BERKELEY AND OLDBURY SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS ARISING AT THE JOINT MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 31 OCTOBER 2018

- Mr Mike Heaton, Site Closure Director for the Berkeley and Oldbury Sites presented a report on recent activities. He referred to the continuing high levels of safety performance on both sites and said that there had been no accidents involving time lost from work at either Site during the past year.

- Mr Heaton said that an exercise of anti-terrorist security measures was being organised by the emergency services on the Berkeley site. Local residents were being informed to avoid any unnecessary alarm.

- Revised emergency arrangements were being implemented at Oldbury to reflect the reduced level of hazard on the site. Waste IONSIV components stored in the station's fuel ponds had been packaged for eventual transfer to Berkeley for interim storage. Fuel skips removed from the pond were being cut up to reduce their volume for storage.

- Equipment used for the retrieval of fuel element debris waste from Vault 2 at Berkeley had been transferred to Vault 1 where it was being used for the retrieval of more highly radioactive wastes. Equipment to be used for the retrieval of waste from Vault 3 was being delivered to site. Waste items were being removed from the shielded area in the former laboratories part of the site.

- A report was given by Mr Jonathan Jenkin of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority. He described preparations being made for Magnox limited to become a wholly owned subsidiary of NDA after the termination of the Cavendish Fluor management contract. He referred also to a review of decommissioning strategy being undertaken by NDA.

- Reports were received from the Site Inspectors of the Office for Nuclear Regulation and the Environment Agency.

- Members received a report on discharges from the Berkeley and Oldbury sites and environmental monitoring undertaken in the vicinity. It was reported that there was no significant trend in any measurement of radioactivity in the environment.

- Mr Malcolm Lynden reported on his activities as chairman of the Oldbury Site Stakeholder Group.

- At the end of the meeting members suggested a number of issues which might be taken into account by NDA in reviewing decommissioning strategy.

BERKELEY AND OLDBURY SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUPS
MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING HELD AT THE GABLES HOTEL, FALFIELD ON WEDNESDAY 31 OCTOBER 2018

PRESENT:

Mr M Lynden (in the chair)	-	Oldbury on Severn Parish Council
Mr S Andrews	-	Staff Representative
Cllr Ms C Collinson	-	Aust Parish Council
Cllr Dr J Cordwell	-	Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr C Davies	-	Stinchcombe Parish Council
Cllr D Dovey	-	Monmouthshire County Council
Ms G Ellis-King	-	South Gloucestershire Council
Cllr C Evers	-	Glos Assn of Parish and Town Councils
Cllr J Greenwood	-	Lydney Town Council
Mr G Jones	-	Staff Representative
Cllr Ms J Lyons	-	Olveston Parish Council
Cllr J O'Neill	-	South Gloucestershire Council
Cllr Ms H Priestley	-	Hamfallow Parish Council
Cllr M R Riddle	-	South Gloucestershire Council
Mr B Roberts	-	Thornbury Chamber of Commerce
Mr J Stanton	-	Co-opted member
Cllr B Tipper	-	Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr Mrs P Wride	-	Ham and Stone Parish Council

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr J Jenkin	-	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Mr N Shaw	-	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Mr P Reynolds	-	Environment Agency
Mr J Beckett	-	Stroud District Council
Mr A Slaney	-	South Gloucestershire and Stroud College
Mr P Heath	-	Magnox
Mr M Heaton	-	Oldbury and Berkeley Sites Closure Director
Mr P Clarke	-	Oldbury Site
Ms E Ciezarek	-	Oldbury Site
Ms G Coombs	-	Magnox
Ms J Callander	-	Magnox
Ms S Stagg	-	Horizon
Mr T Proudler	-	Horizon
Mrs E Ashton		
Mrs S M Dovey		
Mr C Hall		
Mr J McHugh		
Mr A Mitchell		
Mr B Otto		
Cllr G Vaughan-Lewis		
Mrs E Vaughan-Lewis		
Mr G Wheeler		
Mr M J Davis (Secretary)		

I WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

1 Mr Lynden welcomed members to this joint meeting of the Oldbury and Berkeley Site Stakeholder Groups.

II APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 Apologies for absence were received from Mr D Drew MP, Mr W Gill, the Clerk, Falfield Parish Council, Cllr S Chandler, Mr K Warren, Cllr Mrs H Molyneux, Mr G P Simms, Mr K Sullivan, Len Hales and Ms B French.

III MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

(a) Accuracy

3 The minutes of the joint meeting held on 25 October 2017 were approved as a correct record. Ms Ellis King had proposed amendments to the minutes of the Oldbury SSG held on 1 August which would be incorporated before circulation.

(b) Matters arising

4 There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

IV PUBLIC FORUM

5 Cllr Mrs Wride invited questions from members of the public on any issues which might not arise in later discussions. Mrs Ashton referred to press reports of quantities of sediment being moved from Hinkley Point and taken to Cardiff Bay. Mr Lynden said that this was related to the construction of Hinkley Point C station and was not a matter for this SSG; he suggested that any questions should be directed to the Environment Agency or EDF Energy.

V SITE REPORTS

6 Mr Heaton reported on recent activities at the Berkeley and Oldbury Sites, drawing particular attention to the following:

(i) Both Sites had maintained high standards of safety performance. They had been two of the seven Magnox Sites which had during the past year had experienced no lost time accidents. The good performance had been recognised by regulators at a recent safety review meeting.

(ii) Action had been taken following the identification of errors in a spreadsheet used for the despatch of waste from the Berkeley Site. Action had also been taken at Berkeley in relation to weaknesses in confirmation of compliance with a number of maintenance schedule activities; these weaknesses had been identified by an inspection but had no nuclear safety significance.

(iii) A major security exercise was to be held at the Berkeley site on Saturday 10 November. It would be a multi-agency exercise led by the emergency services and would involve a large number of their personnel. Local residents would be informed of the potential activities and noises on the Site.

(iv) Revised emergency arrangements were being implemented at Oldbury to reflect the reduced level of hazards on the site. Members of staff were being redeployed from shift operations to day working to help with decommissioning activities and plant systems were being simplified where possible to reduce the need for responding to alarms. It was anticipated that shift operations working would end in March 2019.

(v) At Oldbury efforts were focused upon draining water from the fuel cooling ponds and dealing with items which had to be removed from that area. The IONSIV components from Oldbury, Dungeness A and Sizewell A which had been stored in the ponds had been packaged within MOSAIK ductile cast iron containers. After further conditioning on site these packages would be ready for transport to Berkeley which was scheduled to commence next year. Fewer containers than expected had been required to package these wastes, reducing the number of packages to be sent to Berkeley.

(vi) Fuel skips removed from the Oldbury pond were being cut up to reduce their volume for storage. This work had been completed on 16 of the 25 skips and the remainder would be completed within the next four weeks. Radiation exposures of the personnel involved in this work had been lower than expected. Subject to planning consent it was intended to send these items to Hinkley Point for processing and storage.

(vii) Bulk draining of the water from the Oldbury ponds had commenced. Due to the location of the ponds within the reactor building they would not be demolished as had been the case at Berkeley, but would be emptied, sealed and left for the duration of the care and maintenance period.

(viii) 150 tonnes of Fuel Element Debris waste (43% of the total) had been removed from Vault 2 at Berkeley and packaged into ductile cast iron containers. With the changes in waste packaging strategy there were opportunities for considering which packages were most appropriate for the different wastes. It was preferable to use the limited numbers of DCIC containers for the more highly radioactive wastes and the retrieval equipment had therefore been moved from Vault 2 to Vault 1 which contained more highly radioactive wastes. Retrieval of waste from Vault 1 had started recently.

(ix) Equipment for the retrieval of waste from Vault 3 at Berkeley was being delivered to site; retrievals were expected to commence next year.

(x) Wastes were being removed from the shielded area at Berkeley. One ductile cast iron container had been filled; it was anticipated that 10 – 12 containers would be required for these wastes.

(xi) Good progress was being made with construction of the intermediate level waste encapsulation plant at Berkeley. Construction of a number of test concrete boxes had started at the manufacturer's works; these would be used in commissioning the equipment on site. The concrete boxes would include an internal steel bin or liner which would allow for any expansion of the contents and the lid would be vented. It was anticipated that the necessary consent for the use of this equipment would be granted in autumn 2019 and the processing of these concrete box containers would then start in early 2020.

