

NuLeAF: NUCLEAR LEGACY ADVISORY FORUM

LGA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP ON RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT AND NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING

**Minutes of the Steering Group held on 15 March 2017,
The Town Hall, Manchester**

Present:

Cllr Brendan Sweeney, Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council (Chair)
Cllr David Moore, Copeland Borough Council
Cllr David Southward, Cumbria County Council
Cllr Marcus Johnstone, Lancashire County Council
Cllr Grace Fletcher-Hackwood, Manchester City Council
Cllr Ernie Galsworthy, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Cllr Peter Downing, Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr David Chubb, South Gloucestershire Council
Cllr Richard Smith, Suffolk County Council
Andrea Hines, Allerdale Borough Council
Manon Wyn Francis, Anglesey County Council
Steve Smith, Copeland Borough Council
Richard Griffin, Cumbria County Council
Lesley Stenhouse, Essex County Council
Adrian Hurst, Hartlepool Borough Council
Sean Morris, Manchester City Council
Peter Day, Oxfordshire County Council
Dave Illsley, Shepway District Council
Paul Browning, Somerset County Council
John Pitchford, Suffolk County Council
Philip Matthews, NuLeAF
Catherine Draper, NuLeAF

1	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES	ACTION
1.1	Cllr Sweeney welcomed everyone to the meeting. Participants introduced themselves.	
1.2	Apologies were received from: Mike Garrity – Dorset Borough Council, Bryan Geake – Kent County Council, Lucy Atkinson – Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service, Phil Watson – Northamptonshire County Council, Cllr Van Coulter – Oxford City Council, Doug Bamsey – Sedgemoor District Council, Cllr David Monk & Katharine Harvey – Shepway District Council, Cllr Matthew Riddle & Gillian Ellis-King – South Gloucestershire Council, Cllr Geoff Holdcroft, Lisa Chandler & Clive Pink – Suffolk Coastal District Council, Cllr Chris Morgan & Andrew Goodchild – West Somerset Council	
1.3	The Chair notified the meeting of the sudden death of Cllr Van Coulter, Oxford City Council. Cllr Coulter had attended a	

1.4	number of Steering Group meetings and his positive contribution would be missed. The meeting recorded its best wishes to Gillian Ellis-King of South Gloucestershire Council who was recuperating after an operation.	
2	MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 DECEMBER, 2016	
2.1	The Minutes of the last meeting were held as a true and accurate record and would be posted on the NuLeAF website.	CD
3	MATTERS ARISING	
3.1	6.5 At the last SG meeting the representatives from Magnox had promised to feedback the comments regarding their piecemeal approach to planning applications to appropriate staff. PM will contact Magnox to find out if this happened and what, if any, action will be taken to address the concerns.	PM
4	DISCUSSION WITH BILL HAMILTON ON THE NDA REVIEW OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	
4.1	The Chair welcomed Bill Hamilton to the meeting. Mr Hamilton was present to update the meeting on the reform of SSGs and plans for a stakeholder summit, which he had touched on when he had attended the September SG meeting. He would also discuss NDA's engagement on strategic opportunities	
4.2	Strategic opportunities: there were three strands to this workstream; a) Proportionate Regulatory Control which is looking at changing the regulatory regime for sites as they move towards the end of the decommissioning process; b) milestones for sites as they move towards their site end state; and c) decommissioning of Magnox reactors – whether there is any scope of speeding up decommissioning.	
4.2.1	Proportionate Regulatory Control (PRC): Some members of NuLeAF will have been involved in the workshops which have been held over the past 6-9 months. Unfortunately, government plans to launch a full consultation on this has been delayed as the civil servant leading the programme was seconded to work on Brexit. We have been told that there will be a three-month delay.	
4.2.2	As part of the stakeholder engagement review we had planned to have an expert speaker attend each SSG meeting, and also work with NuLeAF to get meeting invitations out to particular members and officer at local authorities. Whilst the PRC process is currently on hold, we do still think it is good to have a wider local authority audience present at SSG meetings from time to time. We hope that the October – December round of SSG meetings will have one NDA expert in attendance who will present on the three strategic opportunities.	
4.3	Stakeholder summit: this will mainly focus on socio-economics, but it will also offer the opportunity to meet the new Chair and CEO, and look at waste strategy. It will take place on	

