

LGA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP ON RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT AND NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING

Minutes of the Steering Group meeting held online, 7th March 2023, 10.00 – 12.00

Present:

Cllr David Moore	Copeland Borough Council (Chair)
Cllr David Blackburn	Leeds City Council (NFLA Vice-Chair)
Cllr Mike Caswell	Sedgemoor District Council (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Eddy Newman	Manchester City Council
Cllr Richard Smith	Suffolk County Council
Beverley Alderton-Sambrook	Bassetlaw District Council
Jonathan Cook	Copeland Borough Council
Rachel Whaley	Cumbria County Council
Bethany Rance	East Suffolk Council
Terry Burns	Essex County Council
Charlotte Rushmere	Essex County Council
Linda Townsend	Gloucestershire County Council
Nia Carys Bowden	Gwynedd County Council
Tanya Vaughan	Lincolnshire County Council
Richard Outram	Manchester City Council
Nick Johnson	Norfolk County Council
Doug Bamsey	Sedgemoor District Council
Louise Martin	Somerset County Council
John Burton	Somerset West & Taunton Council
Gillian Ellis King	South Gloucestershire Council
Michael Moll	Suffolk County Council
Ross Walker	Suffolk County Council
Elise Kinderman	West Berkshire Council
Angharad Crump	Ynys Mon County Council
Philip Matthews	Nuleaf
Catherine Draper	Nuleaf

1.	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES	ACTION
1.1	<p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, noting that this was the first meeting for Beverley Alderton-Sambrook - Bassetlaw Council, Elise Kinderman - West Berkshire Council, Michael Moll - Suffolk County Council, Nick Johnson – Norfolk County Council and Iwan Roberts from Gwynedd Council. It would also, as a result of local government reorganisation in West Cumbria, be the last meeting for Cllr Marion Fitzgerald, Cllr David Southward and Steve Smith. The Chair thanks all three for their contribution to Nuleaf.</p>	
1.2	<p>Apologies were received from: Cllr Marion Fitzgerald – Allerdale Borough Council, Steve Smith – Copeland Borough Council, Cllr Craig Rivett – East Suffolk Council, Cllr David Godfrey – Folkestone & Hythe Council, Cllr Matthew Riddle – South Gloucestershire Council Cllr Carwyn Jones – Ynys Mon County Council.</p>	
2.	MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 15th DECEMBER 2022.	
2.1	<p>Gillian Ellis-King noted that her presence had not been recorded, though she had attended the meeting. Subject to this amendment the Minutes were approved as a true record and will be posted on the Nuleaf website.</p>	CD
3.	MATTERS ARISING	
3.1	<p>PM advised the meeting that there was still no publication date for the Hazel Blears report, and that, having spoken to Lincolnshire County Council, Nuleaf would contact central government regarding the issue raised by them at a later date. All other matters arising were dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.</p>	
4.	DISCUSSION ON CLOSER WORKING ARRANGEMENTS WITH NNLG	
4.1	<p>A paper had been circulated prior to the meeting setting out the background to this item and three potential working relationship options. The Chair asked members for their views.</p>	
4.2	<p>The meeting opened up to discussion. Points made were:</p>	

- Nuleaf is predominantly funded by NDA, and it is not NDA's role to fund scrutiny of new nuclear build.
- NNLAG should look at resolving its participatory and funding issues, rather than try to piggyback on Nuleaf.
- Nuleaf and NFLA have a common interest in the safe handling of radioactive waste and recognise the intergenerational issues this raises. However, this partnership would be unlikely to continue if Nuleaf merged with NNLAG.
- Whilst similar organisations in other countries may cover the whole nuclear fuel cycle, we need to address the situation in the UK.
- NNLAG is not pro-nuclear but seeks to make sure that any site hosting new nuclear build reflects the interests of the local community.
- NNLAG is looking at reshaping itself over the next year, and focusing more on skills, employment and new technologies.
- Any form of co-working would need to take place gradually.
- Where Nuleaf and NNLAG interests coincide, a joint approach would make sense.
- It was noted that the NDA Draft Business Plan contains a key activity for Magnox in the provision of support to nuclear new build.
- Discussions on new technology deployment at some decommissioning sites is already happening.
- There are many common goals between NFLA and NNLAG, and in the same way that NFLA and Nuleaf work together to tackle legacy issues, there is scope that NFLA and NNLAG could work together on those issues.
- NNLAG does not promote new nuclear but seeks the best outcome for host communities.
- It is important that any involvement with NNLAG activities did not impact directly or perceptibly upon Nuleaf's standing.
- A shared secretariat could provide support to NNLAG.

4.3

The Chair thanked members for their contribution. He concluded that he didn't see any change as imminent, but that Nuleaf should keep the door open to discussions with NNLAG on closer working. A merger was clearly not a suitable option at this stage. Nuleaf needs to work with NFLA to ensure they are comfortable with any changes, and we wish to avoid any members feeling that they need to withdraw from Nuleaf. The topic should remain on the agenda, and conversation continue.

