

## COMMITTEE ON RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT (CORWM)

### PLENARY MEETING

**22 MARCH 2017, LONDON**

**Venue:** 3 Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2AW

**Timing:** 09:30-15:30

**Attending:** Laurence Williams (Chair), Gregg Butler, Paul Davis, Melissa Denecke, Campbell Gemmell, Joanne Hill, Stephen Newson, Simon Redfern, Richard Shaw, Stephen Tromans, Andrew Walters, Julia West, Kate McCready (CNRD),

**Advisors:** Brian Clarke, Lynda Warren

**Secretariat:** Steven King (Secretariat)

**Public:** Catherine Draper (NuLeAF)  
Andrew Craze (Radioactive Waste Management)

**Apologies:** Andy Hall, Janet Wilson

#### Meeting open and welcome

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### Declarations of interest

2. Joanne Hill declared a potential conflict of interest in relation to her acting as an expert witness. The Chair said he would consider the matter and advise Joanne in due course

**ACTION 1:** Chair to advise on whether a conflict of interest might arise if Jo Hill were to act as an expert witness in a particular case.

3. The Chair reminded members that the Committee was required to publish a Register of Members' Interests. He requested that all members should provide the secretariat with the necessary information, for which purpose the secretary had requested information.

**ACTION 2:** Members to provide the secretariat with up-to-date information on their interests that are relevant to the work of CoRWM.

## **Chair's update**

4. The Chair reported on meetings he had attended since the previous Plenary meeting:

### **a) John Clark NDA Chief Executive, 13 January 2017**

5. This was a regular keep-in-touch meeting recognising that John was retiring as the NDA CEO. The main topic of discussion was the readiness review and RWM's transition to a delivery organisation. The Chair also raised the issue of the long-term relationship between RWM and NDA. He repeated CoRWM's view that in the longer term RWM should transition to a stand-alone organisation.

### **b) Scottish Government, 18 January 2017**

6. The Chair and Campbell Gemmell had lunch with Roseanna Cunningham MSP, the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform. Over lunch they discussed the role of CoRWM in relation to radioactive waste management in Scotland. After lunch the Chair and Campbell met Paul Wheelhouse MSP, Minister for Business, Innovation and Energy and Roseanna Cunningham MSP, and members of their staff. The meeting was the first the Chair had had with Scottish Ministers. The meeting covered the role of CoRWM the Scottish Government's role and its strategy on near surface radioactive waste management disposal.
7. The Chair thought it would be useful for Scottish Ministers or their officials to visit the near surface radioactive waste disposal facility near Forsmark in Sweden.
8. It was agreed that the meeting had been useful and that the Chair and Ministers should aim to meet annually.

### **c) Chief Scientific Adviser for Scotland, 18 January 2017**

9. Following the meeting with Ministers, the Chair and Campbell met with Professor Sheila Rowan, the Chief Scientific Adviser for Scotland. They discussed the role of CoRWM in relation to the scrutiny of the management of radioactive waste in Scotland. Professor Rowan welcomed CoRWM's role and she recognised the importance of CoRWM's advice. She and the Chair agreed that it would be beneficial to keep in touch in relation to radioactive waste management issues in Scotland and they should aim to meet annually.

### **d) Geological Disposal Programme Board, 9 February 2017**

10. The chair reported that he attended the GDPB as an observer. He noted that the GDPB had been reconstituted and was now much smaller. The change of structure was to enable it focus more on decision making.

**e) CoRWM Sponsors, 15 February 2017**

11. The Chair reported that he has regular meeting with CoRWM's sponsors (BEIS and the Northern Ireland, Scottish and Welsh Governments). At this meeting he reported on CoRWM's activities and on the 2017-20 work programme.

**f) Stephen Speed, BEIS Civil Nuclear and Resilience Director introductory meeting, 23 February 2017**

12. The Chair reported that he had an introductory meeting with Stephen Speed who was the new CNRD Director. He took the opportunity to explain CoRWM's role and activities.

**g) RWM Board, 28 February 2017**

13. The Chair believed that the meeting had given CoRWM members the opportunity to meet the new RWM Board and vice-versa. He thought the meeting had been useful for all and that he was encouraged to see the RWM Board beginning to accept that it needed to have a GDF delivery champion at Board level.

**h) Craig Lester, 2 March 2017**

14. The Chair reported that he had met with Craig Lester, recently appointed Deputy Director, Nuclear Strategy and NDA at BEIS. Craig is the BEIS official who is responsible for providing the CoRWM secretariat and budget. The Chair reported that Craig had welcomed his briefing on CoRWM's work and that he supported CoRWM's funding bid.

