

DRAFT

WEALDON WORKS COMMUNITY LIAISON GROUP

MEETING 040 Minutes:

Date: 28 January 2026

Time: 6.30 to 8.00pm

VENUE:

Roffey Millennium Hall and

Remote by MS Teams

Attendees:

Andrew Baldwin	(AB)	Chair	County Councillor for Holbrook
Michael Rigby	(MR)	Qair	Project Manager
Simon Read	(SR)	Qair	Coast Communications
Keith Riley	(KR)	Qair	Secretariat
Brian Johnson	(BJ)	Resident	
Karen Park	(KP)	Resident	
Kevin Slatter	(KS)	Resident	
Piers Chapman	(PC)	Resident	
Thais Covre Delborni*	(TCD)	Environmental Protection Officer	Horsham District Council
David Searle	(DS)	Vice Chairman	North Horsham Parish Council
Sarah Williams*	(SW)		Warnham Parish Council
James Neave*	(JN)	Principal, Planning Dept	West Sussex County Council

*Remote - on Teams

The meeting started at 6.30pm

1. Introductions

All attendees knew each other and introductions were not necessary.

2. Apologies for absence

The following apologies were received - Rob O'Brian, Hannah Butler (HB), Donald Mahon, Richie Gatt, Peter Catchpole (PC) and Gerrard Beelaerts.

3. Minutes from Meeting held on 22nd October 2025

Following a correction to the heading of item 4 noted by KS, the draft minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

4. Outstanding actions from the previous meeting held on 16th April 2025

Action 38/1 - a notice to be circulated when the planning variation has been submitted to WSCC. Completed -covered by Action 40/1 - see Item 6.

Action 39/1 - Qair to circulate details of the NMA as soon as it is validated by WSCC. Completed - replaced by Action 40/1 - see Item 6.

Action 39/2 - KR to brief HB on the air monitoring equipment for HDC - Completed

Action 39/3 - HB to discuss the use and location of the air monitoring station being funded by Qair with HDC Environmental Health Department. Completed. Replaced by Action 40/2 - see Item 7.

Action 39/4 - MC/SR to inform the Group of the communications plan to be enacted when construction contractor is appointed. Completed - see Item 6.



5. Issues regarding the current approved operations

Public complaints /enforcement orders - KR reported that there had been no reported visits from HSE nor the EA, and no complaints had been received.

Vehicle movements and quarterly tonnage details

The vehicle movements for the fourth quarter of 2025 had been circulated prior to the meeting. There were no comments on the movements other than BJ noted that they were using only 23% of the permitted levels.

Vehicle spillage report/ roadside litter

The Chair reported that he along with BJ, KP, KS and DS had attended a Biffa meeting and HDC stated they would be litter-picking from Pollards roundabout at Southwater along the A24 and along the A264 to the Rusper Roundabout over a two week period. KS noted that the minute of that meeting reports that they would also be litter-picking Langhurstwood Road every three weeks in cooperation with the local waste companies, although the detail on this was unknown. BJ thought that they were also litter-picking the laybys every week. It was hoped by all that this would improve the situation.

WSCC Planning Conditions - JN confirmed that no planning issues had been notified on existing operations.

6. Update on the CHER development

MR stated that the application for the s73 planning variation had not yet been submitted, but it was close to being finalised. He stated that a timeline had been included in the presentation by SR to follow, but it is speculative, as it depends on the time for determination of the application and had not been checked with JN. Until the planning situation was cleared, no further progress on other aspects of the project could be made.

In response to a question from PC, MR stated that the reason for change in the type of application arose from advice from WSCC Planning Department. JN confirmed that County Planning had received a non-material application from Qair that had been withdrawn prior to validation. Once any revised application is received, County Planning will validate and register it. If it is a s96a non-material amendment it will not be subject to public consultation. If it is a s73 application, whilst full consultation is not a statutory requirement, County Planning will likely carry out full formal consultation (depending on which conditions are sought to be amended and the nature/scale of change sought), and this would include both technical consultees and the public. Full consultation would be advertised in accordance with statutory regulations, which will include a newspaper advert, a site notice and notification to those that are proximate to the site. Given their proximity to the site, it is JNs understanding that this typically includes BJ and KS.