PM

	There will be waste arising from any new nuclear and that is an area in which Nuleaf would wish to engage.	
5.	SMRs/AMRs: ENGAGEMENT ON WASTE AND COMMUNITY ISSUES	
5.1	The secretariat asked members whether they would welcome a meeting to discuss Advanced Modular Reactors (AMRs). These technologies are new, diverse, and have the potential to be deployed away from current nuclear licensed sites.	
5.2	Members agreed that the meeting would be beneficial and the Chair offered to speak to contacts at the National Nuclear Laboratory to identify a suitable speaker. The secretariat would also approach CoRWM and NFLA with the view of participating.	DM/PM
6.	UPDATE ON NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT	
6.1	PM took the meeting through the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting and provided updates on: NDA Group update; UK Government, Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), fusion power, regulatory matters, Nuleaf news, and international news.	
6.2	Beth Rance confirmed that the demolition of the turbine hall at Sizewell A is likely to take place in 2024, and East Suffolk Council has yet to receive the planning application.	
6.3	Since the meeting papers were circulated, UK government has published its consultation document on the review of UK Radioactive Waste Policy. Nuleaf will prepare a consultation response which it will circulate to members, and the Executive Director would be happy to comment on members own submissions. A meeting is being arranged later in the month for members with central government to discuss the review. Once the date is finalised a meeting invitation will be circulated in the normal manner.	
6.4	Also, since the papers were circulated it had been announced that Andrew Bowie was now the UK's first 'Minister for Nuclear and Networks'. His remit covers the whole nuclear fuel cycle.	
6.5	Nuleaf has organised a meeting with Jamie Reed to consider the review of NDA's Local Economic and Social Impact Strategy. A meeting invitation has been circulated. A concern was raised that the current strategy tended to focus solely on economic	

	factors and that reporting did not take into account the impact of the site when it was operational.	
7.	UPDATE ON GDF SITING PROCESS	
7.1	PM took the meeting through the paper which had been circulated in advance and which provided updates on: Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) Siting Process, Nuclear Waste Services (NWS), regulatory matters, international news; and CoRWM.	
7.2	It was noted that NWS are interested in engaging with Nuleaf to discuss how it can ensure that it leaves a positive influence on the communities which do not go forward in the siting process.	
7.3	The Chair commented that the Mid-Copeland Community Partnership covers the area which currently hosts the waste which will be emplaced in the GDF. Therefore, the relatively high positive scores in the resident survey could be said to reflect the desire of the community to find a solution for final disposal for the waste it already deals with.	
7.4	The Chair noted that NWS is undertaking work on the test of public support, and what form this will take. However, it should be noted that that the decision on the test of public support rests with the local authority.	
8.	RATIFICATION OF MEETING FORMAT ON ONGOING BASIS	
8.1	At the Steering Group meeting held on 15th December 2022 the Chair directed the secretariat to propose at a future meeting that the format of three online meetings and one in-person meeting (with site visit when appropriate) be adopted as an ongoing format for the Steering Group.	
8.2	The Steering Group agreed the proposal without further discussion.	
9.	RATIFICATION OF GMF MEMBERSHIP ON ON-GOING BASIS	
9.1	At the Steering Group meeting held on 15th December 2022, the Chair proposed that a motion be made to a future meeting that Nuleaf would renew its annual membership of GMF without recourse to the Steering Group each year, unless circumstances warranted withdrawing from membership.	

9.2	The Steering Group agreed the proposal.	
10.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
10.1	PM advised the meeting that, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chairs, it had been agreed that the in-person meeting this year would be held in September. The meeting would take place in Cumbria and the secretariat would welcome input on the agenda.	
10.2	A date for the next meeting had yet to be agreed. Members would be advised as soon as possible.	CD
11.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
11.1	In response to a request from members of the Radioactive Waste Planning Group, the secretariat had commissioned the company which had developed the new Nuleaf website to add a secure section to the website. This would enable members to share reports and documentation with other member authorities may find useful. The secretariat wished to know whether this facility should be open to all members or restricted to contributing members only.	
11.1a	The Steering Group felt that it would be most beneficial if all members were able to access and contribute to the secure section.	CD
11.2	PM advised the meeting that a surplus of around £10,000 was forecast at the end of this year. He asked that members consider whether there was any topic on which research could be commissioned which would benefit members. Suggestions should be sent to the secretariat.	All
11.3	It was noted that Catherine Draper was retiring from the position of Director's Assistant after 15 years with Nuleaf. Members noted their appreciation of Catherine's contribution.	
11.3a	PM advised that the intention was to split Catherine's current role and recruit a part time administrator and a part time policy adviser. It was hoped that the new officers would be in post before Catherine left Nuleaf on 31 st May 2023. He welcomed interest from officers in secondment to fulfil the policy role.	

ACTION LIST

<i>7th March 2023</i>			
Item	Action	By	Outcome
2.1	Amend attendance list and post minutes from December SG meeting on website.	CD	Done
4.3	Keep discussion on closer working with NNLAG on agenda	PM	In hand
5.2	Organise meeting for members on AMRs	PM/CD	Taking place on 14 th June
5.2	Contact>NNL for speaker on AMRs	DM	Done.
10.2	Circulate date for June meeting	CD	Done
11.1	Ensure access to secure section of website is open to all members	CD	Done.
11.2	Notify secretariat of any suggestions for commissioned work.	All	None received.
<i>15th December 2022</i>			
6.3	Chase BEIS for a response to issues raised regarding internal coordination on energy projects.	PM	Ongoing
<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