

**COMMITTEE ON RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT (CORWM) PLENARY
17TH MARCH 2016, LONDON**

Venue: MWB Business Exchange, 10 Greycoat Place, Victoria, London, SW1P 1SB

Timing: Thursday, 17th March 2016, 10.00am - 15:00pm

Attendees:

Laurence Williams (Chair), Francis Livens (Deputy Chair), Lynda Warren, Stephen Newson, John Rennilson, Brian Clark, Helen Peters, Janet Wilson, Gregg Butler, Paul Davis, Simon Harley, Mojisola Olutade (Secretariat), Hollie Ashworth (Secretariat).

Agenda Item 1: Meeting Open and Welcome

1. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the public. He informed members of the public that they would have an opportunity at the end of the meeting to make comments but if anyone wanted to make a contribution during the meeting they should indicate this to the Chair.

Agenda Item 2: Declarations of Interest

2. Janet Wilson noted she would be leaving Horizon on 31st March. The Chair noted this and indicated that after this date Janet would be free to engage in discussions regarding Welsh matters.
3. Helen Peters noted she had received a new instruction from the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) regarding contractual advice at Springfields. Helen also informed the Committee that Pinsent Masons were also instructed by the NDA on a Low Level Waste Repository Ltd (LLWR) matter. It is possible that Helen will be involved in this work and will update the Committee at the stage that any work commences. The Chair stated that CoRWM's Terms of Reference (ToR) define the scope of work as radioactive waste management, and therefore low level waste does fall within the remit of the Committee. However, he noted that at present CoRWM's main attention was focussed on geological disposal of higher activity wastes (HAW), therefore the current Work Programme does not include work on LLW activities and hence the Chair did not consider that any future work by Helen would be likely to be a conflict of interest.
4. Gregg Butler who had been ill for the last two open meetings stated that he had been working on a project concerning Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) for DECC since Autumn. The Chair stated that he did not think this constituted a conflict of interest.
5. All other members stated that there was no change in their declarations.

Agenda Item 3: Chair's Update*Meeting with Minister of State, Andrea Leadsom (The Minister)*

6. The Chair said that his meeting with the Minister went well, and the Minister was very engaged in the subject of radioactive waste management. He reported that the Minister was very supportive of the Committee. The Minister had recently visited Sellafield and she was planning to visit Sweden to better understand how geological disposal is being managed in that country. The Chair outlined CoRWM's priorities for 2016/17 and informed the Minister that CoRWM would be submitting its proposed work programme at the end of March and CoRWM's annual report for 2015/16 would be submitted at the end of June.
7. The Chair informed the Minister of CoRWM's views on the DECC response to the two recommendations in the last Annual Report and noted that a detailed analysis would be given in the 2015/16 Annual Report.

Meeting with the Scottish Minister

8. The Chair noted that he had not met any Scottish Minister since his appointment and following advice from Scottish officials he had sent a formal request for a meeting with the Scottish Minister. The Chair reported that the Minister had declined his request. The Chair thought it would be appropriate to wait until after the Scottish elections before seeking a meeting.

Meeting with the Welsh Minister

9. The Chair noted that he had met Welsh Ministers on a regular basis and it would be best to wait until after the Welsh elections before seeking a meeting to discuss the 2016/17 work programme and the 2015/6 Annual Report.

Meeting with Acting Chief Inspector of the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR)

10. The Chair reported that he had an introductory meeting with the acting Chief Inspector (CI) of ONR. The meeting had been extremely useful and had provided an opportunity for him to explain the work of CoRWM and why the Committee was interested in the regulatory framework for a GDF. The CI had welcomed the discussion and was supportive of the need for there to be a clear regulatory framework, especially regarding the licensing of a GDF.
11. Helen Peters commented on some impending amendments to the Nuclear Installations Act 1965. Helen circulated a summary of the changes and a copy of the Order that was laid before Parliament a few weeks ago. Helen noted that the Nuclear Installations Act would, once the amendments came into force (due to be in January 2017), bring relevant waste disposal sites into scope of the NIA65 and the third party liability regime

Meeting with Jo Nettleton (EA)

12. The Chair reported that he had had an introductory meeting with Jo Nettleton. The meeting discussed the role of CoRWM and CoRWM's recommendation relating to the need for a

clear and robust regulatory framework for a GDF. The meeting had been constructive and Jo had agreed to give a presentation to CoRWM on the work of the EA in relation to the regulation of a GDF.

