

Note of Radioactive Waste Planning Group, 2 December 2015

Local Government House, Smith Square, London

Present:

Sue Brett	Cumbria County Council
Mike Garrity	Dorset County Council
Lesley Stenhouse	Essex County Council
Terry Burns	Essex County Council
Dave Illsley	Shepway District Council
Gillian Ellis King	South Gloucestershire Council
Tess Bond	Somerset County Council
Matt Meldrum	West Berkshire Council
Catherine Draper	NuLeAF
Philip Matthews	NuLeAF
Ben Bridgewater	Magnox Ltd
Val Drake	Magnox Ltd
Kelly Duane	Magnox Ltd

1. Welcome and introductions

PM welcomed everybody to the meeting and there were round the table introductions.

2. Note of the meeting on 2 September 2015

The Note of the meeting held on 2 September was agreed, but it was noted that the embedded Winfrith presentations could not be opened. The presentations will be re-attached and the Note posted on the NuLeAF website.

Action: CD

3. Matters arising

None.

4. Presentation by Magnox

4.1 PM welcomed Ben Bridgewater and Val Drake to the meeting (Kelly Duane joined the meeting later). Ben gave a presentation on the Magnox Integrated Decommissioning and Radioactive Waste Strategy.

4.2 Magnox are looking at ways of optimising both decommissioning and waste management to deliver improved safety, reduced environmental impacts and offer better value for money for the UK taxpayer. The focus is to prioritise higher hazard reduction

activities to reduce risks prior to sites entering the Care and Maintenance period. Safety and compliance remain their top priorities.

4.3 The presentation slides are posted on the NuLeAF website. Headline topics were:

- Decommissioning – interim and Care and Maintenance entry states
- Radioactive Waste Strategy overview
- Revised Radioactive Waste Management Strategy
- ILW packaging and interim storage
- Fuel Element Debris (FED) management
- Pond Skips management
- IONSIV cartridge management
- Summary of Town and Country Planning Act permission requirements

4.4 Questions raised during discussions:

Q: How has waste generated as part of the FED programme suddenly become able to get dealt with as LLW?

A: This is because of our ability to better segregate and characterise waste than before, ensuring the right waste goes down the right waste disposal route. The Environment Agency is interested in this new option and it has arisen as a result of good collaborative working between LLWR and the waste operator.

Q: Could you please clarify the different approaches taken at the different sites?

A: FED dissolution will continue to be undertaken at Bradwell. The waste is complex and dissolution is the best approach. Dissolution is not necessary at Hinkley as the amount of FED is not so great following waste segregation. Once dissolution is complete at Bradwell the plant will be decommissioned.

Q: What is the current status of the pond skip project?

A: A trial will begin in January to see how best to cut up the skips. This will enable us to understand how many traffic movements there are likely to be and this information can be included in the planning application. How we arrive at the decision is important – we consider what the perfect process would be and then consider what is practically possible. Risk assessments are undertaken for each element of the operation.

Q: What is the size of a pond skip and what is the minimum decontamination to make the project viable?

A: Skips are 1.5m long x 1m wide x 0.75m high. The maximum amount of the skips which can be recovered is 20%. The trial will include cutting and segregating the waste whilst still in the pond. The plant will not be upgraded (this is not financially viable), so only the parts of the skip which can be handled in its current state will be processed. However, if for example, it is not possible to process all the skips currently at Hinkley Point A, then they would require storage as ILW and that would increase the inventory by 1%. We are also looking at whether the skips could be used as receptacles for ILW and then packaged for storage/disposal. We hope to be able to make a decision in February about the best way to proceed. The pond skip management strategy has been the hardest of them all as there are so many variables which need to be considered.

Q: Were the new packaging solutions developed in isolation or did you work with NDA?

A: The new solutions came from Magnox's new Parent Body Organisation.

Q: Are you involved in the work being done at NDA on boundary wastes?

A: Yes. When waste is first characterised it is always at the top end of the stream. As more is known about the waste and segregation takes place it is moved along the waste hierarchy and diverted to appropriate disposal routes.

Q: Where are the steel containers made?

A: In the UK I believe. The cast iron ductile containers are made Germany to German specifications. Concrete packages can be made in the UK and we hope to start the procurement process in January 2016.

