

## HINKLEY POINT SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP

### Minutes of the meeting held at Hinkley Point Training and Induction Centre 19 October 2007

#### Present

Cllr M Short (Chairman)	-	Fiddington Parish Council
Mr M Lesinski	-	Site Director, Hinkley Point A Site
Mr R Thorson	-	Acting Station Director, Hinkley Point B
Dr D Warner	-	NDA
Cllr C Allen	-	Cannington Parish Council
Mr B Birkenhead	-	Otterhampton Parish Council
Cllr M Caswell (Vice Chair)	-	Stockland Bristol Parish Meeting
Cllr B Child	-	Co-opted Member
Inspector N Crocker	-	Avon & Somerset Constabulary
Ms N Dawson	-	Somerset County Council, Civil Contingency
Mr A Debenham	-	Stop Hinkley
Mr A Dugdale	-	Food Standards Agency
Cllr A Fraser	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Mr C Graham	-	Sedgemoor & West Somerset Green Party
Cllr N Hercock	-	West Somerset Council
Mr T Howes	-	Civil Nuclear Constabulary
Mr G Hudd	-	Somerset County Council
Cllr M Kellaway-Marriot	-	North Somerset District Council
Cllr S Kingham	-	Sedgemoor District Council
Mr C Knox	-	National Farmers Union
Cllr C Morgan	-	West Somerset Council
Mr J Pinkard	-	West Quantoxhead Parish Meeting
Mr G Roberts	-	Environment Agency
Mr B Slade	-	Stogursey Parish Council
Cllr P Tipney	-	West Somerset Council
Cllr J Walker	-	West Somerset Council
Cllr T Williams	-	Kilve Parish Council

#### British Energy

Mr G Bell	-	British Energy Public Relations Officer
Mr M Haslett	-	Environmental Safety Group Head
Mr P Higginson	-	Technical & Safety Support Manager
Mr M Poole	-	SRD Site Inspector
Mr D Stokes	-	Human Resources Advisor

#### Magnox South

Mr T Jones	-	Head of Communications – Magnox South
Mr D McCubbin	-	Environmental Team Leader
Dr A Meehan	-	Technical Integrator – Magnox South
Mr P Montague	-	Head of Radiological Protection
Mrs S Stewart (Secretary)	-	Communication Officer

#### In Attendance

Mr J Baker	-	Member of the Public
Mr A Ball	-	Magnox South
Miss G Coombs	-	Magnox South
Mr J Freeman	-	Member of the Public

Mr N Fry	-	Food Standards Agency
Ms Harvey-Smith	-	Member of the Public
Mrs J Hellier	-	Magnox South
Mr S Payne	-	Magnox South, Berkeley Site
Mrs M Poole	-	Magnox South
Mrs C Richards	-	Environment Agency Communications
Mr T Meek	-	Magnox South
Mr C Thomson	-	Magnox South Union Representative
Mrs P Wride	-	Berkeley SSG Chair

## **1. OPEN PUBLIC Q & A SESSION.**

The Chairman opened the meeting and invited questions from members of the public.

Mr Debenham asked a question relating to the historical ownership data sheet that had been sent out to members. He wondered if the changes of ownership of the two stations over the years had been detrimental to the running of the organisations and queried the administrative overheads that the changes had incurred.

Mr Higginson explained that many of the changes over the years had been a result of change in Government policy. The Chairman explained that the nuclear industry in this country has always been heavily regulated, with safety being the highest priority. The NII have always been involved in any changes of ownership.

Mr Debenham was concerned about the staff turnover being detrimental to the running of the sites.

Mr Lesinski explained that the changes of ownership had little effect on staff at the sites. The recent sale of Reactor Sites had affected only three out of 500 people at Hinkley Point A Site.

Mr Graham asked whether the ILW (Intermediate Level Waste) repository at Hinkley Point A was likely to become a regional facility rather than just a site specific facility.

