

## **HINKLEY POINT SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP**

### **SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS ARISING AT THE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2020**

- Mr Peter Montague, Hinkley Point A Site Closure Director reported on the continued high standards of safety performance on the Site and the progress with decommissioning projects. He explained that the retrieval of fuel element debris waste from the vaults had been resumed after problems with equipment used for lifting drums of the waste had been resolved. Good progress had been maintained with the construction of an interim storage facility and a concrete waste encapsulation plant.
- Mr Montague said that work to maintain deteriorating plant structures in a safe condition included the replacement of glazing on the reactor buildings, the replacement of concrete trench covers and the refurbishment of water reservoirs.
- Mr Montague said that it had been decided not to appeal against the decision by Somerset County Council to refuse planning consent for the transfer of waste from Oldbury for storage at Hinkley Point. Consideration was being given to the possibility of a new planning application which took into account the planning authority's comments.
- Mr Peter Evans, Hinkley Point B Station Director, reported on continued safe and reliable operation of the plant. He said it was now over 13 years since the station had experienced a nuclear reportable event, over ten years since the last environmental event and over four years since the last lost time incident involving an EDF Energy employee.
- Mr Evans said that due to plant problems at the end of 2019 it had become necessary to blow down reactor gas and as a result a quarterly notification level for the discharge of gaseous Carbon-14 had been exceeded in November and December. There had been no breach of the permitted limit of this discharge.
- Reactor 4 had been shut down for a programme of maintenance and graphite inspection work on 21 February. Return to service was expected in June following the completion of the analysis of inspection results.
- On the day before this meeting it had become necessary to shut down Reactor 3 due to a fault on a fire protection system. The reactor was to be shut down for maintenance and graphite inspection in April with return to service expected in late June.
- Members received reports from the NDA and from inspectors representing the Environment Agency and the Office for Nuclear Regulation.

## **HINKLEY POINT SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP**

### **Minutes of the meeting held at Hill House, Otterhampton on Friday 28 February 2020**

#### **PRESENT**

Cllr M Caswell (Chairman)	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Mr P Montague	-	Site Director, Hinkley Point A
Mr P Evans	-	Station Director, Hinkley Point B

#### **Elected Members**

Cllr Ms A Bown	-	Somerset County Council
Cllr H Davies	-	Somerset County Council
Cllr M Facey	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr Ms S Goss	-	Stogursey Parish Council
Cllr W Hawley	-	Fiddington Parish Council
Mr A Jeffery	-	Bridgwater & W Somerset Green Party
Cllr C Morgan	-	Somerset West and Taunton Council
Cllr Ms R Perrett	-	Otterhampton Parish Council
Cllr M Phillips	-	Cannington Parish Council
Cllr E Plomgren	-	Holford Parish Council
Cllr L Redman	-	Bridgwater Town Council
Cllr Ms A Reed	-	Wembdon Parish Council
Cllr J Roberts	-	Nether Stowey Parish Council
Ms M Smith	-	Forum 21
Cllr S Stretton	-	Spaxton Parish Council
Cllr M Walton	-	Kilve Parish Council

#### **Co-opted Members**

Mr M Brown (Vice Chairman)  
Mr M Short

#### **Appointed Members**

Mr J Jenkin	-	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Mr D Knowles	-	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Ms T Braithwaite	-	Environment Agency
Ms V Thomas	-	Environment Agency
Mr R Davies	-	Somerset County Council
Ms L Martin	-	Somerset County Council
Mr J Burton	-	Somerset West & Taunton Council

#### **EDF Energy**

Mr D Stokes  
Mr D Uminski  
Mr J Mason

**Magnox**  
Ms Z Young

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Ms P Harvey  
Mr M J Davis - Secretary

**CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 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.
- 2 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr M Reid, Mr A Debenham, Mr M Laver and Mr N Shaw.
- 3 It was noted that there were sufficient members present to constitute a quorum for this meeting.

**OPEN PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

- 4 Cllr Caswell invited questions from members of the public on any issue which might not be covered in later discussion. No such issues were raised.

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 OCTOBER 2019**

**(a) Accuracy**

- 5 The minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2019 were approved as a correct record.