Geological Disposal Programme Board

13. The Chair reported that he had attended the Geological Disposal Programme Board (GDPB) meeting. He commented that the GDPB was effectively tracking the delivery of the IGS work packages.

Agenda Item 4: CoRWM's Draft Work Programme 2016-19

14. The Chair introduced CoRWM's Draft Work Programme for 2016/19. He noted that the budget for the 2016/17 programme was assumed to be £250,000 which represented a reduction of 11%. He noted that CoRWM's budget had yet to be confirmed but following his discussions with DECC he was confident this should be achievable. The Chair noted that whilst Members were allocated up to 52 days per year the reduced budget translated to an average of 46 days per year per Member.

15. The Chair asked the Committee to consider the draft 2016/19 Work Programme. He noted that the detailed programme for 2016/17 focussed on 7 main areas of work, namely:

Area 1: To provide advice to DECC on the Work Packages arising from the White Paper "Implementing Geological Disposal" (225 Member days).

Area 2: To provide advice to the Welsh Government on "Implementing Geological Disposal" in Wales (30 Member days).

Area 3: To provide advice to the Scottish Government on the Management of Radioactive Waste in Scotland (30 Member days).

Area 4: To provide advice to DECC and other Sponsors on RWM's development of the GDF Safety Case (25 member days).

Area 5: To provide advice to DECC and other Sponsors on RWM's transition to becoming a GDF Delivery Organisation (25 Member days).

Area 6: To provide scrutiny and advice on Management of Radioactive Wastes, Spent Fuel and Nuclear materials (15 member days).

Area 7: CoRWM Outreach Activities (25 member days).

16. In relation to Area 1, the Chair noted that the proposal was for CoRWM's activities to be focussed on the five main work packages:

- WP1 National geological screening;
- WP2 Working with communities;
- WP3 National land use planning - NPS;
- WP4 Developer-led communications and engagement; and
- WP5 Regulation- providing ONR with legal vires to licence a GDF.

17. In relation to the proposals for 2017/18 and 2018/19 the Chair noted that the proposed work activities were less well developed but represented the best current understanding of what would be required. He noted that the budget for these final two years of the programme was on the assumption of a further 11% cut. Hence, Member's time allocation for scrutiny and advice activities would be reduced.

18. The Chair noted that in 2017/18 the proposal was for CoRWM to focus on:

Area1: To provide advice to DECC on the GDF siting process [50%]

- RWM's Community engagement
- Interested Communities activities
- Communication and awareness
- Regulatory framework – GDF guidance

Area 2: To provide advice to the Welsh Government on the management of Higher Activity Waste in Wales [10%]

Area 3: To provide advice to the Scottish Government on the management of Higher Activity Waste in Scotland including near surface disposal [10%]

Area 4: To provide advice on GDF design and safety case development [10%]

Area 5: To provide advice on RWM transition [10%]

Area 6: To scrutinise the management of Interim Surface Storage of HAW Radioactive Wastes, Spent Fuel and Nuclear materials in England and provide advice as necessary [5%]

Area 7: CoRWM Outreach Activities [5%]

19. For 2018/19 the Chair noted that the proposal was for CoRWM to focus on;

Area 1: To provide advice to DECC on the GDF siting process [40%]

- RWM's Community engagement
- Interested Community activities
- Communication and awareness
- Regulatory activities

Area 2: To provide advice to the Welsh Government on the management of Higher Activity Waste in Wales [10%]

Area 3: To provide advice to the Scottish Government on the management of Higher Activity Waste in Scotland [15%]

Area 4: To provide advice on GDF design and safety case development [10%]

Area 5: To provide advice on RWM transition [10%]

Area 6: To scrutinise the management of Interim Surface Storage of HAW Radioactive Wastes, Spent Fuel and Nuclear materials in England and provide advice as necessary [10%]

Area 7: CoRWM outreach [5%]

20. The Chair asked the Committee to review the proposed programme and consider whether changes were required in the light of comments made by the stakeholders. The Committee accepted some but not all of the comments made by stakeholders and the Draft Proposed Work Programme were changed in line with the accepted comments.
21. After a thorough review of the proposed Work Programme the Committee agreed that the secretariat should make the necessary changes and the Chair should send the Work Programme to Ministers for their consideration.,

ACTION 1: The Chair and the Secretariat to finalise the Draft Work Programme and send it to the Ministers in DECC and the Devolved Administrations by 31st March.

