

LGA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP ON RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT AND NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING

**Draft Minutes of the Steering Group meeting held online, 15th
December 2022, 10.00 – 15.00**

Present:

Cllr David Moore	Copeland Borough Council (Chair)
Cllr David Blackburn	Leeds City Council (Vice-Chair NFLA) (morning only)
Cllr Craig Rivett	East Suffolk Council
Cllr Eddy Newman	Manchester City Council (morning only)
Cllr Matthew Riddle	South Gloucestershire Council (afternoon only)
Cllr Richard Smith	Suffolk County Council
Cllr Carwyn Jones	Ynys Mon County Council
Jonathan Cook	Copeland Borough Council
Steve Smith	Copeland Borough Council
Eleanor Godesar	Dorset Council
Bethany Rance	East Suffolk Council
Naomi Goold	East Suffolk Council
Terry Burns	Essex County Council
Linda Townsend	Gloucestershire County Council
Andy Gutherson	Lincolnshire County Council
Richard Outram	Manchester City Council
Alex Smith	Sedgemoor District Council
Louise Martin	Somerset County Council
John Burton	Somerset West & Taunton Council
Gillian Ellis-King	South Gloucestershire Council
Cameron Clow	Suffolk County Council
Angharad Crump	Ynys Mon County Council
Philip Matthews	Nuleaf
Catherine Draper	Nuleaf

Speakers

Bill Hamilton	Magnox
Simon Hughes	Nuclear Waste Services

1.	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES	ACTION
1.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
1.2	Apologies were received from: Cllr Marion Fitzgerald – Allerdale Borough Council, Cllr David Southward – Cumbria County Council, Cllr Christine Randall – Hull City Council.	
2.	MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 15th SEPTEMBER 2022.	
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 matters arising were covered under the meeting agenda.	
4.	UPDATE ON NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT	
4.1	PM took the meeting through the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting and which provided updates on: NDA group, UK Government, the decommissioning of the AGR stations, Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), fusion power, regulators, Submarine Dismantling Project, Nuleaf and international news.	
4.2	In response to a question, PM advised the meeting that he had written to NDA asking about their plans to engage local authorities and communities on their Site End State plans.	
4.3	PM advised the meeting that he had also written to Jamie Reed, Director of Social Impact at NDA regarding concerns raised by members following the meeting held on 2 nd November to discuss NDA's Economic Impact Reports. He had also stressed the importance of engaging with local authorities and communities when NDA begins the process of reviewing its Social Impact Strategy in 2023.	
4.4	The Chair updated the meeting regarding the formation of the Solway Community Power Company, which had been set up by Paul Foster, former CEO of Sellafield, to act as developer for an SMR project at the Moorside site in West Cumbria.	

5.	MAGNOX UPDATE FROM BILL HAMILTON	
5.1	<p>The Chair welcomed Bill Hamilton, Communications and Stakeholder Relations Director at Magnox to the meeting.</p>	
5.2	<p>Mr Hamilton gave an update on Magnox’s review of Final Site Clearance dates (FSCs) for its sites. The review had taken place following work to improve understanding of the current state of sites, and following the shift of decommissioning strategy from Care and Maintenance to a rolling decommissioning programme.</p> <p>Revised dates were published in the draft NDA Business Plan 2023-26 which had gone out to consultation recently. An indication was now given in which decade FSC was likely to take place, rather than a specific year as previously.</p> <p>The dates are indicative only and may be subject to revision. Factors which may affect the dates include provision of funding and technological developments. It should be noted that the dates are not dependent on a geological disposal facility being operational.</p> <p>In response to a question, Mr Hamilton advised that Magnox’s acquisition of the AGR stations will not impact the FSC date of the existing Magnox sites, but the experience learnt in decommissioning those sites will help speed up the decommissioning of the AGR sites. The present decommissioning strategy for the AGR sites (which are currently in the ownership of EDF) is one of Care & Maintenance. This may change when they move to Magnox’s ownership.</p> <p>Magnox is currently devising its stakeholder engagement programme for 2023.</p> <p>Magnox and EDF are working together to identify decommissioning synergies e.g. Magnox ILW stores taking waste from EDF sites where there is space to do so.</p> <p>Criteria used to determine the sequence in which sites would be decommissioned included the current state of the infrastructure on the site, and the potential benefits that could be gained by decommissioning a site early.</p> <p>The Steering Group expressed an interest in Magnox working with local authorities to identify the potential for interim uses where sites were at the further end of the decommissioning programme.</p>	

