill Lane and the product will be removed from Sylvesters over the next few months.

Pat Duffy (PD) asked BW if he had an update on the Staffs Farmers site. BW confirmed that as he is no longer a Pointon employee he is not privy to that information. MB explained that they are waiting for the legal Section 106 to be signed.

4. Date of next meeting

30 April 2021, 4pm.