

Planning and Regulatory Committee

Tuesday, 3 July 2018, County Hall, Worcester - 10.00 am

		Minutes
Present:		Mr R C Adams (Chairman), Ms P Agar, Mr R M Bennett, Mr G R Brookes, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr P B Harrison, Dr C Hotham, Mr J A D O'Donnell, Mrs J A Potter, Prof J W Raine, Mr C Rogers, Ms C M Stalker and Mr P A Tuthill
Also attended:		Mrs E A Eyre attended as local councillor for Agenda item 5.
Available papers		The Members had before them: <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);B. A copy of the summary presentations from public participants invited to speak (previously circulated); andC. The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2018 (previously circulated).
986	Named Substitutes (Agenda item 1)	Ms C M Stalker for Mr P Denham.
987	Apologies/Declarations of Interest (Agenda item 2)	Apologies were received from Mr P Denham, Mr A Fry and Mrs A T Hingley.
988	Public Participation (Agenda item 3)	Those presentations made are recorded at the Minute to which they relate.
989	Confirmation of Minutes (Agenda item 4)	RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
990	Proposed construction of an anaerobic	The Committee considered a County Matter planning application for the proposed construction of an Anaerobic Digestion (AD) storage tank (part retrospective) on land at Springhill Nursery, off A44 near Vale Green Energy,

**digestion
storage tank
(part
retrospective)
on land at
Springhill
Nursery, off A44
near Vale Green
Energy,
Springhill
Nursery, near
Fladbury,
Persnore,
Worcestershire
(Agenda item 5)**

Springhill Nursery, near Fladbury, Persnore, Worcestershire.

The report set out the background of the proposal, the proposal itself, the relevant planning policy and details of the site, consultations and representations.

The report set out the Head of Strategic Infrastructure and Planning's comments in relation to the Waste Hierarchy, the Location of the Development, Landscape Character and Visual Impacts, Residential Amenity (Noise, Odour and Health Impacts), Traffic and Highway Safety, the Water Environment, Ecology and Biodiversity, Cultural Heritage, and Other Matters (Economic Impact, Mineral Safeguarding, and Integrity of Railway Line).

The Head of Strategic Infrastructure and Planning concluded that the applicant stated that the proposal was required to supplement two existing and operational tanks / chambers on site, which were experiencing technical faults due to issues with the type of agitators that had been used. The internal agitators had broken and the stored material had solidified. This meant that repair could not be undertaken until the storage facilities could be emptied. The applicant was proposing that the material would be emptied into the proposed storage tank. In the future this proposed tank would then be used, so that the two existing tanks no longer had to be filled as much as presently, which would help prevent this issue arising again. The applicant was also proposing that the internally mounted agitators on the existing plant would be replaced with externally fitted agitators. The proposed storage tank would also have an externally fitted agitator.

It was considered that this proposal would modernise and improve the operation of the existing AD plant, in that it would help to improve the operation, efficiency and resilience of the plant, which was considered to be a sustainable waste management development that supplied a source of renewable energy. It was considered that the development accorded with the National Planning Policy for Waste and the Worcestershire Waste Core Strategy in relation to the waste hierarchy, as it would support and enhance the existing AD plant.

The proposed development formed part of the curtilage of an existing waste management site (AD plant), was ancillary to the existing AD Plant, would be a scale appropriate to the location and rural character of the area, and therefore, complied with Policies WCS 3 and

WCS 6 of the Waste Core Strategy, relating to the Geographic Hierarchy and compatible land uses, respectively and Policies SWDP 2, SWDP 8 and SWDP 12 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan relating to the Development Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy, and development in rural areas.

Due to the location of the proposal within the existing operational greenhouse, biomass boiler and AD plant site, it was considered that the proposed development would not have an adverse or detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the local area.

Based upon the advice of Worcestershire Regulatory Services and Public Health England, the Head of Strategic Infrastructure and Economy considered that the proposal would have no adverse noise or odour impacts on residential amenity or that of human health, and the proposed development would assist with improving the operation of the existing AD plant, thereby, helping to reduce the number of breakdowns where the tank needs to be opened, and therefore, reduce the risk of odour emissions escaping.

The Head of Strategic Infrastructure and Economy was satisfied that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact upon traffic and highway safety.

Based on the advice of the Lead Local Flood Authority and Severn Trent Water Limited, it was considered that the proposal would not have an adverse effect upon the water environment.

It was considered that subject to the imposition of an appropriate condition as recommended by the County Ecologist relating to a landscaping scheme, the proposal would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on ecology and biodiversity at the site or on the surrounding area.

