

North Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party

Minutes of Meeting held on 20th April 2005 Y Galeri, Caernarfon.

Present.

Iwan Evans	Gwynedd Council (Chair)
Jeremy Gibbins	Gwynedd Council(Acting Secretary)
Chris Morgan	Welsh Assembly Government
Sue Martin	Welsh Assembly Government
Andrew Dale	Countryside Council for Wales
D Gareth Jones	Gwynedd CC
Gareth Jones	Denbighshire CC
Gary Nancarrow	Flintshire CC
Gareth Lloyd	Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri
Ceri Thomas	Conwy BC
Andrew Farrow	Cheshire CC (Sec. N. West RAWP)
Jo Davies	RMC/QPA
Steve Hill	Tarmac/QPA
Darrell Williams	Independent Operators
William Mackenzie	ODPM
J Williams	Anglesey CC

1. Apologies

Duncan Pollock	QPA
Siwan Williams	Welsh Assembly Government
Basil Hollington	Welsh Assembly Government
Peter Huxtable	BAA Wales
R Carter	Environment Agency
Sion Roberts	AMSL
Viv Russell	QPA Wales

NOTE. QPA representation; Eddie Jordan [Hanson] has retired and will be replaced by Tom Brown. Murray Adair has left Hanson and Viv Russell has been nominated to replace him.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting.

1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2004 were approved.

3. Matters Arising.

2.5 Estimates & Expenditure.

IE acknowledged that RTS work would involve additional expenditure.

CM Welsh Assembly Government was awaiting estimates of costs for producing the RTS.

SM reminded RAWPs of need to post minutes on Assembly web site

6.3 Political members' representation.

Deleted: 5

IE had raised Sub group with N. Wales Chief Planning Officers who had agreed the need to nominate members for the Regional Tech Group. Two nominees would be made by each mpa.

CM enquired as to timing.

IE would move the matter through the N Wales CPOs soonest, and would approach the Chair, which was currently with Wrexham.

SH enquired as to the secretariat and staff of the enlarged RAWP

IE accepted that there would have to be a secretariat led by the RAWP Secretary.

SB confirmed that S Wales had proceeded on the basis of one member and one officer from each mpa.

IE saw a need for two members, one in reserve to cover.

GN asked about industry representation.

IE none envisaged since this was essentially a political / planning forum.

SB confirmed there was no industry representation in S Wales nor representatives from Environment Agency or Countryside Council for Wales etc.

SH considered that an officer from each authority would be excessive.

SB considered the officers were needed to brief the members.

GN considered that there should be separate officers and members groups.

IE agreed.

GJ saw a parallel with the N Wales Regional Waste Group, where members preferred to have officers on hand to advise them. A round table exchange continued and it was agreed that SB would send up S. Wales information and a Sub group meeting would be set up as soon as practical. The Chair would seek nominations for two members from each N. Wales mineral planning authority through the RAWP, to include the members' e-mail addresses for administrative purposes.

CM reminded the meeting that a Technical Sub-Group of RAWP members had already started to discuss the RTS work and this should continue.

ACTION;

IE to move nominations of members

SB to forward S. Wales experience to JHG.

8.4 RAWP Secretaryship.

IE reported that despite extensive advertising only two candidates had applied for the post of secretary. Neither candidate had been considered sufficiently qualified or experienced to be invited for interview. The problem was felt to be attributable mainly to the limited remaining time of the 4 year contract, to 31 March 06.

CM noted the difficulties in attracting suitable candidates. There was a need to talk with mineral planning authorities in N. Wales and to review the lead authority situation well before the Secretary's contract period.

IE need to have the future administration of the RAWP in hand by October.

IE would talk to Flintshire about the role of lead authority.

SM emphasised the need to keep WAG informed, there would then only be 6 months to find a full time Secretary.

ACTION;

IE to consider future role of Gwynedd CC in RAWP administration and liaise with Flintshire and Welsh Assembly Government.

4. Chairman & Sec's Reports.

IE advised that JHG was acting Secretary for this meeting. He was retiring from his post as Gwynedd MIs & Waste Planning Manager on 30 April. As a way out of the immediate problem of the lack of a Secretary, he had offered his services as Temporary Part-time [2 ½ days per week] Secretary for the remainder of the contract to 31 March 2006 or until such time as a full time Secretary could be appointed. IE had discussed this with the Assembly and it had been decided that in view of the limited options and the need for continuity JHG's offer would be accepted.

JHG confirmed his position. Administrative rules prevented him from commencing before early June. He was aware of the urgent nature of many of the tasks now facing the Welsh RAWPs and would endeavour to keep matters rolling forward.

JHG reminded the RAWP that Wrexham's representative, BS, had recently moved to Flintshire and no replacement appeared to have been nominated. Wrexham had refused his request to host this meeting when approached. It was agreed that the Sec would write to invite Wrexham to send a replacement representative.

ACTION;

Sec. To invite Wrexham to nominate a representative.

5. IMAECA - ENVIROS

Paul Hatherley and Matthew Faulkner, Enviros Consulting Ltd. presented the results of their work into Implementing the Methodology for Assessing the Environmental Capacity for Primary Aggregates.

The study was set up to move on the methodology established by Arups' EMAADS Study, the objective being to ensure that the future primary aggregates supply in Wales is obtained from the most acceptable locations, taking into account the availability of different types of geological resource and the environmental capacity of areas in Wales to supply those aggregates.

