



Minutes of the Purton liaison committee meeting held at Purton Village Hall on 08 January 2026 at 16.00.

PRESENT

Wiltshire Council

Cllr Jacqui Lay (JL) + guest - John Abbott (JA)
Cllr Paul Sample (PS)
Steve Bryant (SB)

Cricklade Town Council

Cara Watson (CW)
Mark Clarke (MC)
Stuart Pryde (SP)
Nick Dye (ND)

Braydon Parish Council

Emma Brook (EB)

Purton Parish Council

Geoff Greenaway (GG)

Hills Waste Solutions Ltd

Simon Allen (SA)
David Byatt (DB)
Henry Newbery (HN)
Darren Goddard (DG)

APOLOGIES

<i>HRC = Household Recycling Centre / WC = Wiltshire Council</i>	ACTION
Wiltshire Council (WC) proposed closure of Purton (and Lower Compton) Household Recycling Centre	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• JL asked for clarification r.e. the contract term for provision of Purton Household Recycling Centre (HRC).<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ SA outlined that the contracts to run the Purton and Lower Compton HRCs were started 25 years ago and extended by an additional year to 2018. After a tender process, Hills was re-awarded the HRC contract (as part of the larger lot 1 contract) for a period of eight years (up to August 2026) with a further option to extend by WC by up to another eight years – Aug 2034.• JL asked what happens to the other elements of Lot 1 if the HRC contract is not extended:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ SA - Rather than extend the Lot 1 contract in its entirety, WC chose to split it into 3 lots – MRF at Sands Farm / Transfer Stations / Two x HRC's at Lower Compton and Purton.	

- In May 2024 Hills was asked to submit updated financial models for the HRC's which they did in June 2024
- MC asked how WC pays Hills for running the HRC?
 - SA confirmed that elements of the contract are priced on tonnages received, but it is largely based on a management fee.
- MC asked who receives the income from the sale of recycled materials?
 - SA confirmed that 75% of revenue goes to WC and 25% to Hills
- SA confirmed summer and winter opening times, 5 days a week (7 hours in summer, 6 hours in winter).
- SA pointed out that in May 2024 WC asked for 2 financial models. One option was to allow WC to cease operations at one or both HRCs. This was before Hills submitted any revised costs.
- JL said Purton HRC is very much loved.
- HN – Original HRC contract was never priced to have someone on gate.
- SA – Booking system would help reduce likelihood of Swindon residents using Purton site
- PS spoke to say that a short-term solution, whilst waiting for a new facility to be provided on Council owned land might be more Community Involvement. He suggested that perhaps the council (or possibly the local councils) could provide occasional skips/ bring in extra kerbside collections, or perhaps the scouts could get involved and collect up residents waste and take it to the nearest HRC.
- MC – With 93,000 vehicle movements using Purton HRC it shows popularity of facility with people of Cricklade.
- JL – c. 40k people in catchment to use Purton site. Hope is that WC and Hills can come to some agreement to keep it open.
- SA – Hills submitted a tender in 2014 for the HRC elements of the Wiltshire Council waste management and recycling contract – and have only been able to increase the price to operate the sites in line with CPI.
- Since 2014 costs have risen far in excess of CPI and these have therefore not been recoverable through the contract.
- SA - Hills has in effect subsidised WC waste management costs under the Lot 1 contract– making a significant loss on operating the MRF contract. In light of this, it has been disappointing to hear Council comments about an 'unforeseeable increase in costs' firstly because Council Officers have been made aware of the financial performance of this contract over several years and secondly when the revised models for the continued operation of the HRCs was submitted back in June 2024 and therefore foreseeable at that time.
- JL raised issue of open letter from Dr Roz Savage to the leader of WC which claimed Hills costs were 4 x what WC currently paid.
- SA clarified that the price rise was around 75% and not 400%. Hills has only been able to apply Consumer Price Indexation (CPI) and other costs have risen significantly. Other factors include HRC sites which are 20+ years old with no investment. The offices leak and the floors are not fit for purpose. The 75% increase also includes crucial equipment like compactors.
- HN pointed out that compactors at Purton and LC were refurbished from other HRC sites which were previously run by Hills.
- SP – Do the other HRCs have capacity to take waste and car journeys from Purton and Calne?
 - PS – Every decision WC has made has been on evidence heard and takes into account additional journeys to other HRC sites. We recognise local disquiet, but we have a multi-million pound budget problem and we have to balance the books. We have to

