

HINKLEY POINT SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Minutes of the meeting held at Hinkley Point Training and Induction Centre 16 January 2007

Present

Cllr M Short (Chairman)	-	Fiddington Parish Council
Mr M Lesinski	-	Site Director, Hinkley Point A Site
Mr P Higginson	-	Technical & Safety Support Manager, Hinkley Point B Station
Mr A Smart	-	Hinkley A Site Programme Manager, NDA
Cllr T Ayre	-	West Somerset District Council
Mrs H Barrow	-	Hinkley A Site Contract Manager, NDA
Cllr V Brewer	-	West Somerset District Council
Cllr M Brooks	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr M Brown	-	Otterhampton Parish Council
Cllr L Cartwright	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr M Caswell (Vice Chair)	-	Stockland Bristol Parish Meeting
Cllr B Child	-	West Somerset District Council
Cllr B Crowe	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Ms N Dawson	-	Somerset County Council, Civil Contingency
Mr A Debenham	-	Stop Hinkley
Cllr K Dyer	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr J Edney	-	Somerset County Council
Mr D Haigh	-	Government Office South West
Mr T Howes	-	West Somerset District Council
Mr G Hudd	-	Somerset County Council
Cllr S Kingham	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Mr C Knox	-	National Farmers Union
Cllr J Mochnacz	-	Somerset County Council
Mr H Rickard	-	Wessex Water
Mr G Roberts	-	Environment Agency
Mr B Slade	-	Stogursey Parish Council
Mr C Webb	-	North Somerset Council
Cllr D Yamanaka	-	North Somerset Council

British Energy

Mr M Pearce	-	Public Relations Officer
Mr P Dean	-	System Health Manager

British Nuclear Group

Mr T Jones	-	Senior Communications Manager
Mrs S Stewart (Secretary)	-	Communication Officer
Mr D Theobald	-	Human Resources Manager

In Attendance

Ms C Bann	-	Jacobs Babbie
Miss G Coombs	-	British Nuclear Group
Mr T Roxburgh	-	Jacobs Babbie
Mrs M Poole	-	British Nuclear Group
Mr R Wrayford	-	Customer Contract Manager

There were no members of the public attending this meeting.

1. CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Attending the SSG for the first time: Mr H Rickard, Wessex Water.

Apologies for absence were received from: Mr M Brooks, Mrs J Brown, Cllr D Busby, Mr S Conney, Mr R Dean, Mr P Ford, Cllr A Foxhuntley, Mr L Francis, Mr M Haslett, Cllr D Joslin, Mr Ian Liddell-Grainger, Mr M Poole, Mr D Stokes, Cllr A Trollope-Bellew, Mr D Williams, Cllr T Williams, Mr D Withey.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 October 2006

a) Accuracy

The minutes of the meeting of this council held on 10 March 2006 were approved as a correct record with the exception of the following item:

Page 9 Item (iii) 5th line should read tubes rather than channels.

b) Matters Arising from Minutes of the meeting on 13 October 2006:

The first six items are an update to the matters arising from the last minutes.

Item 5 – Temporary Storage of Spoil from Radioactive Waste Store construction:

More details in the A Site Report

Item 6 – Distribution of Potassium Iodate tablets in Stockland Bristol:

Mr Higginson attended Steart Residents Group meeting to discuss the Emergency Scheme and the operation of B Station. He is happy to attend other parish meetings to discuss any issues associated with the station including the distribution of potassium iodate tablets.

Item 8 – End Dates and End States for A Site decommissioning:

This will be covered in Agenda item 9.

Item 9 – Induction Training for SSG members

To be covered in Agenda item 5.

Item 10 – Further representation of groups on the SSG

To be covered in Agenda item 3.

Item 27 – Long term trends of environmental monitoring.

Cllr Williams had suggested that it would be helpful to have some long term trends to relate recent monitoring to historical monitoring which goes back to the days before the stations were built. Cllr Williams was not present at the meeting and work is still ongoing, therefore this will be covered at the next SSG.

Item 4 - A Site Report Questions & Answers.

Cllr Edney had requested a company tree to be put together indicating historical ownership of the two sites. This will be discussed at a future meeting.

Item 5 – B Station Report Questions & Answers.

At the last meeting Cllr Edney asked the two Site Directors to remind their staff about the speed limits through Cannington, it had been noted that many cars were exceeding the limits. Mr Lesinski explained that the A site has organised a number of training courses through ‘Speed Choice’ to educate staff about driving habits. The intention is that everyone at the site will attend one of these courses. The site has also been working with the local police to identify other ways that driving can be improved. Cllr Edney explained that Cannington Parish Council have acquired a speed gun and will be using this in the future. Cllr Slade explained that Stogursey Parish Council are also working with the local police to try and get speed cameras installed. Cllr Cartwright felt that some of the road signage could be improved, especially at the turning to Stogursey. Mr Higginson said that they were also hoping to introduce the ‘Speed Choice’ courses at Hinkley B.

