

Minutes of the Steering Group meeting and Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM).

Held in the Imperial Hotel, Llandudno as part of the Nuleaf Annual Gathering on the 18th June 2024 11:00 – 16:00

Attendees

Cllr David Moore	Cumberland Council (Chair)
Cllr Mike Caswell	Somerset Council (Vice Chair)
Cllr Joseph Ghayouba	Cumberland Council
Cllr Paul Thomas	Folkestone & Hythe District Council
Cllr Alan Martin	Folkestone & Hythe District Council
Cllr Aled Morris Jones	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Cllr Neville Evans	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Cllr. Chris Davies	South Gloucestershire Council
Cllr Richard Smith	Suffolk County Council
Jonathan Cook	Cumberland Council
Bethany Rance	East Suffolk Council
Isaac Stringer	East Suffolk Council
Terry Burns	Essex County Council
Claire Bromley	Gloucestershire County Council
Nia Swann Bowden	Gwynedd Council
Iwan Jones	Isle of Anglesey/Ynys Mon County Council
Angharad Crump	Isle of Anglesey/Ynys Mon County Council
Christian Branch	Isle of Anglesey/Ynys Mon County Council
Andy Gutherson	Lincolnshire County Council
Jonathan Holland	North Wales Councils
Terry Burns	Suffolk County Council
Ross Walker	Suffolk County Council
John Burton	Somerset Council
Louise Martin	Somerset Council
Gillian Ellis King	South Gloucestershire Council
Philip Matthews	Nuleaf
Chloe Atkinson	Nuleaf
Steve Smith	Nuleaf Consultant

Speakers and Guests

Alan Raymant	Cwmni Eginio
Elliw Williams	Cwmni Eginio
Dafydd Gruffydd	Menter Mon
Pip Hatt	NDA
David Wallace	NDA

1.	Welcome and Apologies	ACTION
1.1	The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and noted the excellent turnout of members. He welcomed a number of first time attendees and said he looked forward to the discussion today and the other elements of the Annual Gathering.	
1.2	Apologies were received from: Charlotte Rushmere- Essex County Council; Cllr. Martin Hill – Lincolnshire; Linda Townsend - Gloucestershire County Council; Richard Outram – Manchester City Council; Rachel Whaley – Westmorland and Furness Council	
2.	Minutes of the previous meeting held on the 13th of March.	
2.1	The Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed to be an accurate record and will be posted on the Nuleaf website.	CA
3.	Matters Arising	
3.1	<p>It has now been confirmed that Nuleaf and NNLAG (New Nuclear Local Authority Group) will hold a joint meeting with Great British Nuclear, online on the 18th of July between 1:00pm - 2.30pm. Members are requested to note this date and further information will be sent out shortly.</p> <p>A shorter Radioactive Waste Planning Group (RWPG) meeting will be held on the morning of the 18th July between 10.30am and 12 noon. The shorter meeting is due to the need to postpone two of the planned presentations due to the impact of the General Election.</p> <p>All other actions have been completed.</p>	
4	NDA engagement with local authorities and communities facilitated round table discussion.	
4.1	<p>The Chair welcomed Steve Smith and explained that Steve, along with Doug Bamsey, had been commissioned by Nuleaf to review local government and community engagement with the NDA. This session was an opportunity for Nuleaf members to offer their initial thoughts on the engagement landscape.</p> <p>Steve thanked the Chair and introduced himself. He had been involved in Nuleaf for many years while supporting the work of Copeland Borough Council and has continued to work in this field as a consultant. Doug Bamsey was also a former member of Nuleaf and had worked in a senior role for Sedgemoor District Council.</p>	
4.2	Steve introduced the work he and Doug are undertaking. It is now 20 years since the Energy Act 2004, which established the NDA and gave it a legal requirement to engage with	

stakeholders. Much has changed since then, and there will be further change with the incorporation of the Advanced Gas-cooled Reactors (AGRs) into the NDA estate.

