

Organics Processing Plant Community Liaison Group Meeting

Minutes

6:30pm to 8pm, Tuesday 12 December 2023

Waitai-Coastal-Burwood-Linwood Community Boardroom

180 Smith Street, Woolston, Christchurch 8062

1. Executive summary of minutes

Carl Pascoe (Chair) opened the meeting and shared Daniel O'Carroll's apology.

CCC update on the 6 December 2023 reports on the short and long term options

David McArdle (CCC staff) noted the CCC report attached to the agenda was finalised before the 6 December Council meeting. Before continuing to hand out a further CCC report with information now publicly available following the 6 December Council meeting and talking to this.

Interim solution

Summarised the two stages involved with the short-term solution. Key points below;

- First stage at the OPP completely indoors and within the processing hall.
- No movement of material between two building i.e., the processing hall and the screening shed.
- Trucks loaded directly from the enclosed tunnels and inside the processing hall to be transported to Kate Valley Landfill.
- Then at Kate Valley Landfill the material will be matured in outdoor windrows and screened before being sold as compost.

At the 6 December Council meeting, it was resolved that if any odour issues arise out of this process, staff will report back urgently to the Council with solutions that will address the problem.

Long term solution

Council approved Ecogas to establish a new long term Ōtautahi Christchurch Regional Organics Processing Facility, following a multi-stage procurement process.

The facility will deliver a different system from the existing OPP at Metro Place in Bromley through a fully enclosed operation and technology successfully used in cities around the world, including London, Sydney and Madrid.

In later discussions on the long-term solution, Lynette Ellis added the decision was made last Wednesday, elected members received a technical briefing last Friday and there are plans in place to share further information with the public.

Sources of odour discussion and the community's suggestion of the biofilter

Whilst discussing sources of odour at the OPP members of the community suggested the biofilter. Council staff responded with advice received from external odour consultants Pattle Delamore Partners that the material being stored outside presents the highest odour risk. This advice has been factored into Council's decision to clear the site of unscreened and screened compost being stored outside by the end of the month (December) along with its interim solution. As requested by the community, CCC will provide photos at the next CLG in February to show the progress of the site being cleared come then.

Noting during the last CLG meeting in August the community requested an independent review of the biofilter. This has been completed by Tonkin + Taylor and attached to the agenda for this meeting. The report confirms the biofilter is operating within industry standards and included maintenance recommendations which will be actioned by Living Earth.

ECan's apology and message for the CLG

The Chair shared ECan's apology and an accompanying update received through email. The update included that in the past week ECan has received a number of odour submissions. Concluding that on Friday they responded to an incident whilst carrying out proactive odour monitoring and substantiated a compost odour in the residential area of Bromley. ECan stated the incident is still under investigation.

Chair's letter to ECan

In ECan's absence the Chair offered to write a letter to them addressing various points raised throughout the meeting and detailing the below;

1. CLG's disappointment that ECan staff did not attend.
2. CLG's request to expediate the resource consent variation process for the interim solution.
3. CLG's preference the upcoming OPP resource consent review to be an open review with public input.
4. Nathan Doherty to follow up with Carol Anderson regarding the black dust on her patio, as discussed at the August CLG meeting.

The Chair closed the meeting and asked for efforts to mitigate any odour over the Christmas period.

Any questions or feedback can be sent to Bromley@ccc.govt.nz

2. Verbatim Minutes

Chair – Carl Pascoe

CCC staff – Lynette Ellis, Alec McNeil, David McArdle, Rory Crawford

CCC elected members – Yani Johanson, Jackie Simmons

Living Earth staff – Jaco Kleinhans

Community – Andrew Walker, Bruce King, Geoffrey King, Katinka Visser, Margaret MacPherson, Vickie Walker.

Minutes – Beth Walsh

Apologies – Daniel O’Carroll (community)

1. Welcome and Introduction

Carl Pascoe, Chair – Introduced the meeting. Shared Daniel O’Carroll’s (community) apologies.

2. Confirm previous meeting’s minutes

Carl Pascoe, Chair – Assumed confirmed.

3. Update from CCC regarding short term options consultation results and 6 December short term options reports to Council

David McArdle, CCC staff – Explained the agenda and reports for this meeting were sent out before the 6 December Council meeting, therefore information on the long-term solution had not been disclosed and could not be included. Handed out a second report with further information now publicly available.

