

## **LGA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP ON RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT AND NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING**

### **Minutes of the Steering Group meeting held online, 15<sup>th</sup> September 2022, 11.00 – 15.00**

#### **Present:**

Cllr David Moore	Copeland Borough Council (Chair)
Cllr David Blackburn	Leeds City Council (Vice-Chair NFLA) (morning only)
Cllr Mike Caswell	Sedgemoor District Council (Vice-Chair) (morning only)
Cllr Marion Fitzgerald	Allerdale Borough Council
Cllr David Southward	Cumbria County Council (morning only)
Cllr David Godfrey	Folkestone and Hythe District Council
Cllr David Wimble	Folkestone and Hythe District Council (morning only)
Cllr Eddy Newman	Manchester City Council (morning only)
Cllr Richard Smith	Suffolk County Council
Cllr Carwyn Jones	Ynys Mon County Council
Jonathan Cook	Copeland Borough Council
Rachel Whaley	Cumbria County Council
Eleanor Godesar	Dorset Council
Bethany Rance	East Suffolk Council
Naomi Goold	East Suffolk Council
Linda Marsh	Folkestone & Hythe District Council (morning only)
Nia Swann Bowden	Gwynedd County Council (afternoon only)
Justin Brown	Lincolnshire County Council
Louise Staplehurst	Maldon District Council
Helen Marsden	North Northamptonshire Council
Richard Outram	Manchester City Council (morning only)
Alex Smith	Sedgemoor District Council (morning only)
Louise Martin	Somerset County Council
Cameron Clow	Suffolk County Council
Ross Walker	Suffolk County Council
Angharad Crump	Ynys Mon County Council
Philip Matthews	Nuleaf
Catherine Draper	Nuleaf

	The meeting held a minute's silence to mark the death of Queen Elizabeth II	
	The Chair spoke warmly of his recollections of the Queen's visit to Sellafield and the opening of Calder Hall.	
1.	<b>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
1.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting noting that this was the first meeting for: Justin Brown – Lincolnshire County Council, Louise Staplehurst – Maldon District Council, Helen Marsden – North Northamptonshire Council, Eleanor Godesar – Dorset Council.	
1.2	Apologies were received from: Terry Burns & Charlotte Rushmere – Essex County Council, Linda Townsend – Gloucestershire County Council, Jo Manley – Sedgemoor District Council, Cllr Matthew Riddle & Gillian Ellis-King – South Gloucestershire Council, Cllr Chris Morgan & John Burton – Somerset West & Taunton Council.	
2.	<b>MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 15<sup>th</sup> &amp; 16<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2022.</b>	
2.1	The Minutes were approved as a true record and will be posted on the Nuleaf website.	CD
3.	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>	
3.1	There had still been no response from Jamie Reed at NDA regarding the publication of the Hazel Blears report.	
4.	<b>UPDATE ON NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT</b>	
4.1	PM took the meeting through the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting and which provided updates on: NDA group, Sellafield, UK Government, the decommissioning of the AGR stations, regulators, Nuleaf and international news.	
4.2	In response to a question PM confirmed that the UK radioactive waste inventory is published every three years. Data will be gathered in 2022 and the report published in 2023.	
4.3	It was agreed that Nuleaf should write to NDA regarding the lack of engagement on Integrated Waste Management plans, Lifetime Plans and Site End States. Current timing of stakeholder	PM

	engagement precluded the opportunity to influence or inform decisions made.	
4.4	The meeting noted the importance of the volume of non-radioactive waste arising from the decommissioning process. Officers felt that this was something that had not been addressed previously and continued engagement with NDA on this topic would be beneficial for both parties.	
4.5	In response to a question PM agreed that he would ascertain the state of the Generic Design Assessment process for Small Modular Reactors and the timetable for its completion.	PM
4.6	PM updated the meeting regarding the visit by a small party of Nuleaf members to Rosyth dockyard to discuss the Submarine Dismantling Project. The visit had gone well and been informative. PM took an action to ascertain the MoDs plans for decommissioning the Dreadnought submarines.	PM
<b>5.</b>	<b>UPDATE ON GDF SITING PROCESS</b>	
5.1	PM introduced the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting and provided updates on: the Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) siting process, CoRWM, international news and Nuleaf engagement.	
5.2	JB (Lincolnshire County Council) noted that his engagement with the GDF siting process had highlighted the difficulty in engaging with various government departments on the different proposals made for the site at Theddlethorpe. It was also apparent that the local community was only focusing on the GDF proposal and were not engaging on the other potential developments.	
5.3	JC advised the meeting that he felt that there was a lack of materials provided for members of the Community Partnership and local community to help them understand the GDF siting process. PM said he would look into this further. He would also consider preparing a briefing paper on transport issues and Nuleaf could consider having another presentation on this topic in due course.	PM
5.4	DS noted that it was important that communities identified what infrastructure was required to support the GDF and ensured that commitment to delivering this was made by the developer at an early stage.	
5.5	MF advised that it was proving difficult to get people from a range of backgrounds to join the Community Partnership. It was often the case that those most interested in getting involved had a personal background in the nuclear industry, but they were keen to ensure a diversity of experience.	