The Head of Strategic Infrastructure and Economy considered that due to the distance from designated heritage assets, the screening offered by the glasshouse, topography and the sites boundary vegetation that the proposed development would have no adverse impact upon the nearby Scheduled Monument, Fladbury and Lower Moor Conservation Areas or Listed Buildings.

The proposal was likely to have impacted a known heritage asset of archaeological significance, which was an undesignated heritage asset. The Head of Strategic

Infrastructure and Economy was strongly disappointed by these actions, but considered based on the advice of the District Archaeologist that a condition should be imposed requiring a programme of archaeological work to an area to the south of the proposal to better understand the archaeology of the wider site and to offset the heritage loss that had occurred.

It was noted that the NPPF afforded significant weight to economic growth. By securing existing jobs, the proposal would support communities and thereby provided social and economic benefits. In so far as it provided these social and economic benefits, it was considered that the proposal would accord with the aims of the NPPF.

Whilst the proposal was located within a mineral safeguarding area, it was considered that due to the small footprint of the proposal (approximately 616 square metres), and being located within the confines of an existing glasshouse, biomass boiler and AD plant site, it was not considered prior extraction would be appropriate in this instance.

Taking into account the provisions of the Development Plan and in particular Policies WCS 1, WCS 2, WCS 3, WCS 6, WCS 8, WCS 9, WCS 10, WCS 11, WCS 12, WCS 14 and WCS 15 of the Adopted Worcestershire Waste Core Strategy and Policies SWDP 1, SWDP 2, SWDP 4, SWDP 6, SWDP 8, SWDP 11, SWDP 12, SWDP 21, SWDP 22, SWDP 23, SWDP 24, SWDP 25, SWDP 28, SWDP 29, SWDP 30, SWDP 31 and SWDP 32 of the Adopted South Worcestershire Development Plan, it was considered the proposal would not cause demonstrable harm to the interests intended to be protected by these policies or highway safety.

The representative of the Head of Strategic Infrastructure and Economy introduced the report and commented that members had visited the site and noted that construction of the anaerobic digestion storage tank had been completed and therefore the application was now fully retrospective. Members also observed the location of the nearest residential property on Evesham Road (approximately 260 metres from the tank), the approved crematorium, Bredon Hill AONB, the scheduled monument, the Cotswold Railway Line to the south of the site, the Public Right of Way running along-side the site, the villages of Fladbury to the east and Lower Moor to the west, the storage clamps, the biomass boiler, the existing storage tanks, the hopper, the digesters and glasshouse. He advised of a correction to the reference

in paragraph 110 in the report to the sensitive receptor at "Braden View" which should read "Bredon View".

He advised that in response to the comments of the District Council Archaeologist, the applicant had submitted an Advice Note with the intention of removing the recommended archaeological condition. As a result, the District Council Archaeologist had further commented that they had visited the site and confirmed the structure had been fitted into the bund. However the earth surrounding the development had some roman pottery present therefore to confirm that the development did not truncate the archaeology, a single trench should be inserted to confirm the presence and depth of the archaeology and a condition imposed accordingly.

Mr Barnes an objector to the application addressed the Committee. He commented that during consultations prior to planning permission he had been assured that noise, smell and light pollution would not be a problem. This had not been the case. Since the site had been in operation he had been affected by the sound of machinery day and night including banging, revving of engines, reverse beeps and loud talking and shouting. The worst effects were during the early hours of the morning and at weekends. The site created noxious smells. These varied day to day from mildly unpleasant to days when he had to retreat into the house with the windows closed.

He was concerned that as the site was already failing to comply with the planning permission regarding noise and emissions, would there be further noise and emissions especially with increased movement on site of heavy machinery? Did this have to be a 24 hour 7 day operation? Industrial sites normally closed overnight and at weekends. He believed this land was designated agricultural land. What the applicant was proposing was industrial. He had health concerns regarding air pollution and had this been tested? What future plans existed for expansion as this did appear to be an ongoing development? His grave concern was the site would expand closer to his home and the village. Living daily with the effects of the management of this site, the applicant was doing exactly as they wanted with little consideration for their neighbours and the community. This did not bode well for the future.

