

**Third meeting of the Restoration Working Group that took place on
Thursday 27th October 2016
Scottish Government Offices, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh**

Present:

Russel Griggs	Scottish Mines Restoration Trust (Chair)
Hugh Barron	Scottish Government, Planning
Simon Bonsall	Scottish Government, Planning
William Carlin	Scottish Government, Planning
Philip Rayson	Scottish Government, Planning
Robin Caldow	Scottish Mines Restoration Trust
Philip Baker	Banks Group
Iain Cockburn	Hargreaves
David McDowall	East Ayrshire Council
David Suttie	Dumfries & Galloway Council
James Wright	South Lanarkshire Council

Apologies:

George Burgess	Scottish Government, Environmental Quality
Duncan Gallon	UK Government, BEIS Coal Liabilities Unit
Mark Harrington	Kier Group
Tim Marples	The Coal Authority
Mary Stewart	Fife Council

1. Welcome and Apologies

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

2. Minutes from previous meeting

Philip Baker clarified that production at Rusha was 'suspended' rather than 'ceased' as recorded in the minutes of the previous meeting. With the single amendment the minutes from the previous meeting were agreed by all present.

3. Current Market conditions

Russel asked the industry representatives Iain (Hargreaves) and Philip (Banks Group) to give their views on the current marketplace:

The European coal price has risen up to around \$60 per tonne, almost double the price earlier in the year and the price gap with gas is narrowing. However, the market demand for coal in the UK remains weak, particularly for thermal coal, with no prospect of the type of long-term contracts required to make it worthwhile, thereby making new planning applications or even opening new consented sites to supply

the electricity generation market unlikely. Rising gas prices since May this year have led to generators buying coal again, although this is mainly from current stockpiles.

In Scotland, the current market for coal is less than 1 million tonnes per year (compared to 5.5 million tonnes in 2011). Most of the future market for coal is likely to concentrate on low volume high value specialist coal for the cement, concrete, and steel industries and domestic supply.

The Brexit situation is unlikely to make any significant difference to coal markets in the UK.

4. Work Programme and Progress

Hugh and Phil provided an update on progress delivering the 14 main work streams identified from the Task Force recommendation. Details of progress are available in Paper 3 (spread sheet) of the meeting papers.

5. Council updates

Council officials provided updates on the restoration status of sites within their area remits. Details were provided in Paper 4 – restoration liability assessments and Paper 5 – site inspection reports. Both reports are now being supplied quarterly by the relevant planning authorities and these are available on the [Scottish Government Coal Restoration Working Group](#) web page.

6. Outstanding planning permissions

Council officials provided updates on outstanding planning permissions at coal sites. David Suttie reported there were none in Dumfries and Galloway, David McDowall stated all permissions have been withdrawn in East Ayrshire except Greenburn and House of Water, and James Wright reported that un-implemented permissions remained only for Glentaggart East and Hardgatehead in South Lanarkshire.

7. Final comments

Russel thanked developers, local authorities and all stakeholders involved in the Coal Task Force and the Restoration Working Group for their input and effort over the last few years.

Russel suggested he meet with the Chief Planner and the HoPS Energy and Resources Subcommittee to discuss how to draw this work to a conclusion and report to ministers.