

LGA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP ON RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT AND NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING

Minutes of the Steering Group meeting held online on 15th September, 2021

Present:

Cllr Matthew Riddle	South Gloucestershire Council (Chair)
Cllr David Moore	Copeland Borough Council (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Sean Chaytor	Hull City Council (NFLA Vice-Chair)
Cllr David Southward	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Craig Rivett	East Suffolk Council
Cllr David Blackburn	Leeds City Council
Cllr Tom Dyer	Lincolnshire Council
Cllr Daniel McNally	Lincolnshire Council
Cllr Eddy Newman	Manchester City Council
Cllr Mike Caswell	Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr Chris Morgan	Somerset West & Taunton Council
Cllr Richard Smith	Suffolk County Council
Steve Smith	Copeland Borough Council
Rachel Whaley	Cumbria County Council
Bethany Rance	East Suffolk Council
Linda Marsh	Folkestone & Hythe District Council
Andy Gutherson	Lincolnshire County Council
Charlotte Rushmere	Maldon District Council
Sean Morris	Manchester City Council
Jo Manley	Sedgemoor District Council
Sion Roberts	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Louise Martin	Somerset County Council
Gillian Ellis-King	South Gloucestershire Council
Cameron Clow	Suffolk County Council
Rhys Jones	Ynys Mon County Council
Philip Matthews	Nuleaf
Catherine Draper	Nuleaf

Observers

Cllr Aled Morris Jones	Chair of NDA Site Stakeholder Group Chairs Forum
Simon Napper	RWM
Katie Day	ONR

Speakers

Sue Fletcher	EDF
Clare Hennessey	EDF
John McNamara	NDA
Pip Hatt	Magnox
Guy Esnouf	RWM
Simon Hughes	RWM
Mark Foy	ONR

1.	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES	ACTION
1.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and ran through protocols for running the meeting online.	
1.2	Apologies were received from: Cllr Marion Fitzgerald – Allerdale Borough Council, Rob Ward – Copeland Borough Council, Sara Hardy – Dorset Council, Lisa Chandler – East Suffolk Council, Linda Townsend – Gloucestershire County Council, Lucy Atkinson – Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service, Doug Bamsey – Sedgemoor District Council, John Burton – Somerset West and Taunton Council, Vicky Aston – South and Vale District Council.	
2.	MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2ND JUNE 2021.	
2.1	The Minutes were approved as a true record and will be posted on the Nuleaf website.	CD
3.	MATTERS ARISING	
3.1	All other matters arising had been addressed or were in hand. Comments were noted on the action list at the end of the Minutes.	
4.	CONSIDERATION OF CLOSER WORKING WITH NNLG	
4.1	PM introduced the paper which summarised the discussions to date and set out recommendations for the Steering Group to consider.	
4.2	Cllr Chaytor supported the recommendations made. He agreed that Nuleaf should also look at emergency planning, the transport of waste and issues arising from MoD activities.	

4.3	Cllr Moore agreed that the recommendations should be adopted. Nuleaf will need to discuss new nuclear as it impacts decommissioning sites and will generate legacy waste.	
4.4	Other members supported the adoption of the recommendations, and that Nuleaf should focus on legacy waste management.	
4.5	Cllr Chaytor proposed that the Steering Group adopt the recommendations made, and this was seconded by Cllrs Riddle and Moore.	
4.6	It was unanimously agreed that Nuleaf should: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to work closely with NNLAG on areas of common interest, in line with our Concordat, while remaining a constitutionally distinct body. 2. Continue to engage in new nuclear issues in line with its constitution, which states '<i>Nuleaf's remit encompasses all aspects of the management of the UK's nuclear legacy. This includes the implications for legacy management of any developments that are likely to impact on that management.</i>' 3. Extends its work to include occasional discussion around (a) regional energy and net zero plans; and (b) nuclear Emergency Planning 	
4.7	It should be noted that whilst emergency planning can be covered under Nuleaf's existing constitution, regional energy and net zero plans are not. In order for these areas to become part of Nuleaf's scope of work a change to the constitution will be required and this will be addressed at the AGM in 2022.	PM
5.	NULEAF SOCIO-ECONOMIC BRIEFING PAPER AND POLICY STATEMENT	
5.1	A Briefing Paper and Policy Statement on Socio-economics, sustainability and climate change had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Executive Director asked for comments.	
5.2	The following suggestions were made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introductory sentences to point C on page 2 should include 'and better alignment with the particular priorities of host areas as set out in their adopted strategies and plans'. • The wording in Section F should include a statement that community benefit protocols have been created to reflect the service provided by communities hosting facilities on behalf of the nation. • Point G should consider that interim storage will in fact have a generational time frame. • Community benefits should also look at international best practice 	