It is therefore timely to look again at engagement, and this work parallels a review of the Site Stakeholder Groups (SSGs) that the NDA has commissioned. The study will look at the stakeholder landscape and seek Nuleaf member views on how things could be improved. It will also look at international examples and those from other industries to see what could be learned.

Question: Are we doing this work at the request of the NDA and are they interested in the outcomes.

Answer: This is very much a Nuleaf study but NDA has provided some funding and are certainly interested in the outcome and how it connects with the work they have commissioned in review of the SSGs.

Comment: The Energy Act requirements are non-negotiable and so it is very positive that this work is underway, and that the NDA is supporting a review of the SSGs.

Steve noted that the work began earlier in June, and it is planned to report in the autumn. The aim of today is to get the views of members on a number of critical questions. At this point attendees were split into three groups and asked to consider:

- What in your view are the key issues affecting local authority, Nuleaf and wider stakeholder engagement with the NDA?
- Does your council engage in stakeholder engagement activities with other sectors/partners which you see as examples of good practice and why?
- Are there new techniques for stakeholder engagement that you suggest would be appropriate for NDA to consider employing.
- What changes would you like to be considered to improve the effectiveness of Nuleaf to represent the views of local authority member Councils and their communities?

Each group discussed these questions and reported back at the end of the session. Key overarching messages fed back through this process were:

- Support the need for the review of NDA engagement strategy and practices

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity required around approach and resource availability to support approach • Opportunity to access community engagement through local authorities • Explore local site issues for local people through local authorities • Opportunity to review messages and means of communicating those messages • Opportunity to enhance the role/visibility of Nuleaf. 	
5.	Updates on national developments in radioactive waste management.	
5.1	<p>PM presented the paper and highlighted a number of items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NDA had provided a detailed response to the comments Nuleaf had made in our response to the consultation on the draft Social Value and Communities Strategy. This level of feedback had not been provided before, but it was useful and welcome. • The new UK and Devolved Policy on Managing radioactive substances and nuclear decommissioning had finally been published on the 16th May. • The Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) had notified Sellafield Ltd. that they will be prosecuted for alleged information technology offences. Two senior staff at Sellafield, involved in information security, had announced that they would be leaving. • The Environment Agency (EA) has written to the Low-Level Waste Repository (LLWR) expressing its concern with delays in securing waste on the site, following the lack of progress in the completion of an engineered cap on waste trenches. • It had been announced that Wylfa had been selected as the preferred site for a new large-scale nuclear plant following the purchase of the land by Great British Nuclear (GBN). It had also been announced that Trawsfynydd would not now be considered for the initial roll-out of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs). 	
6.	Update on the Geological Disposal Facility siting process	
6.1	<p>PM introduced the paper. He noted it was a short update due to some GDF related activities being curtailed as a result of the election. He highlighted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Theddlethorpe Community Partnership were seeking an Independent Chair to take the Group forward. • That Nuclear Waste Services (NWS) had announced plans to submit a Development Consent Order (DCO) for site characterisation boreholes as early as 2027. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the EURAD programme, which Nuleaf has participated in, has now ended. A new 5 year EURAD 2 programme is expected but it is not clear what engagement there will be with civil society. 	
7	Date of next meeting	
7.1	The date of the next Steering Group meeting was confirmed as the 11 th September, to be held online via Teams between 10am and 2pm.	
8.	Any other business	
8.1	No other business was discussed.	

EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (EGM)		
	<p>Introduction: The Chair opened the Nuleaf EGM. The meeting was being convened to report fully on budget and financial information, as not all of this had been available at the time of the March AGM. The meeting would also consider proposed amendments to the constitution and present the Service Plan 2024/25 for final approval.</p> <p>The Executive Director confirmed that the meeting was quorate.</p>	
1.	Finance and funding	
1.1	<p>PM introduced the Finance and Funding paper and tabled the Audited Accounts for last year.</p> <p>The Audit for 2023/24, undertaken by Peter Frost of Suffolk County Council, had found the accounts to be fully in order. There was a healthy surplus for the year of £24,298.39, due to (a) a hiatus between Catherine Draper's retirement and the recruitment of Chloe Atkinson; (b) the fact that Chloe works fewer hours than Catherine did; and (c) that the planned Senior Policy Advisor post was not recruited - policy support has instead been provided by external consultants on a per diem basis.</p> <p>Phil thanked Peter Frost for preparing the Audit, with this being echoed by the Chair.</p> <p>PM then introduced the proposed budget for 2024/25. Funding from the NDA, Nuclear Waste Services (NWS) and Nuclear Restoration Services (NRS) had been confirmed and would be at the same level as in the last financial year. It was hoped that member fees would continue at broadly the same level as in the previous year. Nuleaf had also received a contribution from NDA towards the costs of the current consultancy work on</p>	

