

## HINKLEY POINT SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP

### Minutes of the meeting held at The Canalside, Bridgwater on Friday 22 February 2013

#### **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 A Debenham	-	Stop Hinley
Cllr J Edney	-	Somerset County Council
Cllr J Edwards	-	Spaxton Parish Council
Cllr Ms A Fraser MBE	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr R Garner	-	North Somerset Council
Cllr Ms S Goss	-	West Somerset District Council
Cllr P Grierson	-	West Somerset District Council
Cllr P Gripton	-	Otterhampton Parish Council
Cllr N Jones	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr A Keen	-	Kilve Parish 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 T Williams	-	Kilve Parish Council

#### **Appointed Members**

Mr J Jenkin	-	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Dr P Mountford-Lister	-	Environment Agency
Mr H Rickard	-	Wessex Water
Mr J Burrows	-	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Mr I Willson	-	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Mr P Tossell	-	Food Standards Agency
Ms N Dawson	-	Somerset County Council
Ms V Banham	-	Sedgemoor District Council

#### **EDF Energy**

Mr D Stokes	-	Community Liaison Officer
Mr M Speed	-	Hinkley B LJC Representative
Mr G Bell	-	Public Relations Officer

## **Magnox**

Mr K Ellett	-	Trades Union Representative
Ms J Hellier	-	Communications Support
Ms A Kentish	-	Communications
Miss L Miles	-	EHSSQ Manager, Hinkley Point A
Miss M Rolliston	-	Head of Environment, Hinkley Point A

## **IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr J Brooking	-	Amec/Atkins
Ms M Kirschel	-	Amec/Atkins
Mr M J Davis	-	Secretary

## **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. No questions were raised.

## **CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 2 It was confirmed that there was a quorum of elected members present at the meeting.
- 3 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ms A Reed, Mr B James, Mr C Graham, Mr J Walker, Mr P Kennedy, Mr S Nicholson, Cllr C Morgan, Miss B Child, Mr G McMeekan and Mr S Nicholson.
- 4 Cllr Caswell said that he had not yet been able to contact the family of the late Mr Crispin Aubrey as he had undertaken to do at the previous meeting; he hoped to do so shortly.

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 OCTOBER 2012**

### **(a) Accuracy**

- 5 The minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 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 confirmed that discussions were taking place between the NDA and EDF Energy on the possible use of the former A station Turbine Hall for purposes associated with the construction of a new station.

**Design of plant for the dissolution of Magnox fuel element debris (para 10(vii) refers)**

- 7 Mr Talbot said that information on operational experience of the dissolution plant at Bradwell, which would be taken into account in the design of the plant for Hinkley Point A, would not be available until the latter part of the year.

**Reactor 3 fuel pin defect (para 15(ii) refers)**

- 8 Mr Harrison said it had still not been possible to identify the location of the fuel pin which was displaying a minor defect. A systematic sampling procedure was being followed to locate the defective fuel pin but the leakage from the defect was very small.

**Escape of sulphuric acid from a bunded area (paras 10(iv) and 24 refer)**

- 9 Mr Talbot said it had been found that the clean sulphuric acid which had escaped from a bunded area in the chemical treatment plant had dislodged a small quantity of radioactive contamination. A warning letter had been received from the Environment Agency in relation to the control of materials on site

**STATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT – HINKLEY POINT B**

- 10 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) It was now almost 5 years since the most recent nuclear reportable event and more than three years since the most recent environmental reportable event on site. Focus was maintained to ensure that there was no complacency and no reduction in these high standards.
  - (ii) Two minor recordable injuries had been sustained since the previous meeting. These were a sprained muscle sustained during off-site training for emergency scheme activities and a minor eye injury caused by the use of the wrong type of eye protection whilst using a power tool.
  - (iii) Reactor 3 had been returned to service on 10 December following a ten week maintenance outage. It was shut down for a week during December for the repair of pipe work associated with the turbine alternator and returned to service on 28 December, since when it had operated at nominal full load.
  - (iv) Reactor 4 had been shut down for about a week immediately following the previous meeting and had since operated at nominal full load.