5.3	Subject to addressing the comments made, the Steering Group agreed unanimously that the Briefing Paper and Policy Statement should be adopted. Proposed by Cllr Riddle, seconded by Cllr Moore.	PM
6.	UPDATE ON GDF SITING PROCESS	
6.1	PM introduced the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting and which gave updates on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) Siting Process; • RWM; • CoRWM; and • International situation. 	
6.2	It was clarified that, contrary to comments in the press, a working group had not yet been established in Lincolnshire. A formal decision will be made on 5 th October.	
6.3	In respect of the possible challenge to the Secretary of State's decision on local government reorganisation in Cumbria, the county council is currently taking advice from its QC as to whether or not to proceed with a judicial review.	
6.4	Cllr Moore stressed that it is the community which leads, and if a community partnership is established then progress is possible regardless of changes within the local authority.	
6.5	In response to a query it was confirmed that the costs of constructing a GDF to take legacy waste is a national liability but that costs associated with wastes generated by any new nuclear power stations would have to be met by contributions from their owners.	
6.6	PM advised that a presentation on wastes from fusion reactors had been given to CoRWM at their plenary meeting on 14 th September. In that it was stated that large scale fusion reactors can give rise to a significant quantity of Intermediate Level Waste. The majority is relatively short lived (<100 years), but some will need management in the longer term.	
7.	UPDATE ON NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT	
7.1	PM introduced the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting and gave updates on: NDA, BEIS, Sellafield, decommissioning of EDF stations, ONR, fusion siting process, Ministry of Defence Update, Welsh news, and Nuleaf activities.	
7.2	John McNamara, NDA, advised the meeting that following Andrew van der Lem's departure his role had been split in two. Sam Howard would be joining NDA from UKGI to cover government relations. An appointment to the socio-economic role was expected shortly.	

7.3	The meeting discussed long term funding of NDA and the potential for NDA to become a partner in developments proposed for its sites. Concerns were raised that this was outside Nuleaf's remit, while it was also noted that Nuleaf needed to consider the legacy that this generation would leave to the future.	
7.4	The Steering Group voted to adopt the sustainability policy which had been circulated as part of the papers. Proposed by Cllr Riddle, seconded by Cllr Moore, all members were in agreement.	
8.	FORMAT OF FUTURE MEETINGS	
8.1	PM introduced the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting. This summarised the discussions at previous meetings and made recommendations for the Steering Group to consider.	
8.2	The Steering Group agreed that the RWPG should decide whether or not it wished to hold meetings in person.	
8.3	Members considered the options proposed for holding Steering Group meetings. It was agreed that there was value in meeting in person, but also that moving meetings online had resulted in increased attendance. It was also recognised that not all members would wish to attend a meeting in person so that hybrid options should be considered. It was felt that the proposal for a hybrid meeting to allow up to 4 people to attend online was not sufficient. It was noted that councils have been impacted financially by the Covid-19 pandemic, and were emphasising holding meetings online where possible.	
8.4	The Steering Group agreed unanimously that it would hold its meetings online three times a year, with a fourth meeting held in person which would include a conference and site visit. It also agreed that presentations should be recorded.	
9.	SCOPE OF FUTURE MEETING TO DISCUSS DECOMMISSIONING OF AGR STATIONS	
9.1	The Chair welcomed Clare Hennessey and Fiona McCall from EDF, John McNamara from NDA and Pip Hatt from Magnox to the meeting.	
9.2	Mr McNamara advise the meeting that BEIS, NDA and EDF were working closely together to produce a programme of work for the transfer of the AGR stations to NDA following defueling by EDF. Conversations on socio-economic aspects of the closure and handover have begun.	
9.3	Ms Hennessey advised that she was working on the consenting aspects of decommissioning, whilst Ms McCall is	

