
Report of Director of Environment and Housing

Report to Environment & Housing Scrutiny Board

Date: 22nd September 2016

Subject: Odour monitoring and impacts relating to Veolia's Recycling and Energy Recovery Facility (RERF)

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Burmantofts and Richmond Hill, Temple Newsam		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:		

Summary of main issues

The report provides information on odour monitoring relating to Veolia's Recycling and Energy Recovery Facility (RERF). It also provides information on the RERF's performance in respect of emissions since the commencement of operations, with reference to the relevant limits set within the Environmental Permit for the site which is granted by the Environment Agency (EA).

A very small number of odour complaints were received from residents during the commissioning process for the RERF which ran from October 2015 to March 2016, although for some of these there was no evidence of them being related to the plant. Since this time no further complaints have been received. Monitoring carried out by the Council's contract management team, Environmental Health, the EA and Veolia themselves has all demonstrated that there are no off-site odour impacts of any significance arising from the RERF's operations.

Emissions monitoring is carried out continuously using equipment located in the plant's stack. The principal measure of emissions for the relevant substances is a daily average, and the RERF has not breached any of the daily limits set with the Environmental Permit since the commencement of operations. Emissions monitoring data from the plant is included within the report.

Recommendations

Scrutiny Board is requested to note the content of this report.

1. Purpose of this report

The report provides information on odour monitoring and impacts relating to Veolia's Recycling and Energy Recovery Facility (RERF). It also provides information on the RERF's performance in respect of emissions since the commencement of operations, with reference to the relevant limits set within the Environmental Permit for the site which is granted by the Environment Agency.

2. Main Issues

2.1 Odour Monitoring

2.1.1 At its meeting held at the Veolia Recycling and Energy Recovery Facility (RERF) in April 2016, E&H Scrutiny Board requested a further report on odour management and monitoring arrangements for those areas surrounding the RERF.

2.1.2 During the commissioning period, a very small number of odour complaints were received from local residents by the Council. The commissioning process, by its nature, requires the facility to be turned on and off periodically to carry out testing. This led to periods when waste was stored on site for longer than would normally be the case. A meeting was held in February with the residents concerned, Cllr Lyons and Veolia, at which the issues were discussed. Residents confirmed that, since the plant had got past the early phases of commissioning, they had not experienced any further odour issues.

2.1.3 Environmental Health forwarded one complaint to the Environment Agency for investigation in November 2015 and subsequently themselves responded to two odour complaints that were reported as being linked to the RERF, in March and April 2016. They investigated both in accordance with their procedures and undertook numerous visits, but found no evidence of a link to the facility, and the complaints were closed out.

2.1.4 The Council's contract management team carried out daily odour monitoring throughout February 2016 and then recommenced in April and have continued to present day. Monitoring has been undertaken in accordance with IPPC H4 Horizontal Guidance for Odour Part 1. The wind direction and weather conditions are established and then a walk of the full perimeter of the entire former wholesale market site is undertaken. If any odour is detected it is graded in accordance with the guidance and recorded. This information is provided to Veolia on a weekly basis. It has been agreed that in the event of a score being given above 4 (which is the point at which complaints would be raised by people with a normal sense of smell) then this will be immediately reported to Veolia. No significant issues have been recorded, mild odour has periodically been recorded at the site boundary, but these incidents have been intermittent and have been at a level not deemed to have caused nuisance. This is further supported by the lack of any further complaints having been reported to either the contract management team, Veolia or Environmental Health. The Council's contract management team are based opposite the RERF, and are therefore very well placed in terms of quickly becoming aware of any issues.

2.1.5 The Veolia facility is permitted and regulated by the Environment Agency (EA). The EA did acknowledge that there had been some minor issues with odour during commissioning as referred to above. These were raised with Veolia, who acted quickly to address these issues. The EA were satisfied that the reports received during commissioning had been dealt with to their satisfaction.

