

Our ref: EIR 2021-97

Sent by email to: request-714259-b7265744@whatdotheyknow.com

Dear Requestor,

REF: Freedom of information request for copy of complaints

Thank you for providing further details on 17 February 2021, following your request for information of 23 December 2020 requesting copies of 'all complaints made against Cllr Clyde Loakes and the response from the NLWA, including who wrote the response'. We responded on 17 February with details of complaints made during 2020 and 2021 to 17 February and details of who wrote the responses (our information request reference 2020-93). This further response is being handled under the Environmental Information Regulations (EiR) 2004 and has been allocated a new (but linked) reference number 2021-97^[1] and we respond as follows:

- 1. You requested the following information:** By the sounds of it you have more [complaints] from the previous years. Are you kindly able to forward those to me please?

I did notice that none of the behavioural issues highlighted in the complaints were addressed in any of the responses and were not once mentioned. Why is that?

2. NLWA Response

As noted in our previous response, NLWA has a complaints procedure which is available here: <https://www.nlwa.gov.uk/article/complaints-procedure>
All complaints are handled in line with this procedure.

^[1] Given the nature of our activities and the fact that environmental information is interpreted quite broadly we now generally answer information requests under the Environmental Information Regulations rather than the Freedom of Information Act. Further detail is available at:
http://www.ico.gov.uk/for_organisations/environmental_information.aspx

We have no records of any other complaints made about Councillor Clyde Loakes, Chair of the North London Waste Authority, except for those already supplied to you from 2020. This response relates to the years 2017 – 2019, because we have an information policy which can be accessed at the link below, and the retention period within that is three years. <https://www.nlwa.gov.uk/sites/default/files/inline-files/personal-data-retention-policy-2018-v12-issued-04-05-18.pdf>. Informally, we do not have any recollection of complaints made against the Chair outside of this period either.

In accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations this response acts as a refusal notice to supply the information requested under Regulation 12 (4), because the Authority does not hold the information.

The comments made about Councillor Loakes' behaviour in the 2020 complaints were all made in reference to the Authority meeting of 25 June 2020 at which a number of deputations were presented. The responses to these complaints do address behaviour, for example it is noted that:

- Councillor Loakes listened to all the deputations made
- He took notes of the comments raised and
- At the end of each deputation there was acknowledgement of the comments that had been made

This was a meeting of the Authority, which the public are entitled to attend, but public entitlement to speak is governed by the [Authority's Standing Orders](#), which provide for deputations to be made about matters relevant to the Authority's business, but limit the time, and in particular limit the nature of the engagement between the deputees and the Authority to allow for orderly handling of the meeting. Those wishing to make deputations could do so, and were able to speak for up to five minutes, but they were not entitled to ask or present follow-up points or questions. There were nine deputations at this meeting so it was important that the Chair listened to each deputation in turn, but he could not provide one deputees more time or access to Authority Members than the next, so the pace had to be swift.

The behaviour of Members in Authority meetings is governed by the Authority's Standing Orders which were adhered to. There is nothing further to add in response to comments made about councillors attending the meeting and their behaviour at it.

I trust this response answers your questions, but if I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Barbara Herridge
External Relations Manager & Data Protection Officer

Enquiry reference 2020-63

Dated 26/06/20

Dear Camden,

this is not so much a complaint as a note of disappointment and request.

I've just watched a live feed from a meeting of the North London Waste Authority, where a number of very pertinent presentations have been made to the NLWA, asking for a pause and review of the plans for the new incinerator.

Firstly, I believe these should be taken seriously and acted upon.

Secondly, I found the Chair of this meeting:

- rude to those presenting;
- restricted in his willingness and understanding of contemporary issues around climate, pollution and incineration, though more probably avoiding these concerns; and non-democratic in his control of the meeting, limiting questions, and not encouraging discussion. He seemed to run the meeting as the 'Clyde Loakes Show'.

As a local resident I'm shocked by the unwillingness of the Chair of the NLWA to take local residents, MP's, councilor's, doctors and community groups from across the 7 London boroughs seriously, as well as how arrogantly and disrespectfully he talks to these people.