	<p>stakeholder engagement, and also expected to receive some funding from the IAEA to cover costs of engagement in their work.</p> <p>Anticipated income in 2024/25 would be significantly higher than in 2023/24 but planned expenditure was also expected to be higher due to the funding of consultancy work and a plan to fund member involvement in Nuleaf's international work. This would lead to a projected deficit of £3,170 for the year. Given the large surplus in the previous year this was felt to be acceptable.</p> <p>Finally, Phil proposed that membership fees be held at the same level for 2024/25. Membership fees have not risen since 2007. The paper recommended that the EGM:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approves the audit of accounts for 2023/24 as a true record. 2. Agrees the proposed budget for FY2024-25. 3. Agree to hold membership fees at the same level for the coming year. <p>All recommendations were approved unanimously.</p>	
2.	Proposed amendments to Nuleaf constitution	
2.1	<p>PM tabled paper 2 which proposed some amendments to the Nuleaf constitution. These were designed to reflect the decision of Manchester City Council, the sole Contributing member of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA), to instead become a Corresponding member. This had implications for the current role of NFLA within Nuleaf. In response to this, amendments to Articles 8 and 16 of the constitution were proposed. A further amendment to Article 18 was also proposed, to enable the AGM to be moved from the March to June meeting. This would enable the Audited accounts of the previous year, and an accurate budget for the current year to be presented.</p> <p>The EGM unanimously approved all the proposed amendments. The Chair thanked members and noted that he was pleased that the NFLA would continue to engage within Nuleaf.</p>	
3.	Nuleaf Service plan 2024/2025	
3.1	<p>PM presented the final Service Plan 2024/25 for approval by Members. He noted that the draft Plan had been presented to and discussed with a wide range of senior people within the NDA Group, and that he was very encouraged by how the level of engagement between Nuleaf and senior staff at the NDA had developed in recent years. This ensured better understanding of</p>	

	<p>Nuleaf's role and enabled the Service Plan to be properly aligned with all relevant work areas across the NDA.</p> <p>Question: I did a wordsearch for Master-planning but couldn't a reference to it, even though this is an important issue.</p> <p><i>Answer: Master-planning is definitely in the Service Plan but it is probably referred to as Strategic Planning, as that is the term the NDA prefers.</i></p> <p>Members unanimously approved the Service Plan 2024/25.</p>	
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LUNCH

9.	Seminar: Socio-economic and the NDA in North Wales	
9.1	<p>The Chair welcomed everyone back and introduced the afternoon session, a seminar on socio-economics and the NDA with a focus on North Wales, one of the NDA's three priority areas for socio-economic support. The seminar would hear presentations from three speakers, after which there would be a round table discussion with members.</p> <p>He then welcomed and introduced the three speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nia Swann Boden, Business Support Unit Manager at Gwynedd Council; • Dafydd Gruffydd, Managing Director, Menter Mon; and • Alan Rayment, CEO of Cwmni Eginio. <p>He also noted that representatives of the NDA and Nuclear Restoration Services (NRS) were in attendance. They would also be able to respond to relevant points raised.</p> <p>The Chair then welcomed Nia Swann Boden, and invited her to speak.</p>	
10	Socio-economic challenges for Gwynedd and the role of nuclear	
10.1	<p>In her presentation Ms Swann Boden provided an overview of a number of initiatives that her local authority had been leading or engaged in, much of it connected to the Gwynedd Covid Economic Recovery Plan which had been supported by the NDA and NRS. This comprehensive plan focuses on three critical areas of the economy:</p>	

Major Recovery – which has been supporting the development of significant local sites at Trawsfynydd and Llanbedr Airfield.