7 In reply to a question from Cllr Mrs Wride, Mr Heaton explained the segregation of water drainage systems on the Sites with potentially contaminated water being monitored and treated if necessary before discharge.

8 In response to comments made by Cllr Tipper, Mr Heaton explained the work necessary to sort and characterise wastes retrieved from the storage vaults. He said that conditions attached to consents for new power station construction imposed greater controls over arrangements for the storage of wastes on site.

9 In response to questions from Cllr Riddle on features of the concrete box storage packages, Mr Heaton said that the mild steel liner would allow for any expansion due to corrosion of metallic components and the venting was provided to allow for possible generation of hydrogen within the package.

10 In reply to a question from Cllr Dovey, Mr Heaton said that some of the techniques and systems used for the retrieval and storage of wastes were novel and were able to be used by other sites; visitors from other countries were often interested to see systems which they might use.

VI NDA UPDATE

11 Mr Jenkin reported on issues of current interest to the NDA, drawing particular attention to the following:

(i) The Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee had on the day of this meeting published a report on Sellafield, recognising progress in hazard reduction and project completion but identifying a number of continuing challenges.

(ii) Preparations were being made for Magnox to become a wholly-owned subsidiary of the NDA after the termination of the management contract with the Cavendish Fluor partnership. "Stand downs" were being held at each site to provide information for staff and recruitment to senior posts was in hand.

(iii) The NDA Board and government had supported the need for a review of decommissioning strategy including the timescale of planned dismantlement of reactors.

(iv) A workshop was to be held with stakeholders on 28 November to identify the most important factors to be taken into account in determining decommissioning options for each site.

(v) Reprocessing at the THORP plant at Sellafield was to end during the current month.

12 Mr Lynden agreed to allocate some time at the end of this meeting to identify issues which members felt important in relation to options for future decommissioning of the Sites.

13 In reply to a question from Cllr Davies, Mr Jenkin said that government was shortly to issue a policy statement on a geological disposal facility and at that time would set out a process for identifying a host site.

14 Cllr Evers drew attention to the importance of close cooperation between technical experts, particularly between Sellafield and the Magnox sites. Mr Jenkin suggested that the new management arrangements would make it easier for interchanges to take place. Mr Heaton identified a number of instances where good cooperation existed on current issues.

VII OFFICE FOR NUCLEAR REGULATION REPORT

15 Mr Shaw reported on his activities as ONR Inspector at the Oldbury and Berkeley sites. Reports on these activities had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Mr Shaw drew particular attention to the following;

(i) Inspections during the current week had focused upon the shielded area at Berkeley and the retrieval of IONSIV filters and cartridges at Oldbury. Mr Shaw emphasised the importance of there being clear links between the requirements of safety cases and the way those requirements were reflected in procedures, instructions, training programmes and working practices.

(ii) Inspections during the current week also covered arrangements for setting personnel to work at the start of a shift.

16 Mr Stanton asked about the reported shortfall in compliance with maintenance schedule requirements at Berkeley. It had been reported that a number of test activities had not been fully completed within specified intervals and had not been carried out under the control and supervision of a suitably qualified and experienced person. Mr Shaw said that the individual concerned had received training for the role some time ago but there was no record of a formal authorisation appointing him to the particular role. He said that there were no safety implications and the matters at issue need not have been included on the

maintenance schedule but the shortfall was recognised. Mr Shaw said that he had been satisfied with the actions taken at the site subsequently.

VIII ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

17 Mr Reynolds reported on the Environment Agency's inspection activities in relation to the Berkeley and Oldbury sites. Reports on these activities had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Mr Reynolds drew attention to the following:

(i) Inspections at Berkeley had included arrangements for the management of intermediate level waste and the characterisation of wastes. Inspections at Oldbury had included arrangements for the management and disposal of low-level waste. The inspections had produced satisfactory results.

(ii) Actions taken following the identification of errors in a spreadsheet used for disposals of waste at Berkeley had included arrangements for recording any changes made to spreadsheets.

(iii) It was anticipated that with the introduction of the encapsulation plant it would be necessary to increase the permitted discharge limit for tritium at Berkeley. Work on this, which included a submission to the European Commission, was in hand. The anticipated future discharge limit would still be the second lowest at the Magnox sites.

