

**Minutes of the South Wales Regional
Aggregates Working Party
Wednesday 30th September, 2009**

<u>Present:</u> -	<u>Action:</u> -
<p>Martin Hooker (Chairman) – Bridgend County Borough Council Steve Bool (Secretary) – Bridgend County Borough Council H Towns – Carmarthenshire County Council J Locke-Carmarthenshire County Council R Amundson – Caerphilly County Borough Council A.James– CCW R.Millard-MPA R.Bennion-North Wales RAWP S.Williams-City of Cardiff A.Wilkes EAW N.Owen EAW M Lucas – Vale of Glamorgan Council M Lawer – MPA(Tarmac) M Frampton – MPA (Hanson) K.Hobden – MPA J.Morris-Welsh Assembly Government J.Smith – Welsh Assembly Government S Martin – Welsh Assembly Government T Gilman – BAA G Dorrington – Ceredigion CBC A.Wilcock- Torfaen CBC M.Davies-Monmouthshire CC Ruth Henderson-City of Swansea Rachel Parkes-City of Swansea Rachel Willis-BBNP</p>	
<p>1. <u>Apologies</u></p> <p>B. Hollington-(Tech Services)-Welsh Assembly Government) K. Ranson-Pembs CC L.Christian-City of Newport M.Russell-BMAPA K.Maddock-Jones-CCW J.Kirk-Pembs NPA O.Jones-RCT N.Morgan- Neath Port Talbot CBC M.Wrigley-Crown Estate C.Morgan- BBNP</p>	

<p>2. <u>Minutes of the last meeting</u></p>	
<p>Agreed as a correct record subject to:- Page 5 Under the title Marine Consents Unit(third line) the word “premises” should be “permissions”. Page 7 second para after 14% read <u>cement</u>.</p>	
<p>3. <u>Matters arising</u></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The course at Leeds University for mineral related subjects/ elements cannot be run this year due to lack of support but it is intended to run it from September,2010. • National Parks.After discussion it was agreed a sub committee would be set up with industry and relevant officers.SB/MH to decide participants and circulate possible dates.The main objective of the s/c would be to try and achieve some degree of consensus to help resolve the difference in opinion on the need to retain some provision of aggregates for local use in the national parks against the need to protect the important landscape scenery etc of the national parks/AONB's.Any views may then inform the future revision of MTAN1. • This s/c will report back to the SWRAWP,with any findings being relayed to the N.Wales RAWP,to ensure views are shared across Wales. • HT confirmed re joint working, that the BBNP have now been upgraded to a full service provision by Carms CC.The authority now work for three authorities but policy input is limited to base data. • RB advised Flintshire CC are in the process of setting up a regional mineral team but member support is still required.Funding arrangements are also still being finalised and are currently the subject of a study by a consultant to ensure a comprehensive process.An annual fee is likely to be payable. • MH advised re the Severn barrage proposals,DEC were wanting to pull the plug on the supply chain rather than rely on in-house advice.This was of concern and needed to be addressed. 	<p>All SB</p>
<p>4. <u>SWRAWP update SB</u></p>	
<p>SM requested that table 2 of the Annual survey 2008 should show the overall regional landbank figure.SB confirmed this was shown in table 8 although the figures in this table did need to be re-visited for checking. TG questioned the Vale figure in table 2 which seemed questionable.SB to check with ML. SB reported he had met with Kayasand who were promoting a dry sand re-processing/recovery process for the market.Whilst interesting it did not seem to have any significant implications for the region. GD confirmed some figures for Ceredigion needed to be amended.</p>	<p>SB NO</p>
<p>5. <u>Construction and demolition waste</u></p>	
<p>NO confirmed the EAW had data on spreadsheets for 2008 which was</p>	

