

HINKLEY POINT SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Minutes of the meeting held at The Canalside, Bridgwater on Friday 26 October 2012

PRESENT

Cllr M Caswell (Chairman)	-	Stockland Bristol
Cllr M Brown	-	Otterhampton Parish Council
Mr L Talbot	-	Site Director, Hinkley Point A
Mr M Harrison	-	Station Director, Hinkley Point B

Elected Members

Mrs J Brown	-	Parents concerned about Hinkley
Mr R Corns	-	Natural England
Mr A Debenham	-	Stop Hinley
Cllr Ms A Frazer MBE	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr Ms S Goss	-	West Somerset District Council
Cllr P Grierson	-	West Somerset District Council
Cllr M Hogg	-	Nether Stowey Parish Council
Cllr N Jones	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr P Malim OBE	-	Stogursey Parish Council
Ms B Oates	-	West Hinkley Action Group
Cllr M Phillips	-	Cannington Parish Council
Cllr M Short	-	Fiddington Parish Council
Cllr Ms M Smith	-	West Somerset District Council
Mr K Ter Braak	-	Friends of Quantock
Cllr A Trollope-Bellew	-	Somerset County Council
Cllr J Edwards	-	Spaxton Parish Council

Co-opted Members

Mr J Walker

Appointed Members

Mr S Nicholson	-	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Dr P Mountford-Lister	-	Environment Agency
Mr A Hurry	-	Somerset County Council

EDF Energy

Mr P Higginson	-	Technical Safety and Support Manager
Mr D Stokes	-	Community Liaison Officer
Mr M Speed	-	Hinkley B LJC Representative

Mr T Johnson

Magnox

Ms J Hellier	-	Communications Support
Ms G Coombs	-	Communications
Mr D Williams	-	Head of Environment
Mr S Payne	-	Communications Officer

IN ATTENDANCE

Ms C Collingridge - Member of public
Mr M J Davis - Secretary

At the start of the meeting Cllr Caswell reminded members of the recent death of Mr Crispin Aubrey. He said that Mr Aubrey's contribution to meetings of this Group would be missed and undertook to convey members' respects to his family.

OPEN PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

- 1 Cllr Caswell welcomed all those present to this meeting of the Site Stakeholder Group for Hinkley Point A Site and Hinkley Point B Power Station. He invited questions from members of the public on any issue which might not be covered in later discussion.
- 2 Ms Collingridge asked why Cllr Caswell, as representative of this Group witnessing the radiation measurements taken on the proposed C station site, had not provided a more detailed report at an earlier date. Cllr Caswell said that he was not scientifically qualified to comment on the measurements but had attended to observe the way in which the measurements had been taken. He said that EDF had provided full access to the site for these measurements and he felt that the work had been carried out diligently and precisely by the Environment Agency and its contractors.

CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 3 It was confirmed that there was a quorum of elected members present at the meeting. It was noted that Cllr Ms Smith and Cllr Phillips were attending for the first time as representatives of West Somerset District Council and Cannington Parish Council respectively.
- 4 Apologies for absence were received from Mr B James, Cllr N Caville, Mr P Kennedy, Mr C Graham, Cllr C Morgan, Cllr J Edney, Mr H Rickard, Cllr R Garner, Ms N Dawson, Miss B Child, Mr G Bell, Cllr P Knibb, Cllr Ms A Reed and Mr J Jenkin

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 JUNE 2012

(a) Accuracy

- 5 The minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2012 were approved as a correct record.

(b) Matters Arising (other than matters to be covered in later discussions)

Possible Future Use of Hinkley Point A Site Turbine Hall (para 5 refers)

- 6 Mr Talbot said it had been concluded that the former Turbine Hall building and access to it would not be needed during work to prepare the A site for a period of care and maintenance. The NDA, as owners of the site, has been informed of this position. The current plan was that the Turbine Hall would be demolished in 2017 unless agreement was reached on alternative uses for the facility. Cllr Short said it was frustrating that this issue was taking so long to resolve; he said that local people would be keen to see this building used as a facility for C station construction rather than new facilities being built on a green field site. Mr Harrison confirmed that this was an option being considered by EDF Energy.