(iv) A measurement of elevated levels of naturally occurring potassium 40 in a silt sample had been reported to the Environment Agency.

IX ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING REPORT

18 Mr Clarke reported on the monitoring of discharges and radioactivity in the environment undertaken by Magnox. A report on the past year’s results had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting.

19 Mr Clarke explained the nature and scope of the environmental monitoring programme. The programme, which was independent of the monitoring undertaken by the Environment Agency, included radiation measurements and analysis of Tackyshade collectors and TLD devices together with the analysis of food and environmental samples. The monitoring programme had started at Berkeley in 1959.

20 In reply to a question Mr Clarke said that the company's monitoring programme provided an indication of any long-term trends in radioactivity in the environment. The monitoring undertaken by the Food Standards Agency included a range of foodstuffs, taking account of the results of habit surveys,

21 Mr Clarke drew attention to the reduction in gaseous discharges at Oldbury following the cessation of generation; variations in the low level of discharges from the reactor venting system could be caused by changes in atmospheric

conditions. He said that liquid effluent discharges could increase during the current year as a result of the draining of the Oldbury fuel ponds but levels were low compared with those during operation of the station.

22 Mr Clarke said that the apparent increase in gaseous carbon 14 emissions from Berkeley during the past two years resulted from the operation of waste retrieval and conditioning systems. The level of these discharges remained very low.

23 Mr Clarke said that the environmental monitoring programme during the past year confirmed that there had been no significant change in levels of radioactivity in the local environment.

X SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE AND STROUD COLLEGE UPDATE

24 Mr Slaney reported on continuing progress at the College's Berkeley campus. The numbers of students on the site had doubled this year compared with last year and would double again next year. Mr Slaney referred to a number of new initiatives and new businesses becoming established on the Berkeley site together with a police training facility. He described a major battery storage system that was to be established on the site.

25 Mr Lynden said that a question had been raised in advance of the meeting as to whether consideration had been given to installing solar/wind power generation schemes at all decommissioned sites. Mr Jenkins said that there were a variety of local factors which would influence ways in which individual sites could be used in the longer term. It was intended that local communities would be consulted in relation to the end use states of these sites.

XI CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

26 Mr Lynden reported on his activities as Chairman of the Oldbury SSG. He referred to forthcoming meetings of the Emergency Planning Consultative Committee, meetings of SSG Chairs with senior Magnox and NDA officers and the workshop to be held by NDA as part of the review of decommissioning strategy.

XII ANY OTHER BUSINESS

27 Mr Lynden invited comments from members on issues which might be raised at the forthcoming NDA workshop on possible changes in decommissioning strategy. Points raised during discussion included:

(i) Current knowledge of the state of the plants and the availability of relevant skills appeared to be advantages in maintaining a process of continuing dismantlement.

(ii) There appeared to be no advantage in moving radioactive items currently held safely within reactor structures to another location where some storage facility would have to be built. Decay of the radioactivity over a

care and maintenance period would allow the wastes to be treated differently.

(iii) It would be necessary to consider the technical arguments, and the supporting evidence, for each site in order to make an informed decision. It was suggested that local communities would not have the necessary technical awareness to make such decisions.

(iv) It was not clear whether there had been any fundamental changes which invalidated the earlier work leading to the current strategy. It was felt unlikely that there were sufficient technological developments in robotics at this stage to enable reactors to be dismantled remotely.

(v) It was important to consider the safety aspects of any proposal to bring forward the dismantlement of reactor structures.

(vi) The presence of asbestos within reactor structures might require some of the work to be carried out remotely even after a period in which radioactivity would have decayed.

(vii) Since the current policy had been established experience had been gained in decommissioning work at Windscale AGR and Winfrith.

(viii) It was uncertain whether skills necessary to manage asbestos hazards would be available in 60 or 70 years' time as by then such hazards generally would have been removed. An experienced workforce with the necessary skills in decommissioning work was available now.

XIII DATE TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

28 It was noted that the next meetings of the Oldbury and Berkeley Site Stakeholder Groups were scheduled to be held on 30 January 2019 and the next joint meeting was scheduled to be held on 24 April 2019.

MJD
3 November 2018