22. The Committee decided that it would not give feedback to the key stakeholders on the reasoning behind any decisions to either accept or reject their comments. However, the Committee agreed to reply to the NDA regarding its comments on Scottish government policy and the Letter of Compliance (LoC) process, as these comments appeared to be more of an invitation to discuss the issues further rather than proposed changes to the CoRWM's Programme of Work. The Chair thought it would be useful to schedule a meeting with both RWM and the NDA to discuss these issues further.

ACTION 2: The Secretariat to arrange a meeting with RWM and the NDA to discuss the issues stemming their comments on the Work Programme.

Agenda Item 5: Bure Visit and Report

- 23 The Chair thought that the Committee's visit to the French rock characterisation facility (RCF) at Bure had been extremely useful, especially in relation to gaining an understanding of a "clay" based GDF. The Chair noted the clear focus that the French government has on geological disposal of HAW and he noted that at present this did not include the direct disposal of spent fuel. The French approach is to reprocess spent fuel and vitrify the waste fission products. It was noted that the waste fuel cans and assembly components are compacted and placed in the same size canisters as the vitrified waste. The Chair thought this was a good approach and would not only save on volume but also would mean only one machine for manipulation and emplacement these wastes in the repository. The Chair considered that it was clearly very well thought through, and the prototypes of the different waste packages and machinery prototypes were very interesting to see.
- 24 Other members who visited Bure noted that in France there was a clear policy on the steps needed to identify and select a site for a GDF. It was felt that the adoption of an RCF was a valuable tool in demonstrating the design and safety case of the GDF. The depth of the RCF was about 500m which put it in the middle of the 140m thick band of clay. The RCF was close to where the French HAW GDF was to be located and hence the GDF would be in the same band of clay. It was noted that this belt of clay stretches across northern France and under the English Channel where slopes back up under Kent.
- 25 Members noted that the French had selected an area that can cover the required underground footprint of the proposed GDF and that this was acceptable to the local

communities. It was noted that the underground GDF was in one local authority area and the surface receipt and access facility was in the adjacent local authority, this meant that the two communities each get community benefits. It was noted that the local communities in the vicinity of Bure are actively involved with the project.

- 26 The Committee was informed that the initial commissioning of the GDF is not expected much before the mid-2020s, this timescale was the result of a public consultation that concluded that the process was moving too fast. It was explained that the French government had passed specific legislation to deal with some aspects of the process as a way of giving confidence to people.
- 27 The Chair pointed out that the French have proposed that waste will be retrievable at any time during operation of the facility, but once it is decided the galleries are to be closed the waste will no longer be retrievable.
- 28 Members commented the French had given a good deal of thought to the whole GDF siting and operation process, including considering community impact and employment issues. Generally the Committee concluded that the visit had been beneficial, especially in relation to gaining a better understand of the issues relating to a clay-based GDF. It was noted that the visit had focussed on the technical aspects of geological disposal and that any future visits should aim to include discussions with local communities to learn what they saw as the advantages and disadvantages of hosting a GDF.

The Chair, noting the value of the visits to Bure and the visit in 2014 to Sweden, invited the Committee to propose where CoRWM would gain from a future visit to a geological disposal facility. It was concluded that a visit to a salt-based GDF would be advantageous and the best place to visit would be the WIPP facility in the US. The advantage of a visit to WIPP would be to gain an insight not only in relation to the technical challenges of a salt environment, but also an understanding of stakeholder engagement issues.

ACTION 3: Secretariat to look into the feasibility of a visit to the WIPP facility in the US.

ACTION 4: Lynda Warren to look at the report from CoRWM's previous visit to Bure and update the Committee on any significant differences in relation to what can be learned from the French experience.