5.2	The Chair thanked Mr Hamilton for his update and looked forward to hearing more about the stakeholder engagement in due course.	
6.	UPDATE ON GDF SITING PROCESS	
6.1	PM introduced the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting and provided updates on: the Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) siting process, Nuclear Waste Services, CoRWM, and international news.	
6.2	Concerns were noted about the presentation of the data from the sonar surveys carried out off the coast of Whitehaven. It was felt that the interpretation of the data would be most trusted if it was subject to independent peer review.	
6.3	The secretariat was asked to follow up issues raised with BEIS regarding the internal coordination of energy projects.	PM
7.	RENEWAL OF GMF MEMBERSHIP	
7.1	A paper was circulated prior to the meeting reporting on Nuleaf's engagement with GMF over the previous year and highlighting the benefits of engaging with the group.	
7.2	The Steering Group agreed that Nuleaf should renew its membership for 2023 and recommended that an agreement should be made at a future meeting for ongoing membership rather than have an annual review.	CD
8.	FORMAT OF MEETINGS IN 2023	
8.1	A paper was circulated prior to the meeting outlining proposals for the format of Steering Group meetings in 2023, and three options for a meeting in person and site visit.	
8.2	The Steering Group agreed that the format of three online meetings and one in-person should remain for 2023, and that, at a future meeting, this format should be ratified as the permanent arrangement, subject to amendment at any point by the Steering Group.	CD
8.3	PM advised the meeting that NDA had indicated their intention to hold the next Stakeholder Summit in West Cumbria, but as yet no decision had been made whether this would be in 2023 or 2024. A decision on this should be taken in early 2023.	

8.4	The general view was that there was a slight preference for a visit to West Cumbria, but if the NDA Stakeholder Summit was to be held there in 2023, then the site visit should be to another location. Once NDA had made their decision, Nuleaf could then make its choice.	
9.	VOTING PROCEDURES FOR ONLINE ELECTIONS	
9.1	Following discussions at the meeting of the Steering Group held on 15 th December regarding the procedures for online elections and, given that no amendments had been submitted following the meeting, it was proposed that the Steering Group adopt the recommendations outlined in the paper submitted to the September meeting.	
9.2	There being no further amendments or suggestions made at the meeting, the Steering Group agreed the format for online meetings.	
10.	LOCAL AUTHORITY REPRESENTATION AT STEERING GROUP MEETINGS	
10.1	Following discussions at the Steering Group meeting held on 15 th September, a revised paper was submitted to this meeting setting out proposals that the Nuleaf constitution be amended to confirm that more than one elected member may attend Steering Group meetings, but that voting rights will sit with the member nominated by the council.	
10.2	<p>There being no further amendments or suggestions made at the meeting, the Steering Group agreed that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That more than one Elected Member from each member local authority be able to receive information and participate in the Steering Group and other Nuleaf meetings. 2. That Article 10 of the Nuleaf Constitution be amended to clarify this. It is proposed that the new Article 10 should read: <i>"Member authorities will have one vote at Steering Group meetings. This vote will be held with the Elected Member nominated by the member authority. If the nominated Elected Member is unable to attend a meeting, then they will be able to send a designated representative who would have their voting rights. Other Elected Members and officers from member authorities will also be able to receive communications and to attend meetings. Those wishing to do so should notify the Nuleaf Secretariat."</i> 	CD