<b>6.</b>	<b>VOTING PROCEDURE AT ONLINE MEETINGS</b>	
6.1	A paper was circulated prior to the meeting outlining a proposed method of voting in the election of Nuleaf officers at the AGM if the meeting is held online.	PM/CD
6.2	The Steering Group agreed that the proposals should be submitted to the December for agreement, subject to any amendments comments which members should submit to the secretariat in a timely fashion.	
<b>7.</b>	<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY REPRESENTATION AT STEERING GROUP MEETINGS</b>	
7.1	Following discussions regarding representation at Steering Group meetings at the meeting held in June a paper was submitted to the September meeting outlining a number of proposals which would facilitate the attendance of more than one elected member per member authority.	PM
7.2	It was confirmed that the current rule of one vote per elected authority would remain, and that would sit with the elected member nominated by the member authority. However, it would be permitted for the nominated member, should they be unable to attend the meeting, to send a designated representative who would have their voting rights. Officers would not have voting rights.	
7.3	The Steering Group supported the proposals made, subject to amendment to cover the point raised above. It was agreed that an amended paper be submitted for approval to the December meeting.	
<b>8.</b>	<b>FINANCIAL UPDATE</b>	
8.1	A report was submitted to the meeting which covered the out-turn for 2021-22, the auditors report on the accounts for 2021-22 and funding for 2022-23.	
8.2	The meeting recorded its thanks to Peter Frost, Head of Internal Audit at Suffolk County Council for carrying out the audit free of charge.	
<b>9.</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>	
9.1	The next meeting will be held online on 15 <sup>th</sup> December 2022, 10.00 – 14.00.	

<b>10.</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>	
10.1	<p>Those who attended the NDA Stakeholder Summit in Edinburgh on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> September were asked for their feedback. This will be fed back to NDA. Points raised were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of openness and transparency over who is attending – NDA should publish the delegate list in advance, resulting in a missed opportunity for networking</li> <li>• The choice and quality of the venue was appreciated</li> <li>• There was still limited opportunity for delegate participation, resulting in mostly one way dialogue</li> <li>• The focus on youth activity was welcome, and well presented</li> <li>• Breakout sessions were not missed</li> <li>• More time was needed for conversation.</li> <li>• There was too much on the agenda resulting in a rushed event</li> <li>• GDF Chairs attended but had no role. It was a wasted opportunity.</li> <li>• There was no opportunity for Nuleaf or SSG Chairs to talk about their work.</li> <li>• Too many NDA staff were present at the dinner, some in relatively junior roles. The public purse shouldn't be paying for them to attend.</li> </ul>	PM
10.2	<p>PM outlined the Open Radiation project which has approached NWS and Nuleaf with the view of setting up a 'citizen science' project looking at the background radiation levels in the UK. The organiser of the project is interested in engaging schools and local authorities. Anyone wishing to learn more about the project should contact the secretariat.</p> <p>The meeting broke for lunch at 12.52.</p>	
<b>11.</b>	<b>DISCUSSION WITH TOM GREATREX, CEO OF THE NUCLEAR INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION ON THEIR DECOMMISSIONING ACTIVITIES</b>	
11.1	The Chair welcomed Tom Greatrex to the meeting.	
11.2	<p>Mr Greatrex gave an overview of the work of the NIA, focusing on the decommissioning aspects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership covers a broad range of companies across the nuclear supply chain.</li> <li>• NIA endeavours to ensure its members are aware of opportunities and works with their international counterparts to promote the UK industry and identify opportunities in the export market.</li> </ul>	

- The decommissioning of the AGR stations means that the majority of the UK nuclear fleet will have ceased generation within the next decade.
- NIA recognises the importance of building capacity with regulators and local authorities to deal with the workload ahead. It also recognises the importance of encouraging its member authorities in delivering their socio-economic responsibilities in a meaningful fashion.
- Engagement is increasing with other comparable sectors as they seek to create the workforce required for delivering major projects.

