



## PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

**MEETING: Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**MEETING DATE: 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

No.	Petition, deputation or question	Name of Speaker	On Behalf Of	Attendees
1	Deputation	Mr David Hodson, Chair Rutland Quarry Forum The Meadows Kirks Close GREETHAM Rutland, LE15 7NT	Rutland Quarry Forum	Mr David Baker Rutland Quarry Forum Great Lane GREETHAM Rutland, LE15 7NG  Mr Ken Edward, Chair Greetham Parish Council Ivy Farm House Great Lane GREETHAM Rutland, LE15 7NG

### DETAILS

A brief recap on the history of the renewal of the Minerals and Waste contract with North Northamptonshire Council (NNC).

For several preceding years, their performance had been unsatisfactory.

They had been without a qualified minerals enforcement officer due to recruitment difficulties and had up until recently even resorted to using a person living in Australia for processing planning applications.

In February 2022, at a Scrutiny Committee reviewed of the proposal to renew the contract with NNC and doubts were raised about the wisdom of continuing with them. I presented a deputation from The Rutland Quarry Forum urging RCC to go elsewhere. However the contract was renewed.

The Scrutiny Committee mandated that there should be a review of performance after 6 months.

Which did not happen.

So here we are 14 months later with a performance report.

And apart for being a very flimsy superficial report, it makes very sad reading.

As predicted, NNC have staffing difficulties. This is a continuation of one of the difficulties experienced in the previous contract. There still seems to be no succession planning, nor a contingency plan within NNC.

It does not make clear whether or not they now have a qualified Minerals Enforcement Officer.

It does not say how many enforcement inspections were supposed to be carried out.

It does not make clear whether or not any have been carried out.

So, why does this matter?

Without enforcement of planning conditions the whole process of planning conditions become pointless.

The conditions are there to protect the Health and Safety of residents and the environment.

Quarrying companies quickly realise that there is no enforcement and proceed to flout the conditions. We have already seen this at the Greetham Northwest Extension where there have been three breaches of conditions in a very few months.

There are three parts to this contract:

- Local Plan development
- Development Control
- Enforcement

Without enforcement, development control is seriously undermined, so two of the three areas of responsibility are failing. There is no report on how the contract is performing in the Development Control area from those directly involved.

The report says that the underperformance does not constitute grounds for contract termination.

How bad does it have to get?

Where is the information about the performance indicators?

Also, the lack of technical understanding of NNC when advising development control has been highlighted to the committee previously.

Despite this, the lack of understanding is still prominent.

For example, the current determination process for yet another quarry application at Greetham has failed to identify a serious issue regarding monitoring of emissions from site, which will lead to failure to enforce should any breach occur. This failing happened despite their being readily available knowledge from specialists within the industry. Again, this was only identified after intervention by Greetham Parish Council.

With an increase in quarrying applications (some of them significantly large) and Ketton Cement expansion on the horizon Rutland County Council now need to look at re-visiting this contract again looking at alternative options such as engaging private sector companies by market testing this option (which they confirm they have not done to date). The eastern part of Rutland (covering 40% of the villages in Rutland) is predominantly limestone and interest in quarrying will increase. It is time to replace the priority of "ensure value for money" (this

contract is worth £25,000 to NNCC) and investing significant funds into providing a Minerals Service to the residents of Rutland which is fit for purpose.

I urge you to reject this report and mandate a new report which answers the above issues.