

## DRAFT MINUTES

### East of England Aggregate Working Party

Meeting on 22 June 2021 starting at 1pm

Venue: Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams

#### ATTENDEES

Members	
Richard Greaves (RG)	Essex County Council (Chairman)
Phil Dash (PD)	Essex County Council
Emma Chapman (EC)	Hertfordshire County Council
Roy Romans (RR)	Bedfordshire Authorities
Natalie Chillcott (NC)	Bedfordshire Authorities
Jerry Smith (JS)	Bedfordshire Authorities
Andrew Rutter (AR)	Suffolk County Council
Emma Fitch (EF)	Cambridgeshire County Council
Helen Wass (HW)	Cambridgeshire County Council
Caroline Jeffery (CJ)	Norfolk County Council
Hannah Henderson (HH)	MHCLG
Mark North (MN)	Mineral Products Association
Peter Huxtable (PH)	British Aggregates Association (BAA)
Georgie Sutton (GS)	Marine Management Organisation
Alan Everard (AE)	Tarmac / MPA
Mark Page (MP)	Hansons / MPA
Kirsten Hannaford-Hill (KHH)	Aggregate Industries / MPA
Others	
Julia Webberley (JW)	EEAWP Secretariat
Dave Pitt (DP)	EEAWP Secretariat
Rupert Masefield (RM)	RSPB
Apologies	
Richard Drake	Norfolk County Council
Chris Stanek	Hertfordshire County Council
Nick Everington	The Crown Estate
Angela Watts	Brett Aggregates / MPA
Peter Lemon	Midd Aggs / BAA
Simon Smith	Longwater
Mark Kelly	Cemex / MPA
Shaun Denny	Breedon Aggregates / MPA / BAA

Item No.	Subject	Owner
1	<b>Welcome, Introductions and Apologies</b>	<b>RG / JW</b>
	RG welcomed everyone to the meeting and JW ran through a list of attendees and apologies. Apologies are as set out on the previous sheet.	
2	<b>Chairmanship of East of England AWP</b>	<b>JW / JS</b>
	JS confirmed that no nominations had been put forward for a new chair. RG confirmed that he was content to continue in the role for another 4 years to align with the duration of the recently awarded secretariat contracts. RG was thus duly re-elected as chairman with MN proposing and RR seconding.	
3	<b>Oxford-Cambridge Arc – Presentation by RM, RSPB Communications Manager</b>	<b>RM</b>
	<p>RG introduced RM who then made his presentation based on the slides circulated prior to the meeting. The Arc Mineral Restoration Project seeks to create a framework for restoring mineral sites in the Arc for biodiversity, natural capital and ecosystem services.</p> <p>The talk generated a lively discussion with issues being raised including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste arisings are identified but not the need for the mineral;</li> <li>• From where is the 150m tonnes of minerals estimated to be required to be sourced and how is it to be planned for? 150m tonnes is, in any event, likely to be an underestimate;</li> <li>• Individual operators will continue to make their own plans about their sites unless MPAs come together to agree a strategic approach;</li> <li>• Government input is necessary if MPAs are to be required to work together;</li> <li>• No MPAs yet appear to be in discussion with the RSPB;</li> <li>• No groups appear to have been established purely to discuss the implications of the proposal on minerals / mineral operators;</li> <li>• Demand for mineral cannot be ascertained until housing and other infrastructure requirements are known;</li> <li>• In light of the various unknowns expressed above, it appears to be a case of the cart coming before the horse.</li> </ul> <p>AE queried whether biodiversity gains resulting from a restoration scheme approved as part of one development could be used to offset against another development but RM acknowledged that only additional gains would get credit.</p> <p>The ‘takeaway’ for RM was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minerals need to be high on the agenda and issues such as how much mineral is needed, where it will come from and in what phases it is required must be bottomed out to avoid mineral potentially being unnecessarily imported from other regions /</li> </ul>	

