

Update briefing on Cleave Farm and Crossparks, Templeton



Scrutiny Committee June 2017

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This is an update following on from the briefing to MDDC Scrutiny Committee on 10 April, as delivered to Templeton Parish Council on 24 May 2017 by Cllr Andrew Moore.
- 1.2 Complaints have continued to be received by Environmental Health (EH), falling into two broad categories – nuisance odour from spreading and odour and ill-health symptoms being linked to emissions from material in the Crossparks pit.

2.0 Spreading and odour nuisance

- 2.1 Complaints were received from the Palm Springs area focussing on spreading around the property quite intensively over the Easter holiday period. EH established that spreading in this manner was contrary to acceptable best practice and also had the potential to cause a statutory nuisance.
- 2.1 Consequently, a formal Abatement Notice was served under the nuisance legislation prohibiting spreading of any slurry, manure or anaerobic digestate in specified fields on weekends or bank holidays. The notice came into effect on 26 April in advance of the first May bank holiday with a mandatory 28-day appeal period. To date the notice has not been appealed (final appeal date of 24 May) and has also been complied with.

3.0 Crossparks pit

- 3.1 During the last two months, complaints and diary logs have continued to be received, mainly from the occupants of the two properties closest to the pit – Palm Springs and Mount Pleasant. These outline various health complaints and also report impactful odours.
- 3.2 The pit activity has varied throughout this period, from being full with a mix of slurry and digestate to being part or near empty. We have not been able to establish a clear correlation between complaints and activity. On some occasions reports from residents have been co-incidental with a recent fill and/or mix of material in the pit for example and other occasions have however also been reported when the pit has not been refilled recently and was substantially empty.

- 3.3 EH have derived a comprehensive monitoring programme. This programme was technically reviewed in advance and endorsed by the expert authority, Public Health England (PHE - specially their Chemical and Environmental Hazards Division at Chilton).
- 3.4 Under this programme, MDDC EH officers have themselves carried out:
- Gas monitoring directly over the pit using sensitive, calibrated monitoring equipment provided on loan. Monitoring was for Hydrogen Sulphide, Methane, Carbon Monoxide in addition to assessing levels of Oxygen and Carbon Dioxide (if levels of these latter gases was found to be suppressed below normal it would be indicative of other gases being present).
 - 76 gas samples were taken over the pit with no methane or hydrogen sulphide detected; levels of the other gases were normal
 - An additional 45 odour assessments in the locality with statutory odour nuisance not found in connection with material being stored in the pit
 - Undertaken sampling of untreated water from the private supplies at Mount Pleasant and Palm Springs for the full bacteriological and chemical (inorganic/organic) suite of tests available. No adverse chemical results were found and the bacteria levels were normal for any untreated private water supply
 - Also taken samples of the mains water from the same properties and tests with all results being negative and/or acceptable
 - Reviewed other potential sources and pathways for exposure with the potential to cause harm to health or nuisance with nothing identified for concern or further assessment
- 3.5 Also as part of the monitoring programme, MDDC have commissioned independent, accredited third-party gas monitoring at a property close to the Crossparks pit. This was undertaken both outside and inside the property continuously over a two-week period and we await the verified results of that sampling.
- 3.6 Activity at the pit was outside of EH control during the above monitoring, however it commenced immediately followed a period of refilling, mixing and subsequent emptying of the pit, concluding with a period of the pit use being dormant and material levels were very low. This pattern of use was not atypical with other periods observed previously including when complaints have been received
- 3.7 EH officers have continued to advise residents to report any clinical symptoms directly to their GP.

4.0 The next steps

- 4.1 We will continue to monitor compliance with the spreading notice and collate information in respect of the pit. Further correspondence has been received from one complainant at point of drafting this update and will be reviewed in due course. The

outstanding monitoring results will be considered when they are available as outlined below.

- 4.2 EH will also continue to undertake nuisance investigations including site visits where possible.
- 4.3 In April, a multi-agency meeting between Public Health Manager/Director of Operations (MDDC) and representatives from PHE, Environment Agency (EA) and DCC Public Health was held to discuss issues around the Crossparks pit. It was agreed:
- PHE would review all MDDC diary logs received to date and correlate with location and any known activity information on our case file. This review has been completed and EH are awaiting feedback
 - PHE will review all monitoring results when available and advise MDDC of any significance. This will in turn be related fully to the residents of Palm Springs
 - EA will undertake a further sample of material from the pit (date tbc)
 - With the permission of the occupants, all MDDC monitoring results will be shared between the agencies

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