JN confirmed that validation can take up to two weeks. If valid, the application would be backdated to the submission date. If invalid, the time for determination is taken as the date it is validated. If the application falls under s73, in accordance with statutory requirements, the likely target will be for determination of the application within 13 weeks from the valid date (NB determination can be any time following consultation, or a longer period, if an extension in time is agreed with the applicant).

If NMA it will be 28 days. Once a s73 is advertised, there are typically 21 days in which to make comments.

PC asked if there were further changes from those previously described. MR confirmed that they were unchanged. In response to a question from DS, MR confirmed that no further demolition had taken place to date.

SR then made a presentation on the proposed communications programme. The presentation is attached to these minutes. He emphasised that any timings are estimated and may change.

SR opened the presentation by stating that Coast Communications will be advising Qair to ensure that any developments with the project that affect residents will be communicated through a number of different platforms so that people hear directly from Qair and not through the grapevine. Coast has been in business for about 20 years, has advised on EfW developments across the country and has experience of the construction phase and the transition into operations. Nevertheless, they will be happy to take advice and are aware that the CLG has a lot of local knowledge that they will be happy to factor in.

He advised that there will always be confidential information that Qair will not wish to release, but Coast will advise Qair to be as open as possible. However, everything put out by Coast will be approved by Qair beforehand. He was happy to be contacted either directly or through the Chair. CLG members have his contact details and there is a project email available to the wider public. Elected members will also be able to contact Coast directly. However, to avoid either MR or SR's email boxes becoming overloaded, it would be better to use the project email as Coast had people monitoring that address and will aim to reply within 3 working days.

SR emphasised that projects such as CHER are very complex and the number of stakeholders is likely to grow as the project develops. He invited the CLG to suggest stakeholders if members thought they should be added. They will be using Roxill Media to build a media list for communication to the media - including local media in Horsham - but if members felt there is a gap, they should notify him.

SR stated that the project timeline is tentative. MR pointed out that they were hoping for determination in April 2026, but it was agreed that in view of the earlier discussion, as BJ pointed out, this was no longer likely.

BJ was concerned that the key audience is Horsham rather than further afield and that north Horsham in particular is covered. He requested further definition of what would be done.

SR stated that for demolition, it is unusual to carry out a leaflet drop, as it is confined to within the site, but in this case leaflets will go out three weeks before it starts and give information such as timelines, expected hours of work, traffic management, mitigation measures for noise and dust and contact details. DS noted that at the Biffa meeting there were complaints from a Rusper resident about vehicles passing through the village. It was felt that in this case, the demolition is not significant and should not give rise to such problems. The Group advised that maybe "site clearance" would be a better word to use rather than "demolition" and if used, it should state what is involved to avoid giving the impression of major disruptive work.

SR stated that there will be more communication around construction. Prior to construction starting, media across West Sussex as well as Horsham media and trade media will be informed. DS suggested that local television news would be a good medium to use, to which SR agreed although felt it could be difficult at times due to their time pressure.

SR said that social media would only be used selectively but he would be open to recommendations by the CLG. In the event of significant activity such as large items of equipment being transported to the site, or particularly noisy activities, a leaflet will be distributed. The website will also be updated frequently. It was agreed that reliable accounts such as parish council Facebook pages would be useful resources. The Chair recommended Qair advertise and run articles in All About Horsham (AAH). BJ agreed.

SR stated that the CLG was seen as important and whenever possible, the CLG will be notified first. A newsletter will be issued periodically, but CLG will be informed first.

Following a question from PC and a discussion on the area covered by the parishes, it was agreed that the parish councils were the best platform for spreading communications. SW noted that Warnham PC had a Facebook page with good coverage. It was felt that that would be more than adequate coverage for the demolition communication. KS noted that there were some people outside the immediate area that had line of sight to the site and consideration should be given to including those.