**(b) Matters Arising**

**Noise from B Station (para 9 refers)**

- 6 Cllr Ms Goss confirmed that she had received a prompt communication explaining the cause of noise from the B Station which she had mentioned at the previous meeting.

**Degradation of A Site building structures (para 13(x) refers)**

- 7 Mr Montague confirmed that there had been no significant damage to A Site building structures caused by recent storms.

## **Other issues**

- 8 It was noted that all other matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting would be addressed during later discussion at the meeting.

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

- 9 Mr Montague reported on activities at the A Site since the previous meeting, drawing particular attention to the following:
- (i) High standards of safety performance and compliance had been maintained. There had been no lost time accident on the site for more than a year; radiation exposures to personnel had been lower than predicted; and waste management targets had been exceeded. A demonstration of the Site's emergency arrangements had been completed satisfactorily and good feedback had been received from external auditors carrying out audits against international standards.
  - (ii) As a result of problems with the equipment used for lifting the drums of sorted fuel element debris after removal from the vault, the retrieval of fuel element debris had been suspended. Following careful selection and testing of new lifting equipment, retrievals and trials had been resumed during the previous two weeks.
  - (iii) A flashover had occurred during routine electrical testing of 400V equipment. No one had been injured but investigations had covered the actions of individuals involved, the personal protective equipment used and work control processes. These investigations had been reviewed by ONR inspectors who had issued an enforcement letter reinforcing corrective actions which had been put in place.
  - (iv) A site safety improvement plan had been produced by an independent team and was being implemented.
  - (v) The construction of the interim storage facility and the waste encapsulation plant was substantially complete and good progress was being made with the establishment of a waste preconditioning facility. The waste encapsulation plant would include laboratory facilities for the testing of cement produced within the facility.
  - (vi) The removal of plant from the sludge canning building presented technical challenges due to the complex layout and the nature of the waste materials contained. Good progress had been made with the removal of this plant allowing attention to be focused upon dealing with the waste materials.

- (vii) Work being carried out on site to deal with deteriorating structures included the replacement of windows on the reactor buildings, the removal of redundant pipework, the replacement of concrete trench covers, and the refurbishment of towns main water reservoirs. The glazing refurbishment on the reactor buildings involved the replacement of almost 3000 pieces of glass with a thick perspex material; despite the cost of this work it was justified by the poor condition of the glass and the serious safety implications of failure.
  - (viii) It had been decided not to appeal against the decision by Somerset County Council to refuse planning consent for the transfer of waste skip components from Oldbury for storage at Hinkley Point. Consideration was being given to the possibility of a new planning application which took into account the planning authority's comments.
- 10 In reply to a question from Mr Short, Mr Montague explained the nature of the trials involving drums of fuel element debris. These trials were designed to assess the number of highly radioactive springs which it might be permissible to leave within a drum of sorted waste whilst remaining within safety case requirements and meeting the requirements for storage within a geological disposal facility. The sorting process could be simplified if it could be permissible to leave some of these springs in the sorted waste.
- 11 In reply to a question from Ms Smith on the replacement of glazing on the reactor buildings, Mr Montague said that consideration was being given with the NDA to a review of decommissioning strategy. This review would take account of experience to date in preparing sites for a period of care and maintenance and the potential continuing costs throughout such a period.
- 12 In reply to a question from Cllr Ms Reid on the flashover of electrical equipment during routine testing, Mr Montague said that protective equipment arrangements for this work included the use of heavy duty gauntlet gloves.

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

- 13 Mr Evans reported on activities and performance at the power station since the previous meeting of this Group, drawing particular attention to the following:
- (i) It was now more than 13 years since there had been a nuclear reportable event at the Station, more than ten years since there had been an environmental event and more than four years since the last lost time accident involving an EDF Energy employee.
  - (ii) The two individual contract partners involved in lost time events reported briefly at the previous meeting were expected to make full recoveries.

Lessons learned from the event in which an individual had sustained a broken leg had been promulgated to all other sites.

