

Meeting:	NuLeAF Steering Group, 14 May 2015
Agenda Item:	4
Subject:	Update on the Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) siting process
Author:	Philip Matthews
Purpose:	To update members on developments in the siting process and NuLeAF's engagement in current processes

Introduction:

The Government White Paper – **Implementing Geological Disposal¹: A Framework for the long-term management of higher activity radioactive waste** – was published on 24th July 2014. It proposed a range of activities to be taken forward between 2014 and 2016 to set the framework for the GDF site selection process.

This paper updates members on progress with this, in particular the Community Representation Working Group (CRWG). The views of the Steering Group on the CRWG and other work are invited.

Recommendation:

That the Steering Group note this paper.

Background Information:

RWM is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority which was established in 2014 to act as the developer of the Geological Disposal Facility. You can read more about their role and work on their website².

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/implementing-geological-disposal>

² <http://www.nda.gov.uk/rwm/what-we-do/>

1. Recent developments in the GDF Siting Process

A wide range of activity has begun or continued over recent months.

a. Community Representation Working Group

The White Paper committed the Government to establishing a Community Representation Working Group (CRWG) to consider the best approach to a range of issues of critical importance to local government, namely:

- How 'community' is defined;
- The approach to community participation in the siting process and who should lead on discussions with the developer;
- Community representation and in particular how **all** tiers of local government can be involved;
- How representation might develop over time; and
- The process for managing community funds and investment.

Following further discussion with DECC, NuLeAF's Executive Director has been invited (in a personal capacity) to join the CRWG and has attended two meetings. The Terms of Reference for the Group, meeting minutes and other paper are available online³.

i. Membership

The group is Chaired by DECC and has a membership consisting of government departments (Treasury, DECC, BIS and DCLG) along with the developer (RWM) and a range of experts with experience either of geological disposal or of the wider issues the group is considering. CoRWM attends meetings as an observer, while Local Partnerships, an offshoot of the LGA, is providing administrative and research support to the Group.

A list of non-government members and brief biographies is provided in Appendix 1.

ii. Workplan

The intention is that the Group will meet every 6 weeks between now and early 2016 and then submit its conclusions on the above issues to Ministers for consideration. The final decision on the approach adopted to these issues rests with Ministers.

To support the CRWG, Local Partnerships has been tasked with undertaking a literature review; preparing papers on potential options for the Group to consider; and developing plans for stakeholder engagement and communication.

Local Government, other stakeholders and members of the public will be able to feed into the process over the summer.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/implementing-geological-disposal-community-representation-working-group#membership>

Central to this will be a **Call for Evidence**. This will commence on the 4th June and finish on the 9th July, allowing 5 weeks for local authorities and others to contribute their thoughts and ideas. The Call will be concerned solely with the building of the evidence base around the key issues under consideration – it will not be a general consultation on the Geological Disposal Facility. All local authorities will be directly invited to provide evidence.

If a formal consultation is deemed necessary, this will take place in 2016 once the CRWG has submitted its evidence to DECC.

It is also planned to hold meetings aimed at specific stakeholder groups over the summer of 2015. A **Local Government Workshop** will be held in the week of the 6th July, with a second one planned for the week of the 14th September. Workshops will also be held with the business sector, academics, young people and community interests. A final workshop testing proposals with a range of stakeholders will be held in November.

b. Work on Geology

RWM has held a series of workshops in order to establish early engagement with stakeholders around geological issues, and specifically the outputs from the national screening exercise being undertaken by the British Geological Society. A number of NuLeAF member authorities have participated, and the Director's Assistant attended the workshop in London on 12 February. Although the attendance was small, this allowed those present to engage fully with the members of RWM present and to stress the importance of early dialogue with local authorities.

c. Work on Land Use Planning

The White Paper proposed bringing development of a GDF within the definition of a 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP)' in the Planning Act 2008, including the production of a National Policy Statement and accompanying Appraisal of Sustainability.

The Infrastructure Planning (Radioactive Waste Geological Disposal Facilities) Order 2015 was passed by Parliament in February 2015, adding the GDF to the list of NSIPs.

2. Wider NuLeAF engagement on the GDF

To ensure a good flow of information between NuLeAF, government and the GDF developer, and explore scope for collaborative working, monthly meetings between DECC, RWM and NuLeAF have been established. These alternate between face to face and phone meetings.

Additional regular meetings with RWM will also be held over the coming year to ensure NuLeAF is properly briefed on RWM's work. NuLeAF is also in discussion with RWM on the potential to hold an event on the GDF at the LGA Conference in Harrogate in July 2015; and on the scope for other work with local government.

Finally, NuLeAF Chair Cllr. Richard Smith has prepared an article for the LGA's First magazine on the GDF process and the scope for local government involvement. This will be published in LG First in one of the May editions.

