

Company that ran illegal waste operation pays out £10,000 to good causes

The infringement of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 by Seearo Group Ltd, of Grange Farm, Newmarket Road, Flint Cross, Hertfordshire, was reported to the Environment Agency in July 2017. It was reported that the company had been burning waste at its Flint Cross base.

After investigating, Environment Agency officers found that Seearo had committed an offence of operating without or other than in accordance with a permit (waste operation) – Regulation 38(1).

The site was being used as an illegal inert waste operation, with tonnes of material on site, crushing and screening machinery, a wheel wash and a pile of waste for removal.

Grange Farm, Hertfordshire

Having taken into account the circumstances of the case, in particular the company's lack of previous convictions, the Environment Agency decided that in this instance it would be appropriate to deal with the matter by way of an Enforcement Undertaking.

Naomi Daniel, enforcement officer for the Environment Agency, said:

Enforcement undertakings allow those who commit offences to stop offending, come into compliance and to take steps to prevent a recurrence.

When appropriate, they allow a better resolution for the environment than a prosecution and help offenders who are prepared to take responsibility for their actions to put things right voluntarily, in a way that directly benefits the environment and local communities.

Seearo Group Ltd offered to contribute £5,000 to The Woodland Trust and £5,000 to Wild Trout Trust, which will use the money for a conservation project that will help improve river habitats in Cambridgeshire.

A Wild Trout Trust director Shaun Leonard said:

We are looking forward to using this contribution to the Trust to help us deliver a great river habitat improvement project with our partners.

A Woodland Trust spokesperson said the money it received would help to fund continued development of Langley Vale Wood, acquired by the Trust in 2014.

He said:

It is a mixture of rolling hills, ancient woodland and open spaces where the Woodland Trust is creating a mosaic of habitats suitable for a wide variety of wildlife.

As part of the Enforcement Undertaking, Seearo also committed to all management within the company receiving waste training from industry experts WAMITAB at a cost of £5,000 and the hiring of consultants through a membership with CL:AIRE, costing £35,000.

The company also registered its hub and cluster sites, at a cost of £12,000, and agreed to pay the Environment Agency's costs of £6,818.88.

[Five Independent members of the NI Policing Board re-appointed](#)

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP, has announced the reappointment of five independent members of the Northern Ireland Policing Board until 31 March 2020.

The terms of appointment of these members had been due to end on 30 June 2019, however, in order to maintain continuity on the Board for the critical period ahead, the Secretary of State has decided to reappoint Anne Connolly OBE, Brice Dickson, Paul Nolan, Wendy Osborne OBE and Deborah Watters for an exceptional nine month term of office.

Mrs Bradley said:

My absolute priority is to see the restoration of the Executive. The people of Northern Ireland deserve nothing less. Until that is achieved I have been doing what is necessary to ensure good governance and allow critical bodies to operate effectively in Northern Ireland.

The Northern Ireland Policing Board must undertake significant functions over the coming year.

There have been significant changes at senior levels within the PSNI in recent months including the pending appointments at Deputy Chief Constable and Assistant Chief Constable level, which the Board will play a crucial function in appointing.

There is clearly a requirement to retain the skills and experience of the current members to maintain a degree of continuity on the Board to ensure it can deliver its critical functions.

I have therefore decided, with the agreement of the Commissioner for Public Appointments in Northern Ireland, to reappoint the current independent members due to stand down in June 2019 for a further period of nine months to finish on 31 March 2020. This will ensure the Board can deliver its critical role during this period.

The Northern Ireland Policing Board

The Policing Board takes its powers from the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 as amended by the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003 and has political and independent members, including a Chair and a Vice Chair appointed by the Board from among the independent members.

Following the Assembly election in March 2017, as a result of a NI Executive not being formed and no Justice Minister being appointed, appointment functions in relation to the Policing Board could not be carried out. In October 2018, the Secretary of State for NI introduced legislation in Parliament; the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation and Exercise of Functions) Act 2018 received Royal Assent on 1 November. This legislation provides for appointments to the Board by the Secretary of State.

More information can be found on the NI Policing Board [website](#)

Terms of appointment

The independent positions are part-time appointments, attracting a fixed remuneration of £15,000 per annum for a minimum commitment of four days per month, including evening or weekend events.

Biography of Appointees

Biographies of each of the appointees can be found on the NI Policing Board [website](#)

CPANI Code of Practice

The appointment process for independent members of the NIPB is regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments NI (CPANI). The Commissioner has confirmed that she is willing to make an exception to her

code so that these reappointments can be made. This does not preclude the two independent members who have served only one term to date on the Board from applying for a further term of office.

