

**Radioactive Waste Planning Group meeting, 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022,  
10.00 – 11.30, online.**

*Present:*

Heather Morrison	Copeland Borough Council
Rachel Whaley	Cumbria County Council
Charlie Pope	Devon County Council
Naomi Goold	East Suffolk Council
Beth Rance	East Suffolk Council
Terry Burns	Essex County Council
Linda Townsend	Gloucestershire County Council
Richard Outram	Manchester City Council
Jo Manley	Sedgemoor District Council
Louise Martin	Somerset County Council
John Burton	Somerset West & Taunton Council
Ross Walker	Suffolk County Council
Philip Matthews	Nuleaf
Catherine Draper	Nuleaf

*Speaker*

John Harrison	Chair, Severn Estuary Partnership
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**1. Welcome and apologies**

1.1 PM welcomed everyone to the meeting, noting it was the first meeting for Alex Smith from Sedgemoor District Council.

1.2 Apologies were received from: Phil Watson, North Northamptonshire Council; Gillian Ellis-King, South Gloucestershire Council

## **2. Note of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

2.1 The meeting note was amended to incorporate a revised site update from South Gloucestershire, otherwise it was held to be a true and accurate record of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2022 and would be posted on the Nuleaf website.

***Action: CD***

## **3. Matters arising**

3.1 PM thanked members for passing on details of the Emergency Planning meeting arranged for 11<sup>th</sup> October. Nuleaf would welcome further attendance.

3.2 PM provided a verbal update on developments at Springfields and Port Clarence. A written copy was circulated after the meeting.

***Action: CD***

## **4. Presentation by John Harrison, Chair of Severn Estuary Partnership (SEP)**

4.1 PM welcomed John Harrison to the meeting. Mr Harrison gave a short presentation on the role and work of the Severn Estuary Partnership (SEP). The presentation is posted on the Nuleaf website. Key points from his presentation are:

- The SEP was established in 1995 and is one of 50 coastal partnerships across the UK. They are non-statutory bodies.
- There are no defining boundaries, and the SEP seeks to work with everyone involved in the management of the estuary or who has an interest in the future care of the area.
- The area covers Berkeley, Hinkley Point and Oldbury power stations, and although there hasn't been a focus on nuclear in the past, generation is now a topic of interest in the area.
- The SEP seeks to influence policy at a local, regional and national level. They are working with Western Gateway to attract investment to the area and looking at how they can influence the matter of energy generation in the area.
- The Partnership provides facilitation for key groups working in the area on topics such as flood risk, the interface between land and marine planning, and marine pollution contingency planning.
- The SEP is increasingly trying to work at community level either directly or through other organisations. Such areas of work include litter management and dog fouling on beaches. They also seek to raise awareness with the local

population and visitors and are working with disadvantage communities to raise access to the Estuary and its benefits.

- The SEP Strategy 2017-2027 has five key principles: achieving a sustainable marine economy, ensuring a strong, healthy and just society, living within environmental limits, promoting good governance, and using sound science responsibly.
- The priorities for the estuary are to protect and enhance the natural environment, address flood risk and water quality and support sustainable development.

4.2 PM thanked Mr Harrison for his presentation and the meeting opened up to questions.

4.3 *Q: Has your organisation made any representations about the proposal for an acoustic fish deterrent at Hinkley Point C?*

A: The SEP has not made any representation. Our understanding is that this is something that can work but there is limited scientific evidence on this topic.

4.4. *Q: Do you know why there has been no progress on the Great Western Power Barrage?*

A: The government decided this project would not proceed due to the high cost and high risk involved. Because there is planning permission for the development of a large sea freight terminal at the Port of Bristol, the barrage would have needed large locks which added significantly to the cost. Whilst the barrage is unlikely to become reality, tidal lagoons may go ahead with a pilot proposed for Swansea.

4.5 PM commented that the carbon footprint of the volume of concrete that would be required to build the GWP barrage was huge, and that the mitigation measures required under the Habitats Directive would have been prohibitively expensive and difficult to achieve.

4.6 *Q: What involvement have you had with biodiversity net gain projects.*

A: No immediate involvement as yet, but there are many schemes in the area engaged in habitat improvement. The Coastal Partnership Network could provide further information and its e-newsletter would be a good way to keep in touch with what is happening in other areas (NB: on checking website Nuleaf secretariat noted that the latest CPN newsletter was published in February 2020). Looking ahead, biodiversity will be the measure of how we manage estuaries and the marine and land environment.

4.7 PM thanked Mr Harrison for attending the meeting and asked members to contact the secretariat if there were any other non-nuclear related topics on which they would welcome a presentation.

## **5. Feedback on planning meeting with NDA**

5.1 The note of the meeting had been circulated. There were no comments on the meeting. Nuleaf would chase Frank Wigley regarding the date for the next NIGLQ-P meeting.

**Action: CD**

## **6. Update on the GDF siting process**

6.1 PM took the meeting through the paper which had been provided in advance of the meeting and which provided updates on: the Geological Disposal Facility siting process, Nuclear Waste Services (NWS), CoRWM and international developments.

6.2 It was noted that a campaign group had been set up to oppose the engagement of the Theddlethorpe Community Partnership in the siting process.

