

Note of NuLeAF Radioactive Waste Planning Group, 4 March 2015

Present:

Hamish Barrell	Essex County Council
Trevor Brown	Oxfordshire County Council
Terry Burns	Suffolk County Council
Rachel Cutler	Kent County Council
Iain Fairlamb	Cumbria County Council
Catherine Draper	NuLeAF
Gillian Ellis-King	South Gloucestershire Council
Mike Garrity	Dorset County Council
Philip Matthews	NuLeAF
Matt Meldrum	West Berkshire Council
Guy Robinson	Somerset County Council
Richard Sharples	Lancashire County Council

1. Welcome and introductions

PM welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made around the table.

2. Note of the last meeting

Amendments were made to 8.1, 8.2 and 8.4, otherwise the note of the meeting held on 10 December was held to be a true record and will be posted on the NuLeAF website.

Action: CD

3. Matters arising

All actions are done or in hand.

4. Update on national developments

PM went through the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Key points raised during discussion were:

4.1 Sellafield

Cumbria County Council sees the change to the management delivery model as a progressive step and hope that it will simplify the engagement process and improve the pace of delivery.

4.2 Interim and end states

4.2.1 Concerns were raised that the current site end states were not compatible with the aspirations of sites earmarked for new build.

4.2.2 There is a perception that NDA does not understand local authority concerns and it is important that NuLeAF continues to press NDA to engage on this matter.

4.2.3 Concerns were also raised that the current format of the 'road maps' were not suitable for engagement with local communities.

4.2.4 The importance of early engagement with local authorities and communities was stressed.

4.2.5 Disappointment was expressed that there had not been further engagement with local authorities following the presentation in March 2014. Local authorities were being left in the dark about NDA plans, which raised issues in drawing up Local Plans.

4.2.6 PM will contact Kim Baines to seek clarification on the timing for publication of interim state plans

Action: PM

4.3 Low level waste programme

4.3.1 Consultation on the permit application for the Low Level Waste Repository (LLWR) is likely to now take place in the autumn.

4.3.2 The planning application for further vaults had been withdrawn as there had been issues around the ecological component and it was also felt that number of additional vaults LLWR has applied for was not justified. Cumbria County Council is now in discussions with LLWR regarding a new application for 2 new vaults for disposal with an operational life of 25 years. Submission may take place in June with determination hopefully in November.

4.4 SDP

MM clarified that Tadley is in an adjacent council area not within West Berkshire Council boundaries.

5. Discussion re proposed changes by Magnox to the management of ILW and FED.

PM introduced the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Points made during discussion were:

5.1 The new proposals included changes in the location of waste storage as well as the introduction of two new waste streams which had not been subject to consultation.

5.2 Frustrations were expressed with how Magnox had handled the proposed changes. The perception was that they did not understand the negative publicity these changes could generate if not handled correctly, and do not appreciate that they can change plans which have been the result of two years or more of consultation without repercussions.

5.3 The meeting agreed that NuLeAF should write to Magnox/CFP/NDA asking for the time frame of their plans and express concern regarding the approach they have taken.

Action: PM

6. LLW Strategy Review consultation

A paper with the questions raised in the Low Level Waste Strategy review consultation had been circulated prior to the meeting together with some outline issues for local authorities. Key points raised during discussion were:

6.1 Q1 - Integration of strategies.

6.1.1 It was agreed that consolidation of radioactive waste strategies would be a logical approach. Local authorities may find it easier to respond to a single consultation rather than consultations for individual waste streams. This could be in the form of a single strategy for nuclear waste, which then detailed the actions required if waste is driven up the waste hierarchy. Consideration could be given to setting the strategy to follow National Planning Policy Guidance.

6.1.2 It would be prudent to ensure waste producers were comfortable with the concept.

6.2 Q2 – Radiological classification or disposability assessment based approach

6.2.1 It was agreed that the disposability assessment based approach could work provided that proper consideration was given as to how the change was presented to the public. If handled incorrectly there was greater opportunity for negative publicity, for example where a facility took higher activity wastes where lower level waste had only been treated before. NDA should consider these issues carefully before proceeding.

6.3 Q3 – Barriers to reuse of materials

6.2.1 Whilst it was recognised that the proposal was consistent with implementation of the waste hierarchy and proximity principle, it was felt that this too had the potential to generate negative attention if not presented correctly.

6.2.2 It is important to ensure that any re-use of materials does not affect the end use of the site.

6.2.3 Care must be taken in order to ensure that operators do not try to circumvent the planning procedure if, for example, using VLLW soil and rubble in landscaping.

6.4 Q4 – Recycling waste

6.4.1 This was another area where it was felt there was the opportunity for negative publicity if not handled correctly. Tight regulation needs to be demonstrated and the issues carefully explained to the public.

6.4.2 However, the value of these facilities and fine line they negotiate in remaining viable is recognised. If they were to close then more waste would be sent to landfill. Local authorities need to encourage and accommodate where possible in order for the waste hierarchy to function effectively.

6.4.3 This also raises issues under the Duty to Co-operate and some form of national guidance would help local authorities in this area.

6.4.4 It would help planners if the Low Level Waste Strategy could review all waste streams and identify options/Best Available Technique for all waste streams.

6.5 Q5 - Boundary wastes

6.5.1 Concerns were raised around the general difficulties in understanding classifications of radioactive wastes. Clear guidance needs to be given which can be understood by the general public in order to help them understand the issues and why the boundary wastes are treated differently.

