

## CoRWM Open Plenary – 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023

**Timing:** 10:00 – 12:00

**Chair:** Nigel Thrift (CoRWM Chair)

**Members:** Penny Harvey, Ray Kemp, Mark Kirkbride, Derek Lacey, Stephen Tromans, Simon Webb, Claire Corkhill, Clare Bond, Catherine MacKenzie, Malcolm Joyce and Barry Lennox

### CoRWM

#### Secretariat

**DESNZ:** Dawn Armstrong, Josie Carlton and Shubhnit Seera

### Agenda:

**1. Meeting open, welcome and introductory comments (Chair) 10.00**

Chair's recent meetings

**2. Declaration of Interests 10.10**

**3. Approval of Minutes from the May Open Plenary 10.15**

**4. Update on Subgroup Activities and Plans**

10.20

*Key topics:*

- a. SG 1 Working with Communities (Penny Harvey)
- b. SG 2 GDF Geology and Delivery (Mark Kirkbride)
- c. SG 3 Planning and Regulation (Ray Kemp)
- d. SG 4 Scottish Government Activities (Clare Bond)
- e. SG 5 Welsh Government Activities (Stephen Tromans)
- f. SG 6 Storage of Waste, Spent Fuel, and Materials (Derek Lacey)

**5. Presentation: Rethinking Nuclear Waste using an Intergenerational Lens**

11.00

**Speaker: Cat Tully (School of International Futures)**

**6. Questions from the public**

11.40

**7. Any other business**

11.50

**8. Next Meeting: 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023, Cardiff**

**Close of Meeting**

**12:00**

## Minutes

### **1 - Meeting open, welcome and introductory comments (Chair)**

Nigel Thrift (Chair) welcomed all to the meeting.

He covered recent publications – Annual Report has been published, as has the Uranium paper and the Annual GDF Progress Report. The Work Programme is due to be published soon.

He then covered the work to be undertaken by the Committee this year

– the reviewing of the NDA assumption and strategy for managing radioactive waste in the UK

- Decommissioning issues arising from SMR/AMR's
- Advice to NWS for the delivery of GDF
- Advice to Governments for consultation proposals to update nuclear decommissioning and radioactive substances policies.
- And, in due course, CoRWM may become involved in advice to Great British Nuclear (GBN)

He reiterated that, post covid, the Committee have started to undertake visits again –  
Visit to Bure in June

Visit to Sellafield in July

And in September a visit to Trawsfynydd

Subgroups have completed a range of activities in the past year.

### **2. Declaration of Interests**

Claire Corkhill stated that she has now transferred to the University of Bristol (previously with the University of Sheffield) and also that she is supporting Sellafield looking at the disposability of thermally treated waste.

Barry Lennox (BL) consulting for Magnox on graphite materials.

Malcolm Joyce has started doing some work with Rolls Royce

### **3. Approval of Minutes from the May Open Plenary**

All members confirmed their approval of the previous minutes.

### **4. Update on Subgroup Activities and Plans**

**a. SG 1 Working with Communities (Penny Harvey)** - SG1 have been preparing for the workshop on social science with NWS senior members of staff – London, October 18<sup>th</sup>, to which Professor Ash Amin and Professor Sarah Whatmore will join – and will cover topics such as Characterisation of Communities, building trust/acknowledgment

Penny Harvey met with Jamie Matear (NWSMO Canada) and Annabelle Lillycrop (NWS) on 25<sup>th</sup> May to discuss Canadian siting and engagement programme

A meeting in June with NWS was held in which they discussed – Staff changes within the Engagement and Siting team

Effects of local elections on the Community Partnerships and

The shift on emphasis to place-based projects

They also met in September to discuss –

Site evaluation studies: Focus on how NWS will engage and communicate with the communities on the outputs from technical studies, including discussions of the seismic studies in the Northwest.

Withdrawing from a community: NWS presented their emerging approach to engaging and communicating with the communities and stakeholders concerned.

Update on appointment of Major Permissions Partner and how they will fit in with community consultation and engagement activities.

**b. SG2 GDF Geology and Delivery (Mark Kirkbride)** - SG2 has been progressing work on a number of technical papers, with the main focus being on the initial compilation, review and further updates in relation to underground rock laboratories (URLs).

Additional work is being undertaken in relation to the position on retrievability and the implications of nuclear new build on the GDF disposal inventory; SG2 was issued a draft copy of the NWS Alternatives Report in July for review and comment ahead of finalisation and issue by NWS. SG2 provided a set of structured written text and comments which were intended to assist NWS in finalising the report and focusing on specific important areas; SG2 is scheduled to hold the next quarterly meeting with NWS on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023;

They are hoping to have a visit to Boulby mine in early 2024.

