

NORTH WALES AGGREGATES WORKING PARTY

Minutes of the Meeting held on 23rd January 2003
At Conwy Business Centre, Conwy

Present;	J Gibbins	Gwynedd (Chair)
	J Williams	Ynys Mon CC
	G Jones	Denbighshire CC
	C Thomas	Conwy CBC
	J Davies	RMC Aggregates, QPA
	D Pollock	QPA
	S Hill	Tarmac, QPA
	C Sproule	Flintshire CC
	R Sheffield	Wrexham CBC
	C Morgan	Welsh Assembly Government
	R Marsden	Hanson, QPA
	J Davies	BGS
	B Marker	ODPM
	G Lloyd	Parc Genedlaethol Eryri
	S Roberts	McAlpines
	S Cosgrove	NWRAWP Secretary – Guest
	S Power	ARUP – Guest
	J Hastings	ARUP – Guest
	R Bennion	NWaRAWP (Secretary)

1. Introductions and Apologies

- 1.1 **J Gibbins** welcomed the new members and the guests, Dr Cosgrove was present in her capacity as secretary to the North West RAWP in England, the purpose being to improve liaison between the north Wales region and north west England in recognition of the role played by the former in providing aggregates to the latter. Simon Power and Jillian Hastings were present to brief the NWaRAWP on progress with the EMAADS research project.
- 1.2 Apologies were received from I Evans; Gwynedd, J Matheson; Agricultural and Rural Affairs Dept. WAG, S Martin; WAG, P Huxtable; BAA, G Nancarrow; Flintshire and E Jordan; Hanson. **R Bennion** reported that following his retirement from the business M Lloyd had resigned from the working party, the secretary said that he had contacted Mr Lloyd and thanked him for his support and wishing him well on behalf of the NWaRAWP. Mr. Darrell Williams of D.P. Williams had expressed interest in replacing Mr. Lloyd, it was agreed that the secretary should write to Mr Williams inviting him to be a member. **(ACTION - RPB)**

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th September 2002

- 2.1 **J Davies** asked for a correction to his employer reference in para. 1 , it should read BGS. **J Gibbins** asked for the address to be corrected in para. 4
- 2.2 Subject to the amendments in para 2.1 the minutes were accepted, the **secretary** reminded the MPOs of the need to make the approved version available to the public when received.(**ACTION-MPOs**)

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

- 3.1 Ref. para. 4.2 **J Gibbins** said that Gwynedd had now signed the contract to undertake administration of the NWaRAWP.
- 3.2 Ref . para. 7.1 **C Morgan** said that a another member of staff had been appointed and was due to start in April 2003 , this should allow the release of Sue Martin to resume work on the preparation of the MTAN. He cautioned that, given the fundamental switch in emphasis of the MTAN, Assembly members may wish to reconsult following the forthcoming elections.
- 3.3 Ref. para. 7.5 **C Morgan** said that the NWaRAWP response should be submitted in less than 3 months (see item 7 below)
- 3.4 Ref. para. 11, **J Gibbins** reported that following representations to the Assembly by I Evans, it had been agreed that areas affected by slate quarrying and research into the use of slate waste were eligible for money from the Sustainability Fund.

4. EMAADS – Presentation by ARUP

- 4.1 **S Power** said that the presentation was part of the consultation process and responses, together with those of the SWRAWP, would be taken into consideration by the steering group when considering the final report. The draft final report had been given to WAG and the steering group and was to be considered on 31st January 2003.
- 4.2 The briefing note , previously circulated and the presentation notes , circulated at the meeting (all attached to the minutes) had been taken from the report. The purpose of the report was not to formulate policy but was intended to devise methodologies to allow the delivery of policies and the guidance emerging in MTAN Wales.
- 4.3 He explained the approach to evaluating demand and supply and the impact this would have on the role of the RAWPs in Wales. He explained the Environmental Capacity Assessment methodology devised by ARUP, he emphasised that the concept was not new but that the application to mineral development was. The technique avoided the collection of new data rather it relied on the collation of existing information.
- 4.4 **J Hastings** explained how the evaluation methodology would work , focussing on resource blocks which, ultimately , allow direct comparisons to made across the whole of Wales.