The following queries were raised with Mr Barnes:

- Mr Barnes explained that the noise from the

reversing beepers had quietened down but there had been an occasion where a vehicle had broken down and its replacement did not have the appropriate noise softener

- Had the odours emanating from the site worsened or improved recently? Mr Barnes indicated that overall the odour had improved although there were days when it was quite strong dependent on the prevailing wind direction
- Mr Barnes argued that the air pollution levels at the site should be tested to assess the impact on human health. The representative of the Head of Strategic Infrastructure and Planning responded that Public Health England had not objected and did not consider the activity to be harmful to public health
- How often had complaints been made to an authority about noise and odour and what was the reaction? Mr Barnes indicated that he had lost count of the number of times he had made complaints to the applicant and the Council. It was difficult to establish the right contact however the last complaint was dealt with very well by the applicant.

Andrew Bille and Andrew Tenney addressed the Committee on behalf of the applicant. Mr Bille commented that the application was part retrospective due to the urgency of needing the additional storage as the old storage facilities were failing and the operator was keen to be proactive towards finding a solution quickly to prevent any adverse environmental impacts occurring.

The development would enable Vale Green Energy to improve their operations, which would enable them to continue operating in a responsible manner. The modernisation and improvement of the operations would result in more reliable processing of stored materials. There would increase efficiency as well as environmental and sustainability benefits to the locality. It would also result in less risk of adverse odour being caused. In design terms the new storage facility would be modern and highly functional and identical in visual terms to that already on the site which were not visually harmful.

He added that the additional storage chamber was needed to supplement the two already approved and operational chambers on site. These were experiencing technical difficulties due to mechanical failures relating to the type of agitators that had been used. The scheme should therefore be seen as part of Vale Green Energy's

commitment to managing the operations on site in a socially and environmentally responsible way.

The company understood the concerns expressed by the local community relating to the management of odour on the site. Vale Green Energy remained committed to communication with the concerned parties whilst refinement of the management arrangements and processes were undertaken. It should be remembered that the scheme being applied for was an attempt to improve the situation on site, which along with other measures demonstrated the site's evolution as the AD technology advances. The company was in regular dialogue with the County Council Enforcement team relating to the wider site which would continue into the future to ensure management methods remained compliant with historic conditions.

As concluded in the Officer's report, there were no other material considerations which had not been either dealt with during the submission or which could not be mitigated by way of condition. In summing up, when considering the merits of the proposal in the context of the Development Plan, national planning policy, and other material considerations, the planning advantage, in the overall public interest lies firmly in favour of a grant of planning permission.

The following queries were raised with Andrew Bille and Andrew Tenney:

- Mr Tenney confirmed that the process was continual and that the anaerobic digester needed to be fed 24 hours a day
- Mr Tenney confirmed that the vehicle used on site had a white noise reversing bleeper but there had been an occasion when the vehicle broke down and the substitute vehicle did not have the appropriate noise softener. He anticipated that this problem would be addressed in the future
- Following the installation of the new tank and the eventual clearing of the blocked tank, was it intended to increase the capacity through the plant? Mr Tenney advised that there was a limit on the physical gas volume within the plant and therefore the food stock entering the plant would be reduced and the gas output maximised
- Mr Tenney confirmed that a complaints log was kept on site however he could not be certain that all complaints were referred to the company. The applicant did not have a dedicated phone line for

- complaints but could look at this for the future
- Mr Tenney advised that the retro-fitting of an agitator would allow extraction to be undertaken externally without the need to open the tank
 - Mr Tenney confirmed that four people worked on site as well as a maintenance team of 8 staff on call
 - Irrespective of the plans for the new storage tank, Worcestershire Regulatory Services had noted that the blocked storage tank would need to be opened creating an odour problem. Mr Tenney responded that the material in the blocked tank would take 6 – 8 months to break down and this could be done without the need to open the tank. Although the tank would be out of action, it would continue to produce a small quantity of gas that was utilised through the plant
 - Mr Tenney confirmed that the new storage tank had the latest technology and the motor and drive were external to the tank which would allow easier maintenance
 - Mr Tenney commented that it was not possible to retro-fit anything to the blocked tank until it was empty but the technology was available to allow external agitation
 - The new storage tank had been sited on top of a bund. Why was it not located at a lower level? Mr Tenney commented that the storage tank had been formed into the bund in order to reduce the overall height. Mr Bille added that its location also avoided the possibility of damaging the archaeology on the site
 - Was the odour evident on the site visit as a result of the material presently being kept in the open bays? Mr Tenney confirmed the grass crop stored in the open bay was the source of the odour. In the future, the grass would be located at another site. He confirmed that the new storage tank would be completely sealed and therefore odourless
 - Why had the new storage tank not been screened with some form of camouflage to blend in with the environment? There was a sheen on its dome which could be observed from the Cotswold AONB. In addition, the proposed tree-planting would take time to mature. Mr Tenney commented that the sheen would fade over time. It would be possible to look at some form of camouflage netting for the storage tank. The trees would be planted in the autumn. He would endeavour to plant some semi-mature trees to speed up the

