

Geological Disposal Programme Board (GDPB)
Wednesday 24th March 2021
Teams Meeting

Board Members:

Corhyn Parr
Stephen Speed

Umran Nazir
Karen Wheeler
Malcolm Morley
John Corderoy
James Gibbs
Sir Nigel Thrift

Chair – Director of UK Waste Operations, NDA, SRO
Director Nuclear Directorate, Business Energy and
Industrial Strategy (BEIS)
Deputy Director, BEIS
CEO, RWM
Chair of the Board, RWM
GDF Programme Director, RWM
Radioactivity Policy, Welsh Government
CoRWM Chair

Presenting Items:

Siting and Engagement Director RWM
GDF Programme Director RWM

Apologies:

Alan Cumming Director of Nuclear Operations, NDA

Item 1 – Welcome and Chair’s Opening Remarks

1. Corhyn Parr welcomed the members of the GDPB to the March meeting.
2. It was advised that today’s Board will be focussing on and considering the management of risks, in particular the bring forward of seismic related activities and the formation, retention and management of community partnerships.

Item 2 - Minutes and Actions from Last Meeting

3. The minutes of 22nd January ‘21 Board meeting were agreed and will be published on the GDPB internet page of the GOV.UK website.
4. The GDPB Secretariat updated the Board on the current status of the actions on the Actions Log. A number of items were considered and will now be addressed as part of the standard agenda going forwards or as part of the risk and mitigation reviews as they are now deemed to be part of normal business.

Item 3 – Joint Delivery Group Update

5. The GDPB secretariat provided an update from the recently held Joint Delivery Group meeting. The JDG reviewed all the recent assurance and audit review actions to ensure that there are being adequately addressed and that any duplication in responses is minimised. The JDG found that all the actions were in progress and that there was suitable ownership in place for successful close out, the ongoing actions will be followed up as a future JDG item.
6. The JDG reviewed the GDF programme risk log, focussing on emerging and high-level risks and the corresponding mitigation activities. There were no items requiring escalation to the GDPB.

Item 4 – Programme Management Report & Forward Look

7. The RWM Programme Director provided an update on the delivery performance of the GDF Programme.
8. The Board noted that there had been two safety incidents within the borehole sealing project. The RWM Chair emphasised that the RWM Board had taken these incidents very seriously, a review is being conducted to ensure that all of the learning is extracted and issues are being addressed.
9. The Board noted the overall programme performance, key areas of focus, issues being managed and the progress made over the preceding two months.
10. It was noted that the Project 2 business case will require an update and submission for additional approvals due to three elements; changes to the proposed governance arrangements for the community investment funding; increased understanding of the numbers of communities and the associated costs; the management of down selection in future and the associated value for money justification.
11. The RWM CEO presented the forward programme of activities, key decisions and approvals that will shape the delivery of the programme over the next 5 years.
12. The GDPB noted the timeline for future consideration of the key business cases including Seismic, Property Value Protection, Siting, Communities and Project 2 and the Tranche 3 Business Case for Design & Suitability, which will be added to the forward agenda plan.

Item 5 – Siting Update

13. The RWM Community Engagement & Siting Director provided a presentation on the next phase of the project and the reputational risks associated with retaining communities within the process.
14. A number of different models and approaches were discussed highlighting the Canadian and Swedish processes. It was noted that any approach selected would need to align with government policy and be transparent. It was highlighted that a greater level of understanding needs to be gained of the risk-based decisions, the associated costs and potential upsides in order to support the business case. It was discussed that an approach being adopted needed to consider the different stages of maturity, mitigating risk and if appropriate creating competition between sites.
15. The RWM Community Engagement & Siting Director provided an update on the ongoing Property Valuation Proposal work. A strategy and timetable are to be developed to ensure the supporting systems are in place at the point at which they are required.
16. It was advised that learning is being taken from the HS2 and Thames Tideway projects to inform the bounding case. This work will evolve over time as a mechanism will need to be put in place for evaluation and responses. Further work is required to consider risk mitigation and retention of communities as well as the capacity to manage the scope to protect delivery.

Item 6 – Programme Delivery

17. **IPA review recommendations** - The RWM Programme Director provided an update regarding the progress text.
18. The Board noted the very positive outcome of the IPA review, noting a Green Delivery Confidence Assessment (DCA) for the whole programme and an amber DCA for the Tranche 3 sub programme. The review had highlighted the good progress made with the transformation 'Futures' programme and the ongoing strengthening of capability and capacity to support programme delivery.
19. **Risk mitigation - Bring forward of Seismic**

The GDF Programme Director presented the rationale for the bring forward of seismic surveys, in particular the need to secure inshore survey equipment via contract as this specialised equipment is generally booked a year in advance and there is a limited operational window.
20. A business case will be produced to support the initial contract / procurement noting that the value of bringing forward the seismic survey work vastly outweighs the risks and the scope can be delivered without committing too large an expenditure. This topic will be added to the forward agenda plan.

Item 7 – Stakeholder & BEIS Update

21. The BEIS Director advised that there had been a departmental announcement of the future direction regarding the North Sea and a 5th licensing round being launched. The Oil & Gas Authority would be able to provide any further information for consideration of any potential impact in relation to the seismic bring forward work proposed.
22. An organisational update was provided advising on changes within the BEIS team.

Item 8 – Communications – Welsh Government Update

23. Welsh Government provided a brief update noting that the next election period starts on 25th March 2021.

Item 9 – AoB

24. A discussion was held regarding the updated sponsors technical requirements being produced as part of the GDF programme. The revised documentation will be presented at a future meeting.
25. A request has been raised by DNO colleagues to have a conversation around proactive stakeholder engagement so that good practice can be shared.