

SOUTH WALES REGIONAL AGGREGATES WORKING PARTY

**Minutes of meeting – 10am on Monday 25th September 2017, at The Innovation Centre,
Bridgend**

Present:

Llinos Quelch – Carmarthenshire CC (Chair)
Hugh Towns – Carmarthenshire CC (Secretary)
Richard Matthams – Bridgend CBC
Ruth Amundson – Caerphilly CBC
Tom Boothroyd – Carmarthenshire CC
Ffion Morgan – Carmarthenshire CC
Ruth Henderson – CC Swansea
Nick Horsley - MPA
Sarah Jones – Monmouthshire CC
Gemma Beynon - NRW
Carl Comerford – Neath Port Talbot CBC
Lindsay Christian –Newport CC
Gary Nancarrow – North Wales RAWP Secretary
Bob Smith – Pembrokeshire CC
Rob Anderson – The Crown Estate
Joanne Smith – WG
Gareth Dudley-Jones - WG

1. Apologies:

Susan Jones – Bridgend CBC
Stuart Williams – Cardiff C
Peter Morris – Powys CC
Mark Russell – MPA

2. Minutes of the SWRAWP Meeting 27th March 2017

The minutes were accepted as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. North Wales RAWP Update

Sales of crushed rock in North Wales in 2016 amount to some 4.1 million tonnes with approximately 500,000 tonnes of slate used as aggregate. There has been an apparent dip in

sales of land won sand and gravel. Output is some 750,000 tonnes and is confined to a handful of sites.

There are some major projects on the horizon – the upgrading of the A494/A55 By-pass, Second Menai Crossing, Wylfa B Nuclear Power Station and upgrading the 400kv power line under the Menai Straits and potentially a Tidal Lagoon around Colwyn Bay (although the lagoon is less certain).

5. South Wales RAWP Update

The AS2014 Report was published in July 2017 and reflected the position in the Vale of Glamorgan following the Inspectors Report into the Examination of the LDP.

The AS2015 Report is being produced. Sales have been on an upward trend since 2012 and Indications are that sales are still recovering, with primary aggregate sales up approximately 6% to 9.71 million tonnes from 9.12 million tonnes in 2014.

Sales of crushed rock for roadstone are up 150,000 tonnes and sales of crushed rock for fill/construction up by 260,000 tonnes. Sales in South East Wales in particular are up 410,000 tonnes, primarily fuelled by the Capital Quarter redevelopment and a boom in student housing developments in Cardiff. Only Blaenau Gwent and RCT have crushed rock landbanks of less than 25 years. Powys, BBNPA, Blaenau Gwent, Cardiff and RCT now have 3-year production averages which are higher than the 10-year average production.

Land won sand and gravel aggregate sales are up, largely as sales at one site have shifted from non-aggregate to aggregate sales. Only Ceredigion has a land-won sand and gravel landbank of less than 25 years.

Marine landings and sales are up. Sales of secondary aggregate are down.

Sales in Powys, BBNPA, Blaenau Gwent and Cardiff are now higher than the annualised apportionment for those LPA's included in the RTS.

The AS 2016 forms have been sent out with returns to date being patchy. Returns from one of the significant operators are outstanding.

6. RTS 2nd Review

A Background Paper has been forwarded to Welsh Government as indicated at the last meeting. JS advised that WG do not have any money for research at the present time. There is also an issue in relation to the capacity of the Division to manage the project in the short term given current commitments/workloads.

It was considered that the RTS was important evidence that should feed into the NDF and LDP Reviews and it was resolved that the Chair write to WG pressing for the RTS Review to be progressed.

7. WG Update

The revised PPW is in draft form and will look different to the current version. There will be clusters of topics which follow the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (WFGA). Policies will encourage resource efficiency and circular economy thinking. It is anticipated that consultation will be undertaken in February 2018. External testing of the document is to be undertaken in October 2017.

Engagement events in relation to the NDF objectives and spatial options are scheduled for October 2017. Consultation on the preferred option strategy is scheduled for March 2018. NDF Sustainability Appraisal Framework should be on the WG Website in November.

A new DM Manual and Development Plan Manual are to be produced.

WG Cross Cutting Strategy was published on 18th September and is organised around four key themes.

Natural Resources Policy published in August 2017

Planning Consolidation Bill introduced to bring everything into one act specifically for Wales. First Consultation due in November 2017.

8. NRW Update

Area Managers are in place for the 6 areas identified as the Area Statement areas.

A pre-application charging service was introduced in March 2017. This is currently limited to certain topic areas – flood risk, geoscience and contaminated land. GB to provide link to NRW guidance documents.

NH advised that in England DEFRA have provided a reinterpretation of the Habitats Regs and that Natural England are making some changes to the way they look at European Protected Species. The move is more towards population preservation rather than individual animals.

NH enquired what the position was in relation to the implementation of the Water Act 2003 in terms of abstraction licensing.

9. MPA/BAA Report

The MPA has a new Chair, Martin Riley.

There is an NCG arranged for 11th October in London. This is the first meeting of the NCG for some considerable time.

Research in relation to economic data highlights the disparity between London and the rest of the UK. Excluding London from the figures shows all other areas declining.

The ready-mix market in Wales is noticeably reduced.

There is uncertainty over Brexit and the Snap Election have not helped industry confidence.

Welsh Marine Plan Consultation is due in October. This may have implications for marine sand and gravel.

Industry has major concerns over the NRPS and the lack of coverage of minerals.

10. Marine Dredging Update

A new EMS system will be rolled out during 2018.

The 2016 Tender Round produced two applicants for the Culver Extension area. The 2018 Tender Round will be undertaken in early 2018 and is likely to be the same format as the 2016 Tender Round.

11. Secondary Aggregates

There was no-one present to give an update on secondary aggregates.

12. LDP Update

Carmarthenshire – AMR has been approved at Full Council. Resolution to commence formal review with adoption expected at the end of 2021.

Newport – 2nd AMR not yet agreed. Plan expires 2026

Neath Port Talbot – AMR ready for member consultation. Looking at what might need to be done in preparation for SDP's

Pembrokeshire – 4th AMR to be published. LDP Review commenced in May 2017. Delivery Agreement drafted and to go to Cabinet in November. Evidence base being updated. LDP expires in 2021.

Swansea – Deposit Plan submitted for Examination in July 2017.

Caerphilly – Members resolved to withdraw the Draft Replacement LDP in July 2016 due to concerns about housing numbers and infrastructure capacity. A Report is being presented to

Committee in October recommending that work on the LDP is recommenced. Plan has an end date of 2021.

Monmouthshire – 3rd AMR being signed off shortly. Looking at a Review Report being published in December 2017.

Bridgend – LDP expires 2021. Start on review needs to commence 2018. Seeking clarity about regional working before commencing work.

13. Major Projects Update

There are two current applications in Pembrokeshire going through the DNS process - a 49.9 Mw biomass energy plant at Blackbridge, Milford Haven and a Cogen Plant at Valero Oil Refinery, Milford Haven.

The electrification of the Welsh Section of the main rail line from Paddington to Swansea has now been shelved.

14. Any Other Business

No other business

15. Date of next meeting – 10am on Monday 19th March 2018 at the Innovation Centre, Bridgend