Business Recovery: Initiatives under this include Project Recharge, a business engagement strategy, and various business grant packages aimed at revitalizing local enterprises.

Workforce Recovery: This is addressing in-work poverty and supporting the local workforce through targeted interventions and support mechanisms.

A major objective is focusing on supporting the Trawsfynydd site, specifically on its development and the broader understanding of nuclear power. To this end, schools across Gwynedd have been engaged on low-carbon energy, looking at how you can establish a balance between different energy sources including nuclear. The local authority and Cwmni Egin have been collaborating with M-Sparc to develop educational videos, including on the potential benefits of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs).

Gwynedd also commissioned a local consultancy group to undertake community narrative research into local people's memories and perceptions of the Trawsfynydd nuclear site. The initiative is governed by the site board.

The other big redevelopment opportunity in the area is Llanbedr Airfield and ex-RAF base that is now being redeveloped into the Snowdonia Aerospace Centre. It has the potential to host many other projects, such as a proposed dark sky observatory. Efforts are underway to secure resources to build a bypass around the village of Llanbedr to unlock the potential of this site.

Other initiatives include the Business Engagement Strategy and the offering of business grants of up to £25,000 to support the development of businesses. The aim is to assist businesses in reducing costs and improving efficiencies, thereby facilitating their advancement and growth in their respective sectors.

Finally, in-work poverty is a problem we have been working with the local council to provide assistance. We identify barriers, support with childcare costs and offer regular catch ups with a mentor to help them in employment.

Question: How long is the grant application process and how do you validate the grants?

	<p><i>Answer: We make the process as short and easy as possible, however the applications have to be checked and sent via a case officer and taken to panels for approval.</i></p> <p>Question: Of the 36 businesses you are supporting, how many of those are in the hospitality industry? I am involved in a community pub and can see that one of the major issues facing hospitality is the cost of energy.</p> <p><i>Answer: Initially we didn't include hospitality as there are other programmes supporting that sector. However, once we got the programme running, we realized we should open it up as hospitality is a major part of the local economy, and is facing particular challenges as you say. For example, we are working with a local nightclub which has faced challenges with a decline in the number of people who go clubbing. We are having a conversation with the owner about whether the space could also be used for other activities.</i></p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p>Promoting Community Investment and engagement</p>	
<p>11.1</p>	<p>The chair welcomed Dafydd Gruffydd, Chief Executive of Menter Mon.</p> <p>Mr Gruffydd began by setting out Mentor Mon's aim which is to unlock the potential of people and resources to secure the future of communities. The organisation's work spans a range of areas with a focus on support for the Welsh language, renewable energy, nature and wider economic development. For many years they have received support from the LEADER programme and also from the NDA who have supported us since 2008. Of all our funders the NDA has been the most responsive and most flexible and in particular they are helping us with the Morlais scheme which I will say more about shortly.</p> <p>There is a great line within the LEADER programme – 'the things that make you different are the things that make you interesting.' That underpins all the work we do, from supporting the red squirrel and encouraging the Welsh language. These are all things that make us different and make us who we are.</p> <p>All our work sits within 3 categories – community, economy and energy.</p> <p>Community focussed activities include supporting a Welsh language music festival and taking over the running of a local castle which has significant heritage value and also includes an important nature site.</p>	

In terms of the **economy** one area of focus is in encouraging young people to stay or return to the area. That is a particular challenge in north Wales and vital to the survival of the Welsh language and in creating energy and dynamism in the local economy. Steve Jobs said that 'creativity is joining the dots' and by being involved in a range of work Menter Mon helps do that.

