

**Note of the meeting of the Radioactive Waste Planning Group,
31st October 2023, 10.00 – 12.30, online**

Present:

Heather Morrison	Cumberland Council
Alice Paine	Dorset Council
Eren Balkir	Dorset Council
Bethany Rance	East Suffolk Council
Charlotte Rushmere	Essex County Council
Linda Marsh	Folkestone and Hythe Council
Linda Townsend	Gloucestershire County Council
Angharad Crump	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Richard Outram	Manchester City Council
Matthew Winslow	Maldon County Council
Sion Roberts	Snowdonia National Park Authority
John Burton	Somerset Council
Louise Martin	Somerset Council
Ross Walker	Suffolk County Council
Tom Rice	South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse District Councils
Rachel Whaley	Westmorland & Furness Council
Philip Matthews	Nuleaf
Chloe Atkinson	Nuleaf

Speakers

Paul Skelton	Nuclear Waste Services
Samantha McKenzie	Nuclear Waste Services
Frank Wigley	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

1	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES	ACTION
1.1	PM welcomed all members to the meeting.	
1.2	Apologies were received from Gillian Ellis-King- South Gloucestershire Council and Terry Burns from Essex County Council.	
2	Minutes held on the 18th of July 2023	
2.1	The meeting note was held to be a true and an accurate record. The minutes will be posted on Nuleaf website	CA

3	Matters Arising	
3.1	All matters arising were reviewed. It was requested that a session on Planning Performance Agreements will be added to January's meeting agenda.	PM
4	Annual meeting with NWS on Low Level Waste (LLW) Management	
4.1	PM introduced Paul Skelton and Sam Mackenzie from Nuclear Waste Services (NWS).	
4.2	<p>Paul ran his presentation explaining how Nuclear Waste Services started operating on the 31st of January 2022, combining the expertise from Radioactive Waste Management. This was an important part of the wider move to create 'One NDA' with 4 subsidiaries. His presentation focused on the management of LLW and the operation of the LLWR.</p> <p>It had been another successful year with 98% of waste diverted from the repository along alternative routes. These included combustion, super compaction, and disposal to landfill.</p>	
4.3	At the LLWR there is much work underway, with a primary focus being the capping of the trenches and Vault 8. This is a long term and complex project which will run until 2038.	
4.4	LLWR is also undertaking a major review of their 2011 Environmental Safety Case (ESC) which will be submitted to the Environment Agency in May 2026.	
4.5	Lastly, Paul spoke about the Social Licence to Operate and Community Engagement which continued to be based on an 'open door' policy and the support of local organisations through socio-economic funding.	
4.6	Question: While diversion of material from the LLWR is welcome, does it not merely impose a waste issue on other communities across the country?	
4.7	Answer: We are expected to embrace the Waste Hierarchy and so this is the right thing to do. Much of the material that is diverted is actually recovered e.g. metals that can be used again.	
4.8	Question: Looking forward, are there some challenges for your disposal routes? Does the closure of landfill sites cause issues?	
4.9	Answer: This is a concern and an issue that is being monitored. At present the market is delivering all the disposal	

	routes satisfactorily. If this changes they will have to work with Government to look at alternatives.	
4.10	Question: The old trenches were not built to modern standards. Is there any issue with leachate from below the trenches?	
4.11	Answer: This is not an issue at present. There is monitoring of leachate flow and action will be taken if there are any issues.	
4.12	Question: Can you provide any detail on the amount and type of aggregate being brought in for capping of vaults. Is it coming from within Cumbria or being imported from elsewhere? Is it being transported by rail?	
4.13	Answer: We don't have this information now we will take your details and speak to the project team.	PS
4.14	Question: How are you planning to avoid flooding and the impacts of climate change?	
4.15	Answer: The biggest risk at present is coastal erosion. This is addressed through the Environmental Safety Case and we are working closely with the EA on adapting to these risks.	
4.16	Question: Asbestos is a huge issue for the NDA isn't it? How are you planning to manage asbestos from decommissioning?	
4.17	Answer: Yes, this is a significant issue. Some of the asbestos is radioactive and some is not but all will have to be managed appropriately.	
5	Update from NDA on land use planning work	
5.1	PM welcomed Frank Wigley from the NDA. Frank updated the Group on the development of strategy and practice around land use and planning. Key points were:	
5.2	In terms of the Magnox sites applications for permissions for disposal were being made for the two Lead and Learn Sites, Trawsfynydd and Winfrith. High-level assumptions have been generated for Berkeley and Chapelcross, Work to do the same at Sizewell Dungeness and Hinkley is underway. Across the estate they are considering how they can deliver meaningful stakeholder engagement and are working to understand what land needs to be used for what by when.	
5.3	At Sellafield work is also underway on stakeholder engagement and on looking at groundwater and contaminated land issues.	