- (iii) At the end of 2019 the gas bypass plant had been isolated from the reactor circuits to allow maintenance work to be carried out. When the plant was returned to service moisture levels in the coolant gas in Reactor 3 had increased and it had been necessary to carry out blowdowns of reactor gas to atmosphere. As a result the station had exceeded the quarterly notification level for gaseous discharge of Carbon-14 in November and December.
  - (iv) On the day before this meeting it had been necessary to shut down Reactor 3 following the identification of a fault on a Mulsifyre fire protection system. Operational staff had followed established procedures for shutting down the plant in a controlled manner in such circumstances and establishing appropriate control arrangements. The shutdown process involved discharges of smoke and steam which might have been noticed by local residents; the smoke came from gas turbine plant which started automatically to provide backup electricity generation.
  - (v) Reactor 4 had been shut down on 21 February for a planned programme of maintenance and graphite inspection work; it was estimated that the reactor would be returned to service in early June following completion of safety case analysis and the review of inspection findings. Reactor 3 was due to be shut down for maintenance and graphite inspection work on 24 April; that outage was expected to run until late June.
  - (vi) The 515 staff on site included 9 apprentices who had been transferred from Horizon Nuclear Power at Wylfa to complete their training at Hinkley Point. Additionally there were 200 contract partners and 11 agency staff on site.
- 14 Referring to the incident in which a contractor's employee had sustained a broken leg, Cllr Plomgren asked about arrangements for training contractors' employees coming to work on the site. Mr Evans explained the Station's process of induction training for contractors but said that in these particular circumstances that process had been bypassed as the contract, which was for fencing work, had been placed by staff at the company's corporate headquarters.

#### **EMERGENCY PLANNING CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

- 15 Mr Uminski said that the next meeting of the Emergency Planning Consultative Committee was scheduled to be held on 12 March and that a report would be presented at the next meeting of this Group.

- 16 Mr R Davies referred to discussion at the previous meeting in relation to Somerset County Council's responsibilities for defining a Detailed Emergency Planning Zone for the site. He said that following the completion of the public consultation described at the previous meeting the Council had decided that there should be no changes to the current DEPZ arrangements within a distance of 3.5 km of the site. He said that details of this decision were available on the Council's website at <https://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=1310>. Cllr Ms Goss expressed her appreciation of the public consultation undertaken by the Council on this matter and said she believed that local residents were pleased that the existing arrangements within a distance of 3.5 km from the site were being maintained.
- 17 In reply to questions from Mr Jeffery, Mr Davies confirmed that there were to be outline planning arrangements within a radius of 30 km from the site and that work undertaken by the Council in relation to nuclear emergency planning was chargeable to the site operator.

#### **UPDATE FROM THE NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING AUTHORITY**

- 18 Mr Jenkin provided an update on current activities within the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, drawing particular attention to the following:
- (i) A review of decommissioning strategy for the former Magnox power station sites was being undertaken. It was hoped that an announcement might be made in late March on the selection of a lead site at which decommissioning could be accelerated and site clearance brought forward.
  - (ii) A supply chain event was to be held in Telford on 18 June.
  - (iii) Consultation was being undertaken on the NDA's local economic and social impact strategy; this consultation would close on 13 March. Consultation on the NDA's strategy document would take place between June and October.
  - (iv) An NDA stakeholder summit was to be held in Edinburgh on 19/20 October.
- 19 In reply to a question from Ms Smith, Mr Jenkins said that Radioactive Waste Management Ltd was inviting expressions of interest from local communities in relation to the siting of a geological disposal facility. Discussions were taking place with some communities but no formal expression of interest had yet been made.
- 20 In reply to a question from Cllr Plomgren, Mr Jenkin explained that the NDA was a government agency, sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. Approximately two thirds of its funding was received in the

form of a direct government grant and the remaining one third was derived from commercial operations, principally associated with the management of spent fuel and nuclear materials.

