

# NEW CHUM COMMUNITY REFERENCE GROUP

Meeting minutes – July 12, 2023

## Meeting details:

Meeting:	New Chum Community Reference Group
Date:	July 12, 2023
Location:	New Chum Boardroom, Cleanaway, 100 Chum Street New Chum
Start time:	5pm

## Agenda items:

Item	Discussion led by
1. Welcome and introduction	Chair
2. Attendance and apologies	Chair
3. Confirmation of previous meetings	Chair
4. Action items from previous meetings	Chair
5. Correspondence	Chair
6. Site update – remediation, environmental actions, other items	Cleanaway
7. Planning and Environment Court Decision	Cleanaway
8. General business	All
9. Next meeting	Chair
10. Meeting close	Chair

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## Minutes:

### 1. Welcome and introduction

The Chair welcomed all attendees and declared the meeting open at 5pm.

### 2. Attendance and apologies

The Chair acknowledged the attendance of:

- **Wendy Davidson (community member)**
- *Yvette Phillips (community member) - apologies*
- **Walter Wood (community member)**
- **Ian Dalzell (community member)**
- **Bryan Carmont (community member)**
- **Vicki Carmont (community member)**
- **David Trezise (community member)**
- *Mark Delitt (community member) - apologies*
- **Geoff Yarham (community member) – Secretary of Ipswich Residents Against Toxic Environments (IRATE)**
- **Aaron Carter (General Manager of Solid Waste Services Queensland, Cleanaway)**
- **Michael Azevedo (Regional Manager, Cleanaway)**
- **Phil Lutton (acting as CRG chair on behalf of Cleanaway)**
- **Andrew Musgrave (acting as CRG secretary on behalf of Cleanaway)**

The Chair noted the absence of our regular observer:

- *Brett Davey (Ipswich City Council Manager City Design) - apologies*

The chair noted the CRG did not hear back from:

- *Cr Andrew Fechner (Ipswich City Councillor) - apologies*
- *Daniel Phipps (Department of Environment and Science Assistant Director Community Engagement) - apologies*
- *Paul Hurley (community member) - apologies*

The Chair also noted that up to 10 members of the community can be part of the committee and encouraged those present to pass on the details of any interested parties to Three Plus or Cleanaway.

### 3. Confirmation of previous meetings

The Chair confirmed the circulation of the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday, June 7, 2023, at 5pm.

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The Chair provided an opportunity for committee members to comment on the minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes were then adopted as a true record of the June meeting.

- Question from David regarding wording in the minutes. That was clarified and he accepted the explanation.
- Minutes adopted (David/Walter)

#### 4. Action items from previous meetings

CRG Members asked if the Anderson Report could be made public. **ACTION:** Cleanaway undertook to respond to the request to make the document public.

- Michael speaking to request for Anderson Report to be released – explained what the report is used for, that it is largely internal, and is not something that would be released, however it is reported on when required to DES and ICC (commercial in confidence [CIC] re: monitoring activities). David asking if DES get a copy of the monitoring results.
- Geoff speaking about Anderson Report – Refutes that it is CIC as it is publicly available via ICC website.
- Geoff asking if environmental report on the boreholes that is supplied to DES (from New Chum site) is available to the public on the Cleanaway website. Where can we find a copy of the 2022 report?
- Geoff commented that he had to leave his home for eight weeks due to the smell in 2022. Poor performance by Cleanaway cited by Geoff.
- **QUESTION ON NOTICE from Geoff: Can Cleanaway supply a copy of the 2022 Environmental Report supplied to DES?**
- Michael Azevedo clarified some aspects of the report are CIC, and the fact Cleanaway has released parts of the reports in the past. Commented on their commitment to the CRG and community in general.
- Geoff also then commented on most recent Anderson report where Cleanaway stated, “let’s use this number for the height in the application of Cell 3B”, suggesting Cleanaway is “remiss to readily supply information”.
- **QUESTION ON NOTICE by Geoff: Why the site manager is not attending these meetings?**

A CRG member asked if there was a timeline for the potential closure of New Chum. **ACTION:** Cleanaway undertook to provide an update on the status of the site and potential reopening of Cell 3B.

- Phil suggested to the CRG this would be addressed within a subsequent agenda. The CRG concurred.

CRG member David Trezise is seeking to confirm that all cells had geo-fabric liners and whether some had been damaged. **ACTION:** Cleanaway to clarify.

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David CONFIRMED this has been answered as he has read the Planning and Environment Court's rulings that details seven tears to the liner during gas drilling.

## 5. Correspondence

The Chair asked if any correspondence had been sent or received in relation to the CRG or relevant to operation of the New Chum Landfill site of which the CRG should be aware.