- (v) Work undertaken during the Reactor 3 maintenance outage represented an investment of some £35 million in the plant. During the outage more than 1000 extra specialist contractors had been working on the site and all the work had been completed with no injuries or events. Work undertaken during the outage included the inspection of 31 fuel channels, representing some 10% of the core, and 36 graphite samples had been trepanned from the core for analysis. None of these inspections had revealed any defects or unexpected results. Other work included the exchange of an HP and an IP turbine rotor and the exchange of one gas circulator. It had been planned that three gas circulators would be exchanged during the outage but the exchange of the other two had been deferred. All boiler tube bifurcations and welds had been inspected and no defects had been found.
- (vi) Work on Reactor 3 needed to connect new nitrogen injection equipment as part of improved shutdown systems had been completed during the outage.
- (vii) Investigations into the cause of pond water being found in sumps in the pond building had indicated that the cause was associated with arrangements for taking samples.
- (viii) The company had announced a seven year extension to the operational life of Hinkley Point B with the station now expected to remain operational until at least 2023.
- (ix) New nuclear site licences had been granted to facilitate changes in the boundary between Hinkley Point B and Hinkley Point A site and to allow the transfer of licensed land to Hinkley Point C to become part of the proposed new nuclear power station site.
- (x) The new Visitor Centre which had opened in Bridgwater in December had attracted a great deal of interest and since that time more than 1000 individuals had visited the station.
- (xi) Actions taken following consideration of the implications of the Fukushima accident included the provision of additional response facilities and vehicles; the vehicles were able to be used to maintain access to the site in the event of bad weather conditions.

11 In response to questions from Mr Debenham, Mr Harrison said that the £35 million investment during the recent outage was associated predominantly with Reactor 3 although some was related to work on plant systems common to both reactors. He said that the declared load factors for the plant were based upon the Rated Unit Power which had been reduced some time ago to 70% of the original design rating.

- 12 In response to further questions from Mr Debenham, Mr Harrison said that the graphite core inspections were planned, together with inspections of the similar reactors at Hunterston B, to give a comprehensive programme. He said that two of the refurbished gas circulators allocated for exchange during the Reactor 3 outage had not been used due to concerns over measured vibration levels during testing. The two circulators which remained in use were in a satisfactory operable state and the planned exchanges would take place at a later date. In relation to the proposed new station construction, Mr Harrison said that a site licence had been granted and the EPR design had been given safety approval; a decision on planning consent was expected during the coming month and before taking its final investment decision the company was engaged in discussions with government on future energy prices.
- 13 In response to a question from Cllr Malim, Mr Harrison said that the emergency response vehicles which had been acquired by the company were held at a central location from where they could be deployed to any site if needed. The operational characteristics of the plant allowed ample time to transfer these vehicles to sites.
- 14 Referring to the new Visitor Centre in Bridgwater, Cllr Grierson suggested that it might be appropriate to have some such facility in West Somerset, possibly at Minehead. Mr Harrison said that the longer term aim would be to locate the Visitor Centre nearer to the site but he undertook to consider whether some display material might be located in West Somerset.
- 15 Cllr Williams asked why additional emergency response equipment had been bought as he understood that an accident such as had occurred at Fukushima was not credible at Hinkley Point. Mr Harrison said that following Fukushima, consideration had been given to the potential implications of events which were beyond those which could be expected from a rational analysis of the plant.
- 16 Cllr Ms Smith pointed out that business rates were not payable by the power station when the plant was shut down and this had a significant effect upon the Council's income. In response to a further question from Cllr Ms Smith, Mr Bell confirmed that the talks service presentations at local schools included discussions on general issues including renewable generation sources and waste.

## **SITE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – HINKLEY POINT A**

- 17 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 69 months since the most recent lost time accident on the site and more than 58 months without a personal contamination event. Efforts to maintain this level of performance included the detailed analysis of events which had occurred at other sites.