- 4.5 The methodology will require the RAWP to move beyond its current remit to date such matters as , the environment, demand and production in relation to the production of aggregates in Wales
- 4.6 **J Gibbins** said that the methodology appeared complex but accepted it was an attempt to move mineral planning forward to a more sustainable approach.
- 4.7 **S Hill** asked if the technique included for restored quarries . **S Power** confirmed that it did but that this could have both negative and positive effects depending on the perception of the success of the restoration.
- 4.8 **D Pollock** commented on the absence of weighting of indicators , he said that it would be inevitable that , for instance, a National Parks designation would have greater weighting, **S Power** said that this had been deliberate to separate the methodology from the usual development control process. The use of twelve indicators assisted in allowing an overall impression to be gained and prevented a single indicator from dominating.
- 4.9 **C Morgan** said that the purpose was estimate overall demand on a Wales basis and the ability of Wales to meet that demand locally in an environmentally acceptable way, it was not intended to replace the existing DC process.
- 4.10 **D Pollock** said that it appeared to be a tool to measure comparatives and inasmuch was an expensive way of reinventing the Mineral Planning Officer.
- 4.11 **B Marker** said that the ODPM had also commissioned research into environmental appraisal of mineral development, the contractor will be given a free hand to research the matter based on case studies in Kent and Leicestershire.
- 4.12 **R Bennion** said that to be effective the evaluation would need to look at the whole of Wales not merely those areas traditionally associated with the supply of aggregates or those types of stone currently favoured for aggregate use, this would present an enormous task.

5. 1995-2000 Monitoring Surveys and Reports

- 5.1 **R Bennion** said that the matter of the production of the reports remained with Flintshire, it was likely that a single report would be issued incorporating the survey statistic for the six years. He confirmed that although the report(s) had not been published the draft figures issued by the NSC could be considered as public information and used accordingly. He said that the figures in the earlier reports had been used in the preparation of the statistics in the 2001 annual report. It was agreed that the secretary should write to Flintshire asking them what was the current position and urging them to publish the report as soon as possible. (**ACTION RPB**)

6. 2001 Annual Survey and Report

6.1 R Bennion said that the annual report was almost complete and subject to there being no adverse comments on the statistics would be published before the end of February 2001. Copies of the tables showing production by sub region and at county level were provided together with the table showing the reserves and land banks down to county level. All figures had been checked for confidentiality and would be checked against the newly available BGS AM 2001 survey statistics even though the data had been extracted from that submitted for the AM2001 survey.

6.2 R Bennion showed a table, to be included in the report, which demonstrated the impact of reserves declared in the survey that were in statutorily dormant sites, the issue was particularly marked in NE Wales where, if discounted, reduced the land bank from some 239 years to 10 years.

7. Draft Minerals Technical Advice Note – Sub-group Report

7.1 The report, previously circulated was presented by G Jones, many of the questions posed by ARUP on the future role of the RAWP had been raised by the sub-group with the conclusion that the direction had to come from elsewhere. The report had been drafted to promote discussion in the working party. Generally the sub group supported the proposals contained in Appendix A of the MTAN, it was considered that to make the RAWPs more proactive was a good idea but felt that the current structure could not deliver, mainly as a result of local government reorganisation in 1996. It was recommended that the structure set up to deal with waste in Wales should be used as a role model. The RAWP should be retained as a technical body but would require the support of a democratically accountable steering group. It envisaged the production of a regional strategy to help to inform local policy and decision-making, for instance on the matter of apportionment.

7.2 **D Pollock** asked who “signed off” the final document, it was agreed that it would be up to local authorities to include the recommendations in UDPs but the ultimate responsibility lay with WAG.

7.3 **C Sproule** said that he recognised broad similarities with the North West of England regional waste strategy, which, to date, was working effectively.

7.4 **J Gibbins** pointed out that the proposals would have major resource implications and there was discussion as to whether the technical expertise should be provided at national level.

