

## **Minutes of Allstone Liaison Group meeting**

Date: Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Venue: Allstone House, Myers Road, Gloucester.

Attendees:

Rowan Elliott (RE): Managing Director, Allstone.

David Ambrose (DA): Operations Director, Allstone.

Paul Dunccliffe (PD): Agent for Allstone (Chair).

Sarah Pearse (SP): Gloucestershire County Council.

Linda Townsend (LT): Gloucestershire County Council.

Nick Bainton (NB): Gloucestershire County Council.

Temitayo Olatunji (TO): Gloucester City Council.

Valerie Gannon (VG): Local Community Representative.

Theresa Leather (TL): Local Community Representative.

### **Item 1: Introductions (and Item 2 Apologies)**

PD: Welcomed everyone to the meeting including a number of new attendees. He invited everyone to introduce themselves following which he suggested it would be helpful if RE could explain how the two new Local Community Representatives had been invited on to the Liaison Group. He also asked TO to provide a brief summary of his role with the Liaison Group. No Apologies had been received. Beth Robertson and Julie Turner were not in attendance.

The introductions were as follows:

PD: Advised that he acted for Allstone and had done so for over 25 years. He was the Chair of the Liaison Group.

TO: Advised that he was the Principal Environmental Protection Officer in the Community Department of Gloucester City Council and his role/remit was to act as a bridging gap between the City Council Environmental Protection Team, Allstone, other regulators and local residents. He would be alternating attendance at the Liaison Group with Julie Turner.

NB: Advised that he was the planning link between GCC, Allstone and local residents and had been involved with the Allstone site for a number of years. He advised that his primary responsibility was the overseeing of planning enforcement matters relevant to Allstone. He also advised that he was the Planning Case Officer for a site at Bromsberrow which was also in the ownership of Allstone.

SP: Advised that she was the Principal Planning Officer at GCC and had been involved with the Allstone site over a long period of time as part of her overseeing role.

DA: Advised that he was the Operations Manager of Allstone.

RE: Advised that he was the Managing Director of the Allstone business and had been in post for 4 months. His background spanned 30 years in the aggregates, asphalt and heavy materials sector and that this was his 2<sup>nd</sup> attendance at the Liaison Group.

LT: Advised that she was the Senior Planning Officer at GCC and had been the Case Officer for the various Allstone planning applications for several years.

VG: Advised that she was a local resident from Swallow Park since 1992.

TL: Advised that she was a local resident from the Armscroft area. She is a retired Teacher and her family have lived in the locality since 1963.

The introductions having been completed, PD asked RE to provide a brief summary of his discussions with VG and TL about their membership of the Liaison Group.

RE: Advised that at the July meeting of the Liaison Group there was a discussion about the need for the appointment of new Local Community Representatives. This had been publicised in the Allstone news letter (Spotlight) which is circulated by hand to local residents and businesses. As a result of this, VG and TL had contacted RE and he had met with both of them and invited them to attend the next Liaison Group meeting. RE mentioned that he thought the Liaison Group was the right forum for open dialogue with one of the key aspects being feedback to local residents.

PD: Thanked RE, VG and TL for their input and then invited TO to say a few words about his attendance on the Liaison Group.

TO: Advised the following:

- he had conducted a site tour with DA ahead of the meeting to familiarise himself with the various operations and was impressed with the layout. He thanked DA for the tour.
- his remit was to liaise between all parties taking into account statutory law.
- residents have a right to enjoy their property but equally Allstone have a right to undertake their lawful business operations.
- he welcomed the open forum which the Liaison Group provided and thought that the structure of it was very good.
- working together and managing all parties expectations was a key aspect.
- that he would be in attendance on a shared basis with Julie Turner.

VG: Asked whether the City Council Planning Department should be in attendance at the Liaison Group in relation to the various planning conditions within their remit.

NB: Advised that there has been friction and frustration over the years due to the fact that the site has a complex planning situation based on a 2 tier Authority. He provided the example of the Breedon Concrete batching plant being a City Council matter, whilst the Allstone site was

largely a GCC matter but some parts of the site fell within the remit of Gloucester City Council.

It was not straightforward. He had endeavoured to seek attendance of Gloucester City Council Planning Officers, the last communication with them being on the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

PD: Clarified the structure of the Liaison Group and advised that its terms of reference was established via GCC as part of the planning conditions.

SP: Enquired whether PD had heard back from Katie Curtis the Planning Officer that had been mentioned by Julie Turner in one of the recent e-mails.

PD: Advised that he had not had a response but Katie Curtis had been copied in to the e-mails. He had asked Julie Turner to forward her a copy of the Minutes and Agenda. PD advised that Julie Turner had advised that Katie Curtis was very busy and might not be able to attend.