screening process

- Was it possible to introduce an automated feed process to avoid the use of JCBs on site? Mr Tenney responded that the blending process was too complicated to be suitable for automation
- Had the applicant considered painting the dome in a colour which conformed with the Malvern Hills AONB approved template of suitable colours for the countryside? Mr Bille responded that it was not possible to paint the tank but gave an assurance that the initial colouring would become duller over time
- Was it possible to replace the existing vehicles with electric vehicles to cut the noise levels? Mr Tenney commented that the vehicles used were standard agricultural vehicles. When an existing vehicle needed replacing, he would consider purchasing a quieter unit
- Did the operator comply with existing condition in relation to odour? Mr Tenney considered that the existing conditions were being complied with and furthermore the high odour items were being removed from the site
- In response to a query, Mr Tenney explained that only one of the storage bags had become solid and the additional liquid had been transported off-site to allow capacity to carry on operating the site
- Confirmation was sought that the new storage tank was not being introduced to increase the capacity of the plant. Mr Bille responded that the storage tank was being introduced to increase efficiency with no additional vehicle movements. With this greater efficiency it was possible that more gas could be sent to the National Grid. He confirmed that there would be no increase in material brought to the site. Mr Tenney indicated that the tank that was solid would probably become a gas storage bay rather than a tank. The agitation process would still be applied even if the tank was used for this purpose
- What percentage of the material processed at the site was internal/imported? Mr Tenney advised that product was moved internally between the digester tanks. About 20% of the product would be imported depending on circumstances. The product would be stored in the clamps. All the product from the glasshouse was sent to another site because of concerns about odour levels
- What assurance could be given that the conditions from the previous permission would be adhered to? Mr Tenney commented that the product

presently stored on the site would be removed to reduce odour. This application was for a sealed tank and therefore there would not be any additional odours. Mr Bille added that mistakes had been made previously but the ultimate aim was to make the process odourless

- In response to a query, Mr Tenney explained that the limiting factor in relation to the capacity of the site was the gas upgrade and engine i.e. the volume of gas that the plant could take. He confirmed that with the new tank in operation, the site was presently operating at maximum capacity
- Mr Tenney confirmed that should the applicant wish to increase the capacity of the site, new equipment would be needed as well as a new National Grid connection and therefore there was no intention of increasing capacity
- What was the rationale and justification for the new storage tank? Mr Tenney explained that the new storage tank had enabled the plant to work at full capacity and produce the amount of gas necessary to fulfil contractual obligations. It would allow less feedstock to be used to maximise gas output
- Mr Tenney confirmed that new rules and regulations about spreading of waste materials meant that in the future more material might need to be stored at the site.

In the ensuing debate, the following principal points were raised:

- The local councillor expressed her disappointment that the application was now fully retrospective in nature. It was also unfortunate that aspects of the process that produced the most odour were not located nearer to the railway line and away from local properties. The applicant had argued that this was due to archaeological cost. The retrospective nature of the application and the applicant's attitude to archaeology showed a lack of respect for due process. She was keen that officers enforced the archaeological conditions to prevent the avoidance of archaeological costs. It was important that the existing and future conditions were complied with. Condition 17 of the original planning permission in relation to odour was continually broken by the applicant. Would the Odour Management Plan be updated as a result of this permission? The representative of the Head of Strategic Infrastructure and

Planning responded that a condition was recommended for this application to control the release of odour from the tank. This proposed condition did not relate to the Odour Management Plan which formed part of the extant permission