Item 6 – Report from the Emergency Planning Consultative Committee.

Mrs Dawson confirmed that she was looking into the issue of transport arrangements if evacuation of local areas was ever necessary. She will report back at a future meeting.

Item 9 – NII Report – Matters Arising.

The NII had shown concerns over access to site because of queuing traffic. Mr Higginson assured the meeting that if emergency vehicles needed access to site, any traffic would be cleared and priority would be given to emergency vehicles.

3. CHANGES TO SSG CONSTITUTION AND CODES OF PRACTICE INCLUDING APPENDICES.

The Chairman had received comments that the existing constitution and codes of practice was not fit for purpose. It was also evident at the last meeting that the voting members needed to be identified. All SSG members were sent a copy of the new proposed constitution and asked for comments.

Mr Smart felt that bullet points 4 & 5 on page 1, should also refer to British Energy. Many people felt that the constitution focused too much on the A site and the NDA. It was explained that the changes to the SSG were brought about by the NDA. British Energy were given the option at the time of forming their own group but were keen to remain as part of the existing group. It was agreed that they shouldn’t be sidelined and that British Energy would be referred to in the bullet points.

Mr Caswell stated that the updated document now made it very clear which members were eligible to vote.

Mr Hudd felt that the NDA had made it clear that the location for meetings should be moved around. Mr Smart confirmed that the NDA would prefer to see different meeting places to be used and times to be changed, however he also made it clear that it is up to the SSG membership to agree this. Mr Debenham stated that Mrs Brown, PCAH, felt she was excluded from meetings because of the venue, however he did understand that the general consensus at the last meeting was to hold the meetings at Hinkley Point. Mr Caswell felt that this was a matter for discussion at the AGM as this meeting was to discuss the constitution. Mr Brown felt that the way the draft document was worded still allowed for the meeting to be moved to another location.

The Chairman referred to page 3, and explained that the current constitution referred to the upholding of the SSG's terms of reference. As this document does not exist, it has now been removed from the constitution.

Cllr Mochnacz asked for a definition of the word 'local' when referring to the 'local community' on page 4. The chairman explained that himself and the secretary had written to the County Council, all District Councils in Somerset and Parish Councils between East Quantoxhead and Pawlett. Very little interest had been shown, however if any of these councils wanted to send representation in the future we would welcome them into the membership.

Cllr Mochnacz asked that we reconsider the timings, however it was felt that the wording in the constitution allowed for flexibility and that we should address this at an AGM along with the venue issue.

The two appendices which list the numbers of voting and non-voting members were discussed. The Chairman explained that Sedgemoor Council had felt that they should have six voting members and had tried to increase their representation. He said that if they wished to officially propose an increase from five to six we could discuss it and vote on it. Cllr Cartwright explained the process for Sedgemoor Council to change their membership on an outside body. Cllr Cartwright was unaware that the council had tried to increase their number of representatives on the SSG and said that this should not have been done without putting it through the council at their annual meeting. This was confirmed by Cllr Dyer and Cllr Crowe.

Cllr Mochnacz suggested that we have an attendance register which is fed back to the councils. This was felt to be a good idea.

Some confusion arose over the number of elected and therefore voting members, the current confirmed number being 34, with the possible addition of a further 10 members from parish councils that are not currently represented. In view of this, it was agreed that a quorum of 1/3 of the confirmed voting members at the date of any meeting should be in attendance for a vote to be counted. The matter of councils sending substitute members was discussed. It was agreed that substitutes could be used as long as the councils had informed the group of the names of the substitutes. The Chairman reminded the SSG that voting should be avoided where possible anyway.

Cllr Brewer asked for the number of officers representing West Somerset District Council to be increased to four, in line with Sedgemoor Council. This was agreed.

Mr Hudd proposed that we formerly adopt the revised Constitution and Codes of Practice. The decision to adopt these was unanimous. It was also agreed that we would contact the councils that had chosen not to be represented again and give them another opportunity to elect representatives to join the group.

4. RATIFICATION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN.

Cllr Edney took the chair for this item to be discussed. Cllr Edney re-capped on the events of the last meeting. He explained that two other proposals were received prior to the meeting starting on 13 October, even though nominations had been requested to be submitted by 9 October. It had also been questioned whether Mr Short was a totally independent candidate. A number of letters had been circulated prior to this meeting, and Mr Short and Mr Caswell have

sought the NDA's views on what constitutes an independent chair. The NDA have confirmed that the chair needs to be independent of the NDA, British Nuclear Group and British Energy, and that both Mr Short and Mr Caswell are suitable candidates for the position of Chair and Vice Chair. They have also confirmed that the Standards Board of England has no jurisdiction over the proceedings of the Hinkley Point Site Stakeholder Group.