**c. SG3 Planning and Regulation (Ray Kemp)** - SG3 met with NWS on June 28<sup>th</sup> to discuss Environmental Permit for Intrusive Investigation – an overview of the process and work to prepare, to include: staged regulation, the Rochdale Envelope, EA Guidance, how this fits with site evaluation work, the down selection ability and how this will be managed by NWS, CoRWM would like more detail into how this is going to be taken forward.

SG3 members attended the visit in Bure hosted by Andra – here it was noted that industry in France works together to engage with the community. The members focussed on the Pros and Cons of a URL that is separate from the construction site of a GDF and how transferable knowledge gained from experiments in other URL sites.

CoRWM would also like to investigate further the idea of the licensing process whereby there is 'pilot operation' prior to emplacement.

CoRWM will be meeting with the EA on November 30<sup>th</sup> in Birmingham, primarily to discuss their position on URLs.

**d. SG4 Scottish Government Activities (Clare Bond)**

CoRWM are organising a visit to Dounreay in Spring 2024

SG4 responded to the Scottish Governments draft HAW work programme. Following this, members of SG4 had a meeting with Scottish Government in August to discuss the draft HAW work programme and Scottish work plans.

Members of SG4 attended the Scottish Nuclear Sites Stakeholder meeting at Scottish Government in August, and CB presented a paper on CoRWMs activities. Malcolm Joyce will join the SG4 team.

Diane Hamilton (Scottish Govt) also gave an update – they have been working with NDA on NSD Scottish project (overarching picture) and this is due to be published this year.

Pete Roche (guest) asked a question regarding the characterisation of packaged waste at Hunterston A – Clare Bond stated it was an interesting discussion and that they are dealing with packaged waste ‘as was’ rather than repackaging it – emphasising the importance of having a good knowledge of the inventory. Derek added that there is beginning to be an interest more in interim storage.

#### **e. SG5 Welsh Government Activities (Stephen Tromans)**

Stephen thanked James Gibbs for his support to SG5 – he has regular updates with James and particularly recently on the consultation to the UK Government and devolved administration consultation on policies for nuclear decommissioning and managing radioactive substances document.

Stephen has produced a paper on the legal/policy position in Wales

Professor Barry Lennox is joining SG5

Presentations were given in the closed plenary on Welsh framework, Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Rob Morgan) and the Wylfa and Trawsfynydd sites. (James Gibbs)

CoRWM to visit Trawsfynydd on September 13<sup>th</sup> following the plenary.

#### **f. SG6 Storage of Waste, Spent Fuels and Materials (Derek Lacey)**

Both Malcolm Joyce and Barry Lennox are to join SG6

The CoRWM Report on “Consideration of the UK Uranium Inventory, Management and Disposal Options” has been published onto the CoRWM website, Derek gave a summary of this report

SG6, met with NDA and NWS in Sheffield on July 12<sup>th</sup> and at Sellafield on July 13<sup>th</sup> to continue discussion on storage strategy, treatment strategy and management of Pu. A blog of the visit to Sellafield Waste Treatment Complex will be going on to the CoRWM website.

Visit to Sellafield – Five CoRWM members visited the waste treatment complex including the drums and were able to see the full process of how material arrives, storage before disposal, final products in drum store – these will be stored for decades before disposal.

Derek raised the question if there was potential to part from cementitious approach to a thermal heating approach at an industrial scale?

A study of interim storage may be considered in the future by CoRWM.

Pete Roche (guest) asked about the difference in environmental impact between cementation and thermal treatment.

Though the thermal treatment of waste does produce an ‘off-gas’ – methods such as the “GeoMelt” system can trap and filter away the harmful elements within the gas. Compared with larger cemented waste products, the thermally treated glass products take up a much smaller amount of valuable space in a disposal facility, with the augmented waste forms also having a greater margin of passive safety.

Furthermore, a large amount of CO<sub>2</sub> would be generated from the cement needed.

Derek stated that the decision has many elements and that all elements/issues need to be considered before a decision is made.

**5 – Presentation: Rethinking Nuclear Waste through an Intergenerational Lens**

– Cat Tully from the School of International Futures gave a presentation regarding Intergenerational views on nuclear and how we can structure thinking about our responsibilities to future generations

**6 – Questions from the public**

– none

**7 – Any other business**

– none

**8 – Next Meeting**

28<sup>th</sup> November Edinburgh