

MINUTES OF CORWM PLENARY 21 MARCH 2014, LONDON

Secretariat

Present: (CoRWM): Laurence Williams (Chair), Francis Livens, Brian Clark, John Rennilson, Rebecca Lunn, Helen Peters, Janet Wilson (by phone), Stephen Newson, Simon Harley, Paul Davis, Lynda Warren, Laura Butchins (secretariat), Chanelle Gibson-McGowan (secretariat).

Declarations of Interest

1. Paul Davis had started some work for Eden Consultants relating to the safety case for the Low Level Waste Repository (LLWR). As CoRWM's remit does not extend to low level waste, it was agreed that there was no conflict of interest.

Chair's Update

2. The Chair had been interviewed as part in an independent major projects review of the Geological Disposal Facility programme.

Members Updates

NERC R&D event

3. Francis Livens had attended the Natural and Environmental Research Council (NERC) launch to fund a set of projects relating to radioecology, deep sub-surface characterisation and migration of radionuclides and mechanisms of radionuclide near surface transfer and processes. The event had provided an opportunity for consortia to connect and speak to Environment Agency (EA) and Radioactive Waste Management (RWM) representatives who were part funding the work.

Scottish Government Higher Activity Waste (HAW) Strategy Board

4. Brian Clark had attended a meeting of the Scottish Government Higher Activity Waste (HAW) Implementation Strategy Project Board. This board is overseeing the development of an implementation strategy for the Scottish Government's HAW Policy of near site, near surface storage and disposal of HAW. The proposed Strategy is envisaging a phased approach to delivery of the Policy.
5. The timetable for publication is in spring and CoRWM made comments on early drafts. CoRWM welcomed the updates made in relation to the comments that they had provided.
6. The following comments were made relating to the strategy:
 - the Scottish Government would need to be clear about their role in delivering the strategy,
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) should be clearly explained,
 - key terms such as "near surface" and "near site" should be clearly defined,
 - Care should be taken to be very clear that Scottish Government are not reopening the position on policy.
 - Proposed timescales would benefit with clarification, for example, when would sites be cleared?
 - clarity on where costs lie with the provision of an 'enabling framework' to reassure the public that liabilities will not be passed on to future generations, and save on costs where possible, for example, looking at alternatives for wastes only containing short-lived radionuclides.
 - issues of regulator resource and knowledge management would need to be adequately addressed.

7. The Committee agreed that they would formally respond to the consultation when it was published.

Geological Society Talk

8. Rebecca Lunn had given an invited public lecture at Geological Society in her capacity as Professor at Strathclyde University. It was entitled "Meeting the Challenge Geological Disposal of the UK's Higher Activity Wastes".
9. The lecture:
 - framed the discussion in the energy context and looked at issues of supply and reduction in carbon emissions and the need to deal with wastes from all energy production sectors,
 - described different safety case concepts for a Geological Disposal Facility, explaining how the safety functions worked.
 - Described the siting process in recent years and appraised the technical arguments that were put against the most recent attempt at siting.
10. In giving the lecture Rebecca Lunn aimed to raise awareness of issues faced by siting for intergeneration reasons, and emphasise the point that any new process must deliver a site no matter where that is across England or Wales.
11. The slides would be published on the Geological Society website and the CoRWM website would put up a link.

CoRWM 2014-17 Work Programme

12. The committee had received comments on their proposed Work Programme from the EA, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) and RWM. The committee considered all the comments provided and updated the work programme.
13. The work programme was signed off by the Committee subject to the final agreed changes and would be submitted to CoRWM's sponsoring Ministers in DECC, Scottish Government, Welsh Government and the Department of the Environment, Northern Ireland at the end of March 2014.

CoRWM's 2013-14 Annual Report

14. CoRWM reviewed the latest draft of its annual report which was on schedule to submit to Ministers by the end of June 2014. Prior to submission, it would be circulated to stakeholders and CoRWM sponsors for comment.

CoRWM's Stakeholder Engagement

15. It was thought that CoRWM did not have sufficient money and resources to widen the engagement work they already had planned in terms of the three public meetings, open plenaries, website and e-newsletters. It would not be possible for CoRWM to host large stakeholder engagement events as they had done in the past, for example to take other's view into account in informing the advice that CoRWM provides to Government.

16. However, the Committee thought there may be other methods to publicise the Committee's work and raise awareness of issues, for example, via twitter.
17. The Committee's time should also be spent looking at DECC and RWM's engagement strategies which were critical to a successful process. CoRWM should consider how they could be more proactive in other's stakeholder events.
18. CoRWM were keen to meet those from non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and maintain contact with those in industry, with the British Geological Survey and those who were involved in siting process in the past.
19. The Committee agreed to produce background material on engagement for Members and the Secretariat to use to explain the key issues.

ACTION 03/2014/076: An ad-hoc sub-group of the Committee would put together some engagement material to explain CoRWM's role and highlight issues of interest to the public and stakeholders.

CoRWM's Next Public Meeting

20. The Secretariat would produce some material to send out to advertise CoRWM's public meeting in Workington on Wednesday 30th April 2014.
21. The event would provide those attending the opportunity to ask CoRWM any questions. It was also be an opportunity for CoRWM members to listen to other's views on the GDF siting process. A link to CoRWM's response to DECC's GDF Siting Process consultation should be put in the advert.

Q & A

22. Those observing the meeting were invited to ask any questions or comments but declined.

Action no.	Action	Progress
8 November 2013 (Minutes CoRWM doc. 3139) outstanding actions		
11/2013/64	Secretariat to investigate another way to provide the historical information without undue pressure on secretariat resource.	On-going
20 February 2014 (Minutes CoRWM doc. 3150)		
02/2014/073	Secretariat to invite NGOs to meet with sub-group of CoRWM	open
02/2014/074	Members to send secretariat annual report draft chapters for collation by 12 March.	Closed
02/2014/075	Paul Davis to confirm availability for the next GDF Users' Group.	Closed
20 March 2014 (Minutes CoRWM doc.		
03/2014/076	An ad-hoc sub-group of the Committee would put together some engagement material to explain CoRWM's role and highlight issues of interest to the public and stakeholders.	New