4.5 GEK commented that as part of discussions with Magnox, it had come to light that the original planning permission and any subsequent variations particularly in the early years for Oldbury Power Station could not be found, either from records from predecessor local authorities, the station, Site Licensee or NDA. South Gloucestershire Council were keen to understand what if anything the permission and any subsequent decisions may have said about issues such as the import of waste. BB said that he hoped that this had now been rectified following a search of the Gloucestershire County Council archives.

4.6 PM thanked Ben, Val and Kelly for coming to the meeting. They expressed an interest in later items in the agenda and stayed for the rest of the meeting.

5. Update on Geological Disposal Facility

PM gave update on the siting process for a Geological Disposal Facility. A paper had been circulated prior to meeting. Points highlighted were:

5.1 The meeting of the Communities Representation Working Group scheduled for 19 November had been cancelled at short notice, due to a lack of progress in reviewing the Call for Evidence submissions. The next meeting would now take place in February 2016 and at present it is hoped that the process will still be completed by late spring/early summer 2016.

5.2 NuLeAF had circulated a draft response to the consultation on the geological screening guidance. PM thanked all those who had commented and told the group a final response would be submitted on 4 December and posted on the website. It was understood that RWM may wish to 'test' the guidance on a sample of stakeholder organisations before publication in order to ensure it met audience requirements. NuLeAF had offered to assist with this process and the RWPG would be an appropriate forum.

6. Local authority updates

Cumbria: In November LLWR and their consultants submitted a new planning application following the withdrawal of the 2011 application for further vaults and disposal. The new plan is for "The phased construction of additional vaults (10 and 11 and an extension to Vault 9 (9a)); the disposal of low level radioactive wastes in the new vaults and in the existing Vault 9 including the higher stacking of waste containers in Vault 9; the permanent retention (disposal) of waste containers by means of higher stacking in the existing Vault 8;

and the phased construction of a permanent capping layer over trenches 1-7 and Vaults 8-11; together with other ancillary works.” The consultation process has begun and the application should be submitted to the Development Committee in March 2016.

There have been no developments in the proposal to store waste from dismantled nuclear submarines at Sellafield and an announcement on the final site selection is not expected until summer 2016. The council views Sellafield as an unsuitable site for this project because of the spatial constraints on site. Sellafield is also looking at long term temporary (50 year) storage of construction and demolition waste, either on site or adjacent; the latter would accord with our allocation the draft Local Plan, but would, of course, need planning permission.

LDP – M&W Local Plan – Regulation 18 consultation was held on the new Minerals and Waste Local Plan from March to May this year. Consultation responses are being reviewed and their impact on the draft plan considered. The next version will be for publication and it is hoped that this will be submitted to committee after February 2016.

Essex: Work is still progressing on the joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan (with Southend BC). It is hoped that a draft version will be submitted to members before Christmas and consultation will take place February/March 2016. The intention is to incorporate information from the geological screening process.

With regard to works at Bradwell - pre-application costs have been confirmed to Magnox.

West Berks: No progress has been made on Waste Plans. Aldermaston and Burghfield are undertaking ongoing updates at the sites.

Dorset: Consultation on the Waste Plan has concluded. It has raised the issue of in-situ material at Winfrith resulting from decommissioning and is designed to assist with the decommissioning and end-state programme. No concerns about this have been raised and Magnox has generally been supportive of the approach taken. There is also a policy on specialist treatment as Tradebe who have the adjacent site wish to expand - current policy does not allow them to bring in waste from outside of Dorset. Discussions are ongoing with Purbeck DC about the Planning Performance Agreement and how the next stage of decommissioning programme will be managed.

South Gloucestershire: Oldbury site has completed defueling and the last fuel will be taken off site early in the new year. The next stage will be to liaise with the site to find out what is happening next.

Somerset: Work on an updated Radioactive Waste Topic Paper is ongoing. Hinkley Point C is currently in care and maintenance and it is hoped will move into the next phase early next year.

Shepway: Discussions have taken place with Dungeness to see how staff can be encouraged to remain in the area following Magnox staff restructuring.