(Post meeting note: this refers to the properties along the east side of Dorking Road local to Denhams Auctioneers).

KP felt that Horsham was an "easy" social media town. She suggested Qair use social media, but perhaps for messaging only and not allow comments back. She also suggested that Qair should want people to come back to them rather than to the parish councils. SR responded that social media will be taken on its merits, as social media comments can be inaccurate and that can cause unnecessary concerns.

KP felt that the communication programme was a good first step, and it will be important to get that right, but that rather than Qair giving the residents their list of stakeholders, the residents were expecting Qair to be asking them whether they can use their list of Facebook pages and other means of outreach. SR welcomed that and agreed it would be useful to have a list of Facebook groups recommended by local residents.

A question arose on whether the new CLG constitution applied. JN felt it was already operative because the development has been implemented. Although the existing operation was being reported, it was just the interim transition phase. The Chair read aloud an extract from the terms of reference for the Group, and it was concluded that the representation on the CLG could now be expanded. The frequency of meetings was also referred to, which will normally be quarterly unless there is a reason for an interim meeting, which can be requested by any member of the Group.

(Post meeting note: For easy reference a copy of the terms of reference for the CLG accompanies these minutes.)

Action 40/1- MR/SR to inform the CLG when the planning variation has been validated and the nature of the variation.

7. Horsham District Council

TCD reported that HDC is still monitoring air quality through the sensor on Langhurstwood Road at the Wienerberger site and results over the last three years are well below the thresholds of the air quality objectives. The results can be seen on the HDC website.

(Post meeting note: see <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/environmental-health/air-quality/air-quality-reports-and-assessments>).

In response to a question from BJ, TCD reported that the site of the mobile station being funded by Qair has not been decided and will not be until provision of the station is known, which will not be until CHER is financed. Qair will not be party to deciding where it will be located. BJ was concerned that the location should not be delayed when the equipment becomes available. TCD said that the equipment delivery time will be several months and there is also the issue of arranging the power supply to it. It was pointed out that the new station was for the monitoring of the operational plant, which was at least three years away. The Chair requested that TCD discusses with HB to identify a potential site.

Action 40/2-TCD and HB to discuss a potential site for locating the mobile monitoring station.

8. Two questions raised by KS by email of 11.1.26

1. *I've been made aware of an appeal document submitted by MW Environment Ltd regarding a proposed EfW facility in Wimborne (AA/23/00822/F). A paragraph within the Statement Of Case casts some doubts on the Horsham project and reads as follows:*

"The actual development of the EfW facility at Westbury appears less than certain, notwithstanding the supposed implementation of its planning permission, as it is understood that the company owning it is trying to sell it along with a project at Horsham in West Sussex"
Can the Cher team comment on this please.

MR responded that Qair was seeking equity partners in the projects but were not withdrawing. This is not unusual for projects of this sort. MR & KR were surprised that MW had made such a statement.

2. *In a Case Study on the Government website 'Science Supporting Cleaner Waste Incineration', it talks about the measurement of CO2 for ETS reporting. It highlighted that to be fair and effective there is a need to separate the monitoring of Fossil based CO2 from Biogenic based CO2.*

Q1 Do the Cher team have a view on this?

Q2 What technology/methodology is planned to achieve this level of monitoring and reporting?

MR stated that Qair were aware of the discussion on CO2. Monitoring of fossil carbon cannot be carried out directly, but Carbon 14 - which is found in non-fossil carbon - can be measured and by subtracting it from the total carbon emitted, the fossil carbon can be determined.

The requirements of the UK-ETS with respect to incineration are still not known, so Qair is keeping a watching brief and will fit the equipment as required.

9. Any other business

Following delay of the local elections, AB confirmed that assuming the Group agreed, he was happy to carry on as Chair until the election in 2027.

10. Date of next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting will be Wednesday 13th May 2026. The meeting closed at 7.56pm.