Appendix 1: Community Representation Working Group (CRWG) Members

Holmfridur Bjarnadottir is a Director at the Swedish National Council for Nuclear Waste; their remit is to investigate and clarify matters relating to nuclear waste and decommissioning and dismantling of nuclear facilities, facilitate interaction among stakeholders and to give advice to the Government. She is also the chairperson of the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency's "Forum for Stakeholder Confidence" (FSC). It explores means of ensuring an effective dialogue with the public with a view to strengthening confidence in the decision-making processes.

Professor Andrew Blowers taught at the Open University for 35 years, and is currently Emeritus Professor of Social Science at the Open University. He has taught and researched in the area of environmental policy, politics and policy specialising in radioactive waste management, publishing books and papers on the subject. He has studied and written on the international context, especially in France, Germany and the United States.

Lisa Levy is a senior public relations professional with extensive experience of leading multi-disciplinary communications and stakeholder engagement teams. She has achieved key communications milestones for the most significant major engineering projects in the UK, including delivering Britain's first high-speed line. Lisa specialises in communication and engagement activities for the most controversial and challenging of project areas involving significant change.

Kirsty Gogan is an established expert in climate and energy communications with extensive experience advising the UK Government, industry, academic networks and non-profit organisations. She created the Low Carbon Alliance between the nuclear and renewables industries, and the first UK chapter of Women in Nuclear. Kirsty is co-founder CEO of Energy for Humanity, a new environmental NGO, working to meet the goal of universal access to clean and cheap energy.

Phil Richardson has over 24 years' experience of reviewing geological and social aspects of radioactive waste management and disposal worldwide. A former mining geologist, Phil has consulted for a wide range of national regulators, waste producers, government advisory bodies and national and local government departments in a range of countries (Canada, Finland, Germany, Italy, Sweden, United States) and international bodies (IAEA). In the 1990s he was a consultant to international environmental organisations, such as Greenpeace International and Friends of the Earth, before joining Quantisci Ltd in 1999, moving to Galson Sciences Ltd in 2006.

Professor Nick Pidgeon is Professor of Environmental Psychology and Director of the Understanding Risk Research Group at Cardiff University. He works on risk, risk perception, and risk communication; his research is

interdisciplinary at the interface of social psychology, environmental sciences, and science and technology studies. He currently researches public responses to energy technologies (e.g. nuclear power, renewable energy), climate change risks, and climate geoengineering. Nick has led numerous policy oriented projects on issues of public responses to environmental risk issues and on 'science in society' for UK Government Departments, the Research Councils, the Royal Society, and Charities. He was formerly a member of the UK Department for Energy and Climate Change's Science Advisory Group (SAG), and theme leader for the Climate Change Consortium for Wales. He currently serves as vice-chair of the DECC/Defra Social Sciences Expert Panel (SSEP).

Phil Stride, head of the Thames Tideway Tunnel, has been working for Thames Water on the project for the last seven years. He is a Chartered Civil Engineer and has a wealth of experience managing both waste water and clean water projects. He was previously Head of Capital Delivery for Thames Water. Phil has worked for Thames Water for 40 years and has held a number of senior manager positions in both engineering and operations. He is a Fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers and a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. He is also a member of the Crossrail Tunnelling and Underground Construction Academy (TUCA) Industry Advisory Panel.

Cherry Tweed (Chief Scientific Advisor for Radioactive Waste Management Ltd), Cherry provides authoritative scientific advice and challenge to RWM in support of its activities. She works right across the organisation, covering preparation for implementing geological disposal and the advice which RWM gives to waste producers who need to package their wastes now. Cherry oversees a number of RWM's key relationships, particularly those with the organisations responsible for implementing geological disposal overseas and those with international organisations, primarily the Nuclear Energy Agency of the OECD, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the European Commission. She sits on a number of international working groups, preparing guidance to support the implementation of geological disposal. These interactions provide valuable insights into overseas programmes.

Natalyn Ala (Geological Disposal Facility Siting Director for Radioactive Waste Management Ltd) has a technical specialism in hydrogeology, and has 25 years of experience in environmental projects for commercial and government organisations both in the UK and internationally. With a technical specialism as a hydrogeologist, Natalyn has presented at international conferences on controversial topics, such as shale gas and climate change. Natalyn has recently joined RWM after working with Atkins as Director within the Water & Environment business. She extensive knowledge of ground and groundwater investigations and conceptualisation, land contamination risk assessment and remediation, waste characterisation and environmental risks and liabilities associated with energy, infrastructure, and land regeneration projects. Particular projects for which she has provided technical leadership

in recent years are Sizewell C Power Station, High Speed Two Limited, Crossrail, King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah and London 2012 Olympic Park.

Judith Armitt is Chief Executive at Local Partnerships LLP. Her background is in central and local government, and the regeneration sector. She joined Local Partnerships from the Cabinet Office (Government Property Unit) with responsibility for London estate rationalisation. Previously she held posts as managing director, Ashford's Future Company, chief executive at Thames Gateway, and a number of local government roles, including chief executive at Medway Council. Judith is a member of the Academy of Urbanism, a trustee of the Centre for Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence, and a board member of the Kent Architecture Centre.