

MINUTE

BALUSS FARM LIAISON GROUP

**Mintlaw Academy, Mintlaw
12 November 2015 - 6.45 pm**

Present: Councillor Jim Ingram (Chair)
Sandy Howie (Baluss Farm)
Mary Bowie-Wallace (Resident)
David Steele (Resident)
Alexander Laird (Community Council)
David Coull (Community Council)
David Cooper (Environmental Health)
John Grant (Environmental Health)

1. Apologies

Councillor Chapman, Councillor Smith, Councillor Pirie, Joyce Munro, Margaret Grant (David Steele and Mary Bowie-Wallace new local resident reps)

2. Minute of Last Meeting (30 April 2015)

Accepted as an accurate Minute

3. Matters Arising

Reference made to actions in item 6:

1. David Cooper advised of the establishment of a survey via Survey Monkey and that over 125 notifications had been received. Staff have responded to as many of the notifications as possible by visiting the area and liaising with Mr Howie. It had been hoped that the date and time of complaints could be linked to specific farm activities. Although Mr Howie keeps detailed records it has not been possible to link complaints to any specific activities. There has been a reduction in number of complaints associated with slurry spreading; injection system now being used.
2. Mr Howie said that he had not been contacted by residents at time of complaints; if he had he would have visited them to witness the odour at their houses.
3. Environmental Health discussed the ventilation system with SAC but they were unable to propose any improvements; the system is a modern and efficient system.

4. Mr Howie has checked that the ventilation system is working as efficiently as possible.
5. Slurrycell continues to be used.
6. An update will be provided to residents, on the website, following this meeting.
7. EH will continue to respond to complaints and liaise with Mr Howie.
8. EH has discussed the situation with the Council solicitor. Both notices are being complied with and consequently enforcement action is not appropriate.

4. Current Position

Community Councils: David Coull and Alexander Laird advised that the issue is regularly discussed at Community Council meetings.

Baluss Farm: Mr Howie advised that he has been fully cooperative with EH. He referred to the SAC report which highlighted that best practice is being adopted throughout the farm. He had enquired about installing accelerators to the ventilation system but said they would make no difference. He disputed some of the complaints in that some of them did not relate to his farm or slurry spreading but he was still being blamed. He now utilises a slurry injection system costing an additional £1500.

Residents: David Steele and Mary Bowie- Wallace explained that the smell 'comes and goes'. Mary referred to continuing problems with flies, although less of a problem compared to last year. Mary also said that the smell is noticeable at weekends and can be overpowering.

Aberdeenshire Council: David Cooper advised that a proposal had been received from a company with regard to onsite monitoring. It is intended that the company carries out sampling on the farm, and carry out dispersion modelling, with the intention that this identifies specific sources of the odour.

5. Actions

1. David Cooper to arrange for odour monitoring to be carried out. Group members will be advised of the proposal. Mr Howie has agreed to provide assistance where required in order to access specific areas within the farm.
2. David Cooper will publish an update on the Council's website, including the Minutes of this meeting once finalised.
3. Environmental Health to make arrangements to visit Mary Bowie-Wallace's house to ascertain extent of fly problem.

4. Next meeting - February/March. David Cooper to organise.

6. AOCB

Councillor Ingram wishes to see more resident representation at next meeting.

David Steele asked Mr Howie if residents could visit the farm. Mr Howie agreed, subject to appropriate arrangements in terms of disease control.