A principal element of the work included collating and digitising all available geological resource data on primary aggregates and applying the EMAADS methodology utilising GIS and a software tool to query geological and environmental information over the whole of Wales.

The geological database identified 11 classes of aggregate type reflecting primary aggregate sources currently being worked, while the software allows for a scoring system applied to 1 Km. grid squares and based on 12 national environmental indicators shaded to produce a coloured indication of the capacity of a given area to accommodate further aggregate extraction.

The system is not an aid to planning decision making but is designed to be used only by the RAWPs to establish aggregates production capacity.

A question and answer session followed.

Some concerns were expressed at the assumption that the lead mpa would have to install the latest GIS system to be able to run the data.

Enviros confirmed that all the geological information used in the study was available on request from the BGS for use by mpas in their Development Plans.

6. Wales Environment Trust's Aggregate Programme.

GB / RH In a short introduction Graham Bishop and Rebecca Huck explained the Trust had recently been set up, funded by the Aggregates Levy. It seeks to develop the environmentally sustainable reuse and recycling of mineral waste. It will provide free

advice and support services to assist businesses to obtain funding and develop business plans.

The Trust was developing contacts with all agencies in the field, particularly waste managers. It was keen to promote the use of added value products such as Glasphalt. Surveys and assessments were to be undertaken. There was a conference in the pipeline to which all would be invited.

It was decided that Rebecca Huck should be invited to join the RAWP for the duration of the Trust's work.

ACTION;

Sec. to confirm in writing.

Irish Sea Marine Aggregates Initiative [IMAGIN]

At this point Chris Nicoll who had been invited to the meeting at short notice by the Acting Secretary was invited to make a presentation. CN introduced the IMAGIN Project, a study to develop a strategic framework for marine resource management in the Irish Sea.

IMAGIN is to be a two year GIS based study funded by INTERREG, WAG and the Aggregates Industry. It is at an early stage and a Steering Group has yet to be set up.

Contacts will include Mpas, Environment Agency, Countryside Council for Wales etc. a web sites is to be developed and workshops undertaken.

The Study will include a marine ecology study, all identifiable constraints [inc. gas fields, marine windfarms] and will include a review of landing facilities.

CM confirmed that Ireland had initiated the study, and the Welsh Assembly Government had been pleased to contribute in view of the study's obvious importance in terms of the potential contribution of marine aggregates to N. Wales and the N. West of England.

7. AM 2004.

IE understood that the QPA and BAA had raised new concerns at national level over the confidentiality of figures submitted. The problem was the recent coming into force of the Freedom of Information Act. The ODPM had been advised that in the QPA's opinion figures submitted under the survey could not be kept confidential by mineral planning authorities.

IE understood that there were exceptions in the Act which would prevent disclosure of sensitive information to a third party.

WM confirmed that the ODPM considered that there was substance in the QPA claim and that legal advice was being sought. Ways round the problem were being considered such as the information only being seen by the RAWP Secretaries who would destroy after collating.

SM requested a copy of ODPMs advice.

GDJ considered that all resource and projected output information generally available in mineral planning applications anyway.

JHG considered that the industry needed a complete review its position on confidentiality which had caused so many problems over the years.

IE considered that all major operators must have a good idea what their competitors were doing.

SH explained that while competitors might have ideas, they did not know for certain what their competitors were doing on a year to year basis.

SM was concerned that as well as QPA members, independent operators may not wish to submit figures.

ACTION;
WM to keep Welsh Assembly Government and RAWP Secretaries informed.

8. Research

CM advised that BGS will be publishing the geology of S. /Mid Wales by summer 2007 [which includes 12 months quality assurance] and that this would close gaps revealed in the IMAECA Study.

Significant development pressure had been identified in N. East Wales and, subject to Ministerial approval, it was hoped that a sand and gravel resource study would be undertaken in the near future.

9. AOB

GW Flintshire had sent a letter to Welsh Assembly Government requesting update on Statutory Review stalled sites.

SM confirmed being attended to.

SM referred to the West Midlands RAWP – would be a good idea if Wales RAWP Secs attended their meetings.

SH referred to the desirability of a list of Prohibition Orders and reminded mlpas of the need for an annual statement

SM advised that Carmarthen, Powys and Brecon Beacons intend to pursue Prohibition Orders.

DGJ reminded mlpas of the TAN requirement to produce an annual monitoring report.

SB reminded the industry that they should be undertaking environmental audits.

AD reminded mpas of the need to undertake Appropriate Assessments of all consents, including minerals planning permissions. Countryside Council for Wales were already working with Environment Agency and will engage mineral planning authorities as soon as possible.

ACTION; all mineral planning authorities.

ACTION; JHG to consult with Paul Wilcox West Midlands RAWP Secretary.

9. Date of the Next Meeting

SH considered that the next meeting the Technical Sub Group meeting and the Members Meeting should have been held before the RAWP meeting.

Next RAWP meeting was proposed to be on 5th October. [The Chairman subsequently found he had a prior appointment on 5th and with apologies nominated Wednesday 12th as an alternative.]

JHG proposed that the venue should be in N. East Wales, probably at County Hall, Mold.

ACTION; Chair and Secretary to organise.