

Chairman: **Ian Selby** (The Crown Estate)

Acting Secretary: **Lester Hicks** (Independent Consultant)

**Minutes of the 35<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the UK Minerals Forum held at the IOM<sup>3</sup> offices, 297 Euston Road, London, NW1 3AQ on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2018 at 11am.**

**Present:**

Ian Selby (**IS**) – Chairman (The Crown Estate)

Alan Thompsons (**AT**) – Secretary (Cuesta Consulting Ltd.)

Ruth Bradshaw (**RB**) – CNP

Peter Close (**PC**) – Natural England

Peter Day (**PDa**) – POS

Peter Dorans (**PDo**) – The Wildlife Trusts

Lester Hicks (**LH**) – independent

David Highley (**DH**) - independent

Peter Huxtable (**PH**) – BAA

Nigel Jackson (**NJ**) – MPA

Jo Mankelow (**JM**) - BGS

Brian Marker (**BM**) – Independent consultant

David Payne (**DP**) – CBI Minerals Group

Stewart Proven (**SP**) – Banks Group

David Richards (**DR**) – Suffolk County Council

Jo Smith (**JS**) – Welsh Government

Paul Williams (**PW**) – Hanson

Guest:

Marta Santamaria (**MS**) – Technical Director of the Natural Capital Coalition

**1. Welcome and introductions**

- 1.1. The Chairman apologised over the confusion relating to the date of this meeting and welcomed those standing in for members unable to attend. He also noted that Marta Santamaria – Technical Director of the Natural Capital Coalition – would join the meeting later as an invited guest, to make a presentation on Natural Capital in the minerals sector.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from:

Andrew Bloodworth (**AB**) – BGS

Gordon Best (**GB**) – QPANI

Lauren Darby (**LD**) – Ceramfed

Jim Davies (**JD**) – Environment Agency

Trevor Evans (**TE**) – BAA

Bob Fenton (**BF**) – MAUK

Steve Gaines (**SG**) – Sibelco UK

William Carlin (**WC**) – Scottish Government

Nick Horsley (**NH**) – MPA

Barney Pilgrim (**BP**) – Banks Group

Richard Read (**RR**) – The National Trust

Guy Robinson (**GR**) – Historic England

Nigel Symes (**NS**) – RSPB

Andrew Tyler (**ATy**) – Omya UK

Robert Westell (**RW**) – Raymond Brown

Lonek Wojtulewicz (**LW**) – POS

**3. Minutes of the last meeting (34<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2017), as amended**

- 1.2. The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

#### **4. Action points from last meeting and matters arising not covered elsewhere**

##### 4a. Improved Links with the Geological Society

4a.1 **JM** noted that Andrew Bloodworth is standing for membership of the Geological Society Council which, if approved, will provide direct opportunities for improved liaison.

4a.2 **NJ** has recently written to the Society and is arranging a meeting with them to encourage further engagement.

4a.3 **BM** has been in touch with Nick Billham to discuss the proposed educational leaflet, but still no progress on this.

##### 4b. Sustainable Aggregates Website

4b.1 **BM** handed over USB drives containing material which he had recovered from the Sustainable Aggregates website before MIRO's demise to both **NJ** (on behalf of the MPA) and **PH** (on behalf of BAA). Both organisations will now look to upload this information onto their own websites and promote its renewed availability.

4b.2 **BM** noted that some of the original website's links to Defra projects, particularly on marine-dredged aggregates were broken, so those reports are not available. **IS** thought that the Crown Estate may well have copies of these and will try to arrange for these to be added to the MPA and BAA archives.

**Action NJ, PH and IS**

##### 4c. Options for Video-Conferencing

4c. 1 **IS** noted that this will now be offered as an option for future meetings. **AT** will arrange for the facilities required at IOM<sup>3</sup> and will promote the opportunity when sending out the next Agenda.

**Action AT**

##### 4d. Academic representation on UKMF

4d.1 **PH** reported that Mark Osbaldeston at the University of Derby is very keen to participate in future meetings of the Forum. **AT** will add Mark to future circulation lists.

**Action AT**

##### 4e. Involvement of Junior Colleagues

4e.1 Once again, no-one had responded to the invitation to bring a junior colleague along to this meeting but **IS** re-emphasised that it remained an open invitation for future meetings, subject to giving notice to the Secretary in order to maintain manageable numbers.

**Action ALL**

##### 4f. Collaborative funding of UKMG Working Groups

4f.1 **NJ** advised that funding for such projects from CBI Mineral Group was very difficult at the present time.