Mr Lesinski explained that the construction of the ILW facility at Hinkley Point A has been postponed due to funding issues, but that the permission in place at the moment is only for Hinkley Point A waste. He went on to explain that there are strategies to look at ways of saving significant amounts of funding by using the capacity in some stores to take waste from other Magnox facilities. Other strategies have been developed that will decrease the volume of ILW needing to be stored at sites which would possibly mean that only a part of the ILW store would be used. Any changes from the current strategy would have to go through a significant amount of consultation.

The Chairman reiterated the fact that the permission for the ILW store at Hinkley Point A is currently only for site specific waste and that it is an interim measure until a national repository has been built.

Mr Hudd also confirmed that the planning application was only for Hinkley Point A's ILW and that volumes of that waste were taken into account at the time that planning permission was granted.

The Chairman asked if there were any objections to the proceedings being recorded for the purpose of producing minutes of the meeting. No objections were noted.

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

Apologies for absence were received from: Mr J Edney, Mr R Prowse, Mr R Williams, Mr A Trollope-Bellew, Mr M Brown, Mr P Smith, Mr D Busby, Mr D Theobald.

The following new members introduced themselves at the request of the Chairman:

Cllr P Tipney – West Somerset Council  
Cllr J Walker – West Somerset Council  
Cllr M Kelloway-Marriot – North Somerset District Council  
Cllr N Hercock – West Somerset Council  
Cllr C Allen – Cannington Parish Council  
Cllr C Morgan – West Somerset Council  
Cllr A Fraser – Sedgemoor District Council

Mr Hudd also explained that Cllr J Mochnacz has been replaced by Cllr A Horsfall on behalf of Somerset County Council.

It was confirmed that the SSG currently has 35 elected voting members. At least 12 voting members need to be present for a quorum. A show of hands confirmed that 14 elected voting members were present at the meeting.

## **3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 March 2007**

### **a) Accuracy**

The minutes of the meeting of this group held on 16 March 2007 were approved as a correct record of the meeting.

### **b) Matters Arising from Minutes of the meeting on 16 March 2007.**

#### **Item 2b.6 – Distribution of Potassium Iodate tablets in Stockland Bristol:**

Mr Higginson was not available for the summer parish meeting of Stockland Bristol due to holiday commitments. He and Cllr Caswell will make arrangements for his attendance at the spring parish meeting, or any other meeting that Cllr Caswell is able to arrange, to explain the distribution of the tablets.

#### **Item 2b.9 – Induction Training for SSG members:**

The Chairman explained that two training sessions had already taken place and had proved useful for the understanding of any technical reports. New members would find this particularly useful. Two dates have been identified for the induction training to take place – 29/11/2007 and 9/1/2008. Anyone wishing to attend either of these sessions should give names to the secretary. A minimum of six people would need to attend each course to make the sessions viable.

#### **Item 4 – Q2 Oct 06 Minutes - Company tree indicating historical ownership.**

This was requested by Cllr J Edney and has now been sent out.

#### **Item 4. (viii) Update on Skip Smelting Project.**

This will be covered in the Hinkley Point A Site report.

**Item 5. (iv) Update on B Station Operations since the outage last year.**

The Chairman had asked Hinkley Point B Station for a more detailed report following the repairs carried out during the outage. A comprehensive report explaining the work carried out had now been sent out to all members. Mr Debenham thanked the Chairman for requesting this report.

**Item 10. Questions relating to Low Level Waste Workshop – Mr Allan had an action to respond to a letter from Mrs Brown, PCAH, relating to geological data.**

Mr Allan has now left Hinkley Point A Site but it is thought that the new project manager, Mr Priddle has responded. The site will confirm this is the case by the next meeting.

**Item 11. Question relating to the Low Level Waste Workshop – Cllr Foxhuntley also had an action to respond to Mrs Brown, PCAH, regarding a quote about West Somerset Council’s intention to resist the development of further nuclear power generation capability at Hinkley Point.**

Cllr Foxhuntley is no longer a member of the SSG, but it is understood that the action was withdrawn because Mrs Brown had made an inaccurate quote.

