

Chairman: Ian Selby (The Crown Estate)

Secretary: Alan Thompson (Cuesta Consulting Limited)

**Minutes of the 32nd Meeting of the UK Minerals Forum
held at the IOM3 offices, 297 Euston Road, London, NW1 3AQ
on Thursday 2nd March 2017 at 11am.**

DRAFT

Present:

Ian Selby (IS) - Chairman (the Crown Estate)

Alan Thompson (AT) - Secretary (Cuesta Consulting Ltd)

Andrew Bloodworth (AB) - BGS

Simon Bonsall (SB) - Scottish Government

Lauren Darby (LD) - Ceramfed

Peter Dorans (PDo) - The Wildlife Trusts

Alan Everard (AE) - Tarmac

David Highley (DH) - Independent
consultant

Ken Hobden (KH) - CBI Minerals Group

Peter Huxtable (PH) - BAA

Nigel Jackson (NJ) - MPA

Brian Marker (BM) - Independent
consultant

Barney Pilgrim (BP) - Banks Group

Richard Read (RR) - The National Trust

Guy Robinson (GR) - Historic England

Andy Tickle (ATi) - CPRE

Andrew Tyler (ATy) - Omya UK

Lonek Wojtulewicz (LW) - POS

1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1. The Chairman welcomed Simon Bonsall, attending his first UKMF meeting, representing the spatial planning and environment functions within the Scottish Government.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

Ruth Bradshaw (RB) - CNP

Peter Close (PC) - Natural England

Jim Davies (JD) - Environment Agency

Peter Day (PDA) - POS

Bob Fenton (BF) - MAUK

Lester Hicks (LH) - independent
consultant

Nick Horsley (NH) - MPA

Jo Mankelov (JM) - BGS

Eamon Mythen (EM) - DCLG

Mark North (MN) - MPA

John Penny (JP) - Aggregate Industries

Joanna Russell (JR) - Natural England

Jo Smith (JS) - Welsh Government

Nigel Symes (NS) - RSPB

Nicola Walters (NW) - BEIS

Paul Williams (PW) - Hanson

3. Minutes of the last meeting (24 November 2016), as amended

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

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

4.1. UKMF Education Initiative

- 4.1.1. BM reported that this was an initiative carried forward by himself and LH, following the Forum's response to an earlier consultation on A-level and GCSE specifications. They wished to know whether the UKMF should remain involved, and, if so, how. Three specific queries were put to the meeting:

- i. *Should they continue tracking developments within the National Curriculum for schools, liaising with Peter Loader (Chief Examiner) to press for recognition of bulk minerals in the curriculum?* The meeting confirmed this would be desirable and suggested that BM might usefully co-opt a voluntary assistant with links to the Earth Science Teachers' Association to help continue this work.

Action BM

- ii. *Regarding public information leaflets being produced by the Geological Society, which have included mining and minerals, should the Forum press for one on construction (covering the cycle from site investigation through development to uses of construction materials)?* BM and LH have already met with the Geol Soc. Which was receptive to the idea, and an initial note on scope was sent to the Society on 8th February. The meeting agreed this was a good idea and the Forum would be willing to be consulted on the content of a draft leaflet.

Action BM

- iii. *A database on opportunities for school visits to mineral extraction sites has been proposed by the Geological Society, which is keen to develop a pilot study to develop an optimum approach. The Society has proposed use of the Solent Area for this purpose, ranging from Bognor Regis in the west to Winchester and the Isle of Wight but including (academic, industry and regulatory) members from as far as Bournemouth and Guilford. The area has been identified because of a large school population in an area that is not traditionally thought of as a centre of quarrying. Is the Solent Area suitable for this? ... and might industry be willing to nominate one or two individuals who would be willing to discuss possible approaches, preferably from a company/companies that have sites in the Solent area?* The meeting considered that this was a worthwhile initiative, which the Forum should stay in touch with, but that it would need careful handling as not all sites would be suitable, for a variety of reasons. Industry reps should liaise with BM if they are willing to assist.