- David commented he has sent an email on March 26 regarding the New Chum contamination not being on Emergency Management Register. That email was noted by the Chair as being received.

## 6. Site update - remediation and environmental actions

Michael Azevedo provided an update on remediation and environmental actions.

- Michael commented it's been a quiet month, a lot of effort going towards capping, remediating erosion. Expansion of the gas drilling program has been slow. Next temporary flare has been delivered to site – approvals currently with ICC – undergoing its commission (it is the third flare). It will slow the commissioning due to damage in travel.
- Geoff notes there are a number of sprinklers on many "completed" cells. He asked: "Why is there no progressive rehabilitation being undertaken on these cells"?
- Michael responded when you have an application in and awaiting an outcome you would not undertake these finalised/capping works as you run the risk of having to undo this work depending on the result of the application.
- Geoff asks if the water coming from the surface of these cells is leachate.
- Geoff asks: "Are the sprinklers distributing leachate?" and "What water is being distributed on the partially completed cells (via the sprinklers), is it leachate, groundwater or stormwater?"
  - Michael says water used in the sprinklers is coming from groundwater or stormwater.
- Geoff commented the Chum Street Pond contains leachate – stating: "DES still consider the Chum Street Pond a leachate pond."
- Michael clarified that water that comes in contact with waste is leachate – commented even stormwater contains PFAS. "We are preparing (the plant?) to treat PFAS."
- David commented Point 64 from the court's ruling was referenced as the seven tears have been rectified and no leachate is reaching the groundwater.

## 7. Planning and Environment Court Decision

Cleanaway to provide an update and field questions about the recent decision of the Planning and Environment Court decision regarding the height rise.

- Aaron made his comments – Cleanaway is seeking to be open and transparent.
- Bryan asking about who incurs cost if the appeal is again denied. Cleanaway replies that legal costs would be incurred by all parties in any further court proceedings.

**Questions on notice regarding the decision from CRG Member David Trezise:**

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**Q:** Justice Williamson was scathing of the poor management of the site by Cleanaway. What changes are being implemented to immediately improve site management?

**Cleanaway:** The changes have already been implemented and continue to be upheld.

- David asked when is the leachate plant becoming operational. Michael commented “it is currently being commissioned”.

**Q:** Why didn't Cleanaway give the reason for the dismissal of the appeal to shareholders?

**Cleanaway:** It is very unusual for an ASX listed company to make comment on decisions made by the courts. Cleanaway by law is required to make ASX announcement as soon as possible, noting the judgement is over 90 pages long. The company is currently assessing the judgement.

**Q:** Justice Williamson went to lengths to describe leachate management on site and he doubted that leachate could be managed effectively. What measures are proposed to improve site leachate management since the appeal was dismissed?

**Cleanaway:** New Chum is currently working proactively on managing its site leachate levels. This has been done through the tankering of 100KL/day of leachate offsite for treatment to the Cleanaway liquid waste disposal treatment plant at Yatala. In addition to this measure, Cleanaway is currently commissioning a new 0.5 MLD leachate treatment plant which will produce a treated leachate to trade waste compliant levels for disposal to the Urban Utilities Bundamba Treatment Plant. These measures will significantly increase the ability of site to rapidly reduce the site leachate inventory.

- David asked if there are draw down wells being used on site to help keep water away from the leachate?
- Michael clarified dewatering would not allow discharge into the creek as it was outside of EA.
- Geoff asked if the leachate they are currently extracting is more contaminated than the water that was being sent to Bundamba?
- Michael responded giving detail as to why it stopped. Essentially, nutrient content has changed.

**Q:** Has a decision been made by Cleanaway to appeal Justice Williamson's dismissal of the appeal?

**Cleanaway:** Cleanaway is currently considering its options and will decide within the 28-day appeal window. An official announcement will be made once Cleanaway makes a decision.

- Aaron confirmed no decision has been made. Response “should be ready” by next meeting.

**Q:** Will any subsequent appeal add to the financial burden already imposed on the community?

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**Cleanaway:** If an appeal is lodged, there may be further legal costs for parties. That cost will be a matter for Ipswich City Council. Planning and Environment matters before the Court of Appeal are public hearings and transcripts and records can be easily accessed.

- Resolved.

**Q:** The cost to the Ipswich City Council and thereby the Ipswich community for the dismissed appeal was in the order of \$2 million. The P&E court does not award costs! Does Cleanaway endorse the imposition of this financial burden on our community? It pales into insignificance when compared against the recent community grants. Imagine what those funds could have been used for by the Council - infrastructure, services, parks and gardens. Does Cleanaway realise the lost opportunities resulting from this court case?