**Item 12. Mr Smart, NDA, had an action to find out more information about the NDA consultation regarding the reforming of SSGs. This work was carried out by the convenor for the NDA.**

Dr Warner explained that the item had also been covered at the National Stakeholder Group meeting. Handouts were available at reception, the results of the consultation are being collated and further updates will be available in the future.

**4. STATION DIRECTORS REPORT – HINKLEY POINT B STATION**

- (i) The station had produced 1.98 TWh up to 30 September 2007 but has now passed 2 TWh, which is a milestone for the station.
- (ii) The station is approaching a year without a lost time accident. Mr Thorson explained that British Energy’s criteria for recording a lost time accident is anyone not returning to work the day after an accident, whereas the UK industry generally uses three days as the criteria for recording a lost time accident.
- (iii) The accident frequency rate stands at 0.32
- (iv) The station has received a RoSPA Gold Medal Award recognising more than five years of Gold Awards for occupational health and safety achievements.
- (v) The station has gone 90 days since the last environmental event. The most recent being related to a problem with the station sewage system. Due to a pipe blockage, sewage had to be transferred to the station sewage plant by tanker. This affected the ability of bacteria in the plant to treat the waste. Follow up samples showed that the levels had returned to well below the discharge limit.
- (vi) A warning letter was received from the Environment Agency relating to a missing gasket from a cloth ceramic filter in the Active Effluent Treatment Plant. The problem was identified internally and no unauthorised discharges occurred. Procedures have now changed and personnel have undergone additional training to ensure this event is not repeated.

- (vii) A number of emergency exercises have taken place. The latest was a RADSAFE exercise, which is a set of arrangements used to manage incidents involving transport. The Department of Transport were satisfied with the outcome of the exercise.
- (viii) Distribution of new Potassium Iodate tablets was successfully completed in September. A corporate letter was sent out prior to the distribution of the tablets explaining that the tablets had been delayed slightly due to supplier delays. It appears that an incorrect mailing list was used and 135 letters were sent to residents outside the DEPZ area. Letters Of apology have now been sent out to those people.
- (ix) No INES reportable events since the last SSG meeting. The station has achieved 358 days without a reportable event.
- (x) Both units are currently operating at around 70% of reactor power. Reactor 3 has produced 1,066 GWh and Reactor 4 has produced 920 GWh. R3 returned to service on 29 May 2007 and has been in service since that date. R4 returned to service on 14 June and has completed 109 days of operation. A 100 day run is a good indicator of the maintenance that has been carried out. 18 channels have been re-fuelled on both units and 11 fuel flasks have been dispatched.
- (xi) Community Relations – Over £10,500 has been raised for the charity of year, St Margaret’s Hospice through fundraising events and raffles held at the station. This money will be matched by British Energy.
- (xii) The station joined the Somerset Chamber of Commerce in August.
- (xiii) On 15 August a meeting was held by the Department for Business Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR) to consider the energy review consultation.
- (xiv) A number of local community projects have been supported through the sponsorship committee. Members of staff have also taken part in many community events.
- (xv) The station currently has 530 full time employees, 18 apprentices and 162 full time contract staff.
- (xvi) British Energy has published its annual report. The company has announced post profits of £798 million. Output was down, mainly due to the extended outages at Hinkley Point B and Hunterston B.
- (xvii) Deputy Chairman, Clare Spottiswoode, retired from the board and has been replaced by Ian Harley. Quarter one results for the three months ending in July showed 5TWh of losses across the fleet. Again this is mainly down to the extended outages at Hinkley Point B and Hunterston B.
- (xviii) British Energy has responded to the Government consultation on the future of new build. A copy of BE’s submission will be sent out to all SSG members.

**Questions relating to the B Station Report:**

Mr Williams asked whether the work that had been carried out on the boiler tubes was a repair or a replacement?

Mr Thorson explained that the tubes had been repaired. Because of the tighter regime that the station is now operating under, it is hoped that the station will not have similar issues in the future. Obviously inspections work will still continue.