**i) BEIS Partners Industrial Strategy Workshop, 7 March 2017**

15. The Chair reported that BEIS had introduced an initiative for chairs and deputy chairs of its 'partner' organisations. This new initiative was intended to improve interactions between BEIS and its Partner organisations to help support BEIS's mission. The Chair noted that there was a real danger of independent advisory NDPBs such as CoRWM being considered as a BEIS partner and membership of the group would need careful handling.

**ACTION 3:** The Chair to circulate a note of the BEIS Partner Industrial Strategy Workshop held on 7 March 2017.

**j) BEIS Partner Organisations Networking Session, 26 January 2017**

16. The Chair reported that Campbell Gemmell (Deputy Chair) had attended this meeting as he had not been available. Campbell reported that he had sought the views of the Partner Organisations on their relationships with the Sponsors. The meeting had provided the Partner Organisations to find areas of mutual interest and to agree strategies.

**ACTION 4:** Campbell Gemmell to circulate a note of the BEIS Partner Organisations Networking Session held on 26 January 2017.

### **Approval of Open Plenary meeting minutes of 12 January 2017**

The Minutes of the meeting of 12 January were approved subject to minor changes.

#### **Actions**

17. The Committee noted the status of the actions. The following points arose out of this:

- a) Andrew Walters would look into providing Dropbox, a file-hosting service, through his firm to allow members to share and work on files and avoid the problems which sometimes arose when files were circulated by e-mail. He emphasised that editorial settings were very important to ensure that the final version was 'locked' so that no further changes could be made to a document.
- b) Simon Redfern said that Moodle, a free Open Source software system, might provide a similar facility.

**ACTION 5:** Andrew Walters to set up Dropbox through his firm for CoRWM members to access documents. The Committee would review its use at the next closed meeting.

- c) The Committee agreed that the subject line heading CoRWM e-mails should start with 'CoRWM' then, if the e-mail is a subgroup matter, the number of the subgroup followed by the subject of the e-mail, e.g. CoRWM SG8 Meeting with BEIS.

**ACTION 6:** CoRWM e-mail subject headings to be presented in a standard format beginning with 'CoRWM' then, if the e-mail is a subgroup matter, the number of the subgroup followed by the subject of the e-mail, e.g. CoRWM SG8 Meeting with BEIS.

### **2017-2020 Work Programme for submission to Ministers**

18. The Chair introduced the draft Work Programme (WP) for 2017-2020. The WP set out the key activities to be undertaken in the following three years, with greatest detail for 2017-18. It identified the responsibilities and work for each subgroup and listed the expected CoRWM deliverables.

19. Following discussion the Chair asked the Committee to approve the draft Work Programme. The Committee approved the document and agreed that the Chair should submit the CoRWM sponsors for submission to their Ministers for formal approval.

20. The Chair noted that it would take some time for Ministers to approve the WP and in the interim CoRWM would continue to work on the assumption that it would be approved.

### **2016-17 Annual Report**

21. The Chair reported that CoRWM was required to submit its Annual Report for 2016-17 to Ministers at the end of June 2017. He asked subgroup Chairs to start drafting their sections of the report. The structure of the report would follow that of the previous year.
22. Lynda Warren agreed to manage the drafting of the Annual Report and the Chair reminded Members to send their contributions to Lynda. It was agreed that the planned plenary meetings in May would be used to progress the production of the Annual Report. The chair asked for all contributions to be with Lynda no later than 1 May so that there would be a draft available for discussion at the plenary meeting.

**ACTION 7:** Subgroup Chairs to send in their draft contribution for the Annual Report to Lynda W no later than 1 May.

### **CoRWM Scrutiny Activities**

#### **a) SG1: Working with Communities**

23. *BEIS Raising awareness seminar: Local authority and business (24 January 2017)*. Julia West reported reservations over whether BEIS had invited the right groups to the Raising Awareness seminars. There was no opposition voiced at the meeting. At the meeting, RWM outlined its approach to raising awareness.
24. BEIS and RWM were preparing a document on the implementation of the consultation.
25. RWM was having discussions with local councils. RWM was still developing its website. RWM gave the impression that it was not prepared for what it had to do. The subgroup believed that RWM had to change its culture from confrontation to consultation for it to deliver the siting programme successfully. RWM indicated that they would be seeking a greater input from CoRWM.