- The local councillor commented that the report from the applicant's consultant had indicated that there would be occasions where the new closed tank would need to be opened. In addition, on the site visit, Mr Bille had intimated that it was likely that odour would never be totally eliminated. The representative of the Head of Strategic Infrastructure and Planning responded that the applicant had confirmed that in the event of a build-up of gas they would need to vent gas as a fail-safe for the system. This application would not resolve background odour issues at the site. However, it was considered to be a step in the right direction to regularise the day-to-day odour problems. The tank with an externally fitted agitator would make the plant more resilient in the event of a break down
- The local councillor queried whether a condition could be introduced to prevent an increase in capacity. The representative of the Head of Strategic Infrastructure and Planning advised that the original permission did not place a limit on feedstock throughput. The permission for this tank did not impact on feedstock levels. It was not considered possible to control or reasonable to put a limit on throughput via a condition. Should the applicant wish to increase the capacity of the site it would require the submission of a further planning application
- The local councillor requested that a landscaping condition be added to the permission. The representative of the Head of Strategic Infrastructure and Planning advised that a condition was recommended that an ecological enhancement plan be introduced which included a seed mix suitable for skylarks. If members wished to include trees, the wording of the landscaping condition could be amended accordingly in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee
- The local councillor requested that a condition be added for camouflage netting of the tank to prevent glare
- The local councillor queried whether a condition could be added to reduce noise outside normal working hours. The representative of the Head of

Strategic Infrastructure and Planning considered that the addition of a condition of this nature would amount to a reconsideration of the previous permission. A process already existed for dealing with complaints raised about the site

- The local councillor commented that although she had concerns about this site, to refuse the application would create a bigger problem for local residents
- In response to a query, the representative of the Head of Strategic Infrastructure and Planning advised that the applicant was entitled to ask for planning permission retrospectively so no weight should be given to this issue when considering the material planning considerations
- Over a number of years conditions had not been adhered to by the applicant and this was a concern. The representative of the Head of Strategic Infrastructure and Planning commented that there were two strong conditions attached to the existing permission relating to odour and noise which requested that complaints were made to the operator who kept them in a log to be shared with the local planning authority. This information was important to allow issues to be investigated by the County Planning Authority
- The applicant had demonstrated a willingness to be compliant with planning permissions and had confirmed that the throughput would not be increased and therefore permission should be granted
- There was sympathy with the concerns of local residents however the technological difficulties had been recognised and if technology of this kind was to be used in the future, adjustments must be made. The tank would be sealed with a limited impact on the environment and heritage and no impact on the rail line and few objections. The application was supported by a number of national and local policies. It satisfied the main principles of sustainability and the SWDP
- Although the operators had indicated that they did not wish to increase the capacity of the plant, circumstances could change and there would be no control mechanisms in the future. An increase in capacity would magnify all the existing difficulties on the site. Would it be possible to enter into a legal agreement to limit the capacity or a condition added? The representative of the Head of Strategic Infrastructure and Planning advised that the engine limited the capacity and

should the applicant wish to increase capacity, a further planning application would need to be submitted. He would recommend that a condition of this nature was not added because this application was a completely separate permission

- It was agreed that further conditions be added relating to landscaping and camouflage netting with the wording to be agreed by the Head of Strategic Infrastructure and Planning in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

RESOLVED that planning permission be granted for proposed construction of an Anaerobic Digestion (AD) storage tank (part retrospective) on land at Springhill Nursery, off A44 Near Vale Green Energy, Springhill Nursery, Near Fladbury, Pershore, Worcestershire, subject to further conditions relating to landscaping and camouflage netting – the wording to be agreed by the Head of Strategic Infrastructure and Planning in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee and subject to the following conditions:

Approved Plans

- a) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the details shown on submitted Drawing Numbered C1609/1, Rev B, except where otherwise stipulated by conditions attached to this permission;

Construction Hours

- b) Construction works including the use of plant and machinery, necessary for implementation of this consent shall only be carried out between the hours of 08.00 and 18.00 Monday to Friday and 08.00 and 13.00 hours on a Saturday. There shall be no work carried out on a Sunday or Bank and Public Holiday;

Delivery Hours

- c) The permitted hours for deliveries to the development hereby permitted shall be 08:00 to 18:00 hours Mondays to Friday and 08:00 to 17:00 hours on Saturdays with no deliveries on Sundays, or public and bank holidays;

Noise

- d) The vehicles, plant and machinery operated

within the site shall be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's specification at all times, this shall include the fitting and use of effective silencers;

- e) All vehicles and machinery associated with the facility used on the site shall be fitted with a non-audible safety device or a "smart" form of reversing alarm, which produces a sound only audible to personnel in the immediate vicinity of the vehicle to which it is fitted;

Odour

- f) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the '*Potential Odour Impacts of Proposed Additional Digestate Storage Tank at Springhill Nursery*' Note, dated 1 March 2018;