	<p>abroad with all the attendant negative environmental implications;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MPAs are supportive of the idea of positive restoration but schemes need to be in the right order;</li> <li>• MPAs need to be more actively involved.</li> </ul> <p>RM advised that he would contact MN direct for additional input. RG thanked RM for his contribution to the meeting.</p>	
4	<b>Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising</b>	<b>RG</b>
	The minutes of the last meeting were agreed with matters arising being dealt with under other items.	
5	<b>National Planning Issues including AM 2019 and secretariat contracts and host website for EEAWP</b>	<b>RG / JW</b>
	<p>JW and DP had attended a meeting of the new AWP secretaries hosted by MHCLG on 17 June and JW relayed headlines from that as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reference AM2019, the BGS hopes to publish final data in July;</li> <li>• An update to the National Guidelines for Aggregates Provision is being worked on;</li> <li>• MHCLG will publish completed Annual Monitoring Reports on its website but a separate website pertinent to the EEAWP is still required for the publication of minutes and agendas. In this regard, the meeting agreed that David Jarvis Associates (DJA) would host a webpage for publication of EEAWP documents. Once this has been set up, JW will liaise with JS regarding transfer of relevant documents from the Central Bedfordshire website. It was suggested that participating MPAs include a link on their websites directing the public to the DJA EEAWP webpage once created;</li> <li>• Lonek Wojtulewicz is retiring at the start of July. Guy Skelton of MHCLG who currently oversees environmental assessment will also become responsible for minerals and waste.</li> </ul>	
6	<b>East West Rail Shortlisted Routes</b>	<b>MN/ JS</b>
	JS relayed his understanding that this item ought to be on the AWP's radar going forwards. RR advised that current consultation on the route options is non-statutory and that it will be some time before it invokes a DCO process. Therefore, this item can come off the agenda at this time.	
7	<b>Annual Monitoring Report 2020 - Update</b>	<b>RG/JW/JS/MPAs</b>
	<p>JW advised that she had received updated survey collation forms from 3 MPAs, with 2 of those being received within the past 24 hours. Therefore, work has not yet commenced on the AMR 2020.</p> <p>To ensure consistency of reported information and easy comparison of data across the AWP regions, MHCLG has recently produced a draft template for the Annual Monitoring Reports. AWP secretaries have</p>	

been invited to comment on this template. JW asked attending MPAs whether they received annual data via their survey returns about imports and exports. This appeared to vary between MPAs but the consensus seemed to be that the 4 yearly surveys were generally relied on to provide this data and that the 4 yearly surveys should therefore be used as the source for this data going forwards to ensure consistency.

Pending finalisation of the AMR template which MHCLG hopes to publish over the summer, it was suggested that:

- JW chase up remaining MPAs for their collation forms;
- JW collate the information received and recirculate it back to MPAs so that they can commence preparation of their LAAs;
- Once the AMR template has been finalised, JW can commence production of the EEAWP AMR 2020. Hopefully, this can then be discussed at the next meeting (due in October) at the same time as the LAAs.

The AWP contracts include an annual timeline for various matters as reproduced below. MHCLG acknowledges that there will be some slippage this year given the delayed start of the contracts.

<b>Milestone / Deliverable</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Timeframe or Delivery Date</b>
1	To prepare a programme/project plan indicating timing of meeting milestones.	By May of each year
2	Collection of annual survey data and preparation of annual report draft in agreed consistent format.	By October of each year.
3	To provide advice, scrutiny and consideration of all LAAs in AWP area.	By October of each year
4	Provision of final agreed annual report including clear conclusions on implications of results in relation to national policy and MASS	By December of each year
5	Provision of additional data to support annual report.	By December of each year.
6	Organise and hold AWP Meetings	By end of year
7	Publish agenda and minutes of AWP meetings.	Within 2 weeks of receiving members comments at AWP meeting.
8	Attend annual MHCLG- AWP Secretariat meeting.	By end of year

	9	To provide support to the AM survey as specified.	During AM Survey year.	
8	<b>EEAWP Terms of Reference (ToR)</b>		<b>RG / JW / JS</b>	
	<p>Proposed EEAWP ToR had been circulated prior to the meeting together with draft national ToR. JW explained that the AWP secretaries had 3 months in which to comment on the draft national ToR and it therefore seemed sensible to defer consideration of any local terms until the national terms had been finalised. This approach was endorsed by members.</p> <p>HH added that the aim is for consistency across the AWP's and that members were welcome to feed any comments on the draft national terms back to JW for inclusion in JW's response to MHCLG. If, after finalisation of the national terms, members of the EEAWP still wished to create local specifications, then this was acceptable to MHCLG.</p> <p>It was agreed that JW would send an email to members asking for comments on the National ToR.</p>			
9	<b>Mineral Products Association Update</b>		<b>MN</b>	
	<p>MN referred to the following economic and market outlook which had previously been circulated to members and commented that the economic outlook generally appeared to be improving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MPA MINERAL PRODUCTS MARKET FORECAST:</b> Strong impetus in mineral products demand since March means that the outlook for mineral products markets this year has improved across all product lines. Sales volumes for primary aggregates are expected to increase by 11.0% this year, 9.0% for asphalt, 10% for ready-mixed concrete and by 15.0% for mortar. All markets are then expected to see further growth of 3.0% in 2022, except mortar sales which are expected to increase faster next year, by 5.6%.</li> <li>• <b>ECONOMIC AND CONSTRUCTION UPDATE</b> UK GDP grew by 2.1% on a monthly basis in March, the fastest monthly rate of growth since August 2020, and business surveys across all major sectors of the economy (services, manufacturing and construction) remain at record-highs, fuelled by robust post-lockdown pent-up demand. However, now is not the time for complacency; in various parts of the world, Covid cases are still growing rapidly, whilst the economic recovery and resultant growing shortages of some raw materials also threaten to throw a spanner in the works through inflation.</li> </ul> <p>Construction activity gained substantial momentum in March, with output 6% higher than a year ago and 2.4% higher than pre-pandemic. Business surveys suggest that this impetus</p>			