	An updated version of the constitution will be posted on the Nuleaf website.	
10.3	It was noted that where Nuleaf was funding members attendance to the in-person meeting, that support would be limited to one elected member and one officer.	
11.	PRESENTATION ON NULEAF'S INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES	
11.1	<p>The Executive Director gave a presentation on the recent trip to Borsele, Netherlands, undertaken through the auspices of GMF.</p> <p>The Netherlands has a smaller inventory of higher level radioactive waste than the UK. It does not plan to start the GDF siting process until 2080, or it may participate in a multinational project.</p> <p>The delegation visited Covra, the Dutch radioactive waste storage facility. In contrast to UK facilities this is open to the public to visit, almost no area of the site is off limits, and the Dutch take a pride in their facility. Because of the ideal atmospheric conditions it is also used to store national treasures.</p> <p>In response to a query, PM confirmed that Russia had been a GMF member, but following the invasion of Ukraine this was suspended. There had been a Russian delegation at the IAEA technical meeting he attended. He'd been struck by the difference in their concept of public engagement, but also by the sheer vastness of the territory they covered and the problems this posed.</p> <p>The Chair, who had also participated in the trip said he had been struck by how far advanced the UK was in its emergency planning and preparation in comparison to the Netherlands. He also felt there was a lesson for NDA to learn in how clean, modern and accessible the Dutch facilities were.</p>	
12.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
12.1	The next meeting will be held online on Tuesday, 7 th March 2023, 10.00 – 15.00. This will include Nuleaf's AGM.	
13.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
13.1	The Steering Group's attention was drawn to the recent fatality at the Hinkley Point C construction site.	

14.	PRESENTATION ON JOBS AND SKILLS CREATION BY THE GEOLOGICAL DISPOSAL FACILITY SITING PROCESS, SIMON HUGHES, SITING DIRECTOR, NUCLEAR WASTE SERVICES	
14.1	The Chair welcomed Mr Hughes to the meeting.	
14.2	<p>Mr Hughes gave an overview of the GDF siting process. Nuclear Waste Services (NWS) had published a report on jobs and skills creation resulting from the process. Key points from the report are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The jobs created will be direct, indirect and induced, with roughly each type making up a third of the overall total. • A lot of the jobs forecast will be created in the supply chain. • The forecast total does not include jobs in other industries or sectors which are drawn to the site. • The majority of jobs are not 'nuclear' in that they do not require specialist nuclear skills. • Handling of the material for disposal will most likely take place either at Sellafield or at the site where the material is currently stored. • The majority of construction jobs during the build and operational phases could, and should, be recruited locally. • Educational level required will range from GCSE through to highly skilled, with three quarters of the jobs created being accessible to those with education attainment at A level or below. • It is estimated that 4,000 jobs will be created in the first 25 years. • The project will run for approximately 175 years, creating an average of 2,000 jobs per annum over the lifetime of the project. • NWS is committed to supporting the local community in the development of the workforce. • Construction should get underway in the 2040s and last for a period of 25 years. • NWS will also aim to use local contractors in line with government procurement rules. <p>The meeting opened up to questions:</p>	
14.3	<p><i>Q: Do you know what level of jobs will be required in waste handling?</i></p> <p>A: The figures given today relate to the GDF, but there are at present 1,000 people working at Sellafield preparing waste to go to the GDF. We are working with Sellafield to enumerate what</p>	

