

North East Aggregates Working Party Note of Meeting

Meeting Date:	Thursday 8 July 2021	Meeting Venue:	Meeting held virtually
Meeting Chair:	Claire Teasdale	Note Taker:	Jack Freeman

Attendees:

Chair:

Claire Teasdale (CT)

Technical secretary:

Kevin Tipple (KT) (also representing Northumberland County Council)

MHCLG representative:

Hannah Henderson

Mineral Planning Authority representatives:

Rachel Cooper (RC) – South Tyneside Council

Claire Dobinson-Booth (CD) – North Tyneside Council

Jack Freeman (JF) – Northumberland County Council

Lucy Greenfield (LG) – Gateshead Council

Fiona Hurworth (FH) – Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council

Andrew McMeiken (AM) – Northumberland County Council

Jason Mckewon (JM) – Durham County Council

Jamie Simpson (JS) – Sunderland City Council

Helen Smith (HS) – Hartlepool Borough Council

Aggregates industry representatives:

Neil Beards (NB) – Tarmac

Michael Hodges (MH) – British Aggregates Association (and Breedon Group)

Nick Horsley (NH) – Mineral Products Association

Geoff Storey (GS) – Aggregate Industries UK

Apologies:

Apologies received from: David Bage (Stockton on Tees Borough Council); Susannah Buylla (Northumberland National Park Authority); Peter Huxtable (British Aggregates Association); and David Nelson (Darlington Borough Council).

Agenda:

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Chair of the North East AWP
3. Notes and actions from the meeting held on 4 December
4. MHCLG and Aggregates Working Party update
5. National Terms of Reference for the AWP
6. Annual Survey and Annual Report 2020
7. Local Aggregate Assessments
8. Industry update
9. Mineral Planning Authority updates
10. Any other business
11. Date of next meeting

Item	Details	Action
1.	<p>Welcome and introductions</p> <p>The Chair welcomed those attending. Introductions were made and apologies were noted.</p>	
2.	<p>Chair of the North East AWP</p> <p>CT explained that under the Terms of Reference for the AWP, it was necessary to agree a chairperson and a period of time for which they would be chair.</p> <p>It was proposed that CT continued as Chair until 31 March 2025, which is when the current secretariat contract runs out. This was agreed.</p>	
3.	<p>Notes and actions from meeting held on 4 December 2020</p> <p>The draft minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2020 were circulated prior to the meeting. The draft notes were reviewed and an update on the actions identified in the meeting notes was given:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item 4 – Annual Report for 2019. Actions are complete. The draft was circulated and comments used to finalise the report, which has now been published and circulated to members. • Item 5 – Local Aggregates Assessments. Response sent to relevant MPAs and circulated to AWP members for information in January 2021. • Item 8 – Mineral Planning Authority updates. Circulated with the meeting notes. Updated version circulated with the agenda for this meeting. • Item 10 – Next meeting. Action complete. Agreed that the North East AWP will have at least two meetings each year moving forwards. This is set out as a specification in the current contracts. <p>No other matters were raised and the notes of the meeting held on 4 December 2020 were agreed.</p>	