## **ENVIRONMENT AGENCY REPORT**

- 21 Ms Braithwaite and Ms Thomas reported on the Environment Agency's monitoring and regulatory activities in relation to Hinkley Point A Site and B Station. A report on those activities had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. They drew particular attention to the following:
- (i) An updated site permit had been issued to Hinkley Point A to introduce conditions relating to the guidance on requirements for the release of sites from radioactive substances regulation. At the request of the Site the permit also provided for two new gaseous discharge routes associated with the concrete waste encapsulation facility; this did not involve any increase in permitted discharge levels.
  - (ii) Two inspections of aspects of the management of radioactive waste had been undertaken at the A Site with satisfactory results.
  - (iii) The Agency had completed a review of an investigation report from the A Site relating to analyses of samples collected during discharge of the Final Monitoring and Delay tanks. Three low-level non-compliances had been identified and actions placed on the Site to review procedures.
  - (iv) The Agency's inspections at Hinkley Point B had included arrangements for the management of combustion plant and a review of responses to events.
- 22 Ms Braithwaite drew members' attention to the report on radioactivity in food and the environment (RIFE) published recently by the Agency in conjunction with the Food Standards Agency. Ms Thomas drew attention to a press report which had suggested that the RIFE report contained an indication of increases in radioactivity in samples of sediments in the vicinity of Hinkley Point. She said that no radioactivity had been detected in these samples and the results had therefore been declared to be below the limits of detection of the analysis equipment used. Due to a change in methodology the declared limits of detection were slightly higher than those used previously but this did not mean that there was an increased level of radioactivity in the sediments.
- 23 In reply to a question from Mr Short, Ms Braithwaite confirmed that the identified discharge routes from the waste encapsulation plant on A Site operated through high-efficiency filters and the equipment was included in the Site's maintenance schedule.

- 24 In reply to a question from Mr Jeffery, Ms Thomas said that the quarterly notification level was a monitoring hold point to ensure that confirmation was received that best available techniques were used to minimise the level of the discharge. The B Station's QNL for Carbon-14 was conservatively set at less than 25% of the annual limit and the discharge limit had not been exceeded.
- 25 Cllr Plomgren asked whether Environment Agency inspectors carried out unannounced spot checks. Ms Braithwaite and Ms Thomas confirmed that they did have powers to carry out unannounced inspections but inspections were generally organised on a planned basis; this was necessary to arrange access to certain areas and to make best use of the time spent on site. Ms Thomas said that opportunities were taken during planned inspections to introduce an element of surprise by raising issues which would not be anticipated by the site personnel.

## **OFFICE FOR NUCLEAR REGULATION REPORT**

- 26 Mr Knowles reported on ONR's regulatory activities in relation to Hinkley Point B Power Station. Reports from the ONR on both sites had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Mr Knowles drew particular attention to the following points relating to B Station:
- (i) Aspects covered by inspections on B Station during the period included organisational capability, management systems and turbine protection systems.
  - (ii) An enforcement letter had been sent to EDF Energy corporate centre following investigation of the event in which a fencing contractor had sustained a broken leg. The placing of that contract by staff at the corporate centre had resulted in the station's normal procedures being bypassed.
  - (iii) Mr Knowles had been on site at the Station on the day prior to this meeting when it had become necessary to shut down Reactor 3. He confirmed that all procedures relating to the shutdown of the reactor and the establishment of emergency control arrangements had been carried out correctly.
  - (iv) There had been a successful demonstration of the Station's emergency arrangements. The exercise had been based upon a security incident but had also included health and safety aspects.
- 27 In reply to a question from Cllr Ms Goss, Mr Knowles confirmed that arrangements had been made to replace the nuclear safeguards monitoring undertaken by Euratom.

- 28 No questions were raised by members on the ONR's report on its activities in relation to Hinkley Point A Site.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

- 29 A report from Cllr Caswell as chairman of the Group had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting.
- 30 Mr Brown reported on a meeting with senior Magnox personnel which he and Cllr Caswell had attended with representatives of other SSGs. There had been presentations on the various managerial issues facing the company and reports on progress to date. A copy of a note on the company's recent achievements presented at the meeting is attached to these minutes.
- 31 In response to a comment by Mr Jeffery, Mr Montague said that the purpose of the laboratory associated with the waste encapsulation plant was to analyse samples of cement produced in the plant. He said that high density cement would be used where the nature of particular waste required a higher level of radiological shielding.

### **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

- 32 No business.

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

- 33 It was noted that the next meeting of this Group was scheduled to be held on Friday 26 June 2020.

MJD  
3 March 2020