**ACTION 8:** Subgroup 1 to follow up with Andrew Craze his offer to share the RWM communications website with CoRWM.

26. The actions arising out of this meeting were that Subgroup 1 wanted to see RWM's communications strategy document to provide comments. The subgroup also wanted to see the structure of the proposed website and the slide pack on guidance, which had been promised but not yet shown to CoRWM.

**ACTION 9:** Subgroup 1 to follow up with Andrew Craze his offer to send CoRWM the RWM communication strategy document and the RWM slide pack on guidance and the RWM prospectus.

27. Subgroup1 met with RWM and BEIS for an update on WWC and Communications (20 March 2017). BEIS was discussing the use of independent experts to provide communities with independent advice in GDF siting issues. The subgroup intended to keep a close eye on this work.

**ACTION 10:** Subgroup1 to follow up with BEIS on its offer to provide CoRWM with its latest thinking on access to expertise.

28. BEIS was planning the engagement phase. It was noted that the third draft with the GDF prospectus should be completed by early April. It should contain implementation plans for one or many volunteers.
29. BEIS asked if CoRWM would be the oversight body for the consultation process. As the request came from BEIS, CoRWM should do this, but it would be important for CoRWM to know the timescale in order to determine which members would participate. Janet Wilson was keen to have CoRWM members attend the regional meetings which BEIS was setting up, ideally two CoRWM members attending each meeting.

**ACTION 11:** Secretariat to seek information from BEIS on timing and locations of regional workshops.

30. Brian Clark said that the timing and effective planning were critical as the deadlines were short and there would be staff changes in BEIS.
31. The Chair said that CoRWM was appointed to scrutinise governance, not what RWM was doing elsewhere. Therefore the proposed oversight should not come out of CoRWM's budget.
32. Julia West said that RWM was coming up with awkward and difficult questions. People were hearing about what they were doing but were not clear about what was actually happening. RWM had said was that they were setting up a project control team to ensure they presented a consistent message.

**ACTION 12:** Arrange meeting between SG1 and BEIS to discuss communication.

#### **b) SG2-GDF Safety Case and Geology**

33. Paul Davis reported that TAP, which RWM had set up in 2012 to provide them with internal technical advice, had held its last meeting. It would be succeeded by a new committee that would cover much of the same technical functions as TAP but it would be broader remit. In discussion members felt it was important for this new committee not to be seen as duplicating the role of CoRWM's. Paul Davis felt that the change of remit would not conflict with CoRWM's role.

34. RWM was making progress with its public facing documents on the GDF, but there was a question as to how much credible guidance RWM could give without it being site-specific. RWM had not yet developed a safety case with a range of scenarios. Their generic safety case "2016" was not a safety case but a compilation of information that would be used to help make a safety case. It appeared to be an extension of an original safety 2010 gDSSC.
35. The Chair said that the problem was that RWM was presenting the data used to inform the safety case as a safety case, but had not yet developed a GDF safety case.
36. Paul Davis said a critical element in the success of the project would be how RWM presented the safety case to the public. RWM had done some safety assessments for all three rock types, but CoRWM had not yet seen them. RWM had to be able to show the public that it knew about their local rock types and present the process which would ensure safety.
37. Cherry Tweed had given CoRWM a draft of one of RWM's public-facing documents which CoRWM subgroup 2 would respond to. The document covered radioactive waste and the GDF but had very little about hard rock.

**ACTION 13:** SG2 to comment on Cherry Tweed's draft document to guide her in relation to the other two documents which she should then provide to CoRWM.

38. The Chair said that for CoRWM to provide official advice, it should discuss the subject at its Plenary meeting. In this case it was not feasible, owing to the time constraints. Therefore CoRWM would be able to provide informal advice, which would be the subgroup's view taking account of comments from other CoRWM members.
39. CoRWM needed to meet with RWM as a matter of urgency to get a better understanding of the role of the generic disposal system safety case. It also needed to be assured that the three public facing documents (one for each rock type) were fit for purpose and adequately described indicative GDF designs and the associated safety characteristics.

**ACTION 14:** Arrange a safety case meeting with John Corderoy from RWM and the Chair. Meeting to cover RWM's gDSSC.

**ACTION 15:** Arrange meeting for SG2 members with RWM for RWM to explain the 2016 generic geological disposal system safety case

### **c) SG3- Planning and Regulation**

40. Andy Hall reported that a National Policy Statement would be presented later that month. The issue of licensing of a GDF was still to be resolved. CoRWM had given comments on early proposals but had not had a response.