Monday 18th and Tuesday 19th September at Energus in West Cumbria. A wide spectrum of stakeholders will be invited: those who have benefited from NDA funding, but also those who have a critical voice – Professor Andy Blowers has been invited to attend, as will NGOs with a national focus. It will offer the chance to meet with those who have made a successful bid for socio-economic funding from NDA. NDA would like to develop a 3-5 year pipeline of projects. It is hoped a government minister will also attend.

4.3.1 NDA will offer to fund travel and accommodation for one representative from each local authority which has an NDA site within its boundaries. NDA would like to encourage both officer and elected members to attend, but unfortunately it cannot fund both. NDA will work with NuLeAF to get invitations out soon. The meeting will start at 11.00 on Monday and finish at 14.00 on Tuesday.

4.4 **Reform of SSGs:** Mr Hamilton thanked Sean Morris and the NFLA for the report they had produced on the SSGs. He hadn't had time yet to read it thoroughly, but had already noted things with which the agreed and identified issues which NDA was seeking to address.

4.4.1 NDA wishes to redefine the focus of SSGs, which in some cases was deemed to have drifted from its purpose of holding the site to account for safe delivery of the decommissioning programme.

4.4.2 The meetings will be made more inclusive of members of the general public who should be able to ask questions at any point throughout the meeting.

4.4.3 At present the composition of SSGs is predominantly white, middle-aged men. NDA would like to broaden the diversity of the SSG so that it more accurately represents the community, including involving younger people.

4.4.4 Presentations from sites, regulators and the NDA will be clearer and more easy to understand.

4.4.5 There will be increased publicity for the meetings and a budget to support this is being developed.

4.4.6 In future, meeting venues should be more accessible. At present some venues can only be reached by car. Council premises may be a viable alternative.

4.4.7 NDA would like to reach out to those people who presently don't think these meetings are for them. SSGs should use social media more to get information out to parts of the community who are unlikely to attend meetings but may become engaged in other ways.

4.4.8 Training will be provided to SSG Chairs, as they are key to this approach. NDA needs to ensure that the Chair is aligned to making the SSG more open.

4.4.9 Any group within the community should be able to nominate a member to the SSG. It is not an executive body, but rather a community forum. It is the Chair's role to ensure that the range of views of the SSG are expressed and represented in response to consultations.

4.4.10 Voting will be restricted to the election of Chair and Vice-Chair.

4.4.11 New guidelines for SSGs are being drafted. They will be shared with the Chairs over the summer, and if a consensus can be achieved on amendments they will be incorporated into a discussion document which will go to the SSGs in autumn. Final guidance will be issued in late December/early January. SSGs will be invited to look at their constitution with the view of bringing them into line with the new guidance. The new look SSGs will be launched in April 2018.

4.5 Key points made during discussions:

- If NDA had consulted SSGs before drawing up the proposals SSGs could have told NDA what worked.
- Proposals to increase accessibility for the general public as this could make meetings impracticable.
- Concerns were expressed about the possibility of ONR withdrawing from Sellafield.
 - BH responded that ONR would not withdraw from any site whilst there was still any meaningful level of radiation present.
- Opening up membership of the SSG to any local group raised the potential for the SSG to be hijacked by a campaigning group as had happened at Sizewell.
- Whilst the aspiration for wider participation by the general public was laudable, reality demonstrated that it is usually the same people who turn up at meetings.
- NDA must remember that NuLeAF provides an effective mechanism for them to engage with local authorities, and that SSGs cannot deal with issues at the level of detail necessary. NDA must not see SSGs as the only mechanism for engaging with local authorities.
- Will the stakeholder socio-economic summit cover infrastructure investment?
 - Yes, this will be addressed.
- SSGs are there to hold NDA to account and the new guidelines shouldn't prohibit this.
- NDA should consider providing a web-based resource to allow SSGs to provide mutual support.