Allegations of enriched uranium contamination on the Hinkley Point C site (paras 7 and 26 refer)

- 7 Mr Harrison said that the Environment Agency, as an independent agency, recovered its costs from service takers and the costs of investigating these allegations in relation to the proposed C station site would be recovered from the nuclear industry. He said that the costs were significant and the investigation of these allegations represented a distraction from the Agency's other important work.
- 8 Cllr Short said that he had not received a reply to his letter addressed to the Environment Agency on the subject of the costs of these investigations. Dr Mountford-Lister apologised and undertook to ensure that this correspondence was dealt with.

Milestone dates for Hinkley Point A decommissioning (para 11 refers)

- 9 It was noted that a revised schedule of milestone dates for Hinkley Point A decommissioning had been circulated to members.

SITE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – HINKLEY POINT A

- 10 Mr Talbot reported on activities at Hinkley Point A Site since the previous meeting, drawing particular attention to the following:
- (i) It was now more than 5½ years since the most recent lost time accident on the site and more than 4½ years without a personal contamination event.
 - (ii) Good progress was being made with a regulatory periodic safety review.
 - (iii) The site's emergency arrangements had been demonstrated in an exercise to the satisfaction of the ONR.

- (iv) In an event involving pond water chemical treatment equipment clean sulphuric acid had escaped from a bunded area. The circumstances had been reported to the regulators and increased monitoring was being undertaken to ensure that there was no adverse effect on the local environment.
- (v) Mr Talbot had attended a recent coroner's inquest into a death associated with exposure to asbestos. The individual concerned had worked at Hinkley Point in the past. Mr Talbot said that at the time of construction and early operation of the A station the hazards associated with exposure to asbestos had not been understood; rigorous procedures were now in place.
- (vi) An amendment of the planning consent for construction of an interim storage facility for ILW had been approved to reflect the reduced size of building now proposed. Detailed designs for the facility would be completed by the end of the current year with construction scheduled for completion by May 2014.
- (vii) Work was proceeding on the assessment of options for the retrieval and separation of fuel element debris waste. The selection of a technique for processing these wastes would await the outcome of experience at Bradwell.
- (viii) The Reactor 2 pond despatch bay had been cleaned and drained and the draining of Reactor 2 pond had commenced. Work on Reactor 1 despatch bay would commence during the coming month. Decontamination trials on pond skips were to commence later this year.
- (ix) All bulk asbestos would have been removed from the site by the end of the current year, bringing to a close a programme of work which had started in 2003.
- (x) Work had started on a project for removal of the intermediate level wastes from Settling Tanks 1, 2 and 3.
- (xi) Detailed designs for a new car park were nearing completion and construction was scheduled to be completed by January 2013. No space for A site parking was currently available on the B station site during the plant outage and A site staff were being transferred to site by bus.

11 In reply to a question from Cllr Jones, Mr Talbot said that current regulations prevented the use of asbestos materials as thermal insulation. Other materials were available for use.

- 12 Mrs Brown suggested that coroners might not be able to distinguish between lung diseases caused by exposure to asbestos and those caused by exposure to radioactivity.
- 13 In reply to a question from Mr Debenham, Mr Talbot said it was anticipated that intermediate level waste would remain in the storage facility on site until 2040 when it was hoped that a geological disposal facility would be available for use.
- 14 In reply to a question from Cllr Goss, Mr Talbot said that *EnergySolutions* was no longer seeking to dispose of that part of the company dealing with its European operations.

STATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT – HINKLEY POINT B

- 15 Mr Harrison reported on activities and performance at Hinkley Point B since the previous meeting of this group, drawing particular attention to the following:
- (i) Since the previous meeting of this group there had been no nuclear or environmental reportable events and no significant industrial safety events.
 - (ii) As reported to members in correspondence, there was evidence of a small defect in the stainless steel cladding of one fuel pin within Reactor 3. It had not yet been possible to locate the affected fuel pin. Monitoring would continue and, when identified, the fuel element would be removed and replaced. A fuel pin defect was covered by the safety case for operation of the reactors and did not pose harm to individuals or the environment.
 - (iii) A minute quantity of radioactivity found on a tacky shade collector located on the site had been related to a defective HEPA filter at the station's low level waste facility. The level of radioactivity had been well below authorised and reportable discharge limits and was similar to the naturally occurring radioactivity in a brasil nut.
 - (iv) The station had produced more than 2.3 TWh of electricity since the time of the previous meeting. Both reactors had operated continuously at nominal full output with reductions in output only at times of refuelling.
 - (v) Reactor 3 had been shut down on 28 September for its statutory outage. The work programme, which involved some 1000 extra personnel working on site, represented an investment of £30 million in improvement of the plant. Progress at this stage was within 10 hours of the scheduled work programme. Work to be undertaken during the outage included the exchange of gas circulators and the rebuilding of turbine rotors following their return to manufacturer's works for inspection.

- (vi) There were some 536 staff currently on site, 44 apprentices, and 7 graduate trainees together with 220 full-time contract staff.
 - (vii) Actions needed during recent protests against construction of a C station had demonstrated effective cooperation between the three sites and the police which had helped to minimise the impact of the protest action.
 - (viii) An information and visitors centre linked to B station would shortly be opened in Bridgwater. In due course C site would have its own visitors facilities on site.
- 15 In relation to the transport of staff to site via bus and the adoption of car sharing schemes, Ms Oates drew attention to the need for provision of parking facilities in Cannington where some staff were parking their cars..
- 16 In reply to questions from Cllr Jones and Mr Debenham, Mr Harrison said that a decision would be taken before the end of this year as to whether to pursue the possibility of life extension for the B station plant. He said the potential target was to achieve an extension of seven years beyond the currently planned closure date of 2016.

REPORT FROM THE EMERGENCY PLANNING CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

- 17 Mr Higginson presented a report on issues considered at a recent meeting of the Emergency Planning Consultative Committee which had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting.
- 18 Cllr Short drew attention to the reported point that a new housing development had not been covered by the pre-distribution of potassium iodate tablets. Mr Hurry, who had been involved with the pre-distribution of these tablets, apologise for the fact that the distribution to this housing development had been incomplete and said that the situation had been rectified as soon as it was known about.
- 19 In relation to a comment that the Somerset County Council's Essential Services Off Site Plan for Hinkley Point accessible on the SCC website appeared not to have been updated for some time, Mr Hurry said that the plan had been reviewed but it had not been necessary to revise it.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

- 20 Dr Mountford-Lister presented a report from the Environment Agency which had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. He explained the role of the Agency in regulating activities on the site and described environmental

monitoring undertaken to confirm the results of measurements taken by site operators.

- 21 Dr Mountford-Lister referred to the investigations into allegations that quantities of enriched uranium were present on the proposed C station site. Those investigations had been carried out using appropriately calibrated instruments and had been witnessed by Cllr Caswell as an observer. Dr Mountford-Lister said that the investigations had shown that the Hinkley Point site was not significantly different from the surrounding area and had found no evidence of enhanced radiation dose rates as had been claimed. He said that work undertaken by the Environment Agency in dealing with these allegations amounted to some 25 days in total. In addition during the period July to September the Agency had received nine requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act; the time spent handling those requests had not been identified.
- 22 Dr Mountford-Lister outlined the nature and scope of his inspection activities on the Hinkley Point A site. He drew attention to the recent change in regulations determining limits for radioactive waste which took account of the potential hazards of specific radionuclides. He said that these new arrangements would allow better use to be made of the capacity available at the Low Level Waste Repository and would enable different disposal routes to be used for materials which were exempt from regulatory control due to their very low hazard.
- 23 Dr Mountford-Lister said that the Agency was working with Magnox and the Office for Nuclear Regulation to facilitate site boundary changes made necessary by changes in site security arrangements.
- 24 In reply to a question on the leakage of sulphuric acid reported earlier in the meeting, Mr Talbot said that the event had originated from plant and operational defects with acid eventually leaking from the concrete secondary containment. No persons had been injured in this event.
- 25 In reply to a question from Mrs Brown, Dr Mountford-Lister said that the results of the monitoring of radioactivity in the environment always illustrated the variability inherent in the measurement processes but all the measured levels were well below the level which would cause disease.
- 26 In response to a question from Mr Debenham, Dr Mountford-Lister said that during major plant outages Environment Agency inspectors paid particular attention to arrangements for the control of radioactivity and waste minimisation.

