

Meeting: Nuleaf Steering Group
Date: 8th December 2021
Item: 7
Subject: Nuleaf Member Survey 2021
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1. Introduction

Nuleaf carries out a biennial survey of its members. The secretariat endeavours to approach members who have not participated in recent surveys and to speak to a mix of Councillors and officers. Not all those approached opted to take part.

2. Questions and comments

Question 1. Have you looked at the new Nuleaf website?

All respondents had used the new website.

Question 2. If yes, what were your impressions? Do you have any comments on how we could further enhance our communications materials (i.e. the website, newsletter/ebulletin, social media and Briefing Papers?)

Generally, the website was found to clear, comprehensive and easy to navigate. One respondent preferred the previous iteration. Another thought Nuleaf should focus on the website and newsletter, and cease producing an e-bulletin and blog and do away with the LinkedIn group. An 'industry news' section was suggested.

Nuleaf comment: the newsletter has a limited circulation list (contributing members only), whilst the e-bulletin is distributed after each Steering Group and focuses on the discussions at that meeting. It is sent to all Nuleaf members and external parties who have registered to receive the e-bulletin. The LinkedIn Group has members outside local government and so reaches a wider audience.

Question 3. All Nuleaf meetings have moved online since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. How has this affected your attendance? Have you attended fewer, the same or more meetings?

Generally attendance had been the same, although one participant was unable to attend Steering Group meetings on a Wednesday as they clashed with a standing meeting. Another had only started attending meetings since they went online.

Question 3i. What has your experience been of online meetings? Looking forward, have you any comments on how we can further enhance our meetings in terms of format, balance of speakers and papers, etc.

The overall view was that online meetings worked well and meant that members found it easier to attend, both in terms of cost and time taken. The lack of travel was seen as a benefit.

Meetings were considered to be well run with a good blend of speakers.

One respondent felt that although online meetings had worked well, they do not provide the same opportunity for interaction, and looked forward to returning to in-person meetings. Working at home meant that they can get distracted by doing other things, which doesn't happen when attending a meeting in person. They also highlighted the problems of broadband issues causing disconnection.

Nuleaf comment: At the September Steering Group it was agreed that three of the four Nuleaf Steering Group meetings per year would be held online, with one in person meeting which would be combined with a conference/visit. The Radioactive Waste Planning Group was given the freedom to hold in-person meetings if it wished and will undertake further discussion of the best option at their next meeting in January.

Question 4. The landscape within which Nuleaf operates is changing. This includes:

- **The development of a new Policy by UK Government that will allow Near Surface Storage and in situ disposal of waste**
- **Changes in NDA and in the timeline for Magnox decommissioning**
- **The closure of the EDF stations**
- **Proposals for SMRs and fusion reactors on NDA sites**
- **The drive towards Net Zero carbon and integrated energy plans at a local/regional level.**

Do you have any comments on how Nuleaf should respond to these changes? Are there other topics or agendas that you feel we should address within our meetings or wider work?

Two respondents commented that Nuleaf had a specific area of work (legacy waste management) which drew members to its meetings and that it should focus on that. New nuclear issues should be addressed where relevant but not be permitted to dominate – there was a separate local authority body to address these issues and each area benefitted from having its own forum.

Further information on how local businesses could engage with NDA procurement would be beneficial from a socio-economic point of view.

It was suggested that as the GDF siting process progressed the topic would be of less relevance and interest to many members and Nuleaf would need to ensure the

right balance was struck. Engagement with EDF as decommissioning of the AGR reactors progressed would be beneficial.

Question 5. Nuleaf is looking to engage with NDA on how it can support communities as they recover from the Covid pandemic. In relation to this, and to wider socio-economics and sustainability, are there particular issues that you would like to see Nuleaf raising with NDA?

A comment was made that NDA needs to recognise that authorities are building back greener and the importance of the social value agenda. It needs to engage with the community to see where it can add value.

One member identified that it would be helpful if NDA provided funding to support refreshing local delivery plans. NDA and Magnox both aim to reflect local strategies in their socio-economic strategies so this would be beneficial for them.

Another member had found it difficult to identify whom to speak to at NDA for socio-economic support and felt they had been passed from one person to another – there was a lack of clarity of structure – this specifically related to a non-Magnox site area.

6. NDA is undertaking a review of how it engages with stakeholders. Do you have any thoughts on how NDA could better engage with your local authority, either directly or through Nuleaf? Do you have any other comments on how Nuleaf could improve its support to your local authority? For example; in terms of other types of meetings/engagement events, online resources, etc.

In terms of NDA engagement with its stakeholders NDA needs to think about what questions the community would ask, not the questions it thinks needs answering. NDA needs to grow its planning team as it will always fall short on engagement with this regulatory role if it doesn't have in-house expertise.

In terms of Nuleaf meetings participants were happy with the provision.