Prevention of Pollution of the Water

- g) Any facilities for the storage of oils, fuels, or chemicals shall be sited on impervious bases and surrounded by impervious bund walls. The volume of the bunded compound should be at least equivalent to the capacity of the tank plus 10%. If there is multiple tankage, the compound should be at least equivalent to the capacity of the largest tank, or the combined capacity of interconnected tanks, plus 10%. All filling points, vents, gauges and sight glasses must be located within the bund. The drainage system of the bund shall be sealed with no discharge to any watercourse, land or underground strata. Associated pipework should be located above ground and protected from accidental damage. All filling points and tank overflow pipe outlets should be detailed to discharge downwards into the bund;

Biodiversity Enhancement

- h) Notwithstanding the submitted details, within 3 months of the date of this permission, a scheme for biodiversity enhancement for the development hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority, and implemented within the first available planting season (the period between 31 October in any one year and 31 March in the following year) on completion of the development, and maintained in accordance with the approved

scheme;

Lighting Scheme

- i) Prior to the development being brought into use, a lighting scheme shall be submitted to the County Planning Authority for approval in writing. The scheme shall include details of the height of all lighting, the intensity of lighting (specified in Lux levels), spread of light, including approximate light spillage levels (in metres), the times when the lighting would be illuminated, any measures proposed to mitigate impact of the lighting or disturbance upon protected species and habitats, in particular bats. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details;

Archaeology

- j) No further development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work, including a Written Scheme of Investigation, has been submitted to and approved by the County Planning Authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:
- i. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording;
 - ii. The programme for post investigation assessment;
 - iii. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording;
 - iv. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
 - v. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation; and
 - vi. Nomination of a competent person or persons / organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.
- k) The development shall not be brought into use until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition j) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of

**991 Safety of Sports
Grounds
Annual Review
2017/18
(Agenda item 6)**

results and archive deposition has been secured.

The Committee considered the annual review of activities carried out by Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Directorate of Public Health Emergency Planning team to discharge statutory duties under the Safety at Sports Grounds (SatSGs) and related legislation during 2017/2018.

The report set out details of the Safety Advisory Groups, details of the safety certificates and Safety Advisory Groups findings for Sixways Stadium – Worcester Warriors RFC, Aggborough Stadium – Kidderminster Harriers FC, The Grandstand – Worcester Racecourse, and the Victoria Ground – Bromsgrove Sporting and Worcester City FC, other event safety advice and the Regulatory (Fire Safety) Order.

In the ensuing debate, the following principal points were raised:

- A Committee site visit to the Sixways Stadium and the Victoria Ground would be welcomed. Charlie Heritage indicated that if possible he would arrange a visit to both grounds on the same day depending on fixtures. Worcester Warriors would not be holding matches next season on Friday nights due work taking place on junction 6 of the motorway
- In response to a query, Charlie Heritage explained that Counter Terrorism Plans and Disorder Plans were not new but it was intended that specific clauses be included in the safety certificate in the future to be clear as to how these plans would be incorporated
- In response to a concern expressed about issues experienced with the turnstiles at the Victoria Ground, Charlie Heritage commented that the aged turnstiles were unable to count the number of spectators entering the ground and therefore total attendance was not known until half-time. This was not a problem during the regular season matches which were well under capacity however for big cup matches it could be a problem. These matches were therefore made all-ticket
- Did the SAG provide advice for the larger cycling events taking place in the county? Charlie Heritage responded that the SAG provided one-off advice for events taking place

in the county eg. the Velo bike event and the Worcester Carnival

- Was a grading system applied to the stadia to give an indication of the level of safety standards? Charlie Heritage commented that there was no form of grading criteria as such. Discussions had taken place at regional SAG meetings to establish general trends and the only trend identified had been the use of flares. Every attempt was made to implement national safety standards. All the grounds in the county offered a reasonable level of crowd safety
- Was there a formal procedure for the inspection of grounds? Charlie Heritage indicated that he visited each venue at least once a year however if there was a particular issue of concern, he would revisit it
- Was one visit a year sufficient and was it forewarned or unannounced? Charlie Heritage responded that his visit generally coincided with the busiest match of the season so that the facility could be observed at full capacity and therefore it was not necessary to undertake an unannounced visit.

RESOLVED that:

- a) The 2017/18 Annual Review of activities carried out by the Council to manage and implement the Safety at Sports Grounds legislation be noted;**
- b) It be noted that the Council has successfully met its statutory duty in respect of Safety at Sports Grounds legislation during 2017/18; and**
- c) The intention to include in all of the safety certificates the need for a Counter Terrorism Plan and a Disorder Plan be noted.**

The meeting ended at 12.00 Noon.

Chairman