Item	Details	Action
4.	<p>MHCLG and Aggregates Working Party Update</p> <p>HH provided an update from MHCLG.</p> <p><u>AWP secretariat contracts</u> A contract initiation meeting was held with secretaries of the AWP on 17 June 2021 to discuss the contract specifications and the changes from the previous contracts. The specifications are largely the same but some changes have been made regarding timelines and the format of the annual report to try (a draft template has been prepared, which was circulated to the secretaries for comment) and bring consistency across the AWP and make comparisons between data easier. National terms of reference have been drawn up and comments on these are currently being invited by 27 August 2021. It is possible to add in local specifications if an AWP feels it is appropriate.</p> <p><u>Planning White Paper and planning reform</u> While not mentioned in the Planning White Paper, assurances have been given that mineral planning is being considered and the reforms will need to work for minerals planning. At the RTP/MPA Conference the Director of Planning at MHCLG urged the minerals planning sector to continue engaging. Planning Bill not likely until later in 2021.</p> <p><u>MHCLG Minerals and Waste Team</u> Lonek Wojtulewicz has retired with Guy Skelton taking over responsibility for the minerals and waste team. HH and Aimee Smith are the contacts within the minerals and waste team at MHCLG.</p> <p><u>National guidelines for aggregates provision</u> There is no formal update on this but some work has been undertaken internally to look at the scope of this workstream with the aim of updating them in due course.</p>	
5.	<p>National Terms of Reference for the AWP</p> <p>KT highlighted that draft National Terms of Reference for the AWP were circulated prior to the meeting. These have been prepared by MHCLG to help ensure consistency in each of the AWP in England. Secretariat and members are expected to adhere to these in the operation of the AWP and participation in it.</p> <p>NH informed the meeting that the Mineral Products Association has submitted comments to MHCLG on the draft Terms of Reference, which highlighted a number of issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for re-instatement of the AMRI survey as no bench marking figures were available without this survey • The need to amend some of the references to ‘aggregates’ rather than ‘minerals’ to make it clear that the focus was on aggregates and not other minerals • The need for a meeting of the National Co-ordinating Group • The need for the national and sub-national guidelines for aggregates provision to be updated • The need to make sure there was a distinction between annual aggregates surveys and four-yearly national Aggregate Minerals (AM) 	

Item	Details	Action
	<p>surveys, including in the acronyms used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The requirement for AWP's to sign off statements of common ground potentially puts industry members and the mineral planning authority representatives in an awkward situation if what they have signed up to conflicts with arguments being made in local plan hearing sessions. <p>In relation to the point concerning Statements of Common Ground, KT agreed that some clarity was needed with regards to the role of the AWP as signatories. The role of the AWP should be to advise on the figures that have been used to inform the demand forecasts used as the basis of planning for supply in plans. The AWP is a technical advisory group and does not have executive decision-making powers and many of those attending the meetings would not have the delegated authority to sign on behalf of their organisation.</p> <p>CT asked the meeting whether the NEAWP should stick to the national guidelines for consistency or whether there was a need for any specific divergence for local reasons? KT felt there was no need for anything North East specific that needed to be added and the matters were sufficiently covered by the Terms of Reference.</p> <p>NH discussed minerals safeguarding and concerns that mineral safeguarding areas are being eaten into by non-mineral development without being adequately assessed – particularly in North West England. It was suggested that it would be useful for the AWP's to track the number of approvals being given in MSAs nationally, along with the number of planning applications that are accompanied by a mineral resource assessment.</p> <p>JM shared that Durham County Council were starting to collect this data as a part of the Local Plan monitoring process and it seems developers tend to be finding MSAs an unwelcome surprise and were not geared up to producing mineral resource assessments. Instead, there has been a tendency towards contesting why they were needed.</p> <p>GS stated that in some cities, decisions have been made which have blighted strategic rail sites. Air quality policies can also undermine concrete batching facilities because, if not done carefully, access could be cut off to safeguarded sites for heavy goods vehicles and they could be made unviable as a result.</p> <p>CT stated any additional comments on the National Terms of Reference for AWP's should be provided to KT by 30 July 2021. A collated set of comments highlighting the key matters raised would be sent to MHCLG in August 2021.</p> <p>It was also agreed that the comments of the Mineral Products Association on the draft Terms of Reference would be circulated for information</p>	<p>ACTION: Comment on draft National Terms of Reference to be sent to KT by 30 July 2021 (All)</p> <p>ACTION: North East AWP comments to be sent to MCLG by 27 August 2021 (KT).</p> <p>ACTION: Comments of the Mineral Products Association on the draft Terms of Reference to be circulated (KT)</p>
6.	<p>Annual Survey and Annual Report 2020</p> <p>KT shared an update on the annual survey. This commenced in January 2021 with survey returns now received from the vast majority of sites in the North East.</p>	<p>ACTION: continue to progress the data</p>

