

Meeting: Nuleaf Steering Group
Date: 10th March 2021
Item: 4
Subject: Updates on national developments in radioactive waste management
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Introduction:

This paper updates members on recent developments in radioactive waste management and NDA operations. It covers:

- NDA update;
- Strategy 4 update;
- BEIS Update;
- ONR Update;
- Decommissioning of EDF Stations;
- International engagement;
- Welsh members group; and
- New Nuleaf website launched.

Recommendations:

This paper is for noting.

1. NDA update

1.1 Davide Stronati has been appointed as the NDA's first Director of Sustainability. Davide joins NDA from Mott MacDonald. During that time he spent a number of years on secondment to Anglian Water, where he led work in developing their highly regarded carbon strategy. He is also Chair of the Sustainability Guidance Panel at the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE).

Davide will introduce himself to Nuleaf members at this Steering Group meeting. It is hoped he will be able to provide an update on the expected publication date for the NDA's first sustainability report.

1.3 The consultation on NDA's **Draft Business Plan 2021-24**¹ closed on the 1st of February. Nuleaf's response is available here². The NDA's **Mid-Year Performance Report 2020-21**³ has also been published.

1.4 A new Group Leadership Team (GLT) for the NDA has been created, reflecting further moves to create 'OneNDA.' Led by David Peattie, it will include the NDA Corporate Centre executives along with the CEOs/MDs of the NDA operating companies, and follows on from a series of announcements on senior appointments within the NDA:

- Martin Walkingshaw has been appointed Chief Executive Designate for LLWR. Martin will formally take up his new position following LLWR's transition to an NDA subsidiary on 12 July 2021. Until then, Paul Pointon will continue to lead and be accountable for LLWR performance.
- Mark Rouse has been announced as the Managing Director of Dounreay Site Restoration Limited (DSRL) when it becomes an NDA subsidiary company in April⁴. Mr. Rouse has acted as Managing Director of Dounreay since 2020 and was previously President of Cavendish Nuclear Japan.
- Lawrie Haynes has been appointed as Chair Designate of the new Dounreay subsidiary.

1.5 It was announced on January 19th that the NDA will create new Waste and Transport divisions.

Following the launch of an integrated waste management programme in November last year, a single division will be created, operating across the waste lifecycle from treatment and packaging to storage, transport and disposal. The aim is to build group capability, simplify operations and deliver greater value. Corhyn Parr will lead the development of the new division, working closely with the CEOs of LLWR and RWM.

NDA has also created a single nuclear transport division, **Nuclear Transport Solutions (NTS)**, launched on the 1st February 2021. NTS will operate Direct Rail Services (DRS) and Pacific Nuclear Transport Limited (PTNL). The primary objective will be to support the NDA mission through a range of activities including transporting spent AGR fuel from UK power stations to Sellafield, moving irradiated fuels from Dounreay and returning reprocessing products to customers overseas.

1.6 On the 28th January Nuleaf held a well-attended meeting on plans for a fusion reactor and the implications for NDA sites and legacy wastes. After a presentation from Tris Denton, Head of Commercial and Programme Development for the STEP

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/nuclear-decommissioning-authority-business-plan-2021-to-2024>

² <https://www.nuleaf.org.uk/document-library/consultation-responses/consultation-responses-2021>

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nda-mid-year-performance-report-2020-to-2021?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=95dfc599-9f5d-46aa-bde0-b76670d5262c&utm_content=immediately

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/mark-rouse-appointed-as-managing-director-of-dounreay>

programme at UKAEA, Nuleaf members discussed a range of issues with Tris and representatives of the NDA. Tris' presentation and a minute of the meeting have been circulated to attendees.

2. Strategy 4 Update

2.1 Strategy 4 is due for publication on the 19th March, and a link will be circulated to members when available. NDA has also proposed that the Strategy 4 Development Group (S4DG) should continue as a *Delivery Group* providing strategic oversight of progress in taking the Strategy forward. Nuleaf will be a member of this new group, which will sit above the Theme Overview Groups (TOGs).

3. BEIS Update

3.1 Public consultation on the new **Nuclear Decommissioning and Radioactive Substances Policy** has been delayed until summer 2021. Nuleaf will host an engagement event at the appropriate time.

3.2 The long-awaited **Energy White Paper**⁵ was launched by the UK Government in December 2020. This builds on the **Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution**⁶ published last November.

The primary objective of the White Paper is to drive moves towards a 'net zero' energy system through action across energy generation, industry, transport and the domestic sector. By 2030 it sets targets for:

- 40GW of offshore wind, representing a quadrupling of current capacity.
- 5GW of low carbon hydrogen.
- Ending the sale of petrol and diesel engine cars and vans.
- The Capture, Usage and Storage (CCUS) of 10Mt of carbon in four industrial clusters.
- Development of at least one more large nuclear station. Government is looking to develop new funding mechanisms to reduce the costs of conventional nuclear by at least 30%.

The Paper also commits to:

- Consideration of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and Advanced Modular Reactors (AMRs). A £385 million **Advanced Nuclear Fund** has been announced. This will see £215 million allocated to develop a domestic SMR

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/energy-white-paper-powering-our-net-zero-future>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-ten-point-plan-for-a-green-industrial-revolution/title#point-3-delivering-new-and-advanced-nuclear-power>

design and up to £170 million to a research and development programme on AMRs. A further £40 million will be provided to develop regulatory frameworks and support the UK's supply chain.