Mr Debenham asked if the unit capacity factor percentages shown in the report (R3 – 81% and R4 – 92%) were percentages of the reduced operating power. Mr Thorson confirmed that it was. The figure of 430 GNN (Gross Net Net) in the report is the reduced rated unit power and compares to around 650 MW of electric when operating at full load.

Mr Debenham asked if the boiler tube repairs at Hinkley Point B and Hunterston B, had also led the company to introduce new automatic safety systems. Mr Thorson explained that additional control systems within the boilers were being considered and that operating at a lower regime was an additional safety measure. Mr Higginson added that a safety case for operating the reactors had been produced and submitted to the NII. Everything has been carefully scrutinised by the NII and they are happy with the policy that is being followed.

Mr Debenham asked whether there is a tolerance level of cracks in the graphite bricks that would set alarm bells ringing. Mr Higginson explained that both the number and the types of cracks need to be taken into consideration. Inspections are carried out on a two yearly basis with cameras in the channels and by taking samples. The results are used to produce a safety case that will then go to the NII for them to review. Monitoring also takes place when the fuel or the control rods are moved in or out of the core to ensure freedom of movement.

## **5. SITE DIRECTORS REPORT – HINKLEY POINT A SITE**

- (i) Mr Lesinski reported that after a run of over 500 days without a lost time accident the site had experienced some lost time accidents earlier in the year. The most recent one was when an individual cleaning a shower, slipped on a tile and bruised himself. Mr Lesinski explained that as with the B Station, one missed day counts against the lost time statistics. 116 days has now been achieved without a lost time accident.
- (ii) The site has been awarded the Presidents Award for 10 consecutive gold medals from RoSPA.
- (iii) As mentioned in the report from the Environment Agency, the site received a warning letter as a result of some miscalculations on some venting systems. The inaccuracies were identified by the company.
- (iv) The Reactor Sites Management Company has been sold to *EnergySolutions*, a US based company. The site is still owned by the NDA, and the sale only effects three people at Hinkley Point A Site.
- (v) As the changes take place in the nuclear industry, re-branding of the sites in the North and South is ongoing. The company is going into the shadow working stage and the regulators will monitor this phase for the next six months prior to granting a new licence for the southern sites to operate as one group. This will enable the NDA to move into the competition stage. The schedule for competition has now changed which currently means that Reactor Sites has the contract to run the sites for another 18 months.
- (vi) The NDA now has a new Chairman following Sir Anthony Cleavers retirement in July. Nick Baldwin has taken over this position.

- (vii) The major asbestos project is now complete and leaves only 10% of the asbestos to deal with. An asbestos management programme is in place and the remaining asbestos will be removed as we deal with related areas of plant.
- (viii) The electrical overlay project continues. Rather than relying on the old electrical systems and aging drawings, a new overlay systems is being installed to ensure safe working.
- (ix) The turbine hall is now empty. Recyclable material has been re-used and the building now awaits demolition.
- (x) A lot of work is ongoing in the cooling ponds. Old furniture, skips, sludges etc have to be processed and stabilised. A process is now being used where the skips are being sent to the US for smelting and reuse as shielding for high energy projects over there.
- (xi) Last year the site contributed over £10,000 to charity of the year, BIBIC. This year, staff have chosen to support Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance. Many activities will take place at site in support of this.
- (xii) Other community activities, sponsorship and education programmes continue to be supported by the site.
- (xiii) Mr Lesinski explained that funding at Hinkley Point A Site has been affected because the hazards at Sellafield are more significant than those at Hinkley. Funding at Hinkley has dropped from around £50million to £35million. Projections for future funding are still being discussed. This means that the timespan of the care and maintenance phase may be affected in the future. Next years Life Time Plan is currently being prepared. The funding will not affect any safety or compliance issues.
- (xiv) Mr Lesinski wanted to address some of the articles that have recently been in the local media regarding the proposed low level waste disposal facility and an associated common good fund for the local community. Recent articles have referred to a pay off for the hazards rather than a fund associated with cost savings. Some of the articles have reported the proposed facility as a repository for intermediate or high level waste and talked about ships being used to bring in waste from other places. Mr Lesinski assured the group that the proposal was only for very low level waste produced at Hinkley Point A Site during decommissioning.