Action: Industry Reps with sites in the Solent Area

4.2. HE Minerals & Archaeology Practice Guide

- 4.2.1. GR noted that work on this was still ongoing, and that goodwill was still there to complete, but that progress had been slower than had been hoped. The draft document is currently being streamlined further and the next meeting to review progress is scheduled for April 2017.

4.3. Brexit review of EU Legislation

- 4.3.1. In LH's absence at this meeting, no further update was available.

4.4. Sustainable Aggregates Website

- 4.4.1. BM confirmed his understanding that the website had ceased to exist with the demise of MIRO, but that the content had been salvaged and currently resided on BM's computer, pending further action. It was unclear whether this content included the full archive of ALSF reports, or just links to reports held in other (possibly obscure) locations. In the first instance, it will be necessary to check this out and to create back-up copies on other computers/servers. NJ and PH expressed major concern over the fate of the reports, which represented a very substantial investment by the industry in practical research and in the development and sharing of good practice.

Both offered the services of their respective organisations (MPA/BAA) in hosting copies of the archive.

Action BM, NJ, PH

- 4.4.2. In the meantime, some investigation is needed as to the nature of what has been recovered and the storage location(s) of any missing reports. AT said that he would liaise with BF, and IS said he would speak to Ed Lockhart-Mummery, at Defra.

Action AT, IS

5. Regular stakeholder key issues reports:

5.1. UK Government policy report (DCLG / BEIS / Defra)

- 5.1.1. IS lamented the absence of representatives from any of these Departments, as they are crucial to the overall purpose and credibility of the Forum, but also acknowledged the pressures which Ministers are under. IS will continue to pursue existing and new contacts to encourage them to attend future meetings. AB suggested that it might be useful to establish new contacts via Parliamentary Committees.

Action IS

- 5.1.2. NJ noted that BEIS representatives (NW and Robin Webb) are sighted on the draft Minerals Strategy and hopes to obtain consultation responses from them in due course.
- 5.1.3. RR reported information obtained from DCLG that funding has been secured for the final year of the current Aggregate Working Parties contract, and that EM is actively seeking funding for this to continue next year, together with the next four-yearly Aggregate Minerals survey. This was welcomed by all.

5.2. National Government reports (Wales/Scotland/ Northern Ireland)

- 5.2.1. SB explained that he led a small team covering aspects of spatial planning and environment within the Scottish Government, including minerals planning. He pointed out that, in Scotland, all aspects of planning are fully devolved.
- 5.2.2. Noting the points raised in AOB at the last meeting (Item 12.2 of those minutes), he apologised for his department's lack of engagement with the Forum at recent meetings, but promised greater involvement going forwards. It will not always be possible to attend meetings in London because of the time implications of travelling from Scotland but, where that would be difficult, he suggested that we should explore the notion of joining in by means of video-conferencing or Skype, if that can be arranged. This could also be beneficial for other members and could help to regain more engagement (for Action, see item 6.4.2, below).
- 5.2.3. SB noted the following points which may be of interest to UKMF Members:
- i. The existing National Planning Framework (3), adopted in 2014 (<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-3/>) is a statutory policy which sets out the spatial expression of the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy - with a focus on supporting sustainable economic growth and the transition to a low carbon economy. It notes the importance of construction minerals, in particular with regard to the roll-out of renewable energy developments.
 - ii. The existing Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), also adopted in 2014 (<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/scottish-planning-policy/>), is a non-statutory thematic policy which provides a generally positive environment for the

consideration of sustainable mineral development. It notes the importance of minerals and sets out an approach for planning authorities in terms of construction aggregates, coal and unconventional extraction of oil and gas (onshore). The policy includes requirements for safeguarding mineral resources and a ‘market area’ approach to the consideration of landbanks for aggregates provision, although the areas are not defined in the policy.