Confirmed the resolutions made at the 6th of December Council meeting including two decisions for short and long term solutions for organics processing.

Described the short-term solution will consist of two stages;

1. Stage 1 - To take place at the OPP in Bromley and will all be indoors. Whilst the initial part of the process will remain unchanged, after the enclosed tunnel phase the material will be transported to Kate Valley. This change will be operational from April 2024 to allow for time to vary the resource consent to allow for increased truck movement.
2. Stage 2 - Everything that was previously done outdoors in Bromley will instead be carried out at Kate Valley.

Assured the group that CCC and LE are working to clear material being stored outside on the site as quickly as possible.

If any odours arise from the new process staff will report back to CCC and address these issues immediately.

Regarding the long-term solution, CCC has approved Ecogas as the supplier for the new regional processing solution following a procurement process. The new processing solution will be located in South Hornby and fully enclosed. It will utilise a different technology rather than a “lift and shift” of the current system.

Q. Vickie Walker, community - How long has this technology been around?

A. David McArdle, CCC staff - Pioneer Energy, a major partner in Ecogas have been around for 30 years. Ecogas currently processes Auckland’s kerbside food waste. Anaerobic digestion is used in major cities around the world like London, Sydney and Madrid.

Q. Bruce King, community - Will the consent be public notification for the Ecogas plant?

A. Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - That hasn’t been determined yet.

Q. Bruce King, community - What will happen if there is no consent?

A. Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - As part of procurement an independent planning assessment were done to see if this was consentable. This was part of the presentation to CCC during the decision making.

Q. Bruce King, community - The consent for the present plant is up for renewal next year, will that be publicly notified?

A. Jaco Kleinhans, Living Earth – Confirmed the OPP resource consent to discharge contaminants to air expires in 2033.

A. Yani Johanson, CCC elected member – Added ECan have signalled they will do a review of the resource consent before March as per their report. ECan need to answer if they have to consult the community about this.

A. Lynette Ellis, CCC staff – Added ECan can review the consent every March.

Q. Bruce King, community - What will you do if ECan say they need to close it?

A Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - CCC will make each decision as we need to.

Carl Pascoe, Chair – Summarised that a review has been signalled by ECan and asked what view the CLG would like to express to ECan. The CLG agreed that they would like it communicated to ECan their preference for an open review with public input. The Chair said he will include this in his letter

to ECan.

Action 1a - *Carl Pascoe to write a formal letter to ECan documenting;*

- *CLG's disappointment that ECan staff did not attend.*
- *CLG's preference the upcoming OPP resource consent review to be an open review with public input.*

Vickie Walker, community - Regarding the resolution that staff will have to report any odour issues immediately with the new system, would like to express preference to have this done by an independent party rather than CCC staff.

David McArdle, CCC staff – Assured Vicky that one of the resolutions from the 6 December Council meeting was a commitment to continued proactive odour monitoring by Pattle Delamore Partners (PDP), an independent body.

Geoffrey King, community - Suggested CCC doesn't trust ECan if they have engaged PDP to carry this out.

David McArdle, CCC staff - Assured Geoffrey that PDP's approach to odour monitoring is with odour being subjective and to maximise data collection i.e., the more odour monitoring by different bodies the better.

Carl Pascoe, Chair - Acknowledged that Geoffrey's Odour Report forms part of the data and is as valid as other data collected. Also acknowledged there has been a positive shift in progress in the last six to nine months from the CCC staff and elected staff in trying to get on top of odour.

Q. Bruce King, community - Is it true that the odour watch system no longer works?

A. Jaco Kleinhans, LE - It was decommissioned years ago.

Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - Would like to go back to the timeframe for the new long-term solution, it aims to be operational by end of Dec 2026.

Bruce King, community - Expressed frustration that two years ago they were promised the plant would be closed that day.

Carol Anderson, community - Expressed frustration that it has already been 14 years.

Geoffrey King, community - Expressed frustration that he has repeatedly told CCC that the odour is because of the biofilter.

Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - Acknowledged that CLG has stated this repeatedly but respectfully disagrees. PDP's view is that the source of odour is the piles of materials outside the plant and CCC is working towards removing these piles. The biofilter is being fully refurbished every year.

Carl Pascoe, Chair - Acknowledged two opposing views of CLG and CCC regarding the source of

odour.

