

# Minutes of the First meeting of the Restoration Working Group February 1, 2016 at The Scottish Government, Atlantic Quay, Glasgow

## Present:

Philip Baker	Banks Group
Hugh Barron	The Scottish Government, Planning and Architecture Division
George Burgess	The Scottish Government, Environmental Quality
Robin Caldow	Scottish Mines Restoration Trust
Gordon Cameron	South Lanarkshire Council
Iain Cockburn	Hargreaves
Caroline Edmonstone	The Scottish Government, Energy Industries and Innovation Division
Russel Griggs	Scottish Mines Restoration Trust (Chair)
Tim Marples	Coal Authority
David McDowall	East Ayrshire Council
Stuart McKay	The Scottish Government, Energy Industries and Innovation Division
Philip Rayson	The Scottish Government, Planning and Architecture Division
Mary Stewart	Fife Council
David Suttie	Dumfries & Galloway Council

## Apologies:

Simon Bonsall	The Scottish Government, Planning and Architecture Division
Jeremy Cousins	DECC
Chris Norman	West Lothian Council

### 1. Introductions and welcome

Russel welcomed everyone to the first meeting and the above apologies were noted.

### 2. Context

Russel asked Iain and Philip to give their views on the current marketplace. There was overall consensus that the price of coal needs to improve in order to stabilise the industry.

It was also noted that although Jeremy Cousins couldn't attend this meeting, discussions with the UK Government remain open regarding any further funding solutions for restoration of legacy sites in Scotland.

### 3. Terms of Reference

Russel advised that the Scottish Mines Restoration Trust are going to take forward a piece of work to review each site in order to gain a clearer understanding of what is required to restore each site. Sites to be included in this review are the legacy sites affected by the liquidation of Scottish Coal and ATH. It was agreed that this would be in place by the next meeting of the working group which should take place in June.

Tim advised that the Coal Authority, on behalf of Welsh Government, has produced a Best Practice Guide entitled 'Restoration Liability Assessments for Surface Mines' which outlines a process to assessment restoration liability. This guide is available to view via the following link - <http://gov.wales/topics/planning/policy/guidanceandleaflets/best-practice-guide-on-restoration-liability-assessments-for-surface-coal-mines/?lang=en>

The importance of ensuring that there is community input into this piece of work was agreed.

#### **4. Work Programme and Progress**

There was 14 work streams identified from the taskforce report and the specific timescales and responsibilities of the group will be worked through and monitored at these meetings.

It was agreed that there needs to be consistent communication links with the Head of Planning Group (HOPS).

**Action: Hugh and Phil agreed to circulate a copy of the programme of work to the group.**

**Action: Hugh and Phil agreed to liaise with Trevor Moffat around links with HOPS.**

**Action: Russel to look at Financial Guarantee options**

**Action: Caroline to invite Mark Harrington from Kier to sit on the group**

**Action: Caroline to place Community Benefit as an item on the agenda for the next meeting.**

**Action: Hugh and Phil agreed to send a link of the coal area on the SG website to the group.**

#### **5. Council updates**

A template was discussed and it was agreed that this will be used for Local Authorities to update SG on a quarterly basis. This will allow the The The Scottish Government to publish on its website and submit to ministers as per the recommendation below in the Taskforce report:

*REC 25: .....Moreover, it is proposed that quarterly reports on the status of site financial guarantees should be supplied by planning authorities to Scottish Ministers in this area of acknowledged 'strategic risk' to provide oversight on performance without supplanting local authority responsibility.*

**Action: Robin agreed to circulate a list of legacy sites which will be reviewed in the SMRTs work.**

**6. Information reporting on production and reserves**

Tim confirmed that these figures are on the coal authority website.

**7. Any other business**

Tim advised that the Welsh Government are producing a paper shortly on best practices for restoration.

**8. Date of next meeting**

Caroline agreed to source a date for the next meeting in June.