- iii. There has been a recent review of the Planning System in Scotland: ‘Empowering Planning’ Report of the independent panel (48 recommendations for change): <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/empowering-planning-to-deliver-great-places/>
- iv. There have also been proposals for changes to the Planning System ‘Places, people and planning’ (20 proposals): <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/planning-architecture/a-consultation-on-the-future-of-planning/>. SB noted that this is about legislative rather than policy change. Consultation closes 4 April.
- v. A new Planning Bill is anticipated to be laid in the Scottish Parliament Winter 2017 for consideration in 2018. Policy review anticipated only once the Bill has concluded its parliamentary process. SB noted this is not likely to include any specific proposals regarding minerals, but it will include radical proposals for changing the hierarchy of Development Plans, including removal of the strategic tier.
- vi. There has been recent consultation (closed 27 Feb) on Raising Planning Fees: <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/planning-architecture/consultation-on-raising-planning-fees/> .
- vii. A Draft Climate Change Plan (Report on Policies and Proposals 3): <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/draft-climate-change-plan-draft-third-report-policies-proposals-2017/> has been laid in the Scottish Parliament for 60 days scrutiny.
- viii. Consultation is ongoing on a ‘Scottish Energy Strategy: The future of energy in Scotland’: <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/energy-and-climate-change-directorate/draft-energy-strategy/>. Closes 30 May.
- ix. ‘Talking Fracking; A consultation on unconventional oil and gas’: <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/energy-and-climate-change-directorate/fracking-unconventional-oil-and-gas/> is also ongoing. Closes 31 May. FAQs: www.talkingfracking.scot. A moratorium on onshore unconventional oil and gas extraction remains in place. Underground coal bed gasification won’t be permitted in Scotland.
- x. The Scottish Government, along with many Local Planning Authorities has lost much of its specialist expertise in minerals planning in recent years, primarily through the retirement of experienced officers. The matter is being addressed through various training initiatives.
- xi. A task force on mineral restoration (particularly coal) has been established to give more consideration to this and Heads of Planning Scotland has organised training on restoration bonds for planning authorities. It is also considering training options relating to Reviews of Old Minerals Permissions (RoMPs).
- xii. Minerals in general are high on the agenda for Scottish Ministers, as is the issue of social inclusion.
- xiii. Working relationships between the Scottish Government and both MPA (Scotland) and the BAA (Scotland) are good.

5.2.4. No report available from the Welsh Government. MPA officers to liaise with JS at the MPA (Wales) meeting on 3rd March

Action NJ

5.2.5. No report available from Northern Ireland. AB to liaise via the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland regarding future inputs/involvement.

Action AB

5.3. Environment update (NE/EA/HE/CNP/CPRE/NT/Wildlife Trusts/RSPB)

5.3.1. ATi introduced the brief Environmental Update note compiled by RB. This included notes from CNP on a research report on major development within National Parks [available here](#), together with an update from Historic England on the withdrawal of its 2008 publication 'Mineral Extraction and the Historic Environment' (currently still accessible [here](#)), and its review and update their webpage on minerals: [available here](#). (See also item 4.2.1, above, regarding the Minerals and Archaeology Practice Guide).

5.3.2. ATi also referred to CPRE's note on fracking (*... More details required from Andy*)

5.3.3. ATi passed on RB's query as to whether or not the Forum's members found the Environment Update reports to be of any benefit, vis-à-vis simply checking the Websites of the various organisations represented. IS confirmed that it was very useful for the Forum to receive updates of key developments, and would wish this to continue, coordinated by RB & ATi.

Action RB/ATi

5.4. Planning update (POS)

5.4.1. LW highlighted the recent publication of the Government's White Paper on Housing. Whilst this had no direct references to minerals, there are nevertheless implications for the supply chain, including minerals, and Ministers do not appear to be fully aware of these. There is therefore a continuing need for UKMF to keep a close watching brief on further developments in this area.

5.4.2. LW noted that the white paper focuses on three main areas:

- i. Improving and simplifying the planning process for housing;
- ii. Encouraging new house building; and
- iii. Facilitating home-buying.

5.4.3. The white paper also includes proposals for Local Authorities to be allowed to increase planning fees by 20% from July 2017 if they wish to do so, provided they commit to investing the additional fee income in their planning departments.

5.4.4. There has been recent consultation on outsourcing of planning services by Local Authorities, but there seems to have been very little appetite for this.

5.4.5. LW noted that the concept of strategic planning is on the rise once again in England, but there also appears to be a move towards a greater number of small Unitary Authorities - with implications for a dilution of minerals planning expertise within individual areas.