Agenda Item 6: Update on Meeting with Regulators

29. Helen Peters reported that she, together with other sub group members, met with the EA and ONR in February. The meeting had been interesting and helpful. The sub-group discussed CoRWM's scrutiny role in relation to the development of the regulatory framework for a GDF. The EA updated the meeting on: the development of a draft internal template and supporting guidance for an applicant for GDF intrusive investigation work; environmental permitting structuring through the phases of a GDF; and the EA's advice and recommendation to RWM.
30. ONR provided an update on its internal structure and staffing – it has a full-time member of staff dedicated to the GDF programme and some graduates working on implementation strategy and developing guidance. ONR reported it had developed a high level policy paper

covering licencing for design, construction, commissioning, operation and closure of a GDF. ONR is currently working with DECC on the statutory instrument changes required for licensing under the Nuclear Installations Act 1965 and will by March 2017 have developed draft guidance on the policy and approach for a GDF. The sub-group agreed it would be useful to meet EA and ONR again in September 2016 for a further update and Helen Peters would request some dates.

Agenda Item 7: Sub-group Updates

Working with the Community (JR & BC)

31. John Rennilson reported that two meetings had been held since 4th February and the minutes were available on DECC website. He noted that the meeting that was scheduled to discuss the definition of community had been cancelled and the final meeting was scheduled for 20th April.
32. John noted that the key issue was how to define a community and those who would be directly and indirectly affected by a GDF. The output from this work would be a proposal to Ministers and there was a strong expectation there will be a consultation. Brian Clark complimented DECC officials on the work that they had done to get the papers together for meetings.

Public Dialogue Meetings

33. Brian Clark reported that he had attended the two days public dialogue events organised by DECC in Manchester on open policy making. He did this in his role as a member of the independent Oversight Group as well as representing CoRWM. He noted that whilst CoRWM been critical of some previous consultation events, he had nothing but praise for these events. He reported that the event was well organised with an excellent cross section of the public. He noted that the members of the public were engaged throughout the process. He thought that the formulation of the programme was first class, with great presentations by RWM and DECC, which were short, sharp and to the point. He noted that issues highlighted by the public during the events were valued and would be considered by DECC. Overall he thought that the events had a good atmosphere, in an excellent venue and it was very stimulating. He noted that DECC intended to use this as a public dialogue case study.

National Geological Screening

34. Simon Harley reported that the Committee responded to the NGS in December and he believed that the guidance to BGS would be published in the near future. He thought that there had been thorough analysis of responses to the RWM consultation, and that a review by the Independent Review Panel had been part of the process. He recommended that CoRWM would find it beneficial to have a look at the final guidance when it was published, especially in relation to how the consultation analysis by RWM had informed the guidance.
35. He noted that BGS had been involved in guidance production to some extent, so the final product would be something BGS would be able to relate to. Simon thought that there

remained a need for RWM to explain the interpretation of screening used in the guidance to ensure that the public fully understood what would be delivered by the National Geological Screening work package.

National Land Use Planning (LYW)

36. Lynda Warren reported that the sub group had met with the Head of the DECC team that was working on the NPS work package on 13th March. She noted that CoRWM has been involved with the draft NPS and had put in comments to DECC. She reported that DECC had confirmed that a number of CoRWM's comments had been taken into account. However, she stated that there are still concerns on how the document was going to be used in respect to planners and potential host communities. Lynda recommended that the Committee should continue to scrutinise the NPS work.

ACTION 5: Secretariat to request for the final draft of the NPS and send it to the NPS sub group.

Communications & Engagement (BC)

37. Brian Clark reported that the communication team within DECC are now giving priority to radioactive waste communications. DECC has recruited additional staff and Brian believed that they are now working far more effectively with RWM on joint communication strategies. Brian reported that RWM had appointed a PR company to assist in the development of the communications strategy framework. Brian noted that RWM intend to put out the contract for the development of its communication strategy for competition. He noted that other stakeholder events may be held at a later date.

Welsh Policy Review (GB & LYW)

38. Lynda Warren reported that the Committee had put in a written submission to the House of Commons Welsh Affairs Committee inquiry into the future of nuclear power in Wales on March 4th. Lynda noted that a draft response had been shared in advance with Robert William in Wales Government. It was noted that CoRWM's response was not on the Welsh Affairs Committee website and it would not be appropriate to put it on the CoRWM Website until it appeared on the Welsh Affairs Committee website.