4.6 NFLA had surveyed those who attended SSGs and other community forums. Whilst there were a lot of positive comments there were notable inconsistencies between the different SSG groups. It had also proved difficult to find out information as there was a lack of visibility. There were a lot of good ideas in NDA's proposals and NFLA would be keen to meet with NDA to discuss this further.

4.6.1 It was agreed that the NFLA report should be circulated to NuLeAF members.

CD

4.7	The Chair thanked Mr Hamilton for attending the meeting.	
5	UPDATE ON NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT	
5.1	<p>PM introduced the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting and covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of new NDA Chief Executive and Chair; • Report from Theme Overview Groups (TOGs) and other related meetings; • Integrated Waste Management (IWM) Review and Forum; • Proportionate Regulatory Control (PRC) and Guidance on Requirements for Release of Nuclear Sites from Radioactive Substances Regulation (GRR) update; • Further ministerial changes at BEIS; • Brexit and Euratom; • Annual meeting with Low Level Waste Repository Ltd; and • NDA stakeholder summit. 	
5.2	Copeland BC expressed an interest in being kept abreast of developments in the short-lived ILW and radioactive waste strategy discussions. Bill Hamilton said that NDA were developing an engagement programme, but he was unsure whether this would include a formal consultation period. James McKinney, Head of Integrated Waste at NDA would be giving a presentation at the economic summit in September, to which local authorities would be invited.	PM
5.3	Concerns were raised regarding the relatively quick time in which the interim report for the review of UK radioactive waste infrastructure and policy, and would this impact on the level of detail it contained? PM hoped that there would be sufficient opportunity to influence the final report to ensure it is comprehensive and effective. It was not clear if there would be a formal consultation period.	
5.4	The Chair advised the meeting that he had been made aware that there was likely to be a consultation later this year on the UK withdrawal from the Euratom treaty, with particular focus on the implications for transport of radioactive waste and nuclear materials.	
5.5	Cllr Moore had been advised by Copeland BC emergency planning team that withdrawal from Euratom may have an impact on the Disaster Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ). They would monitor the situation carefully.	
5.4	At the last meeting of the SG it had been decided that members would benefit from a visit to Trawsfynydd to see the progress being made there under the Magnox 'lead and learn' programme. However, this had been scheduled to take place in September, and would now be just 12 days before the NDA stakeholder summit. Given the pressure on member and officer time, and financial constraints, the secretariat sought the meetings on views as to whether the planned visit should go ahead. It was agreed that the visit should be postponed, and discussion held with Bill Hamilton about holding the September NuLeAF Steering	CD

	Group meeting in West Cumbria either before or after the NDA stakeholder summit.	
6	UPDATE ON THE GEOLOGICAL DISPOSAL FACILITY (GDF) SITING PROCESS	
6.1	PM introduced the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting and covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh GDF process; • Committee on Radioactive Waste Management meeting; • Staff changes at RWM; and • Consultation on the GDF framework. 	
6.2	It was reported that Isle of Anglesey County Council had said they would not express an interest in engaging in the GDF process.	
6.3	In response to a query about whether running the English and Welsh siting processes in parallel was likely to cause any issues, PM advised that RWM were expecting the process to be flexible enough to cope with this, and to cope with the process running at different speeds in multiple communities.	
6.4	Frustration was expressed at the slippage in the timetable. Government maintains that Plan B is to make Plan A work, but how long can this approach continue. Government needs to declare what storage methods will be used if the GDF is not available in 2040. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the autumn Steering Group meeting, following the NSIP and communities' consultations which are expected in late May.	PM
7	NuLeAF DRAFT SERVICE PLAN 2017-18	
7.1	The Draft Service Plan 2017-18 was circulated prior to the meeting. It set out Key Tasks against 31 Objectives, and noted Outputs and Outcomes.	
7.2	Following a discussion about the working relationship with the New Nuclear Local Authorities Group, it was agreed that NuLeAF needed to understand what their work plan was.	
7.3	SS complimented NuLeAF on a clear and inclusive presentation.	
7.4	PM asked the meeting to send any comments on the Service Plan to him by email.	All
8	FINANCE AND FUNDING	
8.1	A paper outlining the financial situation for the years FY2016-17 and FY 2017-18 was circulated at the meeting.	
8.2	PM advised the meeting that discussions were ongoing with NDA and RWM regarding funding for FY2017-18.	PM
8.3	The projected out-turn for FY2016-17 shows a surplus following an improved settlement from RWM.	
8.4	The Chair expressed his hopes that NuLeAF's finances would continue on a positive footing, and that it wouldn't return to	