#### **Questions relating to the A Site Report:**

Cllr Williams asked if EnergySolutions had secured contracts for any other decommissioning projects? Mr Lesinski explained that the company also had decommissioning contracts in the US and in Italy but no other contracts in this country.

Cllr Williams asked if the new Chairman for the NDA was American or English. Mr Lesinski confirmed that Mr Baldwin is from the UK.

Cllr Williams asked what the average dose rates to the operators in the ponds were. Mr Lesinski explained that the figures were falling due to the shielding and motion studies taking place. No limits have been reached but Mr Lesinski couldn't quote exact figures. He agreed to take away an action to report average dose rates at the next meeting.

Cllr Fraser thanked the site for their contribution and support towards the public awareness campaign of the water-links project. A £50 million bid for lottery funding has been submitted. Leaflets explaining the project were available to take away.

Mr Debenham asked if the new management arrangement with *EnergySolutions* is similar to that of Wessex Water and YTL, where there is a guaranteed return from the Government to manage the business. Mr Lesinski explained that there is no guaranteed return to *EnergySolutions*. Obviously *EnergySolutions* has bought the contract with the intention of making money but there is no recourse for a reduction in funding. The fee from the NDA is currently around 3.25%, if the funding levels are reduced, the profits for *EnergySolutions* will also be reduced. There are also a number of performance indicators in the contract which have to be delivered before fee can be earned. Safety, schedule and cost are all factors that are taken into consideration when setting these.

Mr Debenham asked if he was correct in the assumption that the tax payer is paying for decommissioning work rather than being funded by the current operational nuclear industry. Mr Lesinski confirmed that the Government are funding decommissioning operations but that money also comes from the Magnox stations that are still operating (Oldbury and Wylfa).

Mr Debenham asked about volumes of waste on site and if there was still any high level waste. He also used the term “entombing of the reactors” and asked when this would happen. Mr Lesinski explained that all the fuel (high level waste) had left site, although as the ponds are being cleared, small fragments are occasionally found, these will all be removed from site. ILW will be stored in the ILW store until a national repository has been built. It is thought that this will be around 2050. Mr Lesinski couldn't quote volumes of waste at this meeting but would find out for the next meeting. Mr Lesinski said that the current three box model (two reactor buildings and the ILW store) strategy for the Care and Maintenance phase was 2096. About eight years later work would start to dismantle the reactor buildings.

Mr Graham was concerned about the recycling of the metal skips, he asked if isotopes could be removed from the metal? Mr Lesinski explained that the metal from the skips would not go into the public market. The metal would be used at a facility that makes shielding blocks for nuclear facilities in the US. The skips that are being sent to the US have only a small amount of contamination on the surface, the core of the skips are completely clean. When the skips are smelted together the activity level will be very low.

Cllr Williams asked whether the sludge in the ponds was high level waste. Mr Lesinski explained that the sludge is ILW. Different processes are being explored to stabilise the sludge. Some interesting technologies are now available that can vitrify the waste. This results in the volume of waste being reduced. The process, which puts the sludge into a glass form, is currently being used in Germany, Sweden and the US.

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

Mr Higginson referred to the report from the meeting held on 6 September 2007.

- The meeting noted the change of company arrangements to Hinkley Point A Site.
- Somerset Local Authority Civil Contingency Unit reported that coastal path signage displaying an emergency message is being finalised.
- Hinkley Point B reported that two emergency exercises had been held. This included a Level 1 exercise deemed an adequate demonstration by the NII.