The meeting opened up to questions:

11.3 *Q: Do you believe there are the skills and resources to deliver the decommissioning and new build programmes?*

A: The skills required for building a large nuclear power station are the same as those required for other large infrastructure projects. NIA is working with other skills development bodies to encourage people into STEM. Wage inflation is an issue. In order to cope with demand some activities may need to be carried out in parallel rather than sequentially.

11.4 *Q: How can local authorities and your members work together to improve opportunities to provide STEM workforce you need?*

A: We hope that once Great British Nuclear (GBN) is established it will give clarity to the work programme so we can understand what the workforce/skills need will be. We could consider setting up a forum to facilitate that discussion between local authorities and the nuclear industry.

11.5 **Comment:** The nuclear work programme needs to be clarified and delivered. In the past announcements have been made, but not followed through and communities have felt let down. The more this happens the more the social license to operate dwindles. Any future programme needs to be properly funded.

11.6 *Q: Are you able to advise the government that they need to consider the branding of GBN as this will not be well received in Wales. They should consider delivering through Cwmni Eginio.*

A: Industry too is frustrated at the failure of projects to come to fruition. The move to RAB (regulatory asset base) funding model will hopefully improve the interest of investors. The name, GBN, came from government, not industry and we have advised that if they wish to be successful then there needs to be bespoke meaningful engagement with communities, which reflects the different dynamics in each area.

11.7 *Q: My observation is that companies are not always aware of how to best carry out their socio-economic responsibilities. What can NIA do to help them?*

PM/TG

	<p>A: We produce case studies where there has been good practice and we encourage companies to share examples of good practice, and assist those companies coming into the nuclear sector to understand their responsibilities. Socio-economic duties are becoming a significant factor in securing contracts and we are looking to help our members in understanding and delivering the requirements.</p>	
11.8	<p><i>Q: Can you clarify what you see as the role of nuclear in production of hydrogen?</i></p> <p>A: If, in future, there is requirement for a high volume of hydrogen either for the production of synthetic aviation fuel or as a fuel source itself, then there will be an increased demand for electricity to facilitate hydrogen production. This will need to be supported by nuclear. UK government is undertaking some work on what infrastructure will be needed to support a hydrogen network e.g. can the existing gas infrastructure be adapted.</p>	
11.9	<p>The Chair thanked Mr Greatrex for attending the meeting and looked forward to working together, especially on the deliver of the skills agenda, in the future.</p>	
<p>There being no further business the meeting concluded at 14.47</p>		

## **ACTION LIST**

<b><i>15<sup>th</sup> September 2022</i></b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
2.1	Post minutes from June SG meeting on website.	CD	Done
4.3	Write to NDA regarding opportunity to engage on IWM/SES/LTP development at early stage	PM	Letter sent 11 <sup>th</sup> November
4.5	Advise Cllr Southward of progress of GDA for SMRs	PM	Done
4.6	Advise Cllr Caswell of plans for decommissioning Dreadnought submarines	PM	Information sent 14 <sup>th</sup> October.
5.3	Look at materials available for members of Community Partnerships/local community	PM	Ongoing
5.3	Prepare Briefing Paper on transport	PM	Ongoing
5.3	Consider taking further presentation on transport issues	PM	Will be done at the appropriate time.

6.2	Submit paper with proposals for online voting at AGM to December meeting	CD	Paper submitted under item 8
7.3	Submit paper on representation by local authorities to December meeting	PM	Paper submitted under item 9
10.1	Collate views on NDA Stakeholder Summit and send to NDA	PM	Letter sent 21 <sup>st</sup> September
11.4	Liaise with Tom Greatrex re opportunities for working together on skills agenda	PM	Letter sent 20 September. Chased 27 <sup>th</sup> October
<b>15<sup>th</sup> June 2022</b>			
3.3	Chase Neil Smith and Jamie Reed again re Hazel Blears report. Escalate if necessary	PM/CD	Report being prepared for publication
<b>9<sup>th</sup> March 2022</b>			
8.7.2	Advise if the Hazel Blears report to NDA is in the public domain	JR	See above