8.5	<p>having to rely on reserves to cover annual shortfalls in funding. Although there is slippage in the GDF timetable there is still a lot of work which needs to be carried out in preparation for the launch of the consultation in late 2017/early 2018.</p> <p>The need to impress upon NDA and RWM the work NuLeAF does to enable their mission, in return for a relatively small outlay was stressed.</p>	
9	MEMBER SURVEY	
9.1	NuLeAF undertakes a biennial survey of its members to review its work and the support it provides. A selection of members had been interviewed and their responses to a short series of questions was reported in a paper to the meeting.	PM/CD
9.2	PM highlighted the suggestions made by those who had been interviewed, and these will be followed up.	
9.3	DI said he found the service NuLeAF provided very useful as nuclear issues were just part of what he dealt with, and NuLeAF provided a valuable resource and expertise.	
10	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
10.1	The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 7 th June, 2017 at Coram Campus, 41 Brunswick Square, London. This meeting will incorporate the AGM.	
11	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
11.1	<p>John Pitchford proposed that NuLeAF invite Stephen Speed, who took over from Lee McDonagh at BEIS, to attend a Steering Group meeting. It was agreed that this should be done. Mr Speed may be at the NDA stakeholder summit in September.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 12.47.</p>	PM
12	PRESENTATION BY NIGEL KNEE, HEAD OF NUCLEAR POLICY, EDF	
12.1	Cllr Sweeney welcomed Nigel Knee to the meeting and round the table introductions were made.	
12.2	Mr Knee said he hoped this would be just the start of a dialogue about EDF's decommissioning proposals and he was particularly keen to listen to the meetings views.	
12.3	EDF has seven sites with 8 power stations, and generates about 20% of the nations' electricity. After purchasing the stations from British Energy it carried out due diligence and concluded that there was the potential to extend the operating life of the plans from the original end of generation dates.	
12.4	EDF made a safety case for life extension for each of the plants and these were scrutinised and accepted by ONR. EDF must continually monitor and maintain its plants to satisfy the regulator that they are safe to operate.	

12.5	Whilst the current end of generation dates are not set in stone, there is probably little scope for any significant further extension of the operating lifetime of the AGR fleet. Sizewell B is a Pressurised Water Reactor and it is likely that a 20 year operating extension will be sought.
12.6	The critical parts of the station which affect the ability to extend the operating life are the graphite core which is used to moderate the reaction, and the steam boiler.
12.6.1	The graphite in the reactor cannot be replaced. EDF inspects its integrity and funds R&D into what happens to graphite when it is exposed to high temperatures over a long period of time in a CO2 environment. If it is possible to manage the graphite in a better way, then small incremental life extensions are possible.
12.6.2	The steam boilers are complex structures and can be difficult to access. Carrying out repairs and maintenance is difficult, expensive and risks exposure to radiation.
12.7	The first end of generation date is 2023, only six years away, and we know from NDA's experience it is best to start your planning early. Whilst the government could step in and take over decommissioning responsibilities, EDF feels that it has a moral duty to carry out the decommissioning process. It is committed to a site end state which would make the site available for reuse.
12.8	Funding for decommissioning is through the Nuclear Liabilities Fund which was set up when EDF bought the stations. This is a segregated fund which sets aside money to deal with decommissioning and the waste arisings. EDF pays into it based on fuel usage. It is managed by an independent board of trustees. A small portion of the fund is actively invested, but the majority is in the national loans fund. It is reviewed regularly and various recommendations were recently made to improve the governance.
12.9	<p>EDF has drawn up decommissioning plans which divide into three phases:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-closure transition and defueling 2. Site surveillance and Care & Maintenance 3. Reactor decommissioning and final site clearance. <p>From start to finish this covers a period of approximately 100 years.</p>
12.9.1	EDF must give NDA 3 years notice of its intention to decommission. However, they recognise that they need to start 5- 6 years before the end of generation. A group of staff is being brought together to work on this, and it is led by an ex-station director.
12.9.2	The defueling period is likely to take 3-4 years. The spent fuel may not be sent to Sellafield for storage, so an alternative solution will be needed.

