

**BERKELEY AND OLDBURY SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUPS  
SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS ARISING AT THE MEETING HELD  
VIA ZOOM ON WEDNESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2020**

- Mr Steve Chandler welcomed members to the meeting.
- Mr Mike Heaton, Site Closure Director, reported on recent activities at the Oldbury and Berkeley Sites. He referred to the continued high standards of safety, environmental and security performance; there had been no significant events at either Site.
- Mr Heaton said that operational activities had been paused at the Magnox Sites early in the coronavirus pandemic; numbers of staff on Sites had been kept to a minimum to deal only with security and compliance checks. Subsequently there had been a systematic process to ensure that operations could return safely to a routine normal basis.
- Mr Heaton described current work programmes at both Sites, explaining work in hand to enable waste materials to be processed for storage in concrete boxes on the Berkeley Site and outlining the position reached with the processing of wastes at Oldbury.
- Mr Jonathan Jenkin of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority reported on current issues. Members expressed an interest in possible plans for the future of the land occupied by Silt Lagoon 3. Reports were given by the local site inspectors of the Office for Nuclear Regulation and the Environment Agency.
- Mr Phil Clarke reported on the monitoring of discharges and radioactivity in the environment undertaken by staff at Oldbury for the Oldbury and Berkeley Sites.. He said that there had been no unexpected changes in discharges of radioactivity and no significant change in levels of radioactivity in the local environment.
- Mr Leon Flexman of Horizon Nuclear Power reported on the current position in relation to the development of a new nuclear power plant at Oldbury. He pointed out that Hitachi had decided to withdraw from the development projects at Wylfa and Oldbury but that it was prepared to cooperate with government or any other parties who wished to develop these sites. He said that Horizon Nuclear Power would continue to maintain the property which had been acquired in the local area for the purposes of new station development.
- Mr Stanton reported on his recent activities as chairman of the Berkeley SSG. Members agreed a note which had been produced by Mr Stanton and Mr Chandler for submission to NDA as a response to the public consultation on its draft strategy document.

**BERKELEY AND OLDBURY ON SEVERN SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUPS  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM ON  
WEDNESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2020**

**PRESENT:**

Mr J Stanton (in the chair)	-	Co-opted member
Cllr T Acton	-	Oldbury on Severn Parish Council
Mr S Chandler	-	Hamfallow Parish Council
Cllr Dr J Cordwell	-	Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr C Davies	-	Stinchcombe Parish Council
Mr M Lynden	-	Oldbury on Severn Parish Council
Mr A Paget	-	Staff Representative
Cllr C Parkinson	-	Thornbury Town Council
Cllr M Riddle	-	South Gloucestershire Council
Mr B Roberts	-	Thornbury Chamber of Commerce
Cllr K Sullivan	-	Oldbury on Severn Parish Council

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr J Jenkin	-	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Ms N Barnes	-	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Mr A Lord	-	Environment Agency
Ms S Gallagher	-	Environment Agency
Ms R Cleverley	-	Environment Agency
Ms G Ellis-King	-	South Gloucestershire Council
Mr L Flexman	-	Horizon Nuclear Power
Ms V Heselton	-	Gloucestershire Constabulary
Mr M Heaton	-	Oldbury and Berkeley Sites Closure Director
Ms G Coombs	-	Magnox Communications
Mrs J Callender	-	Magnox Communications
Mrs E Vaughan Lewis	-	Magnox Communications
Mr P Clarke	-	Magnox, Oldbury
Ms E Ciezarek	-	Magnox, Oldbury
Ms K Baxter	-	Magnox, Oldbury
Mr P Barrett	-	South Gloucestershire & Stroud College
Ms S Stagg	-	James Reed PR for Horizon Nuclear Power
Mr G Vaughan Lewis		
Mr J McHugh		
Mr J Mills		
Mr P Hazelwood		
Mrs E Ashton		
Mr A Middleton		
Mr I Goldsmith		
Ms S May		
Mr A Avery		
Mr M J Davis (Secretary)		

## **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

- 1 Mr Chandler welcomed everyone to this joint meeting of the Berkeley and Oldbury on Severn Site Stakeholder Groups which was being held via Zoom for the first time.

## **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 2 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr C McFarling, Mr G Wheeler, Cllr L Green, Mr W Gill, Mr M Johnson, Dr T Hellen, Mrs J Hellen and Mr A Mitchell.

## **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

### **(a) Accuracy**

- 3 The minutes of the meetings of the Berkeley and Oldbury SSGs held separately on 29 January 2020 were approved as accurate records.

### **(b) Matters arising**

- 5 There were no matters arising from the minutes of those previous meetings.