<p>being finalised shortly. This would be forwarded to SB. Generic base data was available on a web based portal.</p> <p>With regard to exempt sites NO explained the change in legislation which in brief meant that no large sites would be considered to qualify for exemption. The new regs will come in April of next year.</p> <p>SM advised the WRAP/CIE bids for Aggregates Levy funding to carry out c and d waste data collection had been unsuccessful. CIE were now proceeding alone but their objectives did not marry with those required by the SWRAWP.</p> <p>MH confirmed he had received a letter from Karen Black WAG inviting him to sit on a panel/working group for waste/construction issues. He felt this should have been directed to another recipient.</p> <p>RM asked whether or not provision should be made for the understatement of the c and d figures given the fact they were not robust/definitive. The degree of robustness should be qualified and used as a health warning. Industry felt they were reasonably confident of the amount of recycled material that was being used for aggregate purpose.</p> <p>NO advised the Aggregates Protocol is being reviewed and the EAW is working with WRAP to increase the quality of recycled aggregate to meet certain standards. Work on pfa/steel slags/glass is also being undertaken to widen the use for recycling.</p> <p>RM still considered the greatest hurdle was the definition of waste which was causing delays and hardship to the industry. The Mining waste directive will only add to this burden.</p> <p>NO confirmed she would forward details of training for the directive for circulation by SB.</p> <p>On the subject of site waste management plans (SWMP), NO reported the implementation of these were the subject of some delay in Wales and Miranda Lewis of WAG anticipated these gaining approval late next year. See the e mail circulated by AW to all members.</p> <p>RM felt there was a lack of consultation on SWMP's and this needed to be addressed.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>NO</p> <p>NO</p>
<p>6. Industry update(RM)</p> <p>RM reported the industry production levels had been suppressed as expected due to the recession. These levels were, however, expected to stabilise but investment was required to generate an increase.</p> <p>With regard to the issue of energy efficiency/carbon footprint, the MPA's statement of intent sent out a clear message that the industry was signed up to carrying out its work in a sustainable manner. The MPA sustainability model is recognised as being one of the best in the UK and the carbon footprint of industry is high on the agenda. A new sustainability report is anticipated in October.</p> <p>SB questioned if the industry in Wales had produced a statement to-date to give a Welsh feel to how targets and the UK sustainability agenda was being met. This local information could then be fed into local communities to help enhance the reputation of the quarry industry as good public relations. RM agreed he would consider this further and report back to the working party.</p>	<p>RM</p>

<p>In respect of the RTS, the industry has concerns the review should be implemented before the expiry of 5 years from the issue of the RTS (by Oct., 2013). They feel there are some anomalies between the RTS and the MTAN1/MPPW which need to be resolved. In short, it needs to be refined and made more concise.</p> <p>MH felt that in view of the concerns expressed the RTS should be a standard agenda item. All agreed.</p> <p>SM queried whether or not the RTS ought to look at carbon emissions. In view of the amount of other legislation, industry did not express a strong view one way or the other and no other views were expressed by those present.</p> <p>The lack of mineral officer resources was again mentioned as a continued cause for concern. It appeared as though the experienced WAG staff were being lost and this ran the risk of reducing the profile/status of minerals on the political agenda. SM sought to give reassurances the WAG were committed to support not only the RAWP's but also future mineral planning work as reflected by the presence of three officers at the meeting. MH felt it would be beneficial if he discussed these concerns with Rosemary Thomas in the WAG.</p> <p>KH raised the issue of safeguarding areas. In principle, the industry feel the system is over-complicated in Wales compared with England. It is felt there should be a proper and robust method commensurate with other resource management processes. The issue of grading the areas appears problematical but a pragmatic solution is required.</p> <p>SM responded by referring to the BGS website on the safeguarding project where the consultation response of a significant number of respondents supports a graded/weighted system. As an example, the difference between the importance of shales in say Ceredigion was compared with S East Wales. Ceredigion shales are important to satisfy local markets as they are readily available in a rural area. Hence, some form of weighting would be advantageous to resolve such issues. In principle, the matrix system developed in England by comparison appeared by some to be even more complicated than the evolving Welsh system.</p> <p>SM advised Para 13 of MPPW is likely to be reviewed to reflect the new mapping system and the link between them.</p>	<p>SB</p> <p>MH</p>
<p>7. Consultation by WAG on ROMP applications</p> <p>TG requested this item be put on the agenda as he felt the industry were already bearing a significant financial burden through the need for costly environmental statements and they were now being asked to pay for local authority time to process the applications. The industry felt the rationale for charging for ROMP applications was that most people already felt it was a good idea in principle. There were misgivings about the current consultation process (now expired) because the issue of charging fees was not mentioned until the end of the document and presented as though it was a fait accompli.</p> <p>SM confirmed the consultation period had expired and questioned if the RAWP meeting was appropriate arena for this issue to be discussed. Officer views were invited and HT advised most LA's would be</p>	<p>SM / CM</p>