4f.2 **IS** reported that no other offers of collaborative funding had come forward and that this was therefore no longer considered a way forward. He acknowledged, however, that there was plenty of goodwill and offers of in-kind support from various members, which was encouraging. He suggested that, in addition to the proposed work on mineral planning factsheets (see Item 4g, below), it may be useful to develop some form of good practice

guidance on ways of avoiding conflict in relation to mineral development (e.g. linked to the Social Licence concept). IS will prepare a more detailed suggestion on this for the next meeting. **PDo** supported this idea and suggested that it should incorporate the notion of 'ecological due diligence'.

**Action IS**

#### 4g. Proposed Working Group to prepare a new BGS Silica Sand factsheet

4g.1 **JM** provided an update on the BGS position regarding revisions to its various minerals planning factsheets. He advised that BGS itself would be able and willing to fund one these, either on silica sand or on general construction aggregates, but would require the cooperation of industry (MPA, BAA and SAMSA) in providing updated factual information. **AT** advised that he would be able to assist with information on the silica sand factsheet, based on his recent work for West Sussex/SDNPA, Central Bedfordshire and Cheshire East Councils, and would liaise with the ad-hoc group of silica sand producing MPAs to coordinate further updates. **DP** noted that SAMSA would be keen to assist, through Nick Horsley.

**Action: JM/AB, AT and NH.**

### **5. Regular stakeholder key issues reports:**

#### 5a. UK Government policy report (MHCLG / BEIS / Defra)

5a.1 No central Government reps were in attendance or had sent apologies, and no reports were available. **PC** noted that Defra were indirectly represented at the meetings through Natural England and the Environment Agency (though on this occasion only he had been able to attend).

5a.2 **LH** observed that, for Central Government (in contrast to the situation within the devolved administrations), there has been a conscious withdrawal from many previous areas of interest (including minerals) and a re-branding to focus on the imperative requirements of Brexit negotiations and housing.

5a.3 **NJ** noted that BEIS is primarily focused on its industrial strategy, which might eventually be beneficial to the minerals sector, via links with the emerging minerals strategy.

5a.4 **IS** noted that he had now written to the three Secretaries of State to request re-engagement with the Forum and would report back on any progress at the next meeting.

**Action IS**

#### 5b. Devolved Government reports (Wales/Scotland/ Northern Ireland)

5b.1. **JS** reported the following developments relating to minerals in **Wales**:

5b.1 (i) **Planning Policy Wales (PPW)** was undergoing its tenth revision and is currently out for consultation (until 18<sup>th</sup> May). The proposed changes are substantial and are linked primarily to the need for the planning system in Wales to be modified to reflect the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. She noted that the minerals policies within PPW, although rearranged, are largely the same in terms of their requirements as in previous editions. There is also slightly more recognition of the links between mineral supply and the development of 'productive and enterprising places' (a key focus of the 'place-making' agenda which shapes the revised PPW).

5b.1 (ii) There will be a consultation, in April, on preferred options for the emerging **National Development Framework (NDF)**. This is a legal requirement introduced by the

Planning (Wales) Act 2015 and will have Development Plan status. It will sit alongside PPW and will set out where nationally important growth and infrastructure is needed and how the planning system at a national, regional and local level can deliver it by providing direction for Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) and Local Development Plans (LDPs). Minerals supply will be one of the land-use planning implications of major development which need to be addressed.

5b.1 (iii) Welsh Government is engaging the Law Commission to look into the possibility of consolidating legislation.

5b.1 (iv) Funding for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Review of the **Regional Technical Statements** (RTS) for North Wales and South Wales has been secured and will be out to tender this month. (*post-meeting note: the tender competition opened on 26<sup>th</sup> March*). The review will develop updated apportionments and allocation requirements for future aggregates provision and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2019.

5b.1 (v) Welsh Government is currently working on the first **Welsh National Marine Plan** (WNMP), which will guide decisions on the sustainable use of our seas (*post meeting note: consultation on this ended on 29<sup>th</sup> March*). Aggregates will feature as a specific policy sector within the plan.

5b.1 (vi). **Natural Resources Policy** (NRP), prepared as a requirement of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, sets out the Welsh Government's priorities in relation to the sustainable management of natural resources, including minerals. (*Jo: I didn't catch the update points that you mentioned on this ... what needs to be added here?*).

5b.2. **JS** concluded by noting that there are no longer any formal or regular links on minerals issues between the Welsh Government and MHCLG and that there is increasing divergence in policy.

5b.3. **PD** queried whether or not the Welsh Government had been involved in creating Defra's 25-year Environment Plan. **JS** advised that they had not, but that the Welsh Government already had many of the key policies and approaches in place, including the Natural Resources Approach, linked directly to Ecosystem Services and the Wellbeing concept, which is all about challenging and changing behaviours to promote greater sustainability. **RB** commented that these policy directions in Wales are very good.