	<p>those jobs will be in the future, and will also apply this to the other sites where waste is currently stored.</p> <p>14.4 <i>Q: Will the site selection process include the existing presence of relevant supply chain?</i> A: It is more important to site selection that it meets environmental or transport criteria. Gaps in the supply chain are more easily addressed.</p> <p>14.5 In response to a comment, SH noted that the GDF is will have such a significant economic impact on an area that it could be used by government to kick start investment in other sectors. Government may consider using the project to replace a declining sector which had been a significant economic factor in an area. He also noted that contractors will be required to indicate the social value of their bid as part of the tender process.</p> <p>14.6 SH advised the meeting that NWS will next be looking at the Gross Added Value of the project to the local economy.</p> <p>14.7 It was noted that communities engaged in the siting process were not perhaps aware that the greater proportion of jobs were non-nuclear, and that this should be highlighted. Also, a ten year construction project was not something many communities were familiar with.</p> <p>SH advised the meeting that once the initial spoil generated in construction had been removed from site, further spoil would be used in sealing the tunnels following the emplacement of waste. Part of the site selection process included identifying the right geology to produce the right kind of spoil for backfilling.</p> <p>14.8 The Chair thanked Mr Hughes for his presentation.</p>	
	<p>15. PRESENTATION ON REPORT ON 'NDA ADDED VALUE' COMMISSIONED BY NULEAF</p>	
<p>15.1</p> <p>15.2</p> <p>15.3</p>	<p>The Executive Director gave a presentation on the report prepared by Assystem on behalf of Nuleaf.</p> <p>Nuleaf had commissioned Assystem to review the socio-economic impact of NDA including in comparison with other industries and other countries.</p> <p>Conclusions drawn from the report were that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuclear decommissioning is a 120 year £132Bn project and must bring added value to communities wherever possible. • It is a diverse and complex picture. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is some evidence of strategic thinking, and NDA compares favourably to other industries in some regards. • There is a need for standardisation in collection of data. • There needs to be more information on sustainability issues. • More could be done to demonstrate integration with wider plans. • Some of the international examples are worthy of note as they demonstrate how standardised methods could be used to develop a fair allocation of community benefits. 	
15.4	In response to a query, PM clarified that Nuleaf would use the report to support Nuleaf's responses to consultations on NDA Business Plan, review of their socio-economic strategy and UK radioactive waste policy. There was also the question of how it could be used to influence procurement strategy across the nuclear industry in the UK.	
15.5	It was noted that differences in tax raising powers and local government responsibilities in other nations need to be considered when drawing comparisons.	
15.6	The Chair noted that development of an international formula for the calculation of socio-economic benefits would be useful.	
15.7	It was suggested that Section 106 agreements should also be considered, and that the range of considerations expanded to include education and skills, interim use of sites and not focus solely on economic impacts. It was noted that Anglesey County Council had recently updated Supplementary Planning Guidance on Community Benefit expectations for major development which may prove useful to consider, and that the Well-being for Future Generations provided a useful impetus in Wales.	
	Following on from the discussion with Bill Hamilton during the morning session, it was agreed to continue the dialogue with NDA and Magnox around the interim uses of sites.	
15.8	There being no further business the meeting concluded at 14.41	

ACTION LIST

<i>15th December 2022</i>			
Item	Action	By	Outcome
2.1	Post minutes from September SG meeting on website.	CD	Done

6.3	Chase BEIS for a response to issues raised regarding internal coordination on energy projects.	PM	
7.2	Renew membership with GMF in 2023	CD	Paid
7.2	Bring a paper to a Steering Group meeting in 2023 confirming ongoing membership of GMF.	CD	Issue addressed under Item 9 at meeting on 7 th March 2023.
8.2	Bring a paper to a Steering Group meeting in 2023 confirming that the ongoing future format of meetings will be three online and one in-person. Finalise venue for in person meeting.	CD	Issue addressed under Item 8 at meeting on 7 th March 2023.
10.2	Update constitution and post on website	CD	Done
<i>15th September 2022</i>			
4.3	Write to NDA regarding opportunity to engage on IWM/SES/LTP development at early stage	PM	Letter sent 11 th November
5.3	Look at materials available for members of Community Partnerships/local community	PM	Ongoing
5.3	Prepare Briefing Paper on transport	PM	Ongoing
11.4	Liaise with Tom Greatrex re opportunities for working together on skills agenda	PM	Letter sent 20 September. Chased 27 th October
<i>15th June 2022</i>			
3.3	Chase Neil Smith and Jamie Reed again re Hazel Blears report. Escalate if necessary	PM/CD	Report being prepared for publication