

Wednesday 5th August at 5pm

Meeting with Environment Agency Nicola Parkinson and Jackie Swire

With Cllrs G Adams and M MacEley-Young

County Cllr David Ireton

Town Clerk – C Burrow

Public Meeting and Community Liaison Group – PFAS Concerns in Bentham

Bentham Town Council is considering establishing a Community Liaison Group in response to ongoing community concerns regarding PFAS and the environmental issues associated with the Angus Fire site in Bentham.

The proposed group would provide a neutral and constructive forum for residents, regulators, experts and relevant organisations to share information, raise concerns and ensure that the community receives clear and up-to-date information. It is envisaged that the group would be chaired and hosted by Bentham Town Council, with membership including representatives from the Town Council, North Yorkshire Council, the Environment Agency, UKHSA or relevant health experts, agricultural representatives, Angus Fire and approximately six community representatives: an example of this would be Bentham Playing Fields. The group would consist of around 8–12 members and would meet every two to three months.

The group would operate under agreed Terms of Reference or a Statement of Intent, with meetings minuted and actions recorded. It would provide a safe and impartial space for residents to ask questions and for the appropriate agencies to provide information and follow up actions.

The current reported informal multi-agency meeting taking place fortnightly, held remotely, provide regular check-ins between the relevant agencies and regulators, ensuring that everyone is working in the same direction and has access to the most relevant and up-to-date information regarding the PFAS concerns in Bentham. The meetings also provide an opportunity for agencies to be made aware of issues, information and concerns being raised through Bentham Town Council.

Once the Community Liaison Group is established, a wider public engagement event could also be considered. This might involve an afternoon drop-in session where residents can raise questions, followed by an evening public meeting involving the relevant regulators and organisations.

The Town Clerk asked the Environment Agency about potential funding for establishing and operating the Community Liaison Group. Funding could potentially assist with the practical costs of running the group, such as administration, premises, supplies, meeting arrangements, communications, public engagement events and access to appropriate independent expertise where required.

The overall aim is to create a transparent, collaborative and sustainable arrangement that supports effective communication between the community and the organisations responsible for the environmental, regulatory and public-health aspects of the PFAS concerns in Bentham.