5b.4. **PD** advised that the Wildlife Trusts in both Wales and Scotland are developing their own customised approaches to reflect the diverging circumstances in each country.

5b.5. **LH** suggested that the biggest changes in environmental policies and approaches are likely to be seen following Brexit, as a consequence of new approaches to agricultural policy. In this regard, **NJ** observed that a major impact of Brexit is likely to be seen in terms of reduced strategic vision (though perhaps not in Wales, which seems likely to retain a more strategic approach).

#### 5c. Environmental Update (NE/HE/CNP/CPRE/RSPB)

5c.1 **RB** noted that no written update had been prepared. She asked whether or not this was needed for future meetings, as opposed to verbal reports presented at the meetings. The general feeling was that written reports would be much preferred, not least so that these could be circulated to all ahead of the meetings to provide timely information and to keep those not able to attend the meetings fully informed. **PD** questioned whether or not there

was, or could be, a template issued for this purpose, to serve as a reminder for providing the information. **AT** advised that this could be done, and issued to NE/HE/CNP/CPRE/RSPB reps approximately 6 weeks ahead of each meeting.

**Action: AT**

5c.2. **RB** reported that, with respect to their concerns over proposals for fracking within National Parks, CNP and CPRE had signed up to a letter published in the media regarding their opposition to the petrochemical firm Ineos taking the National Trust to court over access to their land for fracking exploration.

5c.3. **RB** also recorded CNP's full support for the Welsh Government's recent decision not to change the purpose of National Parks in Wales.

5c.4. **RB** advised that CNP were currently promoting car-free access to National Parks and taking steps to improve biodiversity.

#### 5d. Planning update (POS)

5d.1. On behalf of POS, **PDa** noted that:

5d.1 (i). POS shared the concerns expressed by other Forum members regarding the lack of Central Government engagement with the Forum (and with minerals planning more generally). As one element of this, with recent changes of personnel at MHCLG, discussions that were being pursued by **RR** regarding the future of the AWP's National Coordinating Group have probably now stalled.

5d.1 (ii). POS also shared many of the industry's concerns regarding the Government's proposed revision of the NPPF (see item 6b, below, for further details).

5d.1 (iii). Joint Plans and Strategic Plans are mentioned in the revised NPPF, but it is too early to say whether or how these will impact on minerals issues. Ditto for the proposed new requirements for Statements of Common Ground (between adjoining authorities).

5d.1 (iv). The updated POS / MPA guidance on mineral safeguarding is to be taken forward.

5d.1 (v). POS is keen to support the MPA proposal for a new Community Fund (see Item 5e, below).

5d.1 (vi). POS is concerned over the lack of proposals and site nominations coming forward from the minerals industry, particularly from the larger multi-national companies. **PW** suggested that this may be due to those companies being too focused on major supply projects at the moment, rather than not recognising the need to look further ahead. **NJ** noted that investment in the exploration and development of new sites is still happening.

5d.3. **PDa** noted POS's ongoing concern about recruitment of mineral planning officers and that they were keen to turn this around by encouraging industry speakers to offer talks on University planning courses. UKMF Members were invited to express any interest in assisting with this.

**Action: All**

## 5e. Industry update (MPA/BAA/BCC/MAUK)

5e.1. **DP** introduced the MPA proposal for a new Aggregates Levy Community Fund (ALCF) which (in part) would replace the former Aggregate Levy Sustainability Fund (ALSF), but at a lower cost – see MPA press releases, previously circulated. The MPA is working with a number of supportive MPs to push for this and asked whether it might be something which the UKMF could support. The general feeling was that it would probably be more effective to enlist the support of individual organisations rather than seeking to align the Forum as a whole with an industry-led proposal.

5e.2. **PH** suggested that if such a fund were to be brought back, it should be broadened to include industrial minerals, not just aggregates. **NJ** disagreed with this.

5e.3. **RB** suggested that the CNP would like the scope of any such scheme to encompass landscape and access issues,

5e.4. With regard to the prospects of legislative changes following Brexit, **NJ** noted that the MPA does not want to see a ‘bonfire of regulations’ and is keen to retain the existing legislation relating to environmental protection. This is partly because the existing legislation helps to underpin the industry’s ‘licence to operate’ but also because changes can be very disruptive and damaging to business.