6.6 Q6 - Stakeholder engagement for LLW strategy

6.6.1 The meeting felt that NDA could strengthen its commitment to socio-economic support for sites.

6.6.2 NDA should also require the SLCs to demonstrate that they have consulted effectively with local authorities and local communities.

6.6.3 NDA should take opportunities to manage the market more proactively rather than letting it be operator driven.

6.7 Q7 - Anything else

6.7.1 The previous iteration of the strategy contained a section on how the strategy interacted with planning authorities which doesn't appear in new version. The older version had more emphasis on planning and provided data to inform plans. The new version seems barren on this topic and it would be beneficial if this could be reinstated, especially as the LLW Strategy had been referred to as national policy in a number of Local Plan hearings. It would also demonstrate that NDA understood the implications of their proposals from a planning perspective.

7. GDF update

7.1 PM gave the meeting a verbal update. There are 3 work streams being developed over the next 2 years – land use planning, geology and communities.

7.2 At present it is not clear what work is going on regarding land use.

7.3 Meetings to discuss the geological screening exercise have been taking place around the country and many local authorities have participated.

7.4 PM has been invited to sit on the Communities Representation Working Group which will be looking at such issues as how to define a community, stakeholder engagement and the initial community benefit packages.

7.5 In response to a questions PM confirmed that it is still government policy to have the Geological Disposal Facility operational by 2040.

8. Duty to Cooperate

Cumbria: about to issue Local Plan for consultation. This will be sent to all local authorities. It updates existing policy taking into account King's Cliffe and has more reference to the application of Best Available Technique. The emphasis is on encouraging facilities to come forward, and there is reference to the proximity principle, encouraging more waste to be dealt with locally whilst recognising the national role of LLWR.

Lancashire: currently reviewing Local Plans and consideration will be given to Clifton Marsh landfill site which at present has a planning permission limit on the import of waste from outside the North West region.

Kent: Consultation on the Core Strategy will hopefully begin mid April.

Essex: Consultation on a revised Preferred Approach will be undertaken shortly.

Somerset: A new Minerals Plan was adopted recently. Will now turn attention to reviewing the Waste Plan and considering Magnox's proposals for dealing with waste streams.

Suffolk: The Waste Plan was adopted in 2011. Currently concentrating on a review of the Minerals Plan.

Dorset: Consultation will take place on the Waste Local Plan, including sites as well as policy, after the elections have taken place. Policies which are supportive of the regeneration of Winfrith will be incorporated.

Oxfordshire: A joint Minerals and Waste Plan is being produced. Still in process of getting Core Strategy adopted, this will be part one of the plan, the second being

the site allocations document. Final submission will go to Council at the end of March and the final version will be published after the elections. Submission will be in September. The Core Strategy does contain policy on radioactive waste, including a general approach to any proposals which may come forward for the management or disposal of radioactive waste. A survey of non-hazardous landfill sites to see if they would wish to apply to take LLW has resulted in a firm no.

South Gloucestershire: The current policy has a sites and places plan. The chapter on Oldbury deals predominantly with new build and sets out the 'asks' for Horizon. There is also reference to community benefits and the import of waste.

West Berkshire: Issues and Options is likely to be published soon. Earlier consultation with the public elicited agreement on dealing with waste generated on the sites but did not favour importing waste from elsewhere, however, the final document may be drafted in a way to permit this. Both Aldermaston and Burghfield as accepted by elected members and the public as big local employers.

9. Transport of nuclear materials

9.1 The issue of whether or not NuLeAF should broaden its scope to include covering the transportation of nuclear materials had been raised at the AGM in October 2014. PM asked the meeting what issues around this topic they would like to see considered. An example could be the lack of consideration of transport in environmental permitting or the application of BAT.

9.2 During discussion the following points were raised:

- It would be good to have a greater understanding of how the method of transport is selected and what are the issues considered e.g. road versus rail.
- How can sustainable transport be addressed, especially where existing planning conditions do not take this into account?
- Does the rail network have the capacity to cope with more movements?
- Where is waste generated away from the main nuclear licensed sites? It would be helpful to have an understanding of where smaller operators are, including NORM waste generators.
- Is transport included in the LLW Strategy?
- Is there the commitment to invest in infrastructure?

9.3 It was agreed that ONR would be approached to provide a speaker at the next meeting in June.

Action: CD

10. Update on local sites

Planning permission on the landfill site at Clifton Marsh has been granted to 2035 with no changes to the conditions.

11. Any other business

11.1 PM had been approached by Anna Clark of NDA and Jim Cochrane of SEPA as they are keen to discuss the possibility of passing some part of the regulation of sites on to local authorities during the interim state. They had asked if it would be possible to arrange a meeting.

11.2 The group considered the proposal and felt that more information was required and that this was an issue best discussed at the Steering Group.

Action: CD/PM

12. Date of next meeting

The group will next meeting on Thursday 4 June at Local Government House, Smith Square, London, 12.30 – 3.30.

ACTION LIST			
Item	Details	Action by	Outcome
2	Post Note of last meeting on website	CD	Done
4.2.6	Contact Kim Baines to seek clarification on the timing for publication of interim state plans	PM	Response circulated
5.3	Write to Magnox expressing concerns over ILW/FED stakeholder engagement	PM	Done. Magnox gave presentation at Steering Group 14 May
9.3	Approach ONR to speak on transport of nuclear materials at next meeting	CD	ONR declined, but Steve Dutton of NDA is attending
11.2	Discuss issues around role of planning regime in clean-up of former nuclear licensed sites at Steering Group	PM/CD	Jim Cochrane attending SG 14 May