OFFICE FOR NUCLEAR REGULATION REPORTS

- 27 Reports from the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) on matters relating to Hinkley Point A and B had been made available to members. Dr Nicholson, the ONR inspector for the A site, drew attention to the following:

- (i) ONR inspection arrangements at the closed Magnox sites had been changed to reflect the reduced hazards on those sites – Dr Nicholson was responsible for inspection at Hinkley Point A, Berkeley, Bradwell and Dungeness A sites.
- (ii) Plans for dealing with wastes and decommissioning were taken into account in the regulatory assessment of designs for potential new station construction.
- (iii) The legal process to authorise changes to the site boundary to reflect changes in site security arrangements was scheduled to be completed on the day of this meeting.
- (iv) The exercise of the A station's emergency arrangements during the previous week had provided a relevant test and had been assessed as an adequate demonstration.
- (v) ONR inspectors were heavily engaged in activities associated with the B station reactor outage. When all the programmed work had been completed, ONR consent would be required before the plant could be returned to service.

28 Mr Debenham asked about progress with inspection of the Reactor 3 graphite core and boiler tubes. Mr Harrison said that all these inspections had been completed and no defects had been found.

REPORT FROM THE NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING AUTHORITY

29 A report from the NDA on current issues had been circulated to members.

SOMERSET NUCLEAR ENERGY GROUP

30 It was noted that no meetings of the Somerset Nuclear Energy Group had been convened recently.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

31 A report by Cllr Caswell on his activities as Chairman of the SSG had been made available to members.

UPDATE FROM CHAIRMAN – SUB GROUPS

32 Cllr Caswell reminded members of the discussion at the previous meeting on the organisation of this group. He said that he had given further consideration to the issues raised and suggested that the existing sub group should be stood down

(with the exception of its continuing role in relation to the consideration of FED dissolution proposals). He said that if it became appropriate to establish a new sub group he would consider this with the deputy chairman and immediate past chairman and invite other members to join as appropriate, ensuring that the sub group remained representative of the membership. Cllr Caswell suggested also that it might be appropriate to reduce the frequency of meetings of this group from three per year to two per year.

- 33 Members supported the proposal to stand down the existing sub group. Cllr Goss said that she would be unhappy to see a reduction in the frequency of these meetings, having regard for the range of issues which required consideration. This view was strongly supported by other members and it was agreed that the frequency of these meetings should remain at three per year.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

- 34 Cllr Caswell left the meeting whilst the election of Chairman was discussed. Cllr Brown reported that nominations had been received for Cllr Caswell to be Chairman of the Group for the coming year; no other nominations had been received. It was agreed unanimously that Cllr Caswell should be elected Chairman of this Group for the coming year.
- 35 Cllr Caswell rejoined the meeting and Cllr Brown left the meeting whilst the election of Deputy Chairman was discussed. Cllr Caswell reported that nominations had been received for Cllr Brown to be Deputy Chairman of the Group for the coming year; no other nominations had been received. It was agreed unanimously that Cllr Brown should be elected Deputy Chairman of this Group for the coming year.

OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

No business.

DATE TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

- 32 It was noted that the next meeting of this Group would be held on Friday 22 February 2013. The venue for the meeting would be confirmed in due course.

MJD
30 October 2012