We live in a different world to the one when this project was agreed to - climate change, the Paris Agreement and Covid-19 are some of the issues that need to be considered in any infrastructure project that has an environmental impact. This committee, from what I have seen today, is not fit for purpose.

Because of these concerns I would like to put my name to requesting a pause and review, as well as asking that Clyde Loakes' position on the NLWA be reviewed.

I would like this to be shared among Camden councilor's and members of the GLA.

NLWA Response to enquiry reference 2020-63

1b Berol House, 25 Ashley Road
Tottenham Hale N17 9LJ

post@nlwa.gov.uk

nlwa.gov.uk

Dated: 04/09/20

Dear X X

Thank you for your email on Thursday 25th June following the NLWA Authority meeting.

I would firstly like to thank you for taking the time watch the live feed of the meeting. The deputations made on behalf of 20 named people at the Authority meeting last Thursday were in line with Standing Orders that provide for short deputations to be made and for the Chair, Cllr Clyde Loakes, to be able to respond.

Cllr Loakes reiterated the need for the North London Heat and Power Project (NLHPP) to provide a long-term solution for managing future volumes of non-recyclable waste in north London. As a public waste authority, we take seriously the responsibility to help minimise the use of resources and preserve them for future generations, particularly during this time of Climate Emergency, as declared by our boroughs. The NLHPP as a whole is an integral part of north London's sustainable waste strategy. Our £100m investment in new recycling facilities will include a public Reuse and Recycling Centre which will provide an opportunity for residents to bring recyclable materials to the EcoPark for the very first time. We are also delivering a Resource Recovery Facility with the capacity to recycle up to 130,000 tonnes of wood, plastics and metals every year. These recycling facilities will play a major role in helping us reach a 50% recycling target in north London.

No new information that has not already been considered and addressed by North London Waste Authority was presented at the meeting, and all members had access to the written deputation in advance for due consideration. The concerns that were raised in the deputations are taken very seriously by the Authority and we have invested a significant amount of time carrying out assessments and studies to ensure that the impact on our residents and the environment are as minimal as possible.

The Project was granted development consent in 2017 after the Paris Accord came into effect and it aligns with waste policies that seek to reduce landfill and achieve a Net Zero carbon economy in the UK. It is also in line with waste policies across the world which seek to protect our planet by reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), European Union, UK Government, Greater London Authority, north London's boroughs and the NLWA all share this objective.

As discussed at the meeting on Thursday, pausing the Project poses severe environmental and financial risks and it would not be compatible with our prime responsibility to provide responsible, effective and long-term solutions for our residents. The Project has been thoroughly reviewed and the decision to proceed with the Project has followed several years of comprehensive environmental analysis, as well as an extensive two-stage public consultation, and careful consideration of the alternative options.

I hope this response is of assistance in addressing your questions. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide any further assistance.

Kind regards

Enquiry reference 2020-64

Dated: 28/06/20

Dear colleagues

I wish to make a complaint regarding the conduct of the North London Waste Authority meeting on 25 June 2020, the meeting showed local democracy in an exceptionally poor light. In summary my complaint regards:

1. Lack of evidence of public accountability and transparency in decision making
2. Poor management of meetings, and misuse of role of Chair to prevent meaningful discussion
3. Sexist and disrespectful behaviour by the Chair

I attach the recording of the meeting for reference.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SiqaAW4hV0U>

1. Lack of evidence of public accountability and transparency in decision making

I am not going to revisit here the reasons why I believe this incinerator build project should be stopped, the deputees covered the issues extremely well. What was startling was that in response to a number of considered and well evidenced deputations from a variety of deputees not one board member other than the Chair made a single comment, explanation or asked a question. With the notable exception of one member, who attempted to ask a question which was not allowed by the Chair.

Serious and important points were raised in the deputations, but there was no indication that these were being reflected on, or afforded any significance by the board. Many issues related to changing context and new evidence were raised, the Chair repeatedly dismissed the deputations with comments that 'all these questions have been answered many times'. At its extreme example context and evidence were raised with reference to COVID-19 economic and social justice impacts, which were also dismissed as having been addressed historically many times - a claim that clearly cannot be true.