NB: Advised that Mr Jon Bishop was the Development Manager at Gloucester City Council.

**Action Point:**

After a general discussion between the attendees it was agreed that PD would write to Gloucester City Council's Planning Department and see whether an Officer could attend the Liaison Group meetings – all Members of the Liaison Group to be copied in along with Councillors Jeremy Hilton and Anne Radley.

**Item 3: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023.**

PD: Asked if the Minutes could be approved. The Minutes were agreed by all members of the Liaison Group.

**Item 4: Annual Review of the terms of reference for the Allstone Liaison Group.**

A general discussion took place about the terms of reference including the requirement for an annual review.

PD: Advised that he had received an e-mail from SP suggesting the need for the Minutes to be posted on the Community Section of the Allstone website as this had been a bit sketchy. She also suggested it would be useful to have a record of what actions had been taken in relation to any complaints and for the Minutes to record those actions.

RE: Advised that he would set up an internal Allstone action log.

PD: Advised that he would ensure that the Minutes captured the feedback on any complaints and what steps/actions had been taken.

**Action Point:**

RE to set up an internal Allstone action log and report back to each Liaison Group meeting.  
PD to ensure that the Minutes captured any complaints and what steps/actions had been taken.

NB: Advised that caution needed to be exercised about the recording of complaints particularly in relation to subjudice and that it would be preferable to record them as alleged complaints.

PD: Asked VG and TL if they were happy with the action log approach and both confirmed that they were. He also advised that RE and DA are available to contact in the event of any issues that arise.

**Item 5: Update to be provided on all improvements/repairs/new equipment purchased since the last meeting.**

PD: Advised that this was a standing item on the Agenda and invited DA to provide an update.

DA: Provided the following update:

- all mobile plant had been upgraded including the Kobelco machine in the front section of the waste transfer station. It is the most up to date machine available.
- 4 new machines had been acquired and these were the most efficient in terms of environmental standards.
- on going programme of infrastructure improvements/upgrades around the site including continual surface repairs to reduce general noise and chain rattle from potholes.
- additional works completed in terms of noise reduction to the rear of the site comprising lego block installation. Gloucester City Council had been notified but had not responded.

RE: Advised that the management team had put in place a 'safety first' initiative this being a key issue in terms of health and safety for staff and visitors to the site. This work would continue as it was important to ensure compliance with health and safety requirements.

TL: Mentioned about noise on a Saturday morning. Saturday mornings are the one day of the week where local residents should have some peace and quiet.

RE: Advised that the business was approved to operate on Saturday mornings but advised that the business needs to comply with the term of the planning permission/s that regulate the site.

TO: Advised that the business should work to Best Practical Means (BPM). 7:30am start times are reasonable for the business, including Saturdays. He suggested an on going review of BPM including vehicle compliance as being examples of good working practice. He also suggested a potential radius to be identified around the site.

RE: Confirmed that all machines are fitted with white noise reversing devices.

DA: Advised that all equipment and plant are purchased with the manufacturer's devices fitted as standard. It is not possible for Allstone to intervene and try and change health and safety devices fitted to any equipment or plant. He gave an example of a Company which had undertaken changes and an incident had occurred which resulted in the prosecution of that Company.

VG: Raised the point that the site is next to a residential area but she does understand why white noise devices are needed in terms of health and safety requirements. She advised that the problem was that the noise can be heard from across the playing fields and does it have to be that loud. The main issue was the constant bleeping of the white noise devices.

RE: Shared a screen shot of Allstone's safety first initiatives all of which related to health and safety requirements. He advised that Allstone would see whether it is possible to reduce the audible white noise reversing devices.

**Action Point:**

RE to find out about the potential to reduce the white noise devices and report back at the next Liaison Group meeting.

TL: Enquired about the status of the Old Boys Car Park and understood that Allstone's use of the car park was on a gentlemen's agreement.

PD: Advised that Gloucester City Council had been involved and no issues had arisen.

VG: Raised the following points:

- noise of cars arriving early in the morning into the car park – why at 5/5:30am?
- west door being opened very early in the morning – squeaking noise.
- why 2 hours earlier than the planning permission condition?
- impact of a long day.
- movement of vehicles on site early in the morning.
- Dust plume in July.

NB: Advised that many of these points were also linked in to the City Council's remit.

RE: Asked VG when these changes had started.

VG: Confirmed there had been gradual creep over the last 12-18 months.

NB: Mentioned that based on his site visits including early morning monitoring, that Breedon Concrete also caused early morning noise and that there was also a 24 hour lawful use of part of the Allstone site.