Q. Geoffrey King, community - When was biofilter redone?

A. Jaco Kleinhans, LE - Refurbishment was completed between March and June this year.

Katinka Visser, community - The report states the biofilter needs to be redone in the next 12 to 18 months.

Jaco Kleinhans, LE - The entire rebuild was done recently, this doesn't need to be done every 12 months. The biofilter is continuously managed and redone every 12 months, these are standard recommendations for pH.

Q. Katinka Visser, community - What will happen in the interim? According to the website the piles of material outside were already gone.

A. Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - There have always been piles of materials outside (fines and tailings). We are working to have nothing outside.

A. David McArdle, CCC staff - Last June to September there was a programme of work to remove all excess tailings from the site. Now working towards removing all fines and tailings from outside.

David McArdle, CCC staff - Confirmed with the interim option there will be no movement of material between buildings, such as from the processing hall to the main screen.

Bruce King, community - References odour meter readouts, suggests the concentration confirms biofilter is source of odour and the system is obsolete.

Geoffrey King, community – Claimed the intensity of the odour is the same from a few piles outside as when we had the windrows.

4. Resident lived experiences since last meeting including the Geoffrey King odour report

Geoffrey King, community - References odour report from August to November 2023. 90 out of 122 days of odour. 44 days the odour was 5 out of 6 and 10 days 6 out of 6. This December so far, there have been 4 days of 6 out of 6. December 1, 2, 5, 8 and 11 were all 6 out of 6. On one occasion it was 6 out of 6 at 6:15am with no wind. In his opinion suggesting the source of odour is the biofilter.

Q. Carl Pascoe, Chair - Asks David McArdle (CCC staff) if PDP's odour monitoring has concluded anything.

A. David McArdle, CCC staff - PDP did monitoring in residential areas Monday, Tuesday and

Wednesday last week and no offensive or objectionable odour was detected.

Geoffrey King, community - PDP have previously said there was no odour from January 2022 to January 2023.

David McArdle, CCC staff - PDP have suggested the material being stored outside has the highest risk of odour.

Q. Katinka Visser, community - Where do they do the monitoring?

A. Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - They do a walking circuit around the streets and also at the plant.

Geoffrey King, community - I have spoken to the PDP whilst they are monitoring, and they've said they can't smell anything when there clearly is an odour.

Bruce King, community - It's subjective, after 14 years of odour you become desensitised to it, and it becomes very strong even at the slightest smell.

Yani Johanson, CCC elected member - It's disheartening that every time there is a community event in Bromley there is a stench. Three out of four people that I speak to at an event at the weekend noticed an organics stench. Can we please try to have the Christmas period odour free? It's frustrating there is a contradiction between PDP not detecting any odour and odour clearly present to residents. If residents will have to put up with this for the next three years, is there a way that the biofilter can be enclosed?

Katinka Visser, community - Suggests that the fans may have been turned off during the independent biofilter review. The odour can sometimes be strong and dissipate quickly. As a result, wonders if this is due to a change in the wind or has a door been closed in the plant.

Q. Geoffrey King, community - Went to the plant three or four weeks ago to ask them to close the doors. Noted that the staff member working and the offices within the plant had a strong odour - how does this occur inside if the odour is as a result of the piles of materials outside?

A. Jaco Kleinhans, LE - Due to its design, the inside of the OPP has a strong odour but this a different odour profile to the one outside of the building.

Carl Pascoe, Chair - Referencing an email from ECan sending their apologies - *"In the last week ECan received a number of odour submissions. On Friday ECan responded to an incident received while carrying out proactive odour assessments in Bromley. The staff substantiated that a compost odour was in the residential area of Bromley. This incident is still under investigation. The odour appears to have been discharged from the wastewater treatment ponds and may be related to pond management changes. ECan are working with CCC to understand the cause of that discharge"*.

Geoffrey King, community - Expressed dissatisfaction that this incident is still under investigation four days later and believes that the odour has nothing to do with wastewater.

Katinka Visser, community – Believes the odour has been dreadful since the December 1.

Q. Vickie Walker, community - If you have identified the storage of materials outside as a source of odour, why can't you get rid of them now?

A. David McArdle, CCC staff - Assured Vicky Living Earth are doing this as soon as they can.

Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - Added no materials are being moved to Bridge Street or near the pond, that practice was stopped months ago.