On the one hand the Chair deflected all questions regarding health impacts to say NLWA are

following PHE and government advice and deferring to this advice. At same time the Chair repeatedly stated that the NLWA determination to persist in the face of all challenge is evidence of its singular and brave leadership capability.

The repeated request for a value for money review was refused out of hand. The Chair stated that the project is 'constantly being scrutinised for value for money' - if this is the case then the Chair did not make clear why this information cannot be published, and why it's decisions on this project cannot be opened to public scrutiny as there is such public concern.

Examples [Chair's comments in quotes]:

19.50mins Chair stated that the suggestion in deputation (Redwood) that NLWA was not fully at forefront of all aspects of environment and waste management was 'unfortunate'

32.00mins When challenged on the incineration elements of the overall project, the Chair deflected by 'lets not get over focused' on these controversial elements.

This makes no sense, as it is exactly the point of the deputations to focus the areas where there are concerns.

37.00mins Chair stated that 'these things take a long time to plan', 'it is unfortunate to suggest that we have not been continuously reflecting'.

However, no evidence was presented or referred to to demonstrate that NLWA have reflected on emerging issues of last couple of years

54.00mins. 'there's nothing that has occurred in last couple of years that hasn't been on authority's mind for far more years' - this is evidently not physically possible

'we are at forefront of environmental agenda at NLWA' 'of course we've pondered long and hard...way before many of the more recent activists and converts to this agenda have come into play'.

This belief that the NLWA is ahead of the thinking of all others in environmental movements or with environmental concerns is dangerously naive.

1hr 05 A perception of lack of transparency and credibility was raised by one depute. Citing no strategic plan or NL waste plan currently in place as a matter of concern. Chair did not comment.

2. Poor management of meetings, and misuse of role of Chair to prevent meaningful discussion

I also found the Chair and the NLWA board members behaviour totally dismissive of the deputations. There was absolutely no indication that they were engaging with the concerns raised in the deputations.

The Chair abused his position by speaking at length whilst being very restrictive of all other contributors, and by failing to afford reasonable rights of reply to reasonable comments and not inviting any other authority members to speak. At end of deputations Chair took platform again, not to specifically address any of the challenges raised but just to self congratulate and to generally justify the decisions of the NLWA. Clearly evidencing that the Chair did not grasp the salient points of the deputation and/or that he refused to listen properly to evidence or to recognise that any party may have new information or viewpoints that he or the NLWA may be able to learn from and may need to incorporate.

Example:

1hr 02 The only time an authority member attempts to ask a question regarding particulate matter. Chair stops them and states the matter will be dealt with later

Presumably this was picked up in the private part of the meeting, as this member was not invited to speak again. Is the Chair the only member permitted to speak in public?

3. Sexist, patronising and disrespectful behaviour by the Chair

I found the Chair's behaviour unprofessional and sexist, and that he made derogatory and frankly rude comments to deputees. The Chair's body language and verbal contributions indicated to the observer that he held the deputees and other concerned parties in very low regard.

To at least three women deputees the Chair in both a patronising and frankly sexist manner explained what good leadership and proper commitment would be. Two women's contributions were disregarded with a dismissive 'I've no comments or questions' and the Chair moved straight on. One woman was shockingly personally insulted, then had her microphone cut-off mid sentence when she attempted to respond. As an observer I interpreted this as bullying behaviour.

Examples [Chair's comments in quotes]:

38.00mins 'This is about leadership Caroline, I'm afraid. You do have to make a decision and you do have to follow it through'.

'We do not have the luxury of constant opposition to be able to constantly put things on pause'.

Illustrates a belief that to listen to challenge and questions would be indicative of poor leadership.

46.00mins ..'please don't hide' [from consultation on the matters] to one of deputies who is an MP

52.00mins .. 'to suggest that we have not been working hard....is incredibly disingenuous'.

'But at some point someone has to show some leadership, Vicky'. 'I look forward, Vicky, to you coming out and fighting...'. 'But if you are really serious on this agenda....that's where you should be targeting and focusing yourself'.