## 6. **Current Topic Papers:**

### 6a. UK Minerals Strategy

6a.1. **DP** gave a presentation on the current state of play regarding the emerging strategy, which has now been through multiple iterations since it was first conceived. His slides are attached at **Appendix A**. The final version has taken account of a wide range of consultation responses and is now a far more focused, the main headline being “*meeting the demand for minerals and mineral products sustainably for the next 25 years*”. The Strategy will be launched at the ‘*Living with Minerals 6*’ Conference in London on 10<sup>th</sup> July.

### 6b. NPPF Consultation

6b.1. **DP** drew attention to the recent MPA press release regarding the consultation on changes to the NPPF, noting that changes made to the minerals section (Chapter 17) appear to have been either ill-advised or not well thought through, and needed to be challenged. **NJ** will be meeting with MHCLG very soon to make very strong representations, as well as submitting a formal consultation response. **PDa** noted that POS will be doing likewise and will include detailed comments on the minerals section. Whilst each organisation represented on the Forum will have its own views, there seemed to be common ground that some of the changes – particularly the removal of the phrase ‘*minerals are essential ...*’ in paragraph 142, and removal of the quantification of stocks of permitted reserves for industrial minerals in paragraph 146, were inappropriate and potentially very damaging.

6b.2. **LH** observed that many of the subtle changes appeared to have been made without an appreciation of their likely consequences, simply to shorten the text. He noted that some of

the missing details might well reappear in the revised online policy guidance, but the wording of that has not been seen and is not being consulted upon. Moreover, the guidance would carry less weight than the policy itself.

6b.3. **IS** asked the meeting whether it might be useful for the Forum to consider making a formal representation itself, on points where there was common ground. This would be in addition to the responses made directly by individual organisations, but could be a powerful way of demonstrating a broad consensus of views on details which needed to be changed. Without prejudice to what may or may not be able to be agreed, this suggestion was well received.

6b.4. *Post-meeting note: To explore this possibility, **AT** drafted suggestions regarding a possible joint response to Question 37 of the formal consultation document, dealing with changes to Chapter 17, and circulated this to members seeking views on whether or not they could support a number of specific suggested points. Responses were initially sought before Easter but the deadline was then extended to 24<sup>th</sup> April. Thereafter **AT** and **IS** will discuss the responses and formulate a final proposed submission on points which were agreed upon. This would then be circulated for final approval before being submitted. Views would also be sought on Questions 38 and 39.*

**Action: All** (replies by 24 April 2018 to [alan.thompson@cuesta-consulting.com](mailto:alan.thompson@cuesta-consulting.com))

#### 6c. Defra's 25-year Environment Plan

6c.1. There was no further discussion of this other than to note that the Plan had been launched in January (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>).

#### 6d. UKMF at LWM6, July 2018 and at the EIG Conference, September 2018.

6d.1. **IS** suggested that UKMF should have a slot at the 'Living with Minerals 6' Conference on 10<sup>th</sup> July.

6d.2. *Post meeting note: **IS** subsequently emailed all members, noting that he had secured the opportunity for a 30-minute session entitled – “**The sandstorm - view from the UK Minerals Forum**”. This would focus on the sustainable utilisation of sand resources, in the light of global attention on this issue at present. The session would relate specifically to the UK and our national position around resources, future supply, environmental and social issues. He invited suggestions for three short, colourful and entertaining presentations from Forum members – one geo/industry, one planner & one NGO or similar – each with say 7-8 mins to make key points. **IS** would introduce and round up.*

**Action: All** (replies by 20 April 2018 to [ian.selby@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:ian.selby@plymouth.ac.uk))

6d.2 **AT** informed the meeting that UKMF had also secured a slot at this years Extractive Industry Geology Conference, taking place at the University of Durham, from 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> September. This will be a 40-minute discussion workshop, chaired by **IS**, with a panel including other Forum members, and will be entitled: “**Opportunities for the Next Generation of Extractive Industry Professionals**”. The aim would be to promote the work of the UKMF

and to encourage future participation by younger professionals. Further information on the conference can be found at [www.eigconferences.com](http://www.eigconferences.com).

6e. New UK Mining Initiatives

6e.1. **IS** noted briefly that as a result of market interest the Crown Estate is considering launching a new tender for rights to mine tin and other resources offshore Cornwall.

**7** Visiting speaker presentation: Natural Capital and the Mining Sector: **Marta Santamaria** (Technical Director, Natural Capita Coalition)

7.1 Marta's presentation is attached at **Appendix B**.

**8. Any other business:** No items were raised.

**9. Date of next meeting:**

- **Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018**, 11am-1 30pm  
IoM<sup>3</sup> offices at 297 Euston Road, NW1 3AQ, followed by a buffet lunch.]

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APPENDIX A: MPA presentation (separate pptx file, attached)

APPENDIX B: Natural Capital presentation (separate pptx file, attached)