- Hinkley Point B had re-issued its Emergency Plan and Handbook in April 2007. Key changes introduced being the term 'Off-site Nuclear Emergency' to replace 'Nuclear Emergency', and the introduction of automatic countermeasures within the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone of 'Go in, Stay in, Tune in and take potassium iodate tablets' on declaration of an Off-site Nuclear Emergency. Hinkley Point A has updated its Emergency Plan and Handbook to include the change to company name and logo and align declaration states to those of Hinkley Point B.
- Somerset Local Authorities Civil Contingency Unit reported that the revised off-site plan will be issued in February 2008.
- The distribution of new calendars and replacement potassium iodate tablets had now taken place. The meeting of the EPCC asked that the SSG be made aware that as well as additional stocks of potassium iodate tablets in locations listed in the Emergency Handbook, bulk stocks are also available to the Somerset Health Protection Unit.
- No planning applications to report
- Next meeting scheduled for January 2008.

### **Questions relating to the EPCC report:**

The Chairman queried whether there was an outstanding action from the last report with regard to arrangements for bussing people out of the area in the case of evacuation.

Ms Dawson explained that within the Off-site Emergency Plan there are collection points for people without transport. A broadcast through the media would be used to inform people.

Mr Debenham asked if the plan had been altered recently to taking threats of terrorism into account. Mr Higginson explained that acts of terrorism had always been taken into account in the plan.

## **7. REPORT FROM THE FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY.**

Mr Dugdale gave a presentation on the Radioactivity in Food and the Environment (RIFE) report, which is a report compiled between the Food Standards Agency, the Environment Agency, the Scottish Environmental Protections Agency and the Environment & Heritage Service of Northern Ireland. Mr Dugdale told members that the report would be available in late November.

Mr Dugdale explained that milk samples were taken from local farms on a weekly basis and bulked into quarterly samples which provided a total of 96-100 analyses. Terrestrial samples and aquatic samples are also taken and analysed in similar ways, dose assessments of people living in the area are calculated based on the results.

Mr Dugdale showed the results of the samples taken and compared them to a dental x-ray and a flight from London to Sydney.

Mr Dugdale explained that a feature of the new report was an aggregated dose which is a new methodology that has been developed which combines terrestrial, aquatic, direct radiation, gamma doses etc. This gives a more comprehensive detail.

The conclusion of the report was that people living around Hinkley Point are receiving only low levels of radioactivity.

## **Questions relating to the Food Standards Agency report**

Cllr Williams asked why there seemed to be more sample points to the east of the site compared to the west. Mr Dugdale explained that it was simply down to the farms that are willing to give milk samples.

The Chairman asked if there was a problem with finding sources for sampling. Mr Dugdale explained that the area around Dungeness was beginning to become more difficult but there are no issues around the Hinkley area at present.

The Chairman asked if the sampling was done independently of the site. Mr Dugdale explained that the Veterinary Laboratories Agency was used for sampling and that it was totally independent of the sites.

A question was asked relating to radiation from Chernobyl. Mr Dugdale explained that specific monitoring was still carried out in relation to Chernobyl in Cumbria, Wales and Scotland. Mr Dugdale couldn't quote figures but confirmed that figures from this monitoring were decreasing. The results would be published in the Rife report.

## **8. REPORT FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY**

A report from the Environment Agency had been issued to SSG members prior to the meeting.

Mr Roberts explained that some of the significant issues had already been discussed. The ventilations system had already been covered in the A Site report as well as the shipment of skips to the US for recycling. If planning permission is granted for the on site disposal of low level waste, formal authorisation would need to be granted from the Environment Agency before the facility could be used.

In respect of the B Station, a new radioactive discharge authorisation was issued in April. A new permit for the combustion process (gas turbines, diesel engines and boilers) has also been issued and the EA are working with the station to improve the systems. A warning letter was issued over the filter event, this was covered in the B Station report. Mr Roberts said they were pleased with a number of initiatives the station has worked on to improve environmental performance, in particular the intention to install an oil separator in the main drain for the site.

## **9. NII REPORTS – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

The Chairman explained that the NII issue reports for each site on a quarterly basis, members should have received four reports since the last meeting. He asked if members had any questions relating to the reports.

The Chairman pointed out that the NII report highlighted the fact there were concerns over the uncertainty of funding at the Magnox stations and that meetings were taking place to discuss