It was proposed by Cllr Cartwright that we ratify the positions of Cllr Short as SSG Chairman and Cllr Caswell as SSG Vice-Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Dyer. The vote was unanimous that this be accepted.

The Vice-Chair addressed the meeting to clarify his position over a rumour that he was also not independent of the nuclear industry. The Vice-Chair stated that he is currently employed by Sedgemoor District Council and has never been employed in the nuclear industry.

The Chair thanked the membership for their vote of confidence and said he hoped that the group could now move forward and forget the business of the last few months.

5. SSG INDUCTION.

The Chairman explained that there had been two induction days in the past, which had been very informative but not well attended. There is an opportunity for another one to be arranged in the near future but there would need to be at least 10 members interested in attending. Members should make their interest known to the secretary.

6. UPDATE FROM B STATION.

Mr Higginson introduced himself and Mr P Dean, System Health Manager. He explained that there had been three lost time accidents at B Station since the last meeting. The station is holding an OCNS (Office of Civil Nuclear Security) witnessed exercise today, and next month they will be holding an NII (Nuclear Installations Inspectorate) witnessed, Level One exercise. He explained that both reactors were shut down at the moment and start up had been delayed due to the need to carry out further inspections on the boiler tubes. Mr Higginson explained that work on Hinkley Point B and Hunterston B should be completed soon and British Energy hoped to return all four reactors to service in the spring. This would be subject to NII approval.

Mr Dean is overseeing the programme of inspection on the boiler tubes and gave a short presentation to explain the work involved and the different options available to deal with any defects in the welds. He explained that British Energy are now working on their Safety Case to bring the reactors back into service. He also said that initially the reactors will operate at only 70% of capacity.

Mr Francis, B Station Director, will be moving to Barnwood to lead a strategy team in the way forward.

Questions relating to the above item.

Mr Knox has worked as a welder in the past and noted that re-welding can increase stress on other parts of plant. He was concerned that the plant would not stand up to the repairs? Mr Dean explained that British Energy would need to meet the safety case with the NII before operation could begin again.

Cllr Edney asked if the issues were greater than expected? Mr Dean confirmed that the repairs made were slightly more than expected.

Mr Debenham asked whether the people carrying out the inspections were working in highly radioactive conditions. Mr Higginson confirmed that the inspection teams and welders were working in radioactive conditions. As is always the case, individual personal monitoring takes place which is strictly controlled. Mr Higginson explained the Eddycurrent Techniques were used, which involved close inspection by a person – not cameras. Mr Higginson, has been in the pressure vessel himself in the past, and the radiation exposure is controlled within their own company limits which are below statutory limits.

Mr Hudd was concerned over the way the problems had been reported at the last meeting in October. Mr Francis had stated that nothing had been found that was not expected, however only days later the stock exchange had announced that problems had been discovered at British Energy. Mr Higginson said that Mr Francis had given a genuine report at the last meeting. Information had come through from Hunterston after the SSG meeting had finished. He did explain however that as a private company they had a duty to make any announcements through the stock exchange.

Cllr Yamanaka asked if faults at other welds could occur in the future? Mr Dean explained that all welds had been inspected and only a small amount had needed repairs. He said that operating at lower temperatures should reduce the problem. It was also explained that although British Energy wanted to get the reactors back into service by the spring, the date would ultimately depend on the NII.

Mr Debenham asked what the worst case scenario would be if a weld were to break. It was explained that the safety valves would lift, releasing steam into the atmosphere. Mr Higginson explained that the safety case had to take into account the possibility of an earth quake happening in Somerset.

7. UPDATE FROM A SITE.

Mr Lesinski said there had been no lost time accidents and no radiological or environmental incidents since the last meeting. The spoil from the ILW store that was stored on the A site has now been moved to the final position of the Cooling Water Pump-house. The ILW slab has been completed. The metal smelting trials for skips in the US have been successful and should enable British Nuclear Group to recycle the skips in the future. De-planting in the Turbine Hall is moving on well and the CW pump-house is now completely de-planted. In total we have completed £60 million of work for £50 million.

On 19th December, British Nuclear Group had received a letter to say that there were some funding issues from the DTI. There will be a short fall in funding for the current year and so some work has been de-mobilised including further work on the ILW store. The company is waiting for further news on what the short fall will be for next year before making more decisions on which work to delay. British Nuclear Group is now focussing on staff issues and also ensuring safety is the number one priority.

British Nuclear Group are still planning for regionalisation and the Northern and Southern sites will still be re-licensed. Priority will be given to License Compliance, Safety, Emergency Preparedness, Hazard Reduction and Critical Path work.