TL: Made reference to continual dust problems.

TO: Advised that his site inspection ahead of the Liaison Group meeting had shown that Allstone had very effective dust suppression measures in place including bowsers across the site.

After a general discussion it was agreed:

**Action Point:**

RE to investigate early morning use of the car park.

RE/DA to investigate the squeaky west door and get this rectified if possible.

**Item 6: Update on any complaints received since the last meeting.**

PD: Asked for an update on any complaints that had been received since the last meeting.

TO: Advised that the only complaint had related to the clamshell bucket in the front section of the waste transfer station. This had been investigated but no operational problems had been identified with the clamshell bucket.

NB: Reported that he and SP had conducted early morning surveillance in the early hours of the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023 and had noted that the bulking out of a vehicle was taking place outside the south door of the waste transfer station. Both he and SP were clear that there was prima facie evidence of a breach of one of the planning conditions that regulated the site. This had been drawn to the attention of Allstone and correspondence had taken place between GCC Planning and Allstone. He further advised that in relation to breaches of planning conditions generally, the planning system was based on an assessment of a continuation of events and it was not necessarily the case that prosecution was an automatic first step reaction. Engagement and proactive management was also part of the planning systems response and much would also depend on the facts, as each case was looked at on its own particular circumstances.

VG: Enquired what sort of timeline is involved before you need to take action.

NB: Advised that the decision would be taken at Director level as this was a corporate matter.

SP: Advised that in matters of planning enforcement a balancing report is prepared as part of an overall on going assessment based on the particular facts of each case. She confirmed that GCC are getting close to this.

RE: Advised that appropriate steps had been immediately taken to advise staff of the planning conditions and breaches of the conditions relating to bulking out would not be tolerated.

**Item 7: Update on 22/0033/GLMAJW.**

PD: Provided an update on an earlier planning application that had been withdrawn and the submission of a new planning application which was intended to cover the various changes that has been undertaken since January 2023. The outstanding item in relation to the validation of the new planning application revolved around the provision of additional highway information that GCC Planning and GCC Highways had requested following a recent site meeting by GCC Highways. He advised that Allstone's Highway Consultants had been instructed to provide additional highway information and it was anticipated that an updated highway report would be submitted as quickly as possible but before Christmas.

LT: Advised that she would await the additional highway information in order to determine whether it was appropriate and covered what had been requested. A decision could then be made about the validation of the planning application. A wheel wash had been suggested by the Highway Authority due to the change to the permanent use of the site.

TO: Noted that a request had been made for a wheel wash on the inert recycling site. He gave an example of sites in Croydon where this was common practice, sometimes involving several wheel washes, especially on very large sites.

VG: Enquired why Breedon Concrete do not attend the Liaison Group meetings.

TO: Expressed his disappointment that Breedon are not in attendance. He further advised that he would follow this up directly with Breedon.

**Action Point:**

TO to make contact with Breedon and establish if they would attend the Liaison Group meetings.

DA: Provided an update on the following matters:

- the position relating to the Environment Agency (EA) about permitting processes and the change from a Standard Rules to a bespoke Environmental Permit.
- updates that have been made to the Environmental Monitoring Systems for the business.
- submission of a bespoke application to the EA for the new wash plant.
- referenced the approach to higher quality aggregates as opposed to volume.

**Item 8: Quarterly Waste Returns**

PD: Apologised that he had not provided details following the last Liaison Group meeting and provided the following update:

Q1 2023: 4874.66 tonnes

Q2 2023: 4651.72 tonnes

Q3 2023: 4158.68 tonnes.

DA: Re-emphasised that the key driver was focussing on the quality of material and not volume.

**Item 9: Feedback from Local Community Representatives.**

It was agreed that feedback from the Local Community Representatives had been appropriately covered during the meeting.

VG: Confirmed that there had not been any community meetings in Morrisons recently.

PD: Expressed disappointment that a previous community representative had not shared details of meetings or flyers when requested.

**Item 10: Any other business**

LT: Enquired whether PD had heard back from GCC Area Highway Officers about a potential pre-meeting to discuss a highway petition from Derby Road residents.

PD: Advised that he had written to GCC Highway Officers as suggested by LT but had heard nothing back. He confirmed he would chase this up although he had already chased and had not heard anything back.

LT: Would enquire with the Area Highway Manager.

**Action Point**

PD and LT to follow up on a meeting with the Area Highway Manager.

**Item 11: date of next meeting.**

After a general discussion it was agreed to hold the next Liaison Group meeting in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of April 2024 (11<sup>th</sup> April) at midday. This would allow for the quarterly waste returns to be available at the meeting.

Meeting closed at approximately 2pm.