	working on stakeholder engagement and communications across the fleet.	
9.4	Ms Hennessey went on to give an overview: by 2030 all 7 AGR stations will be at various stages of decommissioning. Dungeness has already ceased generation, and Hunterston and Hinkley Point B will start defueling in 2022. EDF is working closely with NDA and Magnox to ensure alignment on stakeholder engagement. Once EDF has completed defueling the stations will be handed over to Magnox.	
9.5	Nuleaf is arranging a meeting for members to hear more about the decommissioning arrangements and views on what issues needed to be discussed at that meeting were sought.	
9.6	During discussions it was suggested the following topics should be discussed at the proposed meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigation of decommissioning impacts • Synergy between existing NDA, EDF and new nuclear sites – including implications for local planning • Relevance for non-EDF sites – sharing lessons learned from previous decommissioning • Programme for decommissioning • Legacy waste implications • Where the waste will go – storage and disposal • Socio-economics and skills 	
9.7	Nuleaf will circulate the list for comment and addition. The Chair thanked Ms Hennessey, Ms McCall, Mr McNamara and Ms Hatt for attending and looked forward to the proposed meeting early in 2022.	CD
10.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
10.1	The next meeting of the Steering Group will be held online on Wednesday 8 th December.	
11.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
11.1	Thanks and tributes were paid to Sean Morris who is being seconded from Manchester City Council to work on climate change issues. His contributions to discussions were welcomed and his input to meetings would be missed. Sean thanked the meeting and said that he had enjoyed his engagement with Nuleaf. He had been involved from the very first days and he confirmed that Manchester City Council would remain a member of Nuleaf. He thanked the secretariat for their support.	
11.2	There being no other business the meeting paused for lunch at 12.30 to resume at 13.00.	

12	GDF SITING PROCESS, GUY ESNOUF AND SIMON HUGHES, RWM LTD	
12.1	The Chair welcomed Guy Esnouf and Simon Hughes from RWM to the meeting	
12.2	Mr Hughes and Mr Esnouf introduced themselves giving an overview of their background.	
12.3	Key points raised in the discussion were:	
12.3.1	RWM has had positive conversations in Cumbria leading to the establishment of two Working Groups.	
12.3.2	Discussions are taking place with Lincolnshire County Council and East Lindsey District Council, who are working through the governance processes which could lead to the establishment of a Working Group.	
12.3.3	Concerns were raised about community engagement. RWM stressed that this project focuses on the community. They have recently been part of community roadshows in Cumbria. The project hinges on a community expressing their willingness to host the GDF.	
12.3.4	A member commented that the name of the project – Geological Disposal Facility – gave undue weight to the importance of geology in identifying a suitable site, as in reality it was just part of a multi-layered barrier system which could be adjusted according to the geology in which it was constructed.	
12.3.5	It was highlighted that the timing of infrastructure construction is important and could have a significant bearing on the willingness of a community to become host. This is something Nuleaf could emphasise to government as a potential impediment along with the importance of addressing this issue early.	
12.3.6	Further comment was made that if investment was to come from other government departments than BEIS, would Nuleaf be able to assist in encouraging a joined up approach.	
12.3.7	It was noted that there had been a lack of coverage in the national press and this lack of public awareness might lead to a negative local reaction when it is proposed a community enter the siting process. RWM advised that it had been the intention to take journalists to view projects in Sweden, France and Finland, but this had been put on hold because of Covid-19.	
12.3.8	RWM stressed that although LLWR and RWM were being combined into a single waste division from the end of January 2022, the governing policies will not be changing, nor will the	