Action 6: Secretariat to liaise with the Welsh Affairs Committee secretariat to see when the CoRWM response will be published on its website and then publish the CoRWM response on the CoRWM website.

Scottish Policy

39. John Rennilson reported that not much was happening in relation to the work of the Scottish Government but he has been advised that the Radioactive Waste Implementation Strategy would not be published before Parliamentary elections in Scotland and possibly not before the EU Referendum on 23rd June.

Safety Case Development (PD)

40. Paul Davis reported that CoRWM had participated in a 3 way meeting with RWM and DECC which had been arranged to respond to CoRWM's recommendation made in the 2014/15 Annual Report. The meeting aimed to clarify the CoRWM position on why separate safety cases were needed for each of the three geological formations, namely fractured hard rocks, clays and salts. CoRWM had made it clear that it was not looking for RWM to produce 3 separate "Generic Disposal System Safety Cases" but rather the appropriate information to describe what a GDF design would look like for each rock type and the appropriate safety arguments that would be used to substantiate the design. The meeting also discussed the relationship between the GDSSC and the development of site-specific safety cases. It was agreed that RWM would respond to CoRWM's concerns and further meetings would be arranged for CoRWM to gain a better understanding of RWM's safety case work.

RWM Transition (SN)

41. Stephen Newson reported that not much had been done on this topic since the last meeting but he envisaged that his subgroup would have more to do in the next financial year 2016/17. The main issue was to understand what RWM was doing to ensure that it developed into an effective engineering delivery organisation.

Agenda Item 8: Formal Approval of Minutes (September & October Plenary)

42. Both plenary minutes from September and October were formally accepted.

ACTION 7: Secretariat to publish September and October plenary meeting minutes on the website.

Agenda Item 9: Quarterly Reports (Q1, Q2 & Q3)

43. The Committed noted the draft quarterly reports for the first 3 quarters of 2015/16. Members were asked to submit any final comments to the Secretariat as soon as possible so that the reports could be uploaded on the website.

ACTION 8: Members to submit their final comments on the draft quarterly reports to by Monday 21st March so that they can be published on the website before the end of March.

Agenda Item 10: Annual Report Structure

44. The Chair suggested that as there is the potential for significant change in the Committee's membership from June the Committee should aim to get a draft of the 2015/16 Annual Report for discussion at the April plenary meeting. This would ensure that all current members can make their contributions. The Chair agree to circulate the proposed structure of the annual report and the drafting allocation. His aim was that following April plenary meeting, the draft Annual Report would be sent to stakeholders for comment on factual accuracy. The Chair proposed that a closed meeting would be held at the end of May to finalise the report with the whole Committee. The Chair confirmed the 2015/16 Annual

Report would be agreed at the June open plenary meeting and subject to agreement it would be sent to Ministers before the end of June.

45. Members agreed this timescale for the production of the Annual Report. It was noted that not all Members would be available to meet in May and hence a small group of Committee Members would meet on 26th May to finalise the Annual Report in readiness for the June Plenary meeting.

ACTION 9: Chair to circulate the structure of the 2015/16 annual report along with drafting allocations for Members.

ACTION 10: Members to draft their allotted sections and return to the Chair and Secretariat as soon as possible before Friday 22 April

ACTION 11: Secretariat to arrange a meeting room for 26th May, 9am-4pm for Committee to finalise the Draft Annual Report.

Agenda Item 11: AOB

46. The Chair expressed his thanks on behalf of the Committee to Francis Livens and the University of Manchester for funding the secondment of Hollie Ashworth to the Committee's secretariat. The Chair thanked Hollie for her work with the Committee and hoped she had gained from the experience.
47. The Chair thought that Hollie's secondment had been a great success and he hoped that other postgraduate students could be similarly seconded to the Secretariat. He agreed to discuss the possibility of another secondment with DECC.
48. The Chair noted that the deadline for applications for membership of the Committee closed on 18th March and he urged those members who wished to be considered for membership on the new Committee to submit their applications before the closing date.
49. The member of the public was invited to comment on the work of the Committee or ask questions. The NuLeAF representative thanked CoRWM Member John Rennilson for stepping in and making a presentation to NuLeAF in January. Members of NuLeAF appreciated this and extend their gratitude. She agreed to clarify the position on the Bournemouth conference in July and report back to the Secretariat.