

East Midlands Aggregate Working Party

Minutes of Meeting

11th October 2019 10.30am-12.30pm

Venue: County Hall, Nottinghamshire County Council

Attendees

Stephen Pointer	Nottinghamshire (Chair)	SP
Maria Cotton	Urban Vision (Secretary)	MC
Steven Osborne-James	Nottinghamshire CC Nottingham CC	SOJ
Mark North	MPA	MN
John Bradshaw	Tarmac/MPA	JB
Chris Nicoll	Hanson	CN
Laura Kennedy	Northamptonshire and Rutland	LK
Mark Chant	Northamptonshire CC	MCh
Mike Daley	Lincolnshire CC	MD
Ameila Lees	Leicestershire CC	AL
Oliver Meek	Leicestershire CC	OM
Richard Leonard	Lincolnshire CC	RL

Apologies

Mark Clayton	GeoPlan
Mark Page	Hanson
Andrew Barton	Peak District
Adrian Winkley	Lincolnshire CC
Kirsten Hannaford-Hill	Aggregate Industries UK
Fabian D'Costa	Leicester City Council

Item 1 - Introduction and Apologies

1.1 Stephen Pointer (SP) welcomed everyone and members introduced themselves.

Item 2 – Minutes from Last Meeting

2.1 Minutes of the last meeting were accepted as an accurate record

2.2 MN updated on the HS2 status and suggested that all had gone quiet. No contact details were provided for invitation to this meeting. It is hoped that, moving forward, Local Authorities who are signed up as Qualifying Authorities (Shropshire & Northamptonshire) would be able to feed back updates.

Item 3 – Update on AMR 2019

- 3.1 MC confirmed that all local authorities have provided their return forms and that the aim is to have the draft AMR ready for circulation by the end of October/mid-November. She advised that there will be aspects of the report that members will have to update in the draft – namely planning applications/permissions and the status of Mineral Plans.
- 3.2 MCh noted that he would have liked to have been able to discuss the report during the meeting.
- 3.3 MC accepted that this would have been the preferred option for the secretariat too. However, having been appointed to post part way through the process has meant some delay in preferred delivery dates and that this would be re-evaluated for future reports and meetings. The October/November date had been given at the last AWP meeting.

Item 4 – Progress of LAA's (2018 data) - Update

Northamptonshire & Rutland

- 4.1 Draft LAA circulated on 20th June 2019, comments from Lincolnshire CC have been considered and the updated document has been sent back for acceptance/further comments.
- 4.2 Local Plan Key milestones document attached for information.

Lincolnshire

- 4.3 Draft LAA to be circulated by the end of October (possibly early November) for comments.
- 4.4 The Local Plan, Core Strategy and Development Management Policies were adopted in 2016 (June) 2016 with the Site Locations document being adopted in December 2017. It is proposed to review these documents by 2021(June) although no date set.

Nottinghamshire

- 4.5 Draft LAA was circulated for comment last month with the end date for responses set for the 18th October.

4.6 Reg 19 consultation of the Local Plan recently completed with a proposed date for submission in January 2020. Possibly March/April for EiP depending on PINs availability.

Leicestershire

4.7 Draft LAA has been circulated, but remains unamended at this time following receipt of comments from AWP members. It is expected that final draft will be completed by the end of the year.

4.8 The M&W Local Plan has just been adopted (25th September) with the 6 week challenge window closing in early November.

Derbyshire

4.9 No update

Item 5 – MHCLG and 4 yearly aggregates survey update

5.1 MC provided an update following the secretariats meeting with MHCLG in July. It was confirmed that the 4 yearly aggregates survey will be carried out next year, with the likelihood being that the proposal would be put out to tender early in Q1.

5.2 Sara Lewis has sent an email requesting volunteers to try out the proposed method of data input. MC agreed to forward the email to all members.

5.3 Round-table discussions suggested that the survey would be carried too late for the information to replace next years AMR.

Item 6 – MPAs update – Local Plan progress

6.1 – details listed under Item 4

Item 7 – Update from Industry

7.1 MPA MARKETS UPDATE. Construction market demand for mineral products has been weak so far this year, with sales of aggregates, asphalt and ready-mixed concrete (RMC) down for two consecutive quarters. As a result, sales volumes for aggregates were 1.9% lower in the first half of 2019 compared to the same period in 2018, 1.1% lower for asphalt and 0.3% lower for RMC. Despite 4 consecutive quarters of declines, mortar sales are still showing growth (1.4%) compared to the first half of 2018. Both construction and MPA markets are expected to remain muted for the rest of the year, before resuming growth in 2020 underpinned by new infrastructure work.

7.2 ECONOMIC OUTLOOK. The UK economy contracted for the first time in seven years in 2019Q2. GDP fell 0.2% compared to the previous quarter, with declines in both the production and construction sectors. Underlying growth for the remainder of the year also remains subdued. Indeed, business surveys point to waning optimism for the year ahead, with respondents citing domestic political uncertainty and slowing global growth as the main sources of concern. The Bank of England expects these concerns to continue to dampen UK growth this year and next. Economic growth is expected to reach 1.3% in both 2019 and 2020, predicated on a smooth Brexit.

7.3 CONSTRUCTION. ONS data shows construction output in the first 6 months of 2019 grew just 0.5% compared to the previous 6 months. Commercial work, which has been falling since early 2018, has remained weak into this year, alongside emerging weaknesses in private housebuilding and public new work. Growth so far this year has been boosted primarily by new infrastructure work, a trend likely to continue provided major projects across the rail, road and energy sectors are delivered in a timely manner. The recent announcement of a review of HS2 is therefore a major source of concern.

7.4 CN noted the issues that some of the S&G sites have suffered from exceptional flooding recently, necessitating a shift in production (cross county boundaries) meaning there will be a slant in returns requiring closer interpretation for future LAAs. This concern was echoed by other operators.

Item 8 –Any other business

8.1 An email from SOJ had been circulated around the group, prior to the meeting, with some proposed wording to be included in the DtC/SoCG between NCC and the AWP for the upcoming submission of the NCC Local Plan.

8.2 As with previous discussions on the subject of the AWP signing DtC's/SoCG's, it was agreed that it was not possible due to a conflict of interests amongst the group with members being from both Local Authorities and the minerals Industry.

8.3 MC has raised this point with MHCLG and still awaits a response.

Action: MC to work on some standard wording to be included on all responses to LPA's requesting a signature. This will be circulated for comment.

8.4 MN highlighted the recent impact of a national group called Client Earth who have been targeting Local Authorities and challenging the soundness of the LPA's climate change/carbon footprint policies. Threats of JR have been made.

8.5 MCh stated that he had previously had sight of one of Client Earth letters and wasn't keen on the tone of the letter. It requested that targets/figures were included in Plans.

8.6 OM noted that the group had been challenging Central Government on air quality targets.

Item 9 – Date of Next Meeting

9.1 SO and MC will work on a timetable of actions for the delivery of AMR's and LAA's prior to setting the date for the next meeting. It was agreed that future meetings really need to be arranged around the drafting and finalising of the AMR each year to ensure speedy delivery of the finished document.

9.2 MC to contact members in due course to propose dates for next meeting. It is proposed that the dates for all meetings in 2020 will be sent out together.

Action: SO and MC to create a timetable of meeting dates etc. for delivery of LAA's and AMR's – to be circulated for comment/agreement with the group.