**ACTION 16:** Secretariat to seek feedback from BEIS on CoRWM's comments on licensing prescription.

41. The next steps, over the coming year, were to ascertain how the regulator proposed to undertake the licensing.

**d) SG4-Organisational Development**

42. Stephen Newson reported that RWM had updated the subgroup on its readiness review report. The report, which had a lot of recommendations, was generally favourable. The Chair emphasised the importance of the review for the launch.
43. Paul Davis expressed concerns that RWM did not see the time imperative.
44. The Chair said that to deliver the next stage RWM would have to reorganise itself or the programme. It was important that the subgroup met RWM to sort out these issues and to say what was missing from the readiness review report.

**ACTION 17:** SG4 to meet with RWM before the end of April to discuss RWM's readiness review.

**e) SG5-Scottish Government Activities**

45. Campbell Gemmell reported that the Scottish Government's consultation on the disposal of radioactive waste would end in April. CoRWM might wish to comment on it. Its activity had been useful but its outcomes had been few.
46. Campbell Gemmell reported that the Scottish Government was interested to know what a near-surface model would look like. This Scotland's Chief Scientific Officer was keen to look at the Swedish model.

**f) SG6-Welsh Government Activities (Gregg Butler)**

47. The Welsh Government would take its proposals on working with communities around the same time that BEIS would do so in England. CoRWM was likely to be asked to comment on the draft consultation document.

**g) SG7- Storage of radioactive Waste, Spent Fuel and Nuclear materials**

48. Gregg Butler reported on a meeting with NDA to discuss Higher Activity Waste (HAW), Spent Fuel and Nuclear Materials (SF&NM) Management on 23 February. He had been heartened by the progress being made.
49. NDA had dealt with the immediate problems so could now look at the future more strategically. There was more evidence that they were beginning to bring in a strategy for the whole estate.
50. The Chair said that CoRWM would be interested in their approach to the management of unshielded and shielded intermediate level waste. Proposals



had been put forward for 100 ton plus containers. This would impact on the GDF. CoRWM would need to monitor the balance between shielded and unshielded waste.

51. Lynda Warren said that the question of storage should be on the agenda for discussion with the regulator.

### **General Meetings and Visits**

#### **a) UK ABWR GDA workshop (24 January 2017)**

52. Jo Hill reported on a public consultation for the Generic Design Assessments (GDA) of UK Advanced Boiling Water Reactor (UK ABWR). There had been presentations about the process from the Environment Agency and ONR followed by questions. Many questions had been site-specific but the process was not site specific. The meeting would be followed by two meetings in Anglesey, but these would only be Q&A sessions.

#### **b) BEIS Partner Organisations Networking Session (26 January 2017)**

53. This item had been reported on previously (see paragraphs 15 and 16, above).

#### **c) Visit to ONKOLO, 2 February 2017**

54. Richard Shaw reported owing to a lift failure he had not been able to go underground on his visit to Onkolo in Finland in February. Nonetheless, his visit had been interesting. He described what was being done at the site. He noted that the site had a visitor centre, which was one thing that the UK lacked.
55. Richard noted that Posiva, Finland's Nuclear Waste Management Organisation, did not believe that it could transform itself into an operator. However, it had set up a working group to explore what was needed and now it was behaving like an operator, managing what was becoming a major construction project and fuel handling business.
56. Richard reported that most of the people in the area either worked at Onkolo or had family members who did so.

### **CoRWM's Calendar Forward look up to May**

57. The Chair reported that the Plenary meeting dates for the year ahead had been agreed and were on the CoRWM website.

### Questions from the Public

58. Catherine Draper reported that NuLeAF had arranged for a presentation from BEIS on radioactive waste and policy. NuLeAF was also looking at the implications of Brexit on radioactive waste management.
59. On 18 and 19 September NuLeAF would be holding an event in West Cumbria looking at waste strategy and visiting sites.
60. Catherine Draper referred people to a Ministry of Defence (MoD) consultation on the Submarine Dismantling Programme, which she believed to be an example of a good public consultation. She recommended that RWM could follow the MoD's example. They had to have the expertise to answer all questions quickly.

### Any other business

61. Andrew Craze had heard during the meeting that CoRWM members had not received documents which RWM had promised them. He apologised for this and said that if it happened in future, members should contact him either, directly or through the CoRWM Secretariat.

### Meeting Close

62. The meeting closed at 14:45.

### Actions – Plenary Meeting, 22 March 2017

<b>Actions from 22 March Closed Plenary Meeting</b>	<b>Updates</b>
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<b>ACTION 2:</b> Members to provide the secretariat with up-to-date information on their interests that are relevant to the work of CoRWM.	
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