

Meeting:	NuLeAF Steering Group meeting, 9 th September 2020
Agenda Item:	9
Subject:	Meeting format options
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Purpose:	To outline potential meeting formats for NuLeAF once face to face meetings become permissible.

1. Introduction:

Since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in the UK and lockdown was introduced, NuLeAF has held two Steering Group and two Radioactive Waste Planning Group meetings online using Microsoft Teams. These have, in the main, worked well with few technical problems, a good turnout and participation from a number of new faces.

The Steering Group is asked to consider what format it would like meetings to take once it becomes permissible to hold face to face meetings again.

2. Recommendation:

That the Steering Group agrees with the way forward proposals outlined in Section 4 of this paper.

3. Points to consider are:

- A. While social distancing guidelines are in place, meeting rooms will have reduced capacity, so either larger rooms will be required or fewer members will be able to physically meet.
- B. Even though face to face meetings may be permitted, some members may be uncomfortable using public transport and restrictions may still apply regarding public transport usage and service availability.
- C. NuLeAF's constitution requires that Steering Group meetings are held 'approximately' 4 times per year. There are no meeting frequency requirements for the Radioactive Waste Planning Group.
- D. The current meeting schedule is for a meeting to be held approximately every six weeks alternating Steering Group (March, June, September, December) and Radioactive Waste Planning Group (January, April, July, October).

- E. Prior to the Covid-19 crisis, there had been an appetite amongst some member authorities for remote access to meetings. Teleconferencing had been trialled a few years ago, but found not to work, mostly due to the inadequacies of technology. Since then, technology and software have improved, and the rise of online meetings due to lockdown has demonstrated that, although it is a different experience to face to face meetings, online meetings can work.
- F. Feedback from members have identified the drawbacks to online meetings as the lack of opportunity to network with members before the meeting and during lunch, and the inability to address presenters in person.
- G. The use of new technology offers the potential for additional, topic-based meetings to be held. For example, NuLeAF recently held a meeting with NDA to review their draft sustainability report, and has scheduled a meeting later in September to allow members to engage on the Strategy 4 consultation.

4. The way forward:

It is recognised that whatever is decided upon, the pace of returning to 'normal' meetings will be dictated by the risk of infection, and that there will be no hard and fast date for face to face meetings to become possible again. However, NuLeAF secretariat proposes that:

- H. Face to face Steering Group meetings should resume once permissible to do so. Meetings will be held alternately in London and Manchester as at present. Venues will be chosen which can offer high quality video-conferencing facilities (this may incur higher room hire charges).
- I. Prior to confirmation of a meeting, NuLeAF secretariat will contact those who regularly attend meetings to see if there is a core group of at least 8 people who wish to meet in person. This will avoid incurring room hire charges for a meeting of only 2 or 3 people.
- J. Meeting timings (particularly the Steering Group) will be adjusted to provide those attending online sufficient screen time breaks.
- K. As appropriate, NuLeAF will arrange additional online meetings to cover particular topics.