## **SITE CLOSURE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- 6 Mr Heaton reported on recent activities at the Oldbury and Berkeley Sites, drawing particular attention to the following:
  - (i) There had been no significant safety events on either Site. Early in the pandemic lockdown all operational activities had been paused with only minimal staff remaining on-site for security and compliance checks. A systematic process had been introduced subsequently to return to routine normal operations and this had been achieved at both sites. Coronavirus restrictions had also had an impact on work carried out off-site.
  - (ii) Precautions introduced at the Sites to help reduce the spread of coronavirus included requirements for 2 metre distancing, increased allocations of office space, maximum occupancy being identified for certain areas and the installation of screens where adequate spacing could not be achieved. Actions had been taken to carry out certain briefing activities in outdoor areas and extra sanitisation had been introduced for radiological instruments. Extra PPE was used for first aid treatments and fire assembly arrangements were undertaken outdoors.
  - (iii) Since the pause in operations there had been no further retrievals from waste vaults at Berkeley. The situation remained that some 27% of the waste had been removed from Vault 1, 43% from Vault 2 and 30-40% removed from the Shielded Area. There had been no bulk retrievals yet from Vault 3.

- (iv) Progress was being made with the various enablers required to be completed before wastes could be processed on the Berkeley Site for storage in concrete boxes. This work was scheduled for completion over the next nine months.
  - (v) Progress had been made with the processing of intermediate level wastes on the Oldbury Site; the volume of these wastes was much lower at Oldbury than at Berkeley. The former cooling ponds had been drained, the water treated and discharged and redundant equipment removed. Miscellaneous contaminated items contained in drums were being sorted and characterised, processed as low-level waste if appropriate, and otherwise loaded into ductile cast iron containers. Three such containers had been loaded to date and a fourth was planned to be loaded this year. Samples of radioactive sludges and resins would be taken to determine the preferred option for treatment of this waste.
  - (vi) Magnox had recruited 34 apprentices this year and 19 new graduate trainees. Four of these apprentices were based at Berkeley and three at Oldbury.
  - (vii) Covid-related socio-economic support included the provision of equipment for the Oldbury community shop and street furniture for Thornbury. Applications could now be made for socio-economic support during the coming financial year.
- 7 In reply to a question from Mr Vaughan Lewis, Mr Heaton explained that the argon fire suppression system which had been installed in Vaults 1 and 2 at Berkeley had been shown not to be required and had been removed. An argon injection system was now used in Vault 3 to reduce oxygen levels in the vault whilst sludge cans were being depressurised.
- 8 In reply to a question from Mr Stanton, Mr Heaton explained that items within the drums of miscellaneous contaminated wastes which could be classified as low-level waste were despatched to the LLW Repository. Items which were classified as intermediate level waste were loaded into ductile cast iron containers which were to be sent to Berkeley for storage.
- 9 Ms Ellis King expressed appreciation of the Covid-related socio-economic support given for local food banks, the Oldbury community shop, and seating for Thornbury High Street. Cllr Riddle added his thanks, saying that the administration of this support, with South Gloucestershire Council helping with its allocation, had been very effective.
- 10 Cllr Riddle asked how the numbers of staff working on the Sites compared with those prior to the pandemic. Mr Heaton said that numbers of staff at Oldbury and Berkeley were similar to previous levels although some staff were spending less time on the sites by working from home. Numbers of staff working at the Oldbury Technical Centre had been much reduced by working from home. Cllr Riddle also asked about the timescale of changes in the external appearance of the power station buildings. Mr Heaton said that the Turbine Hall would be

demolished but the appearance of the reactor buildings would be largely unchanged for the foreseeable future.

- 11 Cllr Davies asked whether a mobile plant which had been developed some years ago for the solidification of ILW sludges at various sites was still being used. Mr Heaton said that he wasn't aware of the present location of that plant but said the current preferred arrangement for the processing of those wastes was to load them into waste containers and dry them within the container rather than carry out encapsulation.

## **NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING AUTHORITY**

- 12 Mr Jenkin reported on current issues, drawing attention to the following:
- (i) The period of public consultation on the NDA's draft strategy document was due to expire on 8 November and all comments were welcome.
  - (ii) The NDA had published its local economic and social impact strategy document; it identified priorities and key interactions at each Site but these matters were kept under continuous review.
  - (iii) Good progress was being made with plans for the resumption of normal working. Video conferencing platforms used for SSG meetings and for various consultation meetings with stakeholders were generally considered to be working well.
  - (iv) The NDA's Business Plan for 2021/2024 would be issued for consultation in the coming months.
- 13 In reply to a question from Cllr Davies, Mr Jenkin said that Radioactive Waste Management was continuing its engagement with interested parties in relation to the possible location of a geological disposal facility.
- 14 In response to a question from Mr Stanton, Mr Jenkins said he understood that the publication of the Holliday report into issues associated with the NDA's competition for the Magnox parent body organisation was likely to be imminent.
- 15 Mr Lynden asked about plans for the future use of Silt Lagoon 3. He was anxious to see that there was adequate consultation with local people on the future use of this and other areas which were no longer required by the Site. Mr Jenkin said he was aware of discussions on the possibility of returning this area to a wetland habitat for wildlife. Mr Heaton said that this was a matter for the NDA but he felt that the creation of a wetland area would be a valuable extension of existing wildlife areas. Mr Mills emphasised the ecological value of areas of the site which had not been subjected to modern farming methods. Mr Lynden felt it was important that local residents were consulted on the potential benefits which might be derived from the future use of this and other areas of the site.