Lastly, **renewable energy** is a major part of what we do, especially the Morlais energy scheme off Anglesey/Ynys Mon. One driver of engaging with this was the ending of European funding post Brexit – renewables offered the potential to raise more of our own income. We also saw the benefit of community ownership of energy assets – it can be done by us, not to us. Morlais is a tidal energy development covering 35km² of sea near Holy Island, Anglesey, The area has what we like to think are 'unfair advantages' in terms of the string tides, grid connections and port infrastructure. It has a potential generation capacity of 240MW and one benefit of tidal energy is that the generation output is regular and predictable.

The Morlais scheme seeks to secure consents so that private energy developers can utilise the area using a range of different generation devices – 4 developers have done so to date. The energy generated is transported to an on-land substation and then on to the grid.

The aim is to generate low carbon energy but also to support the local economy. Menter Mon is engaged in supporting skills and training within school and Bangor University also offers a tidal energy module as part of an engineering qualification. More widely we engage in supporting local and regional supply chains and to build links with the Welsh Government's Business Wales programme This ensures that local young people can access the opportunities provided.

Looking forward, a £26 million hydrogen hub is due to open in 2026 in Holyhead, that will produce clean hydrogen to power local buses and trains. This is a joint venture with EDF, and £4.8 million has been allocated by DESNZ to support it.

12	SMRs and the redevelopment of the the Trawsfynydd site	
	<p>The chair introduced Alan Raymant who began by presenting a video in which local people offered their reflections on the significance of the Trawsfynydd nuclear site to the local economy and also as a supporter of local communities and thus the Welsh language.</p> <p>The closure of the nuclear power station has presented significant challenges to the area, as it has led to a reduction in employment and opportunities. Cwmni Eginio was established in 2021 to support the transition of the site to new uses and in this we are working closely with Nia’s team and others. The organisation is supported by the Welsh Government and rooted in the community.</p> <p>Much work to date has been related to the potential for developing Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) on the site. Traws was initially earmarked as the first site for development of SMRs in the UK. However. It has recently been announced by Great British Nuclear (GBN) that they do not view the site as one that is suitable for the first wave of SMR development. This is because they want the initial SMR developments to be at a large scale and Trawsfynydd does not have the land or water availability for this. This does not mean that the site could not be developed for SMRs at a future date.</p> <p>So what is our focus now and in the future? We aim to create more opportunities by enhancing our existing programs and addressing ongoing challenges such as managing supply chains, enhancing skill sets, and navigating the cost of living. It's crucial for us to collaborate with colleges to ensure they can upskill and train individuals effectively. We are also looking to the broader regional development context and to look at energy as a whole rather than just nuclear.</p> <p>We are committed to evaluating the most suitable solutions and incorporating innovative ideas into our plans. This means that when opportunities arise, we are well-prepared to capitalize on them effectively. We are also awaiting the outcome of the UK election and the decisions that the next Government will take in terms of energy and the two nuclear sites in North Wales.</p>	
13	Panel discussion	
	The Chair thanked the speakers and invited questions and comments to the panel.	

Question: It has been commented that local energy projects don't usually lead to lower energy costs. In my area that is certainly the case. Does the Morlais scheme help address this?

Answer: This is an important point, but it is a complicated issue. Due to the nature of the energy market the scheme doesn't deliver low-cost energy but does deliver wider benefits in terms of jobs and skills.

Question: Following on from that, with energy projects there are cases where the community feels it is taking the direct impacts but not getting some of the biggest gains. How can we maximise the benefits of such schemes, especially in areas of high deprivation?

Answer: It is often the case that in Anglesey you will have a lot of development that doesn't really seem to help local people as much as it should. There is a difference though between projects imposed on an area and those coming from the community. Menter Mon's work is very much focussed on delivering Social Value and 'sweating' every community and environmental benefit out of a project. Public policy is also important, especially for private development, to require the added value to be delivered.

It is also the case that you need to think about the wider value from the start, not just as an add on at a later date.

Question: The funding for the substation and grid is public money, but it is predicated on the private sector coming in and using the infrastructure. This means that the risk is with the public purse and there is not certainty that the generation will actually be delivered, doesn't it?