Questions relating to the above item

The chairman asked how the news would affect staffing levels? Mr Lesinski said he thought that the site would probably lose around 100 people quite quickly, this would be done by stopping some of the contract work.

Mr Debenham asked if this would extend the Life Time Plan? Mr Lesinski said this would probably have an affect on the Care & Maintenance preparations stage and therefore could possibly add 4-5 years to get to Care & maintenance.

Cllr Slade asked if local firms would have contracts stopped in order to get lower bids elsewhere in the country? Mr Lesinski said there would be no re-bidding taking place to move work away from local contractors.

The chairman asked what percentage of the workforce is local. Mr Theobald said that a large number of local people had been recruited recently and that an important factor for British Nuclear Group was the impact on the local community. He said he would get a figure for the next meeting. Mr Lesinski said they did not envisage any mandatory job losses for directly employed staff.

Mr Smart wanted to make it clear that the funding cuts were related to production funding from operational sites i.e. Oldbury, Wylfa and Sellafied.

8. NDA SOCIO-ECONOMIC POLICY

The Chairman explained that the NDA Socio-economic policy had been out for consultation for some time and that the views of the stakeholder group needed to be fed back to the NDA by 19 January 2007. Mike had asked members to review the document, in the letter that was sent out with the SSG invitations. He explained that some of the savings made during decommissioning would go back into supporting communities through socio-economic funding however this doesn't mean that savings made at Hinkley would be given to projects in the area local to Hinkley. The NDA have highlighted four geographical areas that would receive priority for funding. He feels this is wrong and that savings made at Hinkley should go back to support projects in the local area. This was also felt by other members of the SSG.

It was explained that funding given to the local community through the site contractor (British Nuclear Group) would still continue, however the NDA would expect the contractor to support more sustainable projects. Funding of community groups for football kits etc would be expected to be funded through British Nuclear Groups own profits. The NDA would still be supportive of continuing support for Bridgwater College and education etc.

Cllr Cartwright asked Mr Smart to explain why the NDA does not consider Somerset to be on the priority list for funding. Mr Smart explained that it was felt that the four geographical areas identified would be more affected by the closure of nuclear establishments in those areas. They are also generally more highly deprived areas than Somerset. Cllr Cartwright wondered if the possibility of Hinkley C had been taken into consideration when identifying priority areas. The chairman said he felt that it was based on areas of deprivations and that they had probably taken into consideration that Hinkley B would still be offering employment opportunities for some time.

It was agreed that the secretary would submit a letter to the NDA stating that the group does not agree with the way funding would be distributed. Savings made at Hinkley should be spent on the Hinkley community.

9. UPDATE ON HINKLEY POINT A SITE END USE CONSULTATION.

Mr Wrayford gave a very short presentation explaining what has been done within the local community to determine the favoured end use of the site. Other sites are carrying out similar exercises although some have spent thousands of pounds on Mori Polls and similar. The NDA need to know the preferred options so that they can budget for the end state of the site. Questionnaires have been distributed through local web sites, Dunster Show, business breakfasts, decommissioning presentations and postal questionnaires. Mr Wrayford said that the preferred option from the results received so far was for a nature reserve and the least favoured option was for residential use.

Mr Mochnacz said he was concerned about the low level of return and felt that the site would need to do more work in the future. It appears that the results at Bradwell and Sizewell were similar to those at Hinkley. Mr Roxburgh, Jacobs Babbie, is involved in the study for Hinkley Point A Site and has seen the results at Oldbury. He said different groups of people are giving different messages, and that the results will require careful handling.

Mr Debenham suggested that maybe the local district councils could send out a questionnaire in the future with council tax bills or similar – this may get a better response.

Mr Brown said that he was disappointed with the results from the SSG membership. It appears that this study is being done on behalf of the SSG yet only five of the SSG members have completed a survey. It was agreed that surveys would be sent out by post to all SSG members. The chairman said that this is only the first round of the consultation process and there will be time to do more consultation in the future. He felt that the fact that consultation is being undertaken over 100 years before the site is cleared is probably one of the reasons that the survey has had such a bad response. The chairman asked the membership if they felt we should spend money on a Mori Poll or similar in the near future. The general feeling was that we should not spend large amounts of money to determine an end use at this stage. Cllr Mochnacz felt we should do more now and Mr Hudd stated that the NDA sees the SSG as the primary route for consultation, we should do the best job we can.

10. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS.

The chairman asked the membership if they were happy that the Chairman and vice-chairman continue to represent the group at national meetings. It was agreed that they should continue as they have been doing.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The membership were reminded that the next meeting of this group would be held at the Hinkley Point Training & Induction Centre on Friday 16 March 2007 at 10 am.