Item	Details	Action
	<p>A draft collation was circulated prior to the meeting showing sales and reserves information for each MPA (where not confidential). Some sites that have not yet provided a survey so the draft collation includes some estimated figures. In addition the checking of the figures provided for individual sites is ongoing.</p> <p>Outstanding returns remain from Breedon sites at Force Garth, Cragmill and Diverthill. MH stated that the returns were progressing and it was requested that these be chased up with a view to submitting the returns for these sites as soon as possible.</p> <p>KT shared some headline figures from the draft collation, which indicated a 10% drop in sales of primary aggregates from quarries in North East England in 2020. This fall was maybe not as may have initially been expected and there was a mixed picture across different sites.</p> <p>CT was aware that quarries closed down for varying amounts of time and that there is currently a potential shortage of building materials.</p> <p>NH stated that business reacted in different ways to lockdown. Though it was down last year, it has bounced back quickly in 2021.</p> <p>GS echoed the comments made by NH. There were many operational challenges during lockdown but sites kept going as there was an essential need to provide materials for projects such as the Nightingale Hospitals and works to the strategic highway network.</p> <p>In terms of the report, KT explained that this year's report would look a little different in terms of its format as it will be written and presented using a standard template provided by MCHLG. Work would commence on drafting the report shortly and a draft would be circulated for members to review around the time of the next AWP meeting.</p>	<p>validation exercise (KT)</p> <p>ACTION: Prepare draft annual report using the MHCLG template and circulate before the next meeting (KT)</p> <p>ACTION: Chase outstanding returns (MH and KT)</p>
7.	<p>Local Aggregate Assessments</p> <p>KT stated that data collection and collation was now at a point where work on the LAA updates could progress. It was suggested that these iterations of the LAAs include both 2019 and 2020 data. Work on drafting should start imminently with draft being provided to the AWP in September 2021 for discussion. KT will discuss timescales moving forward with the relevant LAA leads.</p> <p>JM shared that Durham are keen to move forward with the next joint LAA and agreed with combining the 2019 and 2020 data in the next iteration.</p> <p>NH raised some general comments about LAAs. In terms of content, the industry are focussed on the element of forecasting. It is becoming apparent that supply is being assumed in some cases and this is becoming a problem. In other areas it is being accepted that there will be underprovision with blame being placed on the industry for not bringing forward sites without recognition of the complex nature of bringing a site forward.</p> <p>KT stated that any forecasting needed to look forwards for forecasting rather</p>	<p>ACTION: Contact and liaise with the MPAs regarding preparation and submission (KT)</p> <p>ACTION: Note the timescales for LAA preparation with a view to providing</p>

Item	Details	Action
	<p>than just backwards at historic sales. An issue exists with some MPAs not really looking forwards and understanding the implications that forthcoming developments could have on supply.</p>	<p>this to the AWP in September 2021 (MPA representatives)</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Industry update</p> <p>NH shared an update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sales outlook - It is predicted that sales volumes for primary aggregates will rise by 11% this year compared with 2020. All markets expected to grow between 3 and 5% in 2022. Demand is high but the industry is doing what it can to meet supply. • The MPA/RTPI Minerals Conference on 15 June 2021 was attended by over 300 people with a large number of representatives from the mineral planning authorities. • The Living with Minerals conference is taking place on the afternoon of 15 July 2021. <p>CT shared that Extractive Industry Geology (EIG) was holding a webinar on 14 July 2021 on “Minerals – A Legal Perspective” by Stephen Hadley. Details would be circulated.</p> <p>NB stated that last year had been a bit stop/start whereas this year had been more positive. Pressure has been put on units and plant operations, leading to extensions of operating hours in some cases.</p> <p>JS asked whether there was any sign of increased investment in the industry due to the high levels of demand.</p> <p>NH responded that it was hard for the industry to respond to short term demand due to policy; generally it takes 5-15 years to get a site going from scratch. Government policy on planning at the moment is very short term and longer term investment needs more certainty.</p> <p>GS stated that flexibility of site working hours could be one way that planning officers could directly assist.</p> <p>CT recognised this but highlighted that residential amenity needed to be considered as well.</p>	<p>ACTION: Circulate information about Living with Minerals event (KT)</p> <p>ACTION: Circulate in information about EIG event (CT)</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Mineral Planning Authority updates</p> <p>A form has been circulated for MPAs to complete with this information and this will be provided with the meeting notes in order to provide a full update. Some additional information was provided verbally during the meeting.</p> <p><u>Northumberland County Council</u> The examination of the Northumberland Local Plan is continuing to progress and a consultation on main modifications to the plan is taking place between 9 June 2021 and 4 August 2021. This includes some modifications relating to the</p>	