- As per David's comments, "question is now irrelevant until after the decisions has been made re: appealing the decision".

**Cleanaway:** Cleanaway is committed to open engagement with the community through the Community Reference Group and supporting community organisations through its New Chum Community Benefits Fund. Cleanaway's appeal was made through appropriate legal channels, and we are unable to comment on costs incurred by Ipswich City Council.

- As per David's comments, "question is now irrelevant until after the decisions has been made re: appealing the decision".

**Q:** Please provide an update on the charges made against Cleanaway by the Department of Environment and Science (ie, date of next hearing)

**Cleanaway:** Regarding the 2021 release prosecution, Cleanaway has plead guilty to the two charges. Sentencing on Monday July 21 There will also be a mention of the DES prosecution regarding the 2022 charges on that date.

- **QUESTION ON NOTICE from David: When is the next Cleanaway AGM?**
- **REQUEST from CRG: Write to the DES DG asking for a senior member from DES to attend the CRG meetings.**

## 8. General business

**Questions on notice from New Chum Community Reference Group member David Trezise ahead of the CRG meeting to be held on July 12, 2023.**

**Q:** Cleanaway was issued with a new Environmental Authority (EA) for the New Chum landfill on the June 1, 2023. How does the new EA differ from the previous EA?

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## Cleanaway:.

This is not a new EA, it is simply an amendment to include some new conditions around the rebuilding of cell 3B and relate largely to the groundwater challenges following the floods. The new conditions require Cleanaway to comply with the design and Council approval (which will see the cell floor lifted given the groundwater changes from the floods), to have a depressurisation system in place until the waste is placed to RL27.

- David would like further detail on the EAs and the submissions – CRG are seeking further information regarding EA amendment submissions.
- Geoff asked if either were involved in the EA that as approved on the June 1? Aaron confirmed the organisation is involved.
- **QUESTION ON NOTICE from Geoff: “How come the latest EA application included a drawing from 2018 that didn’t refer to Cell 3B, which was the nexus of the application change?”**
- **QUESTION ON NOTICE from Geoff: Can you provide the reasons for the application made after 25 July (not sure on date – can we clarify pls)?**
- **QUESTION ON NOTICE from Geoff: Can you provide responses two weeks before each of the CRG meetings?**
- **GEOFF HAS REQUESTED TO BE ADDED TO THE CRG’s EMAIL DISTRIBUTION LIST**

**Q:** What operational changes will be made to comply with new conditions?

- Michael summarised the ongoing, remediating works – Aaron added a big part of the works relate to the EPOs.

**Cleanaway:** New Chum is still hoping to complete the Cell 3B works, which are currently under review by Ipswich City Council, and until then the site remains closed. New Chum continues to strive for the highest environmental compliances in areas such as capping maintenance, leachate level reduction, the management of stormwater and groundwater onsite, management of the LFG (Landfill Gas) to reduce odour potential and the ongoing site gas monitoring as part of feedback loop for focusing site’s odour reduction strategies.

**Q:** Will these operational changes reduce environmental impacts?

- Michael stated “they will, we won’t go back, we’ve worked very hard to raise the standards
- **QUESTION ON NOTICE from David: When are you going to do an internal audit against the new conditions and compliance?**
- **REQUEST FROM WENDY (on behalf of members of the CRG) – “Don’t appeal the decision”.** Aaron confirmed he is passing on the CRGs sentiments to management of Cleanaway.

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**Cleanaway:** Since the 2022 flooding event, New Chum has implemented - and continues to build upon - a new operating paradigm of greater transparency and environmental compliance. As part of this approach, the site is continually working towards the completion of outstanding EPO's (Environmental Protection Order) and continually improving how it operates to minimise the recurrence of environmental issues from either general operations and/or extreme weather events. This commitment has seen the department close out 10 of the original 12 EPOs that applied to the site and we continue to take new initiatives, such the introduction of a new Leachate treatment plant, that utilises the best new technologies available to reduce our site leachate levels. The expansion of LFG operations offers not only greater odour compliance but brings New Chum's gas management in line with landfill operations best practices and government environmental policy regarding greenhouse gas management.

## 9. Next meeting

The Chair suggested the next meeting be held on Wednesday, August 9, at 5pm, and that date be confirmed with the CRG in the preceding weeks.

- **QUESTION ON NOTICE from Geoff: Can you confirm there is a proper RFEQ liner under that cell?**
- **QUESTION ON NOTICE from Geoff: Why don't you go straight into electricity generation instead of burning the gases onsite?**

## 10. Meeting close

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 6:46pm.

-ENDS-