

# E-BULLETIN

**July 2012,  
Issue 27**



Welcome to Issue 27 of the e-bulletin, which contains news about:

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- A new topic paper on Hinkley Point C
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## **Update on Managing Radioactive Waste Safely (MRWS)**

There have been significant developments in the MRWS process.

In Cumbria, the West Cumbria MRWS Partnership's generic evaluation, covering safety, design, and other potential Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) impacts, is now drawing to a close. It is expected that the Partnership will complete, publish and submit its final advice to the three 'decision-making bodies' - Cumbria County Council, Copeland Borough Council, and Allerdale Borough Council – by mid August.

The Partnership has consulted on three occasions to understand key issues and public concerns about potential GDF development and surveyed public opinion across Cumbria by telephone on four occasions. Surveyed opinion across West Cumbria shows strong public support for moving to the next stage of the MRWS process.

However, an important concern is whether any site in West Cumbria could be potentially suitable for GDF construction given the known geological complexities of the area. Stronger assurances from the Geological Society, DECC, NDA and the Governments Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee have been sought and the advice is that further investigation is required to assess potentially suitable areas. Not enough is known about West Cumbria to rule out the whole area at this stage.

Regarding a siting process, principles have been identified to guide decision making should the interests of a potentially small unwilling 'host community' living close to a potentially

suitable site for GDF development conflict with the interests of the wider community who may be supportive of GDF development.

In a separate development, on 17 May Shepway District Council in Kent announced it would consult residents of Romney Marsh, around the decommissioned Dungeness nuclear power station, about whether to formally enter the MRWS process. Shepway's consultation closed on the 20 July. Consultation responses will inform a decision by Shepway DC in September about whether to make a formal 'expression of interest' and engage further with MRWS.

Other local authorities still have the opportunity to enter the MRWS process if they wish.

More on these issues can be found on the NuLeAF website under [Steering Group item 4](#). NuLeAF will prepare a case study on the West Cumbria MRWS process which will provide insight for other large capital schemes.

### **Update on the Submarine Dismantling Project (SDP)**

The SDP Independent Advisory Group met in Bristol on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> June. The meeting was based around reviews of:

- The public consultation exercise (which NuLeAF responded to)
- The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of disposal options
- The MOD's option analysis process
- The history of the IAG and its predecessor ISOLUS, and discussion on how effective engagement could be maintained as the project enters a new phase.

The review of process and consideration of next steps is seen as important as two key decisions are due in 2013 which will require an increased focus on engagement.

Firstly, the MOD will take a decision on site(s) for initial dismantling activity, something that is likely to take place at Devonport and Rosyth. Secondly, a short list of candidate sites (still to be identified but drawn from existing nuclear sites in the UK) will be identified as possible storage facilities for Intermediate Level Waste (ILW).

NuLeAF will continue to engage with this process and the planned stakeholder group post 2013.

More information on this is available on the website under [Steering Group item 5](#).

### **Consultation on the proposed justification process for reuse of the UK civil plutonium stockpile**

On 28 May DECC published a consultation document entitled: *Management of the UK's plutonium stocks - a consultation on the proposed justification process for the reuse of plutonium*. The consultation is about the process Government should adopt to determine justification of the 'whole MOX path from fabrication through to disposal' i.e. that the benefits of reusing the stockpiled civil plutonium mostly held at Sellafield will outweigh detriments.

The deadline for consultation responses is 20 August 2012. The NuLeAF Steering Group meeting on 20 July considered the terms of its own response which placed particular emphasis not only on consideration of generic costs and benefits of plutonium reuse, but also impacts upon locations and communities where policy could be implemented.

More on this item can be found on the website under [Steering Group item 6](#).

### **Low Level Waste: Planning and the Duty to Co-operate**

Significant changes in the planning and policy framework in England are having an impact on decisions around waste policy. This is likely to increase in future.

In one development the North London Waste Plan Examination was suspended following issues raised by South East Waste Planning Advisory Group (SEWPAG) and others<sup>1</sup> related to the Duty to Co-operate. The new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also bedding in following its launch in March<sup>2</sup>. The new NPPF represents a significantly stripped down framework for planning that sees the removal of almost all Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) – although PPS10 on Planning for Sustainable Waste Management is still 'live' until a new National Waste Management Plan for England is published.