- The construction of a commercially viable fusion power plant by 2040.

The White Paper envisages that electricity demand could double by 2050 as heat and transport are decarbonised. Two scenarios of the future energy mix are offered. Both require a huge increase in renewable generation but also at least a doubling of nuclear capacity. As any new nuclear development is likely to be on or adjacent to existing NDA land, the proposals have clear implications for sites and for the waste inventory.

3.3 The BEIS Nuclear Directorate is also going through re-organisation in order to effectively deliver on the commitments made in the Energy White Paper and the 10 Point Plan. Director Stephen Speed will depart in May and a replacement will be sought. Declan Burke has been appointed as a Director and will lead the new nuclear and AMR/SMR teams.

3.4 Alok Sharma has relinquished his role as Business Secretary to work full time as President of COP26, the major UN climate summit being held in Glasgow this autumn. Kwasi Kwarteng is promoted from Energy Minister to Business Secretary, with former International Development Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan replacing Mr Kwarteng as Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth.

3.5 The Executive Director participated in a meeting of the **Radioactive Substances Policy Group (RSPG)** held on the 5th March. A verbal report will be provided at the Steering Group meeting.

3.6 Nuleaf's Director met online with BEIS on the 15th February to receive an update on plans for SMRs and AMRs. A range of work is currently underway around the Siting Process for these technologies, the financial model for delivery and the Generic Design Assessment (GDA). It is understood that Craig Lester, Deputy Director Advanced Nuclear Innovation at BEIS will attend the afternoon session with Rolls Royce at the Steering Group meeting on 10th March.

BEIS is considering the respective roles of Government, developers and communities with the potential for communities to play a significant part in local siting. The Government is also planning to undertake a review of the **National Policy Statement for Energy (EN1)**, and then to revise other energy policy statements with that on **Nuclear Power Generation (EN6)** being the priority. A consultation is likely at some point towards the end of 2021.

4. ONR Update

4.1 The Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) announced on the 16th December that it plans to align its leadership structure to other nuclear regulators around the world with a new combined post of Chief Nuclear Inspector/Chief Executive⁷.

Current Chief Nuclear Inspector Mark Foy will take up the new post, subject to government approval, and will be supported by current Deputy Chief Executive, Sarah High. A new senior regulatory role, Executive Director of Operations/Deputy Chief Inspector, will also be established. The changes will come into effect later this year, with current Chief Executive Adrienne Kelbie stepping down.

Nuleaf's Director wrote to Mark Foy congratulating him to his new role and offering some thoughts on how ONR could enhance its engagement with local government. ONR provided a full response to the letter and proposed a meeting between Nuleaf's Director and Katie Day, ONR's Director of Policy and Communications. This was held on the 2nd March and a verbal report will be provided to Steering Group.

5. Decommissioning of EDF Stations

5.1 Nuleaf's Chair and officers met with EDF on the 17th February. This date had originally been earmarked for a members' meeting on the decommissioning of the EDF stations. However, delays in the announcement of Government policy on this has meant that the engagement meeting has been postponed until later in 2021.

The meeting, which also involved NDA, proved useful in understanding EDF's current and potential future plans, and in discussing the important role that local authorities will play. It was agreed that EDF and Nuleaf would continue to meet quarterly.

6. International engagement

6.1 GMF Europe held an online seminar on the **socio-economic impacts of the closure and decommissioning of nuclear power plans** on the 26th February, joined by over 150 delegates from 25 countries. Phil Matthews of Nuleaf and Neil Smith of the NDA gave perspectives on the situation in the UK, and the meeting also heard speakers from Belgium, Spain, France and Bulgaria. All presentations are available to view on the GMF Europe website.⁸

⁷ <http://news.onr.org.uk/2020/12/new-leadership-structure-for-onr/>

⁸ www.gmf-europe.org

6.2 Nuleaf's Director was also involved in a meeting between GMF Europe and **Nuclear Transparency Watch**⁹ (NTW), held on the 19th February. NTW is a European network, largely made up of NGOs, that promotes transparency on nuclear safety issues. It proved a useful discussion and the two groups have agreed to collaborate in hosting a round table discussion on Emergency Preparedness this autumn which will also involve the European Commission.

7. Welsh members group

7.1 Discussion has begun on the potential for Nuleaf to host an annual meeting of our Welsh member authorities, creating a forum to explore the specific issues facing Welsh communities, and the devolved policy context. An initial meeting will define the Terms of Reference and membership of the group. It is hoped that this will be held before the end of March 2021.

8. New Nuleaf website launched

8.1 Nuleaf's new website has been completed and it is hoped to formally launch it before the March 2021 Steering Group. A notification will be sent to members when it is online.

The new website incorporates greater use of graphics and a contemporary design and includes a range of new information pages and resources. Along with better links to social media a new Blog has been created, with members and partners encouraged to submit articles and comment pieces. The website also has better functionality on tablets and mobile devices.

The completion of the website marks the culmination of an overhaul of all of Nuleaf's communication materials, including the creation of a new logo, a redesigned newsletter and E-bulletin, new letterhead paper and a new PowerPoint presentation.

⁹ <http://www.nuclear-transparency-watch.eu/>