

# **ITEM 6: UPDATE ON GEOLOGICAL DISPOSAL FACILITY SITING PROCESS**

## **Report to RWPG, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

This report provides an update on recent developments related to the process for identifying a Geological Disposal Facility. It covers:

- RWM Stakeholder Engagement
- Consultation on the GDF framework

### **Introduction**

The Government White Paper – **Implementing Geological Disposal: 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 2017 to set the framework for the GDF site selection process. This paper provides an update on progress with these activities over recent months.

### **1. RWM Stakeholder Engagement**

As RWM prepares for the launch of the GDF siting process in summer 2017, the organisation is keen to involve NuLeAF as an advisor, ensuring it is geared up for the launch and that its workings are as effective as possible.

NuLeAF's Executive Director participated in RWM's 'organisational readiness review' in Oxfordshire on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> October. The aim of this was to advise RWM of the preparations, internal and external, that will be required to engage communities and local authorities in the GDF siting process. Along with NuLeAF there was representation from BEIS, Welsh Government, NDA, Environment Agency, ONR and CoRWM, as well as some international experts and most members of RWM's senior management team.

The meeting explored different scenarios that might impact on RWM's plans and sought to identify and discuss the individual perspectives of all those present. The meeting highlighted a number of issues within the framework for community engagement that will need to be addressed to ensure local authorities are able to engage effectively, and also internal challenges for RWM in terms of its ability to respond quickly and appropriately to local needs and media pressures. A note of the meeting will be prepared and circulated to attendees, with a more detailed internal report submitted to RWM for consideration.

In addition, NuLeAF's Chair, Vice Chair and Executive Director attended RWM's annual stakeholder meeting in Manchester on the 13<sup>rd</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> October. A verbal report on this meeting will be provided at the RWPG.

Finally, NuLeAF's regular engagement meetings with RWM and BEIS have been extended to include NDA. The most recent meeting was held on the morning of the

19<sup>th</sup> October, immediately before the RWPG. Again, verbal feedback on this will be provided to the RWPG.

## **2. Consultations on the GDF framework**

Consultations on the community and land use planning aspects of the GDF siting process were due to be launched in autumn 2016 but as yet no firm date has been set for these. It is understood that the new ministerial team in BEIS is taking time to review the approach to the GDF and that the consultations cannot proceed until this has been completed. NuLeAF will notify members as and when more information is available.

RWM is also continuing to develop the information materials on geology that it intends to make available to communities. An early draft of these was tested at the last meeting of NuLeAF's Radioactive Waste Planning Group (RWPG). It was originally hoped that a revised version would be available for discussion at the October 19<sup>th</sup> RWPG but progress with the development of these has not been as great as expected. A new iteration of these materials will be discussed with NuLeAF at the RWPG meeting on 24 January 2017.