In response to these developments and the concerns of local authorities, NuLeAF will be revising its interim guidance on Mineral and Waste Development Frameworks (MWDFs) to take on board this new policy environment. The remit of the advice will be expanded to include Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) and Local Development Plans (LDPs). The new advice will:

- stress the importance of the Duty to Cooperate
- deal with onsite disposal of VLLW/LLW
- deal with co-location of waste
- provide options which LAs can select as appropriate to the local situation
- make reference to what Planning Inspectors have said
- consider Sustainability Appraisal.

There have also been developments in a number of specific planning cases:

- On 8<sup>th</sup> May the planning application for an LLW and VLLW disposal facility at Keekle Head in Cumbria was refused by Cumbria County Council.
- On the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2012 Jonathon Green of the Planning Inspectorate was appointed as the Examining Authority to consider the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for King's Cliffe. The preliminary meeting took place on the 26<sup>th</sup> July. The procedural timetable will be issued on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August and the whole examination must be completed by the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2013.

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1 <http://www.nlwp.net/examination/examination.html>

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<http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/planningpolicy/planningpolicyframework/>

- The Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) has launched a consultation on plans for a Low Level Waste Disposal facility at Dounreay. The consultation will run until the 29<sup>th</sup> August 2012.

More information on these issues can be found on the NuLeAF website at [Steering Group item 7](#).

### **New Topic Paper on Hinkley Point C**

The National Infrastructure Directorate (NID) has now set out a timetable for consideration of the application for a new nuclear station, Hinkley Point C (HPC). The three Somerset Councils have prepared a new topic paper on the waste issues around HPC.

The topic paper in particular provides the justification for Section 106 obligations / payments towards mitigation of the impact of long-term interim storage of radioactive waste and spent fuel at Hinkley Point C. It also considers community impact mitigation measures (including a Community Impact Mitigation Fund) where mitigation is not possible, relating to both perceived risks and other negative impacts. The paper is available on the NuLeAF website<sup>3</sup>.

The previous Executive Director was involved in supporting and advising the Somerset Councils on the legacy and waste issues relating to HPC. The new Executive Co-Directors will discuss with officials in the relevant Councils how NuLeAF can best support this work in future.

### **NDA Strategy development**

NuLeAF attended the Integrated Waste Management Topic Overview Group (IWM TOG) meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> July. Discussion centred on various issues related to the new Integrated Waste Strategy.

On Higher Activity Wastes (HAW), a strategic case will be prepared and engagement on this will be undertaken in early 2013. On Lower Activity Low Level Wastes (LALLW), a working group has been established on which NuLeAF and Cumbria County Council sit to review NDA strategy implementation. Options for future on and near site LALLW management will be considered. Those present at the IWM TOG meeting stressed the need for community engagement to be better addressed in future and for a strategic approach to be taken to the issues around LLW. NuLeAF will discuss this issue further with NDA and help ensure that NDA is aware of local developments in planning policy.

More information can be found on the NuLeAF website at [Steering Group item 8](#).

### **NDA Engagement meeting**

Arrangements are being finalised for a third engagement meeting with NDA, site licence companies (for areas outside Cumbria), and regulators to discuss key policy and site development issues. It is likely that the meeting will be held on the 25<sup>th</sup> September in

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.nuleaf.org.uk/nuleaf/documents/B17\\_Topic\\_Paper\\_-\\_Waste\\_-\\_FINAL-formatted.pdf](http://www.nuleaf.org.uk/nuleaf/documents/B17_Topic_Paper_-_Waste_-_FINAL-formatted.pdf)

London with an additional session following on from the next Steering Group meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> October (venue tba). Topics covered at the meetings will include:

- Magnox Optimised Decommissioning Programme
- An update on Site Restoration TOG
- Presentation from NuLeAF on developments in planning
- An update on community benefits

Full details will be circulated to meeting invitees shortly.