2.1.6 As regards measures that Veolia have put in place to deal with odour since the original complaints/comments were received during commissioning:

- An odour suppression system has been installed in the tipping hall. This sprays a fine mist to dampen down dust and neutralise odours;
- Veolia have committed to minimising the time that the fast-acting roller shutter doors on the tipping hall are open following reports from us that some were being left open;
- Veolia's operational practice is to keep waste stored in the tipping hall to a minimum, and to empty completely and clean down the tipping hall on a regular basis;
- Although not new developments, Veolia use a 'stock rotation' system within the tipping hall to ensure that oldest waste is processed first, and the tipping hall operates under 'negative pressure', drawing air from the hall into the incineration process and therefore minimising fugitive emissions.

2.1.7 The EA inspected the site to assess Veolia's odour management systems on 12th May 2016. They raise no concerns, only requesting some further technical information, and noted that there had been no complaints since those mentioned above during the commissioning period.

2.2 Emissions Monitoring

2.2.1 In terms of emissions from the plant, these are continuously monitored using independently certified equipment located within the stack. All results are reported to the Environment Agency and are held on the public register, and Veolia publishes emissions performance data on its website at www.veolia.co.uk/leeds/.

2.2.2 The main assessment of emissions performance is based on daily averages, and there have been no breaches to the already stringent daily limits set by the Environment Agency within the Environmental Permit since the plant commenced operations.

2.2.3 The appendices to this report show the actual daily emissions performance results for the RERF over the last three months for the relevant pollutants, with reference to the permitted limits for each. As well as the continuous monitoring carried out in the stack, extractive sampling and laboratory analysis of emissions is also periodically conducted for other relevant substances. The table below sets out the most recent results from this sampling:

	Q1 performance 2016/17	Permit limit
Hydrogen fluoride	<0.32 mg/Nm ³	1mg/Nm ³
Cadmium, thallium and their compounds	0.001 mg/Nm ³	0.05 mg/Nm ³
Mercury and its compounds	0.0007 mg/Nm ³	0.05 mg/Nm ³
Sb, As, Pb, Cr, Co, Cu, Mn, Ni and V and their compounds	0.01 mg/Nm ³	0.5 mg/Nm ³
Nitrous oxide	30 mg/Nm ³	200 mg/Nm ³
Dioxins/furans	0.025 – 0.035 ng/Nm ³	1ng/Nm ³

2.2.4 In terms of wider air quality monitoring in the area, if this were to be undertaken, this might highlight changes in general air quality in the local area. However, it would not identify the source of any changes, which could be numerous, for example traffic or other industrial processes. If it were suspected that a particular facility might be responsible for elevated emissions in the area, the next step would be to monitor emissions at source. As noted above, the on-site monitoring data clearly demonstrates that the facility is consistently operating within its permitted limits, and this therefore provides assurance that it is not having a negative impact of any significance on local air quality. Also, in the event of a problem occurring at the RERF, monitoring systems at source immediately alert the operator to any problem such that they can take the necessary action to mitigate impacts and resolve the issue. Any such event has to be notified to the EA, who has the authority to take the necessary action, including ultimately imposing sanctions if required.

3. Corporate Considerations

Consultation and Engagement: Extensive consultation and engagement with local communities and Ward Members was undertaken during the planning stages of the project. A dedicated Community Liaison Group continues to meet regularly. Local residents and community groups are now also able to visit the facility itself to view the process and raise any questions relating to its environmental performance.

Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration: An equality impact assessment is not deemed to be required at this stage as this report is primarily an information report.

Council policies and City Priorities: Waste and recycling activities contribute to making *Leeds the best city to Live*. The waste strategy and waste collection policies referred to in this report have been consulted on previously and have previously been approved by Executive Board.

Resources and value for money: The financial benefits arising from the RERF and the transition away from landfill are covered in the relevant Executive Board reports.

Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In: This report does not contain any exempt or confidential information.

Risk Management: Risk management is embedded within the systems and controls for the RERF's operation, and the regulatory regime for a facility of this type.

4. Conclusions

The evidence demonstrates that the RERF is not giving rise to impacts of any significance relating to odour, although this area will continue to be routinely monitored. Emissions performance for the plant has consistently been within the already stringent permitted limits prescribed by the EA and as set out within environmental legislation.

5. Recommendations

Scrutiny Board is requested to note the contents of this report.

6. Background documents¹

None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.