7 NDA update

7.1 PM went through the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that the LLW strategy was yet to be published and NuLeAF would ask what the new publication date would be

Action: CD

7.2 LS asked where the UK radioactive waste inventory could be found online. NuLeAF will circulate a link.

Action: CD

7.3 TB asked Magnox about their engagement with EDF. VD said that at present staff were tied up with updating Magnox plans, but engagement would be picked up again after March. It may be if Magnox need extra storage they may be able to use EDF's. There was the possibility for synergy at Sizewell, Hunterston and Hinkley. She confirmed that EDF would receive draft copies of Magnox waste plans and strategy for comment.

7.4 LS and GEK asked Magnox what discussions had taken place, if any, between Magnox and EDF regarding new nuclear build and potential synergies, not just in terms of storage, but also commercial opportunities such as the sale of land. Also, would these be reflected in Magnox plans? VD said that the intention was to pick up engagement in the coming months, but it was recognised that there were opportunities and these were noted in plans.

8. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at Local Government House on 12 April 2016.

9. AOB

9.1 Administrative controls post surrender of license

9.1.1 PM gave the meeting a verbal update from Jim Cochrane on the work being done on administrative controls for former nuclear licensed sites following permit surrender. A draft guidance paper will be prepared on the requirements for revoking a permit. This should be ready in January 2016 and Jim is interested to hear NuLeAF's comments.

9.1.2 Jim is also in contact with DECC to discuss whether any legislation or planning guidance is required to help take any changes forward.

9.1.3 An event is being run for Scottish authorities in March 2016 and NuLeAF will be invited to attend as an observer. Other local authorities would also be welcome to attend under observer status. GEK asked is an equivalent event would be run for English and Welsh authorities? The secretariat will enquire and respond.

Action: CD

9.1.4 MM and GEK asked whether there had been any developments on the NDA meeting re administrative controls. NuLeAF had not had any further correspondence on this and would follow up with Kim Baines.

Action: CD

9.2 Non-nuclear industry radioactive waste

9.2.1 As part of preparing their draft Waste Plan, Essex is also trying to cover non-nuclear radioactive waste. LS was interested to know the approach taken on this topic by other local authorities.

9.2.1 The Dorset Waste Plan included generic policies but did not address this issue specifically.

9.2.3 SB advised the meeting that the North Eastern Counties had produced a Low Level Waste paper two or three years ago. They had got a lot of information out of the Environment Agency such as a list of companies where radioactive waste was arising. Whilst updating their Waste Plan Cumbria CC had tried to produce a similar paper but had found that the Environment Agency had changed the way it collected and held data which no longer made this possible. As a result they intend to produce a supporting paper simply saying "these are the types of waste which arise and where we they go". SB undertook to circulate a copy of the North Eastern Counties LLW paper.

Action: SB/CD

9.2.4 TB undertook to check with Guy Robinson whether the Somerset CC Topic Paper could provide any useful input.

Action: TB

9.3 Meeting dates and venues

9.3.1 CD advised the meeting that the decision had been taken at the last AGM to swap the meeting timetable for the Steering Group with that for the RWPG. This means that the RWPG will now meet in January, April, July and September.

9.3.2 In addition, Local Government House meeting rooms will be undergoing a refurbishment from August 2016 to July 2017, as a result a new meeting location will need to be found. CD asked the meeting whether they wished to remain in London or use local authority venues around the country. It was agreed that London was a better location by reason of good transport connections. It was suggested that meeting rooms could be found at planning related professional bodies who had their headquarters in London. CD to investigate.

Action: CD

Action List

Item	Action	By	Outcome
2	Post note of meeting on 2 September 2015 on website	CD	
2	Circulate Winfrith presentation and reattach to meeting note	CD	Done
7.1	Find out new publication date for LLW strategy	CD	January 2016
7.2	Circulate link to radioactive waste inventory	CD	Done
9.1.3	Ask Jim Cochrane what proposals are for English/Welsh authorities workshop	CD	Awaiting response
9.2.3	Circulate North Eastern Counties LLW paper	SB/CD	Done
9.2.4	Check Somerset Radioactive Waste Topic Paper for information on non-nuclear waste arisings and forward information to LS	TB/CD	
9.3.2	Investigate meeting rooms at planning professional bodies	CD	