Q. Bruce King, community - Is CCC going to need a resource consent to take materials to Kate Valley?

A. Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - Assured Bruce that this is what Waste Management are working.

Q. Katinka Visser, community - Asked Lynette Ellis about previously requested data on truck movements.

A. Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - Confirmed that she will email these to Katinka.

Action 2: *Lynette Ellis to follow up on Katinka Visser's request for information on truck movements.*

Margaret MacPherson, community - Would like a correction made on previous minutes - it was Carol Anderson rather than Margaret who stated they had black dust on their patio.

Carol Anderson, community - Nathan Dougherty from ECan offered to be my direct contact regarding this dust, there has been no communication from Nathan or ECan regarding this since.

Carl Pascoe, Chair - Will include this in the letter to ECan.

Action 1b: *Carl Pascoe to include the below in his letter to ECan:*

- *Follow up with Nathan Doherty on his agreement to contact Carol Anderson regarding the black dust on her patio.*

Katinka Visser, community - Regarding ECan's 'Smelt It' odour submissions, asked if it only compost related complaints that are getting counted in this data?

Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - ECan are not here to answer.

Q. Katinka Visser, community - Will often write feedback at the end of her 'Smelt It' submission.

Does CCC ever receive these or just ECan?

A. David McArdle, CCC staff – Confirmed ‘Smelt It’ is an ECan system but ECan share the submissions relevant to the OPP.

Carol Anderson, community - Whilst I can identify the difference between a compost odour versus other type of odour, other people may not and so it's not fair that only reports of compost related smells are investigated.

Bruce King, community - Will post the contact numbers for the CCC, ECan and the MP on the Bromley Facebook page so people can ring to complain about the odour.

Action 3: *Carl Pascoe to send a formal invite to Vanessa Weenik, MP to attend this meeting.*

Action 4: *David McArdle to add MP's Vanessa Weenik and Reuben Ferguson to the CCC Bromley mailing list.*

Yani Johanson, CCC elected member - Is it possible to get a copy of the odour modelling that was done as part of the tender evaluation to see how this is performing? Can the biofilter be enclosed?

Lynette Ellis, CCC staff – The air will still have to be discharged and go outside.

Carl Pascoe, Chair - Summarised that in the last six to nine months particularly, Lynette and CCC staff have worked to eliminate issues as they have arisen. In the context of the next three years, it would be helpful for the meeting going forward if LE and CCC look at the biofilter issues. It would also be helpful for Bruce and Geoffrey to share their own investigations and all meeting participants to have an open look at it.

Q. Carol Anderson, community - The system is from the 1930s, is there a better system?

A. Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - There is, we have just bought a new system.

Q. Bruce King, community - Presented an ideal solution to CCC ten years ago. A system which is in place in New South Wales by a French company where all processing takes place indoors. Did CCC approach this company for the new system?

A. Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - All companies had equal opportunity to partake in the procurement process.

Q. Katinka Visser, community - Is CCC clear about the plan for the next three years?

A. Yani Johanson, CCC elected member - CCC is concerned. There was a vote last week to continue to investigate immediate plant closure, but I didn't have the political support for it to pass. The mayor and my

other colleagues have given a commitment to look at solutions if there are any issues with the interim plan. Living Earth and CCC staff have been approached about some new technology, but this timetable may not be feasible between now and April. The key focus for the group should be to put pressure on ECan.

Action 1c: *Carl Pascoe to include the below in his letter to ECan:*

- *Ask ECan to attempt to expediate the resource consent variation process for the short-term solution.*

Bruce King, community - Expressed concern as three-year plan will span into another elected Council and so may harm the CLG's progress to date.

Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - Assured Bruce the plan is set in stone now. There is an agreement in place and contracts will be signed in a number of months. Restated commitment to building a new plant. Commented that the nature of the waste management industry is that there are many differing opinions but is confident that they have an appropriate solution and reputable partners.

Vickie Walker, community - Why don't we go to Reporoa and talk to the community there about how they feel about the plant?

Yani Johanson, CCC elected member - Referencing a video shown at the briefing recently regarding the Reporoa plant. The construction was relatively quick as materials and workers could be sourced locally, reducing the risk of delays.

Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - The decision was only made on Wednesday and had the technical briefing with our councils on Friday. It has only been two working days since then. We are working hard to get as much information on the website as possible. I visited the site in Reporoa last year. The plant in Hornby will not be the same technology, not a "lift and shift". There are other examples of cities where this technology is used in built-up areas. We are looking at how to best implement the new solution for the community of Hornby.

Carl Pascoe, Chair - The CLG has spent 14 years battling this and would hate to see another community faced with the same issues. Called on the CCC to share any evidence they have that the new site will be as described.

Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - There is a plan to share this info as there has only been two working days since the technical briefing.

4. Living Earth & CCC discuss current site management and suggested processes moving forward

Jaco Kleinhans, LE - They are on track to have the outside material cleared by the end of December. There are currently extra truck movements on site as a result.

Katinka Visser, community - Could we get an updated photo of exactly what is onsite? Would like to see that by January the materials are gone.

David McArdle, CCC staff – Offered to arrange a drone shoot and photos before the next CLG in

February.

Action 3: David McArdle to arrange OPP drone shoot and photos for the next CLG in February.

Q. Bruce King, community - Referencing the Living Earth report, previously thought the source of the dust at his house was building works nearby which stopped months ago, indicating the dust is still coming from the plant. The dust was back today. Why aren't you using the water mister to offset the dust?

A. Jaco Kleinhans, LE - There are two water misters still onsite which are moved depending on operational activity. There are also water trucks, and dust monitors to track any changes in dust generated.

Q. Bruce King, community - At the last meeting there was a report which stated that the dust limit was being exceeded for three months. What was the consequence of this?

A. Jaco Kleinhans, LE - The dust limit was exceeded at the end of 2021. When the limit is breached the consent dictates that Living Earth are required to notify ECan and of what they will do. Living Earth advised CCC prior to this breach that the clearing of such large volume of material with the removal of outdoor windrows in such a short timeframe will generate more dust.

Q. Bruce King, community - What is the source of the dust?

A. Jaco Kleinhans, LE - The site will be cleared soon of any dust generating material.

Q. Katinka Visser, community - Who do we report dust to?

A. David McArdle, CCC staff - ECan

Carol Anderson, community - Has glass tabletops on her patio that need to be cleaned everyday due to the black dust. Nathan Doherty (ECan) was supposed to come to look at it.

Carl Pascoe, Chair - As mentioned earlier Carl will include this in the letter to ECan.

Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - The dust has been tested in the past, but it can be done again.

8. General business

Carl Pascoe, Chair - Any other business?

Vickie Walker, community - Emailed Amy Davidson on Monday and was informed that some aerators had been turned off in the waste water treatment pond.

Bruce King, community - Someone in CCC informed him that the bearings in the aerator are incorrect and cause it to seize.

Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - Will contact Amy Davidson and have someone follow up with Vickie about this.

***Action 4:** Lynette Ellis to contact Amy Davidson*

Katinka Visser, community - Last article on Newsline from 24 November 2024 stated that the CCC are able to turn off a number of aerators and will monitor to see if they need to be restarted. No wonder the odour was bad. I have a page of questions to ask ECan and will request a meeting with them.

Lynette Ellis, CCC staff - I can't answer any wastewater questions as it's not my area of the business.

David McArdle, CCC staff - Suggested that it's more appropriate to find relevant contact in CCC and put them in touch with Vickie as it's not the focus of this meeting.

***Action 5:** David McArdle to find relevant wastewater treatment plant contact for Vickie.*

Carl Pascoe, Chair - Jaco wants to respond to Katinka's statement earlier to clarify that during the independent review of the biofilter that nothing was turned off.

Katinka Visser, community - If a report can be done for two days, why can't it be monitored the rest of the time?

Jaco Kleinhans, LE - It is running the same, it will naturally degrade over time, and we will make sure it's replaced before it gets to a critical point.

Katinka Visser, community - Very concerned about getting through the interim period until the end of April next year. The non-residents at the meeting have the ability to go home after and not deal with these issues. Asks CCC to endeavour to please get it sorted as soon as possible.

Q. Geoffrey King, community - Can we have the biofilter fans turned off for Christmas day?

A. Jaco Kleinhans, LE - No, it's not possible to stop the biological process. There will be odour coming off the building if fans are off.

9. Concluding remarks

Carl Pascoe, Chair - Asks that efforts are made to mitigate any smell for the Christmas period.