7.5 **B Marker** said that some English RAWPs had expressed concern about taking on the environmental assessment role and felt that this would be better done by the Regional Planning bodies.

7.6 **S Hill** said that the review of the MTAN was not comprehensive and further work would be needed, it was agreed that the subgroup would

meet again consider the rest of the MTAN and produce a final report to be approved by the NWaRAWP before being submitted to WAG. It was agreed that the sub group should be expanded to include Eddie Jordan (QPA) and Bob Sheffield (MPAs)

8 NWaRAWP Membership – Report by Sub-group

8.1 Report introduced by G Jones, the exiting structure could not deliver the proposals set out in the draft MTAN as discussed under item 7 and confirmed by the ARUP research. It was suggested that in view of the emerging need to take on environmental capacity that the Environment Agency and the Countryside Council for Wales should be invited to join the NWaRAWP, this was agreed and the secretary is` to write inviting EA and CCW to be represented. **(ACTION RPB)**

9 Current Research

9.1 **C Morgan** said that as well as the EMAADS project the WAG had commissioned a research project to in conjunction with BGS to geologically previously unmapped areas of mid Wales. Tenders had gone out to contractors an appointment was likely by March 2003. interested in the assessment of sand and gravel reserves in north west Wales,

9.2 **B Marker** said that many ODPM research projects had been recently concluded. Projects looking into planning in relationship to building stone and into non-energy minerals other than aggregates had been recently started. Other anticipated areas of research included the overhaul of MPGs, the rates of rehabilitation of areas subject to marine dredging and an investigation of quarry noise with a view to producing a good practice guide. The ODPM is to look into financial security of restoration following the EC directive on mine waste.

9.3 The ODPM is to set up a working party to look onto the whole future of surveys and data collection, following the decision of the DTI to review future funding of the AMRI surveys.

10 Sustainability Fund

10.1 No report

11 Mineral Planning Authority Updates

Gwynedd; UDP - no change currently examining responses to consultation.

DC – Minor extension to sand&gravel operation

Application for 24hr working at plant processing slate waste.

Traffic issues causing concern re activation of slate waste working in Nantlle valley.

- Anglesey; UDP – Published proposed changes in 2002 PI 3/6/03
 DC - Applications for development at Hengae and Rhuddlan Bach quarries
- Denbigh; UDP – Adopted July 2002
 DC - Burley Hill PI December 2002 result June/July 2003(?)
 Aberduna work on extension started, further application to remove stone under plant and to complete working to be dealt with in February 2003.
 Extension to Cae Rhys (S&G) started.
 Application to work slate waste at Moel y Faen expected.
 Review of planning at Maes y Droell remains stalled awaiting results of EIA issue.
- Conwy UDP- Delayed awaiting outcome of flood risk assessment.
 DC - Application to extend St George to be dealt with in February.
- Flintshire UDP – draft timetable, deposit draft in Spring 2003.
 DC - Heavy workload of applications, consultant retained to deal with complex site.
- Wrexham UDP - PI report imminent.
 DC - Workload currently unsustainable – MPO required to produce a priority list.
- Snowdonia UDP - Finalising text of deposit draft, PI 2003 Adoption 2004.
 DC - still awaiting date for Arenig PI.

12 Any Other Business

- 12.1 B Marker provided an update on the current situation regarding the review of that section of MPG 6 dealing with supply and demand. He was aware of the concern of WAG regarding exports to England, of particular concern to South Wales. He was hoping to proceed as speedily as possible, hopefully publication before the end of 2003. Any comments on the latest consultation to be with ODPM by 7th February 2003. Any request for changes must be fully justified. The new procedure anticipates frequent and regular reviews.
- 12.2 C Morgan said that WAG had objected to the non inclusion of policies in a Welsh authority UDP. The inspectors report had stated that the authority should pay due regard to WAG's comments, the authority had declined. WAG was now to direct the authority to comply even though this would result in a further PI.

13 Date of Next Meeting

- 13.1 This was fixed for Thursday 3rd April 2003 at 1.00pm in County Hall, Mold, Flintshire. Lunch will not be provided but there are canteen facilities available at County Hall.