- (ii) Good progress was being made with the 10 yearly periodic safety review which was due to be submitted to ONR in March 2014.
  - (iii) Detailed design of the interim storage facility for intermediate level waste was nearing completion; construction was expected to start in early 2014, taking account of experience at other sites.
  - (iv) A contract had been placed for design development work for the retrieval and sorting of fuel element debris. Decisions on the process to be adopted for processing the fuel element debris would await the outcome of experience at Bradwell.
  - (v) Draining of the Reactor 2 fuel pond was continuing and this was expected to be completed by June 2013. The trial draining of the Reactor 1 fuel despatch bay had been completed. Decontamination trials on metal skips and concrete structures would inform decisions on processes to be used in later work.
  - (vi) The removal of bulk asbestos, which had been a major project over many years, had been completed.
  - (vii) A project was in hand to recover wet intermediate level waste from Settling Tanks 1, 2 and 3. It was expected that the recovery would start in August and be completed by March 2014.
  - (viii) Work on the new car park was in hand and was expected to be completed by April 2013. A new security reception building was to be delivered to the site shortly.
  - (ix) Processing of contaminated pond skips sent to the USA for metal melting had been completed earlier than originally planned.
  - (x) Analysis of the implications of the Fukushima accident had found that no major modifications were necessary on the Site but recommended enhancements of equipment and arrangements for dealing with extreme events were being implemented.
- 18 In reply to a question from Cllr Williams, Mr Talbot said that decontamination trials within the cooling ponds would identify the best equipment and techniques to be used in the future. The removal of contamination would allow the conventional demolition of the structures.
- 19 In response to questions from Mr Debenham, Mr Talbot said that the interim storage facility would accommodate all forms of intermediate level waste on the site. The fuel element debris, currently classified as intermediate level waste, would be retrieved and processed. A temporary buffer store would be built for the

wastes from Settling Tanks 1, 2 and 3 as this would be needed before the interim storage facility was completed.

- 20 In response to comments by Mrs Brown, Mr Talbot said that wastes were being removed from existing storage facilities for processing or further storage in a form which would allow long-term storage on site to await the availability of a final disposal facility.

### **REPORT FROM THE EMERGENCY PLANNING CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

- 21 A report on issues discussed at the meeting of the Emergency Planning Consultative Committee held on 13 February had been circulated to members. Mr Harrison drew attention to the satisfactory demonstration of the emergency arrangements, planned future exercises, and arrangements for dissemination of information to residents within the detailed emergency planning zone.

### **ENVIRONMENT AGENCY**

- 22 Dr Mountford-Lister presented a report from the Environment Agency which had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. He pointed out that the Agency had served a warning letter on Hinkley Point A site in relation to the leakage of clean sulphuric acid reported at the previous meeting. He said that the radiological impact of this release had been very small but the discharge of radioactivity which had been initiated by the acid had been via a non-permitted route.
- 23 Dr Mountford-Lister said that the Agency had varied its permit to reflect changes in the site boundaries but there had been no changes in permitted discharges. In relation to proposed arrangements for the processing of Magnox fuel element debris, he pointed out that this would lead to a reduction in hazards on site by eliminating the risk of fire involving this waste.
- 24 Dr Mountford-Lister said that the Agency had updated its permits for all stations operated by EDF Energy and these were now in line with those for the Magnox sites.
- 25 Cllr Short expressed his surprise that the detection of a small quantity of radioactivity on a tacky shade collector identified as being related to a defective filter on the B station's low-level waste facility as reported at the previous meeting had not been mentioned in reports from the Environment Agency or the Office for Nuclear Regulation. Mr Burrows undertook to respond separately to Cllr Short.

## **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. Mr Burrows referred to the large numbers of inspection activities during the B station maintenance outage which were necessary to support the ONR's decision to grant consent for returned to service.
- 28 Mr Burrows explained the various changes in Site Licences to permit the changes in the boundary between A and B sites and to allow the transfer of land for construction of a new station. In response to a question from Cllr Williams on responsibilities for reporting on accidents involving contractors, Mr Burrows confirmed that under the terms of the Nuclear Site Licence, the licensee was required to report on any harm occurring to any person on site.
- 29 Mr Debenham questioned why seven years had been chosen as the period of life extension for Hinkley Point B. Mr Harrison explained that this was a commercial decision taken by EDF Energy to seek to operate the plant to 2023, being satisfied that there was an adequate safety case and being prepared to make the necessary investment to achieve such operation. Mr Burrows explained that in giving its consent for start-up following statutory maintenance and inspections, ONR was accepting that the plant was safe to operate for three years until the next statutory shutdown. He said that if at any time circumstances arose causing ONR to believe that the plant was not safe it would require it to be shut down. Cllr Edney felt it was important to emphasise that the continued operation of the plant was subject to the checks undertaken by ONR. Cllr Caswell agreed that all elected members should be aware of this and draw it to the attention of the public when appropriate.