1hr 'with power comes responsibility, Tammy, and you have just perfectly articulated to me why you will never be in power. You have to take ownership and take responsibility for your decisions'

'we are leaders, doing *real* work (Chair's emphasis) to improve air quality....please don't start lecturing me on such matters'. 'Take some responsibility....before you start coming here and lecturing us'. 'Please, as a parting gesture, start taking some responsibility for your own actions' [Chair then cuts her microphone off]

1.05mins Chair's body language makes clear his disinterest in deputies comments.

Removed headphones during deputation.

Actually challenged on this by deputy, but Chair doesn't even bother to respond on this or any other of her points but just moves straight onto next deputation

1.11mins Very powerful challenge on whole grounds for project from deputy, just ignored with quick 'thank you, I've no questions' and moved on.

I felt that the manner in which this meeting ran was an example of the very dangerous situation where a person in a position of delegated power believes that they are the best and most knowledgeable expert, who cannot be challenged and is not accountable to others for their actions. The impression given is of an authoritarian, unaccountable and opaque authority, with a misplaced perception of itself as being at the forefront of environmental innovation.

I would be interested to hear whether, on watching this video, it is your view that the way this meeting ran, the manner in which the deputations were handled and the behaviour towards the deputies was an example of good local democracy.

With best wishes

NLWA Response to enquiry reference 2020-64

Dated: 04/09/20

Dear X X

Thank you for your email dated 28th June and my sincere apologies in the delay in responding to you.

The North London Waste Authority (the Authority) is a statutory authority in its own right I am responding in the capacity of Chair of the Authority.

I note your complaint regarding the conduct of the Authority meeting held on 25th June 2020, and specifically your concerns around the following:

1. Lack of evidence of public accountability and transparency in decision making
2. Poor management of meetings, and misuse of role of Chair to prevent meaningful discussion
3. Sexist and disrespectful behaviour by the Chair

While meetings of the Authority are not public meetings the Authority's Standing Orders do make provision for deputations to be heard and responded to at Authority meetings. The deputations made on behalf of 20 named people at the Authority meeting of 25th June were in line with Standing Orders that provide for short deputations to be made and for the Chair to be able to respond.

As Chair of the Authority, I duly listened to all deputations made and took note of the comments raised.

I specifically made clear in my introductory remarks, I was not always able to maintain eye contact with the camera as I was simultaneously referring to documents and making notes on the contents of the deputations.

At the end of each deputation I acknowledged the comments made, and where I felt it was appropriate to respond, did so.

In taking this approach I was even-handed in my treatment of all those who made deputations.

As this was not a public meeting, those wishing to give deputations were entitled to speak for a full five minutes but were not entitled to ask or present follow-up points or questions. Members of the Authority were able to hear, in full, each deputation.

No new information that has not already been considered and addressed by myself, other Authority members and the North London Waste Authority over the last 12 months was presented at the meeting, and all members had access to the written deputation in advance for due consideration.

As Chair I have a responsibility to ensure the smooth-running of the meeting, and that all the business of the Authority is addressed. This includes noting where any items for discussion raised by members will be picked up later in the meeting in order to avoid duplication.

The concerns that were raised in the deputations are taken very seriously by the Authority and we have invested a significant amount of time carrying out assessments and studies to ensure that the impact on our residents and the environment are as minimal as possible. The North London Heat and Power Project was finally granted development consent in 2017 following substantial public engagement and consultation and a full public planning enquiry - over a number of years - and it was then signed off by the relevant Secretary of State, as is appropriate for a piece of national infrastructure. This was after the Paris Accord came into effect and it therefore aligns with waste policies that seek to reduce landfill and achieve a Net Zero carbon economy in the UK. It is also in line with waste policies across the world which seek to protect our planet by reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), European Union, UK Government, Greater London Authority, north London's boroughs and the NLWA all share this objective.

As discussed at the meeting on 25th June, pausing the Project poses severe environmental and financial risks and it would not be compatible with our prime responsibility to provide responsible, effective and long-term solutions for our residents. The Project has been thoroughly reviewed and the decision to proceed with the Project has followed several years of comprehensive environmental analysis, as well as the previously referenced extensive two-stage public consultation, and careful consideration of the limited alternative options.