<p>supportive of fees to cover costs. However, if fees were introduced there may be a flood of postponements to the review of applications to avoid Fees.</p> <p>SB indicated that from a purely staff time point of view such applications consumed at least as much time as normal applications submitted with an ES and often more because of the complexity of issues. On the plus side, any fees generated may help LA's to provide sufficient staff in-house to process them quickly or pay other parties such as Carms CC to process them on their behalf. This could therefore speed up the process.</p> <p>MF suggested that if fees were introduced an option may be to impose a flat rate fee of say £25 k per application to keep the fees to a reasonable level irrespective of the technical issues involved.</p> <p>ML referred to item 8 (last sentence) of the last minutes and questioned that if a stalled ROMP application was determined before the regs came into force would any new procedures apply. MF questioned why the proposed regs were so different in Wales compared to England. The regs seemed particularly harsh as any procedural slip-ups could result in the permission being suspended. Also, LA's may take the opportunity to dwell on the determination of the applications without reasonable justification and the industry would be penalised.</p> <p>ML felt significant costs were already imposed on the industry from other legislation which was becoming more frequent and onerous.</p>	
<p>8. <u>AS2008 survey/ report</u></p> <p>SB outlined the current position regarding the report. The survey had commenced in January but there had been considerable delays in the receipt of responses from operators and LA's. There appeared to be an unduly tortuous procedure for survey returns which was not assisted by lack of staff resources and the non-co-operation of some parts of industry. He therefore proposed that in future, survey forms ought to be despatched and returned direct to the RAWP secretary to avoid delays. This would assist those authorities who struggled to prioritise the survey against other work.</p> <p>Whilst industry appeared to be in favour of any option to improve the speed of the process there were several officers who felt "local contact" was important and stats on reserves on a site by site basis would be lost. RB advised the NWRAWP would be asked to consider the same proposals but could not pre-empt what decision would be taken. There were already difficulties in collating returns to maintain confidentiality of sensitive figures.</p> <p>KH advised the same confidentiality issue was under review in England. There appeared to be a strong feeling amongst MPA members to relax the confidentiality rule to underpin the managed supply system.</p> <p>MF referred back to the issue of delays in the return of operator survey forms which he felt was due to a chronic lack of staff.</p> <p>MH concluded there did not appear to be a clear consensus to support SB's proposals and a decision was therefore taken not to change the current system.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>SB</p>

<p>9. <u>Mineral research</u></p> <p>SM outlined the current research being undertaken by BGS on mineral mapping. AMO9.WAG are contributing to the 4 yearly Annual monitoring 2009 survey which is being co-ordinated by the CLG.This survey will replace the normal SWRAWP survey for 2009. Opencast coal research is ongoing.</p> <p>10. <u>Marine update</u></p> <p>SM/JS gave a brief update on the current situation on applications submitted for dredging,JS advised she would forward a revised list to SB to circulate to members. The Marine Bill is still progressing.</p> <p>11. <u>AOB</u></p> <p>(i) TG referred to the short time period for consultation responses on applications which are deemed"major" and require advertising and site notices.He felt 14 days was insufficient time to respond on submissions which were quite complex.HT/GD confirmed the time period was used in their authorities and was stipulated in the GPDO.The limited period reflects the issue of speedier decision making which the WAG themselves are anxious to progress the development process to generate employment growth/initiatives.</p> <p>(ii) "PERC" code.Reference to this code for the assessment of aggregate reserves was made at the recent RAWP sec/MPA meeting in Cardiff.It is a set process which helps to define reserves and complies with the latest European standard.It is accessible on the <u>IOM3 website</u>.</p> <p>(iii) GD-At the BGS User group Forum GD spoke to Mike Gandy of Celtic Energy who also raised concerns about the lack of mineral staff and lack of interest in the subject by students.This reinforces comments on this matter quoted earlier in the minutes.</p> <p>(iv) HT described the situation in the Pembs CNPA where the authority resolved to grant consent for two extensions to Trefigin and Pantgwyn which appeared to meet the exceptional circumstances test.However these have been called-in by WAG and as a result the operators fear the sites will have to close.They both have little or no reserves and provide for a wide area in Pembs and also Ceredigion.TG considered the sites would not be likely to supply the main demand in the area from the power station.</p> <p>(v) SM confirmed that Carms CC had taken over the responsibility</p>	<p>JS</p> <p>All</p>
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for the POSW Minerals and Waste topic group meetings previously undertaken by Bridgend CBC and WAG.

(vi) TG questioned if slate was a mineral quoting a number of applications for shale which had been submitted on the basis it was not a mineral. It was assumed the operators were claiming the slate was a type of shale to overcome the imposition of the Aggregates Levy. Shale is not subject to the Levy.

Date of next meeting

10th March, 2010. 10a.m. Same venue. Innovation Centre, Bridgend.

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