Answer: There is a risk there for the Government, NDA and the other funders. However, for an area such as Anglesey, going in early, with the significant tidal resources that the area has should minimise that risk.

Question: As a supplementary question, has there been an issue with State Aid rules?

Answer: We came in just under the threshold for these to apply, so it didn't impact on the project.

Question: One issue people have with 'Green Jobs' is that they are sceptical about the numbers of jobs that are being created. In this area, how do these job numbers compare with those

that used to be employed at the nuclear stations and how broad is the spread of jobs?

Answer: The spread of jobs is similar to those from past industries and does include unskilled jobs and those not connected with the technical aspects e.g. caterers etc. Also critical is the skills dimension – if we can prepare our workforce then they can access all types of new opportunities whether that be in nuclear, tidal or elsewhere.

Comment: Young people like to have flexible skills but also like to have something to aim for e.g. a particular development or work areas. In a fast-changing world it is difficult to persuade people to invest the time and energy to develop new skills unless they can see the direct opportunities.

Comment: The Wylfa example is useful. Many people were trained up in expectation of a new nuclear development that dint occur at that time. Some of those roles are now usable in renewables and of course we may see new nuclear at Wylfa again and workers may chose to return to work at the site if that happens.

Question: You mentioned that there are 4 companies engaged in Morlais. Do they work collaboratively and do they see the scope for using these technologies elsewhere in the UK and overseas.

Answer: There is collaboration, and in fact two companies are using the same turbines. Menter Mon also has a role in promoting co-operation. Where we identify a mutual interest we encourage this – for example there is collaborative working an organisation in Wrexham.

Question: How does this development sit with ecologists and others protecting the area. I live by Dungeness and the SSSI designation does cause challenges for development.

Answer: It is an issue but as we had a good track record in the area for protecting wildlife, there is a degree of trust. We deploy and monitor measuring the impact to manage the wildlife project.

Question: How was Menter Mon established and who do you report to?

Answer: We were set up originally by Anglesey County Council to run the LEADER project and it has grown from there. We are a not-for-profit social enterprise with our own Board.

Question: You mention you are a nonprofit enterprise but presumably you have targets in terms of e.g. return on investment? So, in terms of Morlais you must have in mind the amount of generation you need to deliver a suitable return?

Answer: Everything we do has to be based on a robust business case. We can make profit it is just that we cannot distribute it. We use our returns to employ more staff and some of the profit will be invested back into the community.

Comment: I was involved at the start of Menter Mon and it has really flourished and grown into a fantastic organisation over time.

Question: Trawsfyndd is NDA lead and learn site. What effect does this branding have on your challenges to bring forward new development?

Answer: I actually think the two are complimentary as the timescales for decommissioning are of a different order and there is an opportunity to create a centre of excellence in decommissioning which would be very valuable.

Comment: We can sometimes be too fixated on the future when decommissioning is actually a big deal and will be so for a long time. The fact it is a Lead and Learn site is in part because we have been lobbying for the decommissioning mission to be maintained, safeguarding employment on the site.

Question: There are representatives in this room that are expecting to understand the learning from the Lead and Learn site and how it will be utilised on their site. It would be good to understand how this learning experience is shared.

Answer: I will offer a perspective on how it works at the Dounreay site, as someone who works for the NDA in Scotland. That and the other lead and Learn sites are very valuable in understanding how we can do things cheaper and more quickly, and we most certainly look at how we share best practice. At Dounreay the most relevant connection is with Sellafield, but Traws and Winfrith will be developing learning that will be very useful for the other Magnox sites.

Question: How easy have you found engagement with schools?

Answer: Partnering up with agencies within helps, but it is hard as we have found that teachers do not understand nuclear. We have designed our programme in a way that teachers have found helpful, and children engage in.

14	David Moore thanked the speakers for their presentations and contributions to the meeting.	
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ACTION LIST

<i>18TH June 2024</i>			
Item	Action	By	Outcome
2.1	Upload previous minutes onto Nuleaf's website.	CA	Done
3.1	CA to send RWPG and GBN invites	CA	Done