5.4.6. There are proposals to modify the current Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 processes, with a change to a Local Infrastructure Tariff (LIT) combined with a Strategic Infrastructure Tariff (SIT). Either of these could have relevance to minerals development.

5.4.7. The Planning Officers' Society is continuing to work with the MPA to update the guidance on producing Local Aggregate Assessments (LAAs). PH raised concerns that the guidance includes a suggestion that future LAAs should include an assumed contribution of 30% of total consumption being supplied from secondary and recycled sources. Whilst this might be true in some urban areas it was unlikely to be achieved in all local authorities. AT confirmed that there was considerable variability, based on a recent review carried out for Oxfordshire. RR noted that there was a shortage of reliable data and that the Forum should press for the four-yearly AM surveys to be extended to include secondary and recycled aggregates. LW agreed to look into these issues.

Action LW

5.4.8. PH queried reported changes to the status of Ancient Woodland as a planning designation, noting very considerable variations in the actual quality/integrity of such sites and whether they were all worthy of such high-level protection. LW agreed to find out more.

Action LW

5.4.9. LW noted that he was preparing an update on recent fracking proposals and would issue this to members ASAP.

Action LW

5.5. Industry update (MPA/BAA/BCC/MAUK/Operators)

5.5.1. NJ reported that the MPA has recently published a new 'Charter' - effectively a contract between the organisation and its producer members, founded on a new vision for 2025. The Charter will be the vehicle for achieving the new vision by 'Driving Change, Raising Standards and Improving Perceptions'. Seven new strategic priorities will sharpen the focus of the work of the association and ensure that the work of the sector is able to adapt to change more readily. Each priority drives a series of objectives, 27 in all, and 10 new targets will enable MPA to measure progress. The Charter forms part of a new Members handbook which 'clarifies, simplifies and consolidates' expectations members have built for themselves over many years of policy development. The handbook brings all policy, guidance, campaigns and initiatives and other useful information together into one place for the first time. Further details are given in the MPA's press release (copy attached).

5.5.2. PH noted that development work on the Duntanlich barytes mine in Scotland is going to plan, following planning approval last year. (post meeting note: Barytes production is currently scheduled to commence in December 2018).

5.5.3. AE noted that Tarmac was focusing attention on the growing need to supply a range of major infrastructure projects which are now being realised. This prompted both NJ and BP to note that industry needs to engage with the Government's consultation on its industrial strategy, emphasising supply chain issues.

5.5.4. LD reported that the ceramic sector has recently been closely involved with the development of a 'place-based' strategy for Stoke-on-Trent, integrating

all aspects of development/regeneration including raw materials supply chain issues. The strategy is linked with, and responds to the requirements of the Local Economic Partnership and is a good model for other industry members to consider.

6. UKMF workshop report and outcomes for adoption:

6.1. Report on session

- 6.1.1. AT introduced the previously-circulated draft notes from the workshop, detailing the various views expressed by those attending, together with a further update of the draft Terms of Reference for the Forum, modified in response to comments received during and following the workshop.

6.2. Updated Terms of Reference (TORs)

- 6.2.1. DH noted that the TORs were now very good. Others suggested various minor elements of fine-tuning, requesting that the final version should then be uploaded to the UKMF website ASAP without further consultation. It was agreed that there should be no explicit mention of the term 'social licence', because of the complications and different interpretations involved. AT to finalise the document for approval by IS & NJ and then liaise with MPA staff to publish.

Action AT/IS/NJ

6.3. UKMF profile, communications & website

- 6.3.1. In line with the observations made at the workshop, all agreed that it was imperative that the UKMF website should urgently be brought up to date and utilised more effectively. NJ said that MPA staff were now 'poised' to undertake the necessary improvements and updates, starting with the new TORs. IS & AT to liaise with MPA to produce updates, in line with notes from the workshop.

Action IS/AT

- 6.3.2. There was discussion regarding whether the Forum should engage with Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and other social media in the interests of getting key messages across. NJ advised, from experience gained by the MPA, that engaging with Twitter and Facebook would NOT be worthwhile, not least because the Forum could not generate sufficiently frequent updates to sustain interest, and could not justify the staff input and associated costs required for this. He did, however, suggest that YouTube might be a good idea for some things, and should perhaps be explored further, once the basic website improvements have been completed.