Political Activity

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland requires the political activity of appointees to be published. Brice Dickson is a member of the Alliance Party.

Statutory Requirements – The appointment of independent members is made by the Secretary of State with regard to the equality provisions set out in section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Schedule 1 to the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000.

UN Human Rights Council 41: Extreme Poverty

Thank you, Mr President,

I am taking the floor with regard to the report presented by the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, which covers his visit to the United Kingdom in November 2018. The UK has submitted a detailed response to the Special Rapporteur's recommendations, under document number A/HRC/41/39/Add.3.

We refer all members of the Council and all observer delegations to that document so that they can consider our comments, alongside the Special Rapporteur's report.

Thank you.

Major flood scheme gets underway in Burton-upon-Trent

Today (Friday 28 June 2019), marks the official start of work on a major Environment Agency flood scheme for the town of Burton-upon-Trent. The £30 million project will reduce flood risk for 5,500 properties currently facing possible flooding from the River Trent, including 4,500 homes and 1,000

businesses.

The Environment Agency carried out a ground breaking ceremony to mark the beginning of the construction phase. The event was attended by Environment Agency Chief Executive Sir James Bevan, Andrew Griffiths the MP for Burton & Uttoxeter, project partners and community representatives.

The project, which is funded by the Government with some Local Levy support, is part of the Environment Agency's £2.6 billion investment programme into flood defences across the country, which will see an additional 300,000 homes better protected from 2015 to 2021.

The upcoming works will see improvements to parts of the 9km of existing flood walls and embankments. This will include creating deeper foundations and other adjustments, which together, will provide an ongoing level of protection to the surrounding area.

The upgraded defences will better safeguard homes and businesses from flooding for decades to come. In addition to the thousands of homes protected, this investment will support the ongoing economic growth of the town by reducing flood risk to 394km² of commercial land which sits behind the defence, in turn helping to safeguard 12,460 jobs in Burton.

The Environment Agency is also working with East Staffordshire Borough Council and Staffordshire Wildlife Trust on improvements for visitors and the environment within the Washlands, the large area of floodplain between the river and the town. This will include creating new wildlife habitats in the form of wetland areas and ponds, as well as installation of new lighting along the boardwalks and a new children's play area.

Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive of the Environment Agency, said:

Today marks an exciting day for Burton. This £30 million project will not only reduce flood risk to over 5,500 homes and businesses but will also boost the local economy by protecting thousands of jobs for decades to come.

This project will also benefit local wildlife through the creation of new wetland areas and ponds, and a better space for local people through upgraded lighting along the boardwalks and a new children's play area.

We've all seen the devastating impact flooding can have on communities in recent weeks and that's why we are continuing to invest £2.6 billion to better protect homes across the country.

Andrew Griffiths, MP for Burton & Uttoxeter said:

So many Burton residents will be relieved to see this scheme completed. This is a massive investment, and will protect thousands of homes from the misery of flooding for decades to come.

Flood embankments which are due to be upgraded

The project is due to complete by spring 2021.

Along with flood defences and flood management schemes, knowing your flood risk is also important when protecting your family and property from flooding. People can [check their risk and register to receive free flood warnings](#) online or calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

[Crime news: parole board review change and 2017 crime contract](#)

Draft amendments to the 2017 Standard Crime Contract are now available to view to take account of new rights to challenge parole decisions.

The 'reconsideration mechanism' will come into force on 22 July 2019 and provide a legal right to challenge parole decisions without going through the courts.

In addition to the amended contract documentation we are working on guidance which will be published before the new arrangements take effect.

What are the contract changes?

The amendments we are making confirm that work carried out:

- on behalf of a prisoner during the 'reconsideration' process will be covered by criminal legal aid
- connected to applications for 'reconsideration' will be a continuation of the existing Parole Board advice and assistance or advocacy assistance matter

Advocacy assistance fee

A separate advocacy assistance fee will be claimable if the Parole Board directs the matter for a reconsideration hearing.

There may be circumstances where clients have not received advice and assistance or advocacy assistance connected to their Parole Board case.

Advice and assistance may still be provided when making applications for reconsideration for such individuals.

Further information

[Standard Crime Contract 2017](#) – draft amendments to chapter 12 of the contract specification now available covering the new rules from 22 July 2019

[Parole Board Rules 2019](#) – to view details of the new rules effective from 22 July 2019