## **REPORT FROM THE NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING AUTHORITY**

- 30 Mr Jenkin presented a report from the NDA on current issues, drawing particular attention to the following:
- (i) Defuelling had recently been completed at Chapelcross
  - (ii) On 30 January members of Cumbria County Council had voted not to proceed with discussions with government in relation to the hosting of a geological disposal facility for radioactive waste. Allerdale and Copeland District Councils had voted to continue those discussions but the agreed process required all three councils to agree to proceed and this process was therefore at an end in relation to West Cumbria. It remained government policy to pursue geological disposal and invitations remained open for councils in other areas to express an interest in hosting such a facility.

- (iii) The competition process to appoint a parent body organisation for the management of the Magnox and RSRL sites was now underway and dialogue was taking place with four identified bidding organisations. These organisations would submit bids for evaluation in due course and it was hoped that the selected parent body organisation would be in place by September 2014. Dialogue between the bidding organisations and local stakeholders would take place in due course.
  - (iv) A large part of the Harwell site had been de-designated and was available for alternative use.
- 31 In response to comments from Cllr Malim, Mr Jenkin said that other local authorities had expressed an interest in hosting a geological disposal facility in the past but West Cumbria was the only option under consideration at the time of these councils' decisions. He said it was possible that councils in other areas might have believed that the choice of West Cumbria was inevitable and might in the changed circumstances now decide to put themselves forward. A community benefits package would be designed to recognise the significance of the decision to host such a facility. Dr Mountford-Lister suggested that it might be appropriate to consider having more than one geological disposal facility with the wastes shared between a number of sites.

## **FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY CONSULTATION**

- 32 Mr Tossell outlined the consultation which was being undertaken by the Food Standards Agency as part of its review of the way it monitored radioactivity in food. He described the current monitoring arrangements which had been in place for many years and which culminated in the annual publication of a report on radioactivity in food and the environment.
- 33 Mr Tossell said that the FSA had reviewed the options for undertaking this monitoring in the future and had identified three options as the basis for consultation. These were firstly to “do nothing” and to maintain the current monitoring programme, secondly to cease FSA radiological monitoring of food and associated reporting, and thirdly to develop an optimised monitoring programme. He said that the FSA believed that their proposed optimised programme was compliant with all European and international obligations and was adequate to provide a robust assessment of potential exposures from consumption of foodstuffs. He pointed out that the majority of the savings in the proposed optimised programme resulted from reduced monitoring in areas remote from nuclear sites.
- 34 Mr Tossell said that as a basis for the consultation the FSA had posed four questions relating to the adequacy of existing arrangements, the adequacy of the proposed optimised programme, the proposal within the optimised programme to discontinue monitoring which was not required to meet legal or international

obligations, and the proposal that the independent monitoring programme should be maintained by FSA with costs recharged to the industry. The FSA welcomed contributions to this consultation which could be accessed via their website.

- 35 In response to a question from Mr Debenham, Mr Tossell said that all controls on sheep in the UK which had been introduced following the Chernobyl accident, had now been lifted.

### **SOMERSET NUCLEAR ENERGY GROUP**

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

### **CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

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

### **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

- 38 Cllr Brown reported on a meeting which he and Cllr Caswell had attended on 12/13 February together with chairmen and vice-chairmen of other SSGs reviewing strategic options for the management of radioactive wastes on Magnox sites. He said that to promote further discussion on the issues raised he would convene a meeting of the subgroup which had considered the treatment of fuel element debris and convene a new subgroup to consider options for intermediate level waste storage. Cllr Caswell said it was important that SSG members had an opportunity to consider these issues before a further planned meeting of SSG chairmen and vice chairmen scheduled for June; he therefore proposed that a special meeting of this SSG should be convened during May.

- 39 During discussion Cllr Williams, Cllr Grierson, Cllr Ms Goss, Cllr Malim and Cllr Phillips volunteered to join the subgroup dealing with intermediate level waste storage. Cllr Caswell undertook to convene meetings of the subgroups in due course when information from the company on credible options would be available. It was agreed that the special meeting of this SSG to consider these issues should be held on 24 May 2013. [Subsequent to the meeting Cllr Caswell decided that as 24 May was the start of a bank holiday weekend it would be more appropriate to hold the meeting on 17 May 2013. The meeting would be held at the Canalside, Bridgwater]

### **DATE TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 40 It was noted that the next meeting of this Group would be held on Friday 28 June 2013. The venue for the meeting would be confirmed in due course.

MJD 25 February 2013