I hope this response is of assistance in addressing your concerns.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide any further assistance.

Kind regards
Cllr Clyde Loakes
Chair, North London Waste Authority

Enquiry reference: 2020-65

Dated: 28/06/20

Dear X X ,

I'm writing to you with a complaint about Councillor Loakes. I listened to a live recording of a North London Waste Authority meeting last week and was absolutely astounded at how rude and patronising he was, especially to the women on the call. Yes he was being challenged about a big decision that he made many years ago but not only did he completely disregard people's concerns - from a range of people including local doctors, residents and other north london councillors - but he also came across as almost spiteful, and condescending.

You can read some of the quote in this piece in the Hackney Gazette: [‘Extraordinarily rude’ Clyde Loakes refuses to carry out cost review of £1.2bn north London incinerator](#)



‘Extraordinarily rude’ Clyde Loakes refuses to carry out cost review of ...
Emma Bartholomew

The head of the project to rebuild an incinerator to burn all of north London’s waste refused MP Ian Duncan Smit...

Or you can watch for yourself here: [North London Waste Authority](#)



[North London Waste Authority]

Please let me know what the process is for making a formal complaint and if this will suffice, and what you will do about it.

FYI - I understand that the project in question has been in train for many, many years but the residents - including me - rightly have concerns about the size of the project if nothing else. I have looked at the waste projections that back up the need to build such a huge incinerator and they are completely out of line with the reality. What is a project meant to service north london is looking like an albatross around our neck that will cost us not just financially but with our health too, as we will have to import waste from outside the boroughs.... etc etc. It needs a serious pause and a thorough review.

NLWA Response to enquiry reference 2020-65:

Dated: 07/09/20

1b Berol House, 25 Ashley Road
Tottenham Hale N17 9LJ

post@nlwa.gov.uk

nlwa.gov.uk

Dear X X.,

Thank you for your email dated 28th June and my sincere responsibilities in the delay in responding to you. As North London Waste Authority (the Authority) is a statutory authority in its own right I am responding in the capacity of Chair of the Authority. I note your complaint regarding the conduct of the Authority meeting held on 25th June 2020, and specifically your concerns around the North London Heat and Power Project (NLHPP).

While meetings of the Authority are not public meetings the Authority's Standing Orders do make provision for deputations to be heard and responded to at Authority meetings. The deputations made on behalf of 20 named people at the Authority meeting of 25th June were in line with Standing Orders that provide for short deputations to be made and for the Chair to be able to respond.

As Chair of the Authority, I duly listened to all deputations made and took note of the comments raised. I specifically made clear in my introductory remarks, I was not always able to maintain eye contact with the camera as I was simultaneously referring to documents and making notes on the contents of the deputations. At the end of each deputation I acknowledged the comments made, and where I felt it was appropriate to respond, did so. In taking this approach I was even-handed in my treatment of all those who made deputations. As this was not a public meeting, those wishing to give deputations were entitled to speak for a full five minutes but were not entitled to ask or present follow-up points or questions. Members of the Authority were able to hear, in full, each deputation. No new information that has not already been considered and addressed by myself, other Authority members and the North London Waste Authority over the last 12 months was presented at the meeting, and all members had access to the written deputation in advance for due consideration.

As Chair I have a responsibility to ensure the smooth-running of the meeting, and that all the business of the Authority is addressed. This includes noting where any items for discussion raised by members will be picked up later in the meeting in order to avoid duplication. The concerns that were raised in the deputations are taken very seriously by the Authority and we have invested a significant amount of time carrying out assessments and studies to ensure that the impact on our residents and the environment are as minimal as possible.

The North London Heat and Power Project was finally granted development consent in 2017 following substantial public engagement and consultation and a full public planning enquiry- over a number of years- and it was then signed off by the relevant Secretary of State, as is appropriate for a piece of national infrastructure. This was after the Paris Accord came into effect and it therefore aligns with waste policies that seek to reduce landfill and achieve a Net Zero carbon economy in the UK. It is also in line with waste policies across the world which seek to protect our planet by reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), European Union, UK Government, Greater London Authority, north London's boroughs and the NLWA all share this objective.

