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Meeting to discuss draft R&D report, website, work programme &c, London, 8 June 2009

Summary

1. Committee Members met in private to discuss the draft R&D report and other issues on the eve of its 9 June plenary. Members agreed to go ahead with plans for improving the website; to develop the draft R&D report further for publication by 8 July; and to introduce some organisational changes including new teams and reporting systems to deliver tasks in the 2009/10 work programme.
2. Present: Robert Pickard (Chair), David Broughton, Margaret Burns, Brian Clark, Mark Dutton, Fergus Gibb, Marion Hill, Bill Lee, Francis Livens, Rebecca Lunn, Les Netherton, John Rennilson, Andy Sloan, Lynda Warren; Sam Bains, Lisa Matta, Simon Mussett, Adam Scott (secretariat). Apologies: Simon Harley.

Website

3. Les Netherton introduced the discussion. This included a proposal to draw up a specification for improvement and management of the CoRWM website, and to issue a tender invitation. Discussion included the aims of the website and the constraints (including resources) to what could be achieved. The priorities were, first, a website that supported Members in doing their job; secondly, meeting stakeholders' needs; and thirdly, providing an educational facility.

4. Actions:

- 1) **Draw up a detailed specification for Member comment;** Les Netherton: secretariat.

R&D report

5. Bill Lee introduced the discussion of the 31 May draft of the R&D report. This reflected comments from 14 stakeholders after the draft had been circulated to Government, NDA and others for factual comment. Marion Hill had provided a covering note on these. Sponsors had asked to see a further version before it was published on 8 July for plenary discussion.
6. The meeting raised general issues, then went through the report section by section. Issues included
 - stakeholder comments, including their perception as well as specific factual points; and the need to make clear that CoRWM was advising on processes - such as the need for strategic co-ordination of a UK radioactive waste management R&D programme - rather than specifying individual R&D requirements;

- the need to recommend the aims to be achieved rather than a detailed mechanism - e.g. organisation - for achieving them;
 - the need for R&D on social as well as scientific / technical issues;
 - new build wastes being substantively outside the scope of this report;
 - the need to make clear that topics omitted in section 6 does not mean that CoRWM think they are unimportant e.g. transport;
 - highlighting caveats by boldening text or using square brackets;
 - need to be clear when using the term R&D. Is the reference to research or development;
 - The need for CoRWM to stand by their definitions of R&D;
 - The need to clarify CoRWM position on RCF and URL's;
 - The need for CoRWM to clarify what is mean by co-location and co-disposal.
7. The meeting agreed that Bill Lee should produce a further draft reflecting Members' comments. A number of Members had also agreed to contribute material, such as the missing section on France (offered by Simon Harley) or to update the draft to reflect recent developments.
- 8. Actions:**
- 2) **Send detailed drafting suggestions to Bill Lee; Members**, during June.
 - 3) **Redraft report, taking account of comments at the meeting; Bill Lee.**

Work programme - organisation and working methods

9. Les Netherton introduced the discussion of proposals for the organisation of the Committee and its work in 2009/10. Papers included doc. 2603 (plenary paper for discussion on the 9th) and a short list of issues for discussion. He thanked Brian Clark for coming up with several of the detailed proposals.
10. Members discussed the proposed **allocation of programme tasks** and suggested some changes. Lynda Warren offered to assist group 2 (Scottish policy) e.g. to comment on legal issues. Rebecca Lunn offered to join group 3 (voluntarism & partnerships). In group 4 (site assessment) Mark Dutton offered to assist Fergus Gibb with task 6 (NDA implementation and safety case work). In group 5 (new-build) it was agreed that Marion would lead with Mark in support. Some of the "watching brief" topics could generate significant work. An additional one might be *International experience* with different Members leading for individual countries. The secretariat had provisionally (pending a DECC decision on Atkins support) assigned named staff to support each task.
11. Some **public & stakeholder engagement** tasks had no volunteers. PSE needed planning into the programme, though CoRWM's scrutiny role meant that often plans could not be laid far in advance. The plenary meeting (doc. 2608) discussed this and other aspects of the programme including milestones, deliverables and progress reporting, and decided on next steps.
12. The meeting agreed that an **information bulletin**, along the lines suggested by Marion Hill, and a diary should be published before each plenary (see "Actions", below, for further detail). This would be needed at least until the website could be improved to carry this information for Members. The information should be made publicly available.

13. It was also agreed that the secretariat would circulate most (/ all?) documents (/e-mails containing substantive information?) to all Members indicating in the "header" who needed to act or decide on the contents.
14. Proposals for conduct of plenary business were generally supported. (Again this was discussed in the plenary itself where decisions were made - see doc. 2608.) Proposals for topics to debate (doc. 2603, Annex C) were useful but generally needed more thought: there were no obvious candidates for the July plenary, by which time the Committee would have made further progress in planning its 2009/10 programme in detail. This would help identify topics and plenary dates. Generally, presentations should be kept below 45 minutes including discussion time.
15. Members were generally working far more than the 1-day-per-week rate at which they were being paid. Having discussed with DECC sponsors, who provided CoRWM's budget, the Chair proposed to allocate a small part of the budget to payment for significant extra work. He would devise a recording and approval process which the secretariat would discuss with appropriate experts in DECC.

16. Actions:

- 4) **Circulate information bulletin before each plenary**, with content provided by Members. Secretariat.
- 5) **Circulate diary of future meetings before each plenary. Notify Members of recently issued documents.** Secretariat

Geological disposal

17. John Rennilson summarised progress on the draft report (doc. 2550) which would be discussed at the next day's plenary meeting. Proposed post-plenary steps included a working group meeting on 19 June to go over the report, and stakeholder comments on it, in further detail; a revised draft on 26 June for further comment by Members; and publication of a further draft on 8 July for final plenary discussion the following week. A further meeting with Government sponsors during this period was also proposed.
18. Marion Hill and Lynda Warren had considered the draft Government guidance for the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010 and said that further comment on the issue was not needed. The Committee had commented on the draft Regulations in April (doc. 2586.1.)
19. Alun Ellis (NDA) gave a Powerpoint presentation on ***NDA planning for geological disposal*** (doc.2622). Members' comments and questions related to:
 - the cost of delay, if a disposal facility was not ready for waste to be emplaced;
 - the scope of desk-based studies, in relation to optimising design concepts in relation to local geologies and potential wastes;
 - the likely cost of managing new-build spent fuel;
 - the process of identifying locations for underground investigation including working with the local (e.g. parish-level) communities;
 - the possibility of lateral separation, with waste emplacement several miles away from surface facilities, and potential land ownership, rights or other interests
 - contingent plans e.g. in the event of unavailability of a disposal facility
 - work on NDA's generic disposal system safety case including reviewing a range of design concepts and generic geologies; and
 - progress towards establishing a site licence company.