- 6.3.3. BP emphasised that comments from individuals, via Twitter, Facebook etc. would not be appropriate given the essential collaborative nature of the Forum. Such publicity would not be consistent with the concept of the Forum being 'a safe place to disagree' as discussed at the workshop.

6.4. UKMF meetings, membership, projects & funding

- 6.4.1. The notion of holding two meetings per year rather than three was discussed. BP suggested that, if only two meetings were held they should be of longer duration, taking advantage that any meeting in London was effectively a 'full day out' for most people. GR suggested that two meetings might be appropriate at times when the Forum was not also pursuing other projects

through working groups. PC had commented, ahead of the meeting, that only two meetings a year would make it more difficult for members to stay in touch with debates if they had to miss one of them. All agreed that, for now, there should continue to be three meetings per year, subject to ongoing review.

- 6.4.2. Following up on earlier suggestions from SB (item 5.2.1, above), IS suggested that additional meetings via Skype or video conferencing might be considered in future, or at least that access to traditional meetings via Skype for some members might be a useful facility. IS to investigate options.

Action IS

- 6.4.3. Regarding membership, NJ observed that the Forum is rather 'industry-heavy' at present and that, for future meetings, only one MPA officer (NJ/NH/MN) will normally attend. He advised that MPA members, whilst still needing to be represented, should also consider whether their numbers could be reduced through collaboration.

Action: all industry reps.

- 6.4.4. There was discussion regarding whether academics ought to be represented. AB suggested that Prof. Frances Wall from Camborne School of Mines might be a useful delegate, having a more practical outlook than many other academics. Agreed that AB should approach Prof. Wall.

Action AB

- 6.4.5. Regarding funding, IS noted the workshop views on the possibility of collaborative funding for specific new projects which could be tackled by the Forum, particularly those linked to Objectives 1 and 2 of the revised Terms of Reference. He asked all members to give thought to this and to come forward with proposals for such funding.

Action: All UKMF Members

6.5. Proposed objectives / priority actions:

- 6.5.1. Other than agreeing the four priority objectives as set out in the revised Terms of Reference, there was no further discussion regarding details of specific projects to be undertaken. This will be for continued discussion at future meetings and will be influenced in part by proposals for collaborative funding (see above).

7. Current topic papers:

7.1. Draft UK Minerals Strategy (previously circulated by CBIMG)

- 7.1.1. NJ noted that, following the recent launch of the consultation on this, 15-20 responses had so far been received and many more were anticipated. To date the responses have not included any devastating objections and most provided constructive criticism, which will be taken into consideration.
- 7.1.2. ATi queried why UKMF members were listed on the back page, wishing to avoid any implication that these were endorsements by the organisations involved. NJ replied that no endorsements were implied and that the list was included primarily to help raise the profile of the Forum.

- 7.1.3. GR asked whether the overall format of the document was fixed in stone or whether it was likely to change. NJ advised that change would be very likely!
- 7.1.4. SB queried whether it was really a UK-wide strategy, given the differences between the devolved administrations. AT suggested that it was, because the objectives of the strategy were more fundamental things which would remain valid irrespective of the administrative systems with which they needed to mesh.
- 7.1.5. ATi suggested that the strategy should be more upfront about the fact that minerals are associated with potential impacts on the environment, whilst noting that the aims included minimising these.
- 7.1.6. NJ repeated the invitation to all UKMF members who had not yet done so to submit consultation responses to himself and KH by 1st April.

Action: All UKMF Members

8. Any other business

- 8.1. IS drew attention to an interesting recent article in The Guardian on sand mining. The link to this is: <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2017/feb/27/sand-mining-global-environmental-crisis-never-heard>
- 8.2. IS also reminded members of the suggestions made at the recent workshop regarding the involvement of younger colleagues. To this end he invited each member, in turn, to bring along a junior colleague to a future meeting. AB offered to do this for the next meeting.

Action: AB

9. Date of next meeting:

- Thursday 22nd June 2017, 11am-1 30pm
IoMMM offices at 297 Euston Road, NW1 3AQ, followed by a buffet lunch.