<p>cancel Purton HRC contract to balance the books. We are examining sites north of M4, speaking to neighbouring local authorities and investigating a booking system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ WC has had a very positive relationship with Hills for many years. We recognise the good work they've done – but the bid Hills put in for this contract was significantly more than we are prepared to pay. We cannot afford to invest capital sums in sites WC do not own. ○ All of information discussed in full council and cabinet is in the public record. ○ Open to having conversations with Hills and others to find a solution. £4 million black hole requires WC to reduce cost where possible. ○ WC will also speak to Parish/Town Council to explore options – which may include community solutions like mobile tips in villages during the transition, inc alterations to kerbside service. Scouts have also taken waste to recycling centres as part of fundraising efforts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● JL – Do we own any sites north of the M4 for a new HRC? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PS – We have sites in north Wiltshire. Officers are looking at this. ● EB – What is planned closure of date of Hills' Purton HRC and what is lead time for a replacement HRC elsewhere? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PS – Closure is set for 1st August 2026. Building a new site might take 4 years, maybe quicker if someone had an existing site. ● ND – Would Hills consider running an HRC for residents on a commercial basis? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SA – Hills would need to assess if there was demand. It's something for Hills to consider. We can invest in infrastructure with a contract, but investment hoping that people will come in is very different. Current emotive response may not be reflected by those willing to pay. ● JL – What will you do with the site when it closes? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SA – No plans yet. It's land that we might rent out or develop for ourselves. It's not that big a parcel of land. ● GG – raised concerns about fly tipping when many people will not want to do a 30+ mile round journey to another site. There will be a cost to the Council dealing with this. Hills' Purton HRC site is very well run, clean and tidy and a benefit to all. ● GG – How does cost of running Hills' HRC compare to the other contractors' sites? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PS – Other 8 HRC sites are 4x cheaper to run than Hills' sites. We've taken a policy decision to invest in sites we own. I regret that we didn't start work on a new northern HRC earlier. ● JA – Important to have these facilities readily available and people will not travel 30 or 40 miles. How confident are you that the Council will accrue the savings they anticipate? Can a compromise be reached with Hills? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PS – We've listened to residents, local councillors and cross examine councillors. On balance I believe the decision made is the right one. If we can mitigate the impact before a new HRC is live we will. We are c. £4 million in the red. This was nearer £40 million earlier in 2025. ● MC – Does WC own the 8 other HRC sites? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PS – Yes. 	
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- MC – Surely WC owned sites also incur costs. They are not free, so it doesn't seem that WC is comparing like with like. Could sites be extended without expensive capital investment. I'm sceptical about how easy a new site can be delivered and will require an environmental permit etc.
- PS - Cllr Sample expressed strongly that the council is needing to make savings as the council is £4million in the red! And still need to support other services, such as Libraries, Leisure Facilities etc. etc.
 - JL expressed how in our communities of both Purton and Cricklade provide the library buildings, the Leisure facilities at Cricklade, in Purton the Charities provide the village hall, museum, football, cricket, tennis and social club plus are responsible for the public toilets.

Minutes of previous meeting

- No comments from Minutes of previous meeting

Parkgate Farm landfill operations

- SA shared details of tonnages for both waste in, leachate out and related vehicle movements from the Parkgate Farm landfill between 01.07.25 and 31.12.25. These were typical for the six-month period.

01.07.25 – 31.12.25	Tonnes	Vehicle Movements
Landfill Waste IN	15,674	2199
Landfill Leachate OUT	9,535	347
Clay OUT	2,649	148

Composting

- SA shared tonnage data and vehicle movements for the Parkgate Farm facility between 01.07.25 – 31.12.25 as shown below.
- SA – Confirmed Cotswold District Council contract runs until 2030 and Wiltshire Council Garden Waste is extended until 2034.

01.07.25 – 31.12.25	Tonnes		Vehicle Movements	
Green Waste IN	Total	17,035	Total	1,563
	WCC	11,865	WCC	535
	GCC	4,539	GCC	826
	Other	631	Other	202
Product OUT		4,435		201
Waste OUT		928		60

Leachate OUT		2,146		77													
Planning applications																	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SA confirmed work on the Solar Park on the old Purton site will start in March. Hills is the Landlord. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be movement from March to July Hills has agreed for cabling from other solar park to run through Hills land. JL – People at Cowleaze were complaining about vibrations. Hills has spoken to drivers and no complaints received since. 																	
Recycling update																	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SA shared the data from the Purton HRC for the period 01/12/24 – 30/11/25: <p>Total car count into site = 93,477 – there was a maximum car count of 9,926 in August 2025 and a minimum of 5,380 in Jan 2025. Total journeys in and out 187,000 for 01/12/24 – 30/11/25.</p> <p>In the same period 5,041.84t of waste was handled at Purton HRC, the breakdown of where it was sent is given in the table below.</p> <p>Tonnage summary:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Reuse</td> <td>1.48%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Recycling</td> <td>51.36%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Diversion to EfW</td> <td>22.46%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Landfill - Cover/Roads</td> <td>24.30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Landfill - Haz</td> <td>0.41%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>100.00%</td> </tr> </table> <p>The above materials were collected in 1597 transactions / vehicle movements. Total HGV journeys in and out 3,200.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SA confirmed 'efw' was energy from waste – aka an incinerator. HN - Hardcore is used for engineering roads on landfill site. HN – confirmed reuse items includes: textiles, bulky waste, large white goods to the likes of KFR, plus gas bottles and books. 'Recycling' includes cardboard, wood and garden waste. JL – queried why residents take black bags to an HRC and don't use the kerbside service. Something for WC to look at. 					Reuse	1.48%	Recycling	51.36%	Diversion to EfW	22.46%	Landfill - Cover/Roads	24.30%	Landfill - Haz	0.41%	Total	100.00%	
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Any other business																	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MC – Urged WC to do a deal with Hills. • ND – Offered Hills help setting up a payment scheme • CW – Needs a Hills commercial skip collected. • GG – incredibly important that Purton retains an HRC • JA – Had read the LibDem plan word for word and there was no mention of closing down the HRC's and that the following statement by the LibDem's is very relevant – "Empowering every community to shape their future and to make its own decisions" – this is not happening in our communities. • PS – Thanks for a respectful meeting and we'll work towards an affordable solution for Wiltshire. • JL – Praised Hills for running liaison meetings. Not every operator does. • DG – from our social media monitoring it's clear how valued Hills' HRCs are. • HN – Told public are supportive of Hills' staff at HRCs. • PS – Enjoyed day spent with Hills in specially arranged site visit to both the MBT and MRF. 	
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Next meeting

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 18th June 2026 (tbc) 	
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