As discussed at the meeting on 25th June, pausing the Project poses severe environmental and financial risks and it would not be compatible with our prime responsibility to provide responsible, effective and long-term solutions for our residents. The Project has been thoroughly reviewed and the decision to proceed with the Project has followed several years of comprehensive environmental analysis, as well as the previously referenced extensive two-stage public consultation, and careful consideration of the limited alternative options.

I hope this response is of assistance in addressing your concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide any further assistance.

Yours sincerely,
Councillor Clyde Loakes
Chair, North London Waste Authority

Enquiry reference: 2020-66

Dated: 09/07/20

Dear Sir/Madam, I have been a resident of Edmonton for 45yrs and am interested in stopping the new incinerator being built. I was told that it was possible to watch a zoom

meeting held on 25th June where people and groups with objections to the new build were going to be able to air their views.

My husband and I watched the meeting together on You Tube and from the time just before the meeting started we noticed one of the people on screen seemed agitated. We found out later this was the chairperson Cllr Clyde Loakes.

My husband and I were really shocked at the behaviour of Cllr Loakes throughout the meeting. He was impatient, rude, dismissive and spoke to the contributors to the meeting in a patronising and sexist tone. Also, his body language throughout the meeting showed his impatience and poor attitude.

The other thing we noticed was the passivity of the other people at the zoom meeting. They did not speak and did not seem shocked by anything that was happening which concerned us.

I want to make a complaint about Cllr Loakes and his behaviour. It also makes me question the validity of decisions that have been made about the new incinerator considering the general attitude of Cllr Loakes and whether or not he is fit to be part or wholly responsible for such decisions making.

I first put this complaint forward on your post@nlwa.gov.uk about 10 days ago but with no result. When I rang I was told this was the email address I should use.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours faithfully

NLWA Response to enquiry reference 2020-66

Issued: 04/09/20

Dear X X,

1b Berol House, 25 Ashley Road
Tottenham Hale N17 9LJ

post@nlwa.gov.uk

nlwa.gov.uk

Thank you for your email on Thursday 25th June following the NLWA Authority meeting and my sincere apologies in the delay in responding to you.

I would firstly like to thank you for taking the time to watch the live feed of the meeting. The deputations made on behalf of 20 named people at the Authority meeting were in line with Standing Orders that provide for short deputations to be made and for me as Chair to be able to respond.

During the meeting I reiterated the need for the North London Heat and Power Project (NLHPP) to provide a long-term solution for managing future volumes of non-recyclable waste in north London.

As a public waste authority, we take seriously the responsibility to help minimise the use of resources and preserve them for future generations, particularly during this time of Climate Emergency, as declared by our boroughs. The NLHPP as a whole is an integral part of north London's sustainable waste strategy. Our £100m investment in new recycling facilities will include a public Reuse and Recycling Centre which will provide an opportunity for residents to bring recyclable materials to the EcoPark for the very first time. We are also delivering a Resource Recovery Facility with the capacity to recycle up to 135,000 tonnes of wood, plastics and metals every year. These recycling facilities will play a major role in helping the NLWA boroughs reach a 50% recycling target in north London, a very significant increase from the position we are in now. As Chair of the Authority, I duly listened to all the deputations made and took note of the comments raised. As I specifically made clear in my introductory remarks, I was not always able to maintain eye contact with the camera as I was simultaneously referring to documents and making notes on the contents of the deputations. At the end of each deputation I acknowledged the comments made, and where I felt it was appropriate to respond, did so.

Members of the Authority were able to hear, in full, each deputation. No new information that has not already been considered and addressed by myself, other Authority members and North London Waste Authority over the last 12 months was presented at the meeting, and all members had access to the written deputation in advance for due consideration. The concerns that were raised in the deputations are taken very seriously by the Authority and we have invested a significant amount of time carrying out assessments and studies to ensure that the impact on our residents and the environment are as minimal as possible.

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I hope this response is of assistance in addressing your questions. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide any further assistance.

Kind regards
Cllr Clyde Loakes
Chair, North London Waste Authority