	<p>continued into April. New contract awards also saw a sharp upswing in April but a sustained and sizeable increase over several months will be required to lift activity back to previous levels and replace some of the lost work over the last year.</p>	
10	<p><b>British Aggregates Association Update</b></p> <p>PH relayed that the annual BAA meeting had taken place the previous day and that it was well attended with 75 delegates, including representation from Natural England, the HSE and Buxton's local MP. The meeting had ended with a very interesting presentation by Andy Littler on quarry restoration, landscape and biodiversity (see link: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amJ2dYRaD1g">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amJ2dYRaD1g</a> ).</p> <p>Finally, PH echoed the comments raised within the Mineral Products Association update to the effect that whilst the economic outlook looks good, there remains some concern about inflation with the RPI at 3% and US interest rates at 2.5%.</p>	PH
11	<p><b>Mineral Local Plans Update</b></p> <p>The Minerals Local Plan Update had been circulated prior to the meeting. Two matters arose for discussion, both relating to statements of common ground (SoCGs).</p> <p>The first SoCG tabled was between Essex CC and Kent CC. The SoCG had been led by Kent CC, which subsequently requested that Essex CC table it at a meeting of the East of England AWP for discussion, including whether the AWP should be a signatory. The SoCG concluded that there are no outstanding strategic issues in relation to mineral sites between Essex CC and Kent CC which required further investigation.</p> <p>However, some members expressed concern at the legal implications of an AWP signing up to any SoCG, not least because there is no formal process in place for so doing. In this regard, it was pointed out that the draft national ToR require the AWP to 'respond to, and where appropriate to engage in the preparation of, SoCGs'. No specific reference is made to signing the SoCG although the Planning Practice Guidance provides that AWP's are expected to be treated as additional signatories in SoCGs which relate to minerals and waste plans.</p> <p>In the circumstances, it was agreed that the minutes would note that the Essex SoCG had been brought to the attention of the meeting and its contents noted.</p> <p>The second SoCG had been prepared by Hertfordshire CC and was introduced by EC. Again, it was agreed that the minutes would note that this SoCG had been brought to the attention of the meeting and its contents noted.</p> <p>EC also explained that Herts CC was proposing a revised minerals apportionment rate based on the 10 year sales average plus a 10% uplift and invited comments on this. EF queried whether Herts CC had</p>	MPAs / All

	<p>taken account of projected housing figures for the area as well as deposit of inert material and EC said she would revert separately to EF on this. JW commented that the LAA is often used to justify the apportionment rate though RR pointed out that the local plan should set out the actual rate as the LAA is not a policy document. Despite this, MN commented that figures within LAAs have been taken as read by inspectors within EiPs and reminded the meeting of his experience at the Worcs EiP. He reiterated his concern that there appears to be no basis to challenge LAAs that are considered inadequate. On that basis, the MPA will be looking to see that all LAAs presented to the AWP make a reasonable attempt to forecast future aggregate demand as required by National Policy.</p> <p>In terms of how to deal with SoCGs going forwards, it was suggested that comments about this, including a request for MHCLG to provide further guidance on this issue, should be fed back to MHCLG as part of the feedback on the national ToR.</p>	
12	<b>Any other business</b>	<b>All</b>
	No other business was raised.	
13	<b>Dates and times of next meetings</b>	<b>RG</b>
	<p>The date of the next meeting is:</p> <p><b>Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 10:00hrs</b>  Venue: Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams  JW will circulate an invitation shortly.</p> <p>It was agreed that the date of the following meeting would be decided at the October meeting given the delay to proceedings to date this year.</p>	<b>ALL TO NOTE</b>
	The meeting closed at 3pm.	