12.9.3	The decommissioning plans have yet to be robustly tested and there may be some room for optimisation.
12.9.4	In response to a question, Mr Knee thought it would be unlikely that the site boundary would be reduced significantly before final decommissioning. The sites were small and partial delicensing was a complex process. However, there may be some scope for development in the vicinity which had not previously been viable because it would have been located next to an operating site.
12.9.5	Decommissioning Sizewell B should take around 25 years from start to finish as the reactor design makes it easier to disassemble.
12.9.6	EDF is confident that the SafeStore approach is the right one to take. It reduces the risk to workers of radiation exposure, and reduces the amount of waste produced. However, they will continue to look at the options and refine the approach as necessary.
12.10	The meeting opened up to questions
12.10.1	<p><i>Q: What preparatory work are you undertaking regarding the redeployment of operational staff once a site enters decommissioning?</i></p> <p>A: Look at the workforce is a priority for the coming year. We will consult with our staff before undertaking any engagement outside the company. Each site will be addressed individually. The staff understand the idiosyncrasies of each station and it is important we retain that knowledge through the decommissioning phase.</p>
12.10.2	<p><i>Q: You talked about handing back the license at the end of decommissioning. Would there be any validity in keeping the license in order that the site can be used for other nuclear purposes?</i></p> <p>A: Nuclear licenses are specific to the site, the design and the operator. To change any of those three constituents you would need to apply for a variation. We would have to look at it on a case by case basis to see if this was justified.</p>
12.10.3	<p><i>Q: I read that EDF are building a gas-powered station. Would you consider using the sites for an alternative form of power production to help keep the lights on?</i></p> <p>A: It is a possibility, but it is not something we are currently looking at. I mentioned earlier the difficulty in freeing up land. What we need to do is look at how we can build stations more quickly. At present we think large stations are the right approach, but this may not always be the case.</p>
12.10.4	<p><i>Q: Does that mean you are looking at Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)?</i></p>

	A: Yes, EDF is working with colleagues in Areva in France. They are at the R&D stage and it will be a long time before this technology could be deployed.	
12.11	The Chair thanked Mr Knee for his presentation. Mr Knee hoped that in future, if local authorities had specific concerns they would feel free to approach EDF to discuss them. The meeting closed at 14.46	

ACTION LIST

15th March, 2017			
ITEM	ACTION	BY	OUTCOME
2.1	Post minutes on the website	CD	Done
3.1	Contact Magnox re concerns over piecemeal planning applications	PM	Done
4.6.1	Circulate NFLA report on SSGs	CD	Done 27 March 2017
5.2	Inform Copeland BC of developments in short-lived ILW and radioactive waste strategy discussions	PM	Will update Copeland on any developments.
5.4	Contact Trawsfynydd to postpone site visit	CD	Done 31 March 2017
5.4	Discuss timings for September Steering Group with Bill Hamilton	CD	Done – set for 18 th September
6.4	Agenda item for autumn SG meeting re Plan B for storage of waste if GDF siting process slips further	PM	Noted as agenda item for September meeting.
7.4	Send comments on Service Plan to PM	All	Service Plan completed and on website
8.2	Continue discussions with NDA and RWM for funding for FY2017-18	PM	Good funding settlement achieved
9.2	Review suggestions made by survey participants and implement as appropriate	PM/CD	Review complete and responses identified.
11.1	Invite Stephen Speed to a SG meeting	PM/CD	On list for potential future speakers
7th December, 2016			
ITEM	ACTION	BY	OUTCOME
6.5	Item for March SG – way in which Magnox are applying for planning permissions in a piecemeal fashion	PM/CD	Done