## **OFFICE FOR NUCLEAR REGULATION**

- 16 Ms Barnes, who had succeeded Mr Shaw as ONR Site Inspector in March, reported on ONR's regulatory and inspection activities. A report had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting.
- 17 Ms Barnes said that ONR had overseen the temporary operational pause at the Sites and the actions taken subsequently during the structured return to normal routine working. She said it had also overseen precautions introduced in the face of coronavirus hazards, emphasising the importance of ensuring that those precautions did not distract from other legal safety obligations.

## **ENVIRONMENT AGENCY**

- 18 Ms Gallagher and Mr Lord reported on the Environment Agency's regulatory activities in relation to the Berkeley and Oldbury Sites. Reports had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. During discussion the following points were noted:
- (i) In the unprecedented circumstances associated with the coronavirus lockdown the Agency had issued a number of temporary regulatory position statements which allowed for limited relaxations of regulatory requirements provided that certain conditions were met whilst clearly setting out required standards. Some of these dispensations had been used but both Sites had now returned to normal compliance arrangements.
  - (ii) The inspectors had maintained regular contact with the Sites and other regulators.
  - (iii) The Agency had undertaken a public consultation on the Site's application for a variation in the Berkeley permit to reflect operation of the waste encapsulation plant. A positive opinion had been received from the European Commission on the impact of this change and the Agency was now in a position to proceed with its determination of this application.
  - (iv) The Agency would continue to carry out some of its regulatory and inspection tasks remotely but visits to sites would be undertaken where necessary.
  - (v) Mr Lord would be transferring to another post within the Agency on 1 November and would be succeeded as the lead regulator for the Oldbury Site by Ms Cleverley. Ms Cleverley introduced herself to members.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING REPORT**

- 19 Mr Clarke reported on the monitoring of discharges and radioactivity in the environment undertaken by Magnox at Oldbury for the Oldbury and Berkeley

sites. A report on the past year's results had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting.

- 20 Mr Clarke said that discharges of radioactivity remained at very low levels, well within permitted limits. He outlined the nature and scope of the environmental monitoring programme which included radiation measurements and analysis of Takishade collectors and TLD devices together with the analysis of food and environmental samples. He said that it was appropriate to review the scope of the monitoring programme particularly in the light of the completion of the draining of the former cooling ponds at Oldbury.
- 21 Mr Clarke said that there had been no unexpected changes in discharges of radioactivity during the past year and the environmental monitoring programme had demonstrated that there had been no significant change in levels of radioactivity in the local environment.

### **CHAIR'S UPDATE**

- 22 Mr Stanton reported on his recent activities on behalf of the Group. He referred to his regular conversations with Mr Heaton, from which he had circulated notes for members' information. He described virtual meetings with representatives of other SSGs and the NDA, outlining discussions on the NDA strategy document and changes in Magnox decommissioning strategy.
- 23 It was noted that Mr Stanton and Mr Chandler had drafted a response to the consultation on the NDA's draft strategy document. It was agreed that this draft which had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting should be submitted as a response from both the Berkeley and Oldbury SSGs.
- 24 Mr Stanton said that issues relating to the storage of ammonium nitrate at Sharpness Docks had been raised with Government via the Member of Parliament and information had been received on actions which were being taken in the light of the major explosion of such chemicals in Beirut.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 25 Mr Flexman of Horizon Nuclear Power reported on the current position in relation to the potential development of new nuclear generation at Oldbury. He said that Hitachi had decided to withdraw from the Wylfa and Oldbury development projects. Hitachi was however prepared to cooperate with government and any other parties who became involved in the development of these sites. He confirmed that Horizon Nuclear Power would continue to manage and maintain the land which it had acquired for the purpose of developing new generation facilities at Oldbury. Cllr Riddle welcomed the attitude taken by Horizon towards the maintenance of these assets and said he had been pleased to see a planning application which they had submitted recently.
- 26 Mr Stanton asked whether there were any plans to install charging points for electric vehicles at Magnox sites. Mr Heaton said that trials were being

undertaken at some sites but it was important to consider whether the establishment of such facilities was consistent with the overall mission of completing decommissioning work.

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

27 It was noted that the next meetings of these Groups were to be held separately on 27 January 2021. The dates scheduled for further meetings were as follows; 21 April (joint meeting), 28 July (separate meetings) and 27 October (joint meeting).

MJD  
31 October 2020