## **7. Update on developments in radioactive waste management**

7.1 PM went through the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting, and which provided updates on: NDA, UK Government, regulatory matters, international news and Nuleaf activities. Key points arising from discussion were:

7.2 Nuleaf would seek clarification from NDA regarding Integrated Waste Implementation Plans and their integration with other approaches such as site end states and waste management plans. PM would circulate information or report back to the next RWPG meeting. He would also ask how these applied to EDF wastes.

**Action: PM**

7.3 PM had contacted NDA regarding proposals for engagement on the non-radioactive waste inventory review but had not yet received a response. Members stressed that it was important that they were engaged in this work as it would provide important evidence when preparing Waste Needs Assessments.

7.4 Disappointment was expressed regarding the perceived generic nature of the five ambitions set out by ONR in their Corporate Plan for 2022-23, which contained

no nuclear references. PM said he would feed this back and that ONR needed to improve the way they explained their mission.

**Action: PM**

7.5 The consultation by the Environment Agency on the proposed change from wet to dry storage of spent nuclear fuel at Hinkley Point C was queried as this would be addressed through an application for a material amendment to the DCO. PM said he would review the consultation and then liaise with JB and LM over what response to make.

**Action: PM**

7.6 In response to a query, PM agreed he would seek further information on the possible timeframe for the development of a waste smelting facility in the UK.

**Action: PM**

## **8. Local site updates**

**East Suffolk:** The DCO for Sizewell C was granted on 20<sup>th</sup> July. Enabling works are being dealt with under the T&CPA. There is a 6 week period in which the DCO approval can be subject to legal challenge.

**Somerset West & Taunton:** EDF has written to SW&T and Somerset County Council regarding preparation for a consultation on the decommissioning plan for Hinkley Point B. The Council views are being sought as EDF will need to make an application to ONR under EIADR.

**Copeland:** Sellafield has formally ended Magnox fuel reprocessing and the focus of the site now switches completely to environmental remediation and interim storages of wastes prior to disposal in a GDF. Management options are being considered for the fuel that wasn't reprocessed. A new large interim store will shortly come into operation. Seismic surveys being carried out as part of the GDF siting process will begin in August. The gas plant at Sellafield may be replaced by an SMR, the heat and electricity generated by this will probably be solely used at Sellafield. The final decision on the location of the STEP Fusion reactor is expected by the end of 2022. Branding for the new council is under consideration and development of a Cumberland Council Plan will be considered over the summer. Staff will be consulted about their allocation in the new council.

**Cumbria:** Staff are waiting to hear which of the two new local authorities they will be allocated to.

**Somerset:** Generation will cease shortly at Hinkley Point B. Members of the SSG had been invited to tour the site.

**Somerset West & Taunton:** The Council is considering its position following the end of generation at Hinkley Point B when business rates will no longer be payable.

**Essex:** TB was meeting with Magnox shortly to review the number of caskets stored at Bradwell ILW store. He hoped to learn more at that meeting about their proposals for further storage of waste from Dungeness and Sizewell.

**Gloucestershire:** They had been notified by the Environment Agency of the consultation on the change to storage of spent fuel at Hinkley Point C.

All other councils attending had no updates to provide.

## **9. Date of next meeting**

9.1 The next meeting will be held 10.00 – 12.30, 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022

## **10. Any other business**

10.1 PM asked if there were any particular topics members wished to see covered at the Emergency Planning meeting. Topics suggested were: drones flying over nuclear plants, cyber security, and the Energy Security Bill setting out the intention to use the Civil Nuclear Constabulary to use guard other establishments and whether this would affect their ability to guard nuclear plants.

10.2 PM asked all those who had indicated they wished to attend the NDA Stakeholder Summit to register as soon as possible.

10.3 PM noted that Phil Watson of North Northamptonshire Council, who was a regular meeting participant was retiring that week. Nuleaf was grateful to Phil for his support and contributions over the years.

## Action List

21 <sup>st</sup> July 2022			
Item	Action	By	Outcome
2.1	Post note of the 28 <sup>th</sup> April 2022 on Nuleaf website subject to amendments.	CD	Done 8 November
3.2	Circulate update on Springfields and Port Clarence	CD	Done 21 July
5.1	Chase FW re next NIGLQ-P	CD	Nuleaf members are joining the meeting on 8 <sup>th</sup> November
7.2	Seek clarification of the role of Integrated Waste Implementation Management Plans	PM	Guidance published – see National Updates paper.
7.2	Seek clarification on how the above applied to EDF wastes	PM	Guidance published – see National Updates paper.
7.4	Feedback to ONR regarding their ambitions for 2022-23	PM	Raised with ONR during quarterly call on 16 <sup>th</sup> September.
7.5	Review EA consultation on SNF storage at HPC and then discuss with JB and LM	PM	Stage 1 (EA permit) not felt to require response. Have agreed with JB and LM to engage in the second phase, a Public Inquiry on the DCO, to be held in spring 2023.
7.6	Ask NDA for further information on timeframe for potential development of waste smelting facility in UK.	PM	NDA has confirmed that this issue is currently under consideration as one possible option. It is expected that the Optioneering will be complete towards the end of 2022 at which time there will be more clarity on whether additional waste smelting will be pursued.