Item	Details	Action
	<p>minerals section of the plan. It is anticipated that adoption will be later this year.</p> <p>An application was received in June 2021 for a new sand and gravel site at Anick Grange Haugh near Hexham with a reserve of 5.8 million tonnes. This application has a Planning Performance Agreement and it is anticipated it will go to the strategic planning committee in December 2021.</p> <p><u>South Tyneside Council</u> Revisiting spatial options and will be undertaking another Regulation 18 consultation next year.</p> <p><u>North Tyneside Council</u> Local Plan was adopted in July 2017 and now nearing the time for a plan review. There has been a significant increase in the number of planning applications being submitted over the last year.</p> <p><u>Gateshead Council</u> 'Making Spaces for Growing places', which forms part three of the Local Plan was adopted on 1 February 2021. The Council are currently looking at a second review of the Joint Core Strategy with Newcastle City Council. A call for sites will be undertaken later this year, which will include minerals. and requested whether there was a database of contact details that could be accessed for this.</p> <p><u>Durham County Council</u> The Local Plan was adopted on 21 October 2020. Work formally commenced on the preparation of the Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations document in January 2021 with the publication of a notice of intent to prepare this document, which also included seeking views on scope and content of the document and a call for sites. Consultation on a draft document is expected in Autumn 2021.</p> <p><u>Sunderland City Council</u> A Regulation 18 consultation on the Allocations and Designations document took place between December 2020 and February 2021 and work on the preparation is continuing to progress. It is proposed to specifically identify and safeguard Eppleton Quarry in the Allocations and Designations document.</p> <p><u>Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council</u> Local Plan (not including minerals) adopted in 2018. Significant work ongoing on the South Tees Development Corporation site. No relevant minerals planning applications in Redcar and Cleveland at the present time.</p> <p><u>Hartlepool Borough Council</u> Local Plan (not including minerals) adopted in 2018. Hartlepool will be leading on the preparation of the Joint Local Aggregates Assessment for Tees Valley this year. The Tees Valley Minerals and Waste DPDs were adopted by the five Tees Valley authorities in 2011 and it is recognised that work is now needed to look at a review, which is now likely to happen next year.</p>	
11.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Clear Air Zones: GS raised the issue of clean air zones and that they can have major implications for the viability of operating sites where located in these zones. A</p>	

Item	Details	Action
	<p>request was made for an update on the current situation in Newcastle and Gateshead. LG stated she was not involved in the work but would try to provide an update.</p> <p>RTPI apprenticeship scheme and minerals planning training: NH raised the RTPI apprenticeship scheme and the need to remember the training needs of those involved in minerals planning. CT suggested the possibility of MPA putting on informal training sessions and this was discussed. CT agreed to discuss this separately with NH and provide details on the topics it would be useful to cover.</p>	
10.	<p>Date of next meeting A next meeting date of late September/early October was discussed to coincide with LAA submissions and preparation of draft annual report. The meeting will be held virtually.</p> <p>The general timing and proposed format of the meeting was agreed.</p> <p>CT thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.</p>	<p>ACTION: Arrange a meeting for Autumn 2021 (KT)</p>