5.4	On End States and Land Use they are continuing a range of work that has been discussed with Nuleaf, including on the interface with Town and Country Planning, communications and Masterplanning.	
5.5	Question: in terms of engagement with local authorities, will that process be underway within 2024 or 2025?	
5.6	Answer: there will be ongoing engagement through Nuleaf and with Local Planning Authorities over the next period.	
5.7	Question: What is the situation with Sellafield engagement?	
5.8	Answer: The approach is under consideration and should become clearer in the new year.	
6	Update on developments in radioactive waste management	
6.1	PM presented the paper, highlighting several developments: Magnox has been rebranded as Nuclear Restoration Services (NRS), reflecting the fact that their mission has been expanded to include Advanced Gas Cooled Reactor (AGR) Decommissioning, Dounreay, and potentially some other sites. NRS will be coming to the December Steering Group to update members on this.	
6.2	The Managing Radioactive Substances and Nuclear Decommissioning Policy was presented to the Radioactive Substances Policy Group (RSPG) at their last meeting, and Nuleaf was in attendance. The final policy adopts some of the things that Nuleaf was asking for, such as a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) for any Near Surface Disposal (NSD) site. It did not adopt Nuleaf's call for a comprehensive framework on Community Benefits, but this is something that PM will meet DESNZ on in the coming days. The Policy is expected to be published early in 2024.	
6.3	The RSPG also highlighted some significant developments in the new nuclear field. Early in 2024 the Government is planning to publish a roadmap for the delivery of 24GW of new nuclear and launch two consultations on (a) alternative routes to market and (b) the siting process for new nuclear stations.	
6.4	John McNamara is moving to Great British Nuclear on secondment, with Sam Harris, Head of Government Relations, taking over the Stakeholder Engagement brief. PM and Sam	

	Harris have agreed to meet monthly in John's absence, and Sam will come to a future Steering Group to address members.	
7	Update on the GDF sitting process	
7.1	PM presented the GDF updates paper, highlighting:	
7.2	The decision by NWS to withdraw from Allerdale, ending the siting process there. This was the first time at a decision has been taken to withdraw from an area, and the other Community Partnerships are interested in how NWS has managed this.	
7.3	PM had been at a useful Technical Meeting on the role of local government in decommissioning, held by the IAEA between the 16 th and 20 th October. He would provide a full report in the December Steering Group papers.	
8	Local Site Updates	
8.1	Winfrith- Work is ongoing on the Masterplan.	
8.2	Sellafield: Lots of activity on the Sellafield site. A travel plan for the site is in development and should be published in the new year. There is a live discussion about the boundaries of the Sellafield site which are very constrained, but it has been agreed to keep the current boundaries at present. Work is also underway on the PPA and regarding potential boreholes as part of the GDF process.	
8.3	Manchester The Nuclear Free Local Authorities are involved in a legal case regarding Sizewell C. This is going to court tomorrow, and an update will be provided to a future meeting.	
9	Any Other Business	
9.1	No AOB were raised	

ACTION LIST

Item	Action	By	Outcome
2.1	Minutes to be uploaded to the Nuleaf website	CA	Completed
3.1	Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) to be added to January's meeting agenda.	PM	Having spoken with Snowdonia National Park Authority it has been agreed that a session on PPAs will be on the Agenda for the April 2024 RWPG meeting
4.13	PS to respond to Rachel Whaley and RWPG re: issues around aggregate import.	PS	Nuleaf has emailed PS to ask for a response.