	personnel. Anyone with concerns about the implications of this change should contact RWM.	
12.3.9	RWM would welcome confidential discussions about the GDF siting process from any interested parties.	
12.4	The Chair thanked Mr Hughes and Mr Esnouf for attending the meeting.	
13.	UPDATE ON THE OFFICE FOR NUCLEAR REGULATION (ONR), MARK FOY, CEO AND CHIEF NUCLEAR INSPECTOR, ONE	
13.1	The Chair welcome Mr Foy to the meeting.	
13.2	Mr Foy introduced his colleague, Katie Day, who is Policy and Communications Director at ONR.	
13.3	Key points from Mr Foy's presentation were:	
13.3.1	Mr Foy provided an overview of ONR's senior leadership team. He had recently succeeded Adriene Kelbie as CEO, retaining his role as Chief Nuclear Inspector. He is supported by two deputies who head up the regulation and support functions of ONR.	
13.3.2	ONR was able to continue to regulate sites during lockdowns, including remote inspection of sites. Operators also demonstrated that they were able to operate sites safely under lockdown conditions.	
13.3.3	ONR works with a range of other organisations including other regulators, NGOs, stakeholder groups and international standard setting bodies such as IAEA.	
13.3.4	As a result of the UK's exit from the EU, ONR has developed a safeguard system which addresses the responsibilities previously covered by Euratom. Nuclear cooperation agreements have also been signed with Australia, Canada, Japan and the USA. ONR resources have developed to handle the increased workload.	
13.3.5	ONR has a team of inspectors on site at the construction of Hinkley Point C. It also regulates at the point of production for components.	
13.3.6	ONR has been asked to plan to undertake a Generic Design Assessment of the Rolls Royce SMR design. This will take place either at the end of this year, or early in 2022.	
13.3.7	ONR is working with UK government and the HSE on a regulatory framework for fusion reactors. Because fusion reactors are essentially an accelerator, they are regulated by HSE.	
13.3.8	ONR are looking at onsite storage of radioactive waste, and at establishing criteria for the delicensing of sites.	

13.3.9	ONR recognises that effective stakeholder engagement is key to establishing and maintaining trust.	
13.3.10	ONR publishes reports to SSGs, webinars and other information of interest on its website www.onr.gov.uk	
13.4	The meeting opened up to questions:	
13.4.1	<i>Q: Why is the Department of Work and Pensions your sponsor?</i> A: Because BEIS is responsible for developing the nuclear industry and policy and ensures there is clear demarcation and avoidance of influence. This is standard good practice and is followed around the world.	
13.4.2	<i>Q: How do you keep on top of cyber threats?</i> A: We are engaged with the National Centre for Cyber Security. It should be noted that in the nuclear industry safety and security systems are completely isolated from business systems.	
13.4.3	<i>Q: It can be hard to accurately reflect the regulations in land use planning policies because the language used is difficult to comprehend.</i> A: We recognise that we can use overly technical language, and we can't always write regulations in plain English, but if there are specific examples, please contact us and we will try to clarify.	
13.5	The Chair thanked Mr Foy and Ms Day for attending the meeting. Mr Foy said he would ensure that the contact was maintained, and he would forward a copy of his presentation to Nuleaf.	MF / KD

ACTION LIST

15th September 2021			
Item	Action	By	Outcome
2.1	Post minutes from June meeting on website	CD	Posted 17 th Sept.
4.3	Submit proposal to amend constitution regarding inclusion of net zero and regional energy in Nuleaf's work programme to ARM in March 2022	PM	Draft proposals submitted under Item 8 to December meeting for consideration.
5.3	Amend Policy Statement in accordance with comments made and publish on Nuleaf website	PM/CD	Amended and posted on Nuleaf website 17 th Sept.
9.6	Circulate list of topics for EDF meeting	CD	List circulated 16 th Sept.
13.5	Send copy of presentation to Nuleaf	MF	Sent 16 th Sept.