### **The Radioactive Waste Inventory (RWI) 2013**

A meeting on the RWI was held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July, hosted by NDA. The 2013 inventory will be a 'full update' covering volumes and the physical and chemical characteristics of waste, and will also seek to eliminate data gaps and inconsistencies in the current information. A technical specification will be finalised and a contractor appointed by September 2012 and up dated waste stream data will be gathered between January and May 2013.

### **Presentation from the Office of Nuclear Regulation (ONR)**

NuLeAF welcomed Charles Temple of the ONR to its July Steering Group meeting. Charles delivered a presentation on a range of issues including:

- progress in discussions with local authorities with licensed nuclear sites about the exercise of planning controls for developments in the vicinity of those sites
- progress in the reviews of emergency planning arising from Mike Weightman's report
- the relevance to the UK of approaches and outcomes of 'stress tests' in other EC member states

Charles' presentation was followed by an interesting discussion on the important issues that have emerged post-Fukushima, and how the ONR is working with local authorities to enhance safety and improve planning and emergency planning processes.

### **NuLeAF staffing and programme development**

The new Executive Co-Directors, Stewart Kemp and Phil Matthews, have now started work. In addition to holding discussions with all NuLeAF's partner organisations, the Directors are drafting a Service Plan for 2012/14, for presentation at the next Steering Group Meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> October. This will set out in detail the NuLeAF work programme through to the end of FY2013/14.

More information on these issues can be found on the NuLeAF website at [Steering Group item 9](#).

### **Joining NuLeAF and participating in our work**

Nuclear waste and legacy issues are major concerns for local authorities across the country. Critical issues include decisions about disposal of Low and Very Low Level Waste to landfill, changes to planning guidance, considerations on the siting of a Geological Disposal Facility

(GDF), the need to maximise community benefits from nuclear legacy operations and the impacts of the decommissioning of many nuclear power stations.

NuLeAF continues to be an effective voice for local authorities on all these issues. We welcome new member authorities and the active participation of Elected Members and officers in our Steering Group and in the officer Radioactive Waste Planning Group. If your authority would like to join NuLeAF, if you would like to participate in the work of the organisation, or find out more then please contact Catherine Draper at the address below.

### **NuLeAF Annual General Meeting (AGM) and elections**

The NuLeAF AGM will be held on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2012. One key task of the AGM is to elect the organisations Chair and Vice Chair for the coming year.

Councillors Knowles and Swannick, the current Chair and Vice-Chair, have both indicated their willingness to serve a further year. However, all valid nominations are welcome and candidates wishing to put themselves forward should contact the NuLeAF secretariat before 5.00 p.m. on Wednesday 19 October (please contact the NuLeAF secretariat at the address below). The procedure for nominations and elections is set out in the footnote below<sup>4[1]</sup>.

### **Diary dates**

25 <sup>th</sup> September	Radioactive Waste Planning Group, London School of Economics, Kingsway, London, 14.00 – 16.30
25 <sup>th</sup> September	NDA engagement meeting, London School of Economics, Kingsway, London 10.30 – 13.30
24 <sup>th</sup> October	Steering Group and AGM (venue tbc)

### **Contact point**

All member authorities are asked to ensure that NuLeAF is kept informed of any changes to officer or councillor contacts. It is important that these are kept up-to-date, so that the right people receive e-bulletins, invitations to NuLeAF meetings and other information.

NuLeAF can be contacted via the Secretariat c/o Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, Russell Road, Ipswich IP1 2BX, Tel: 01473 264833 e-mail: [catherine.draper@nuleaf.org.uk](mailto:catherine.draper@nuleaf.org.uk)

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4[1] A councillor from any contributing member authority may be nominated for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair; candidates may be nominated by any member authority, and should be seconded by another member authority; if any position is contested, voting cards will be issued to the elected member delegates from each contributing member authority represented at the AGM; in the event of the need for an election, candidates (or their nominee) will be asked to make a 2 minute presentation to the AGM in support of their candidature; voting will be by secret ballot and each ballot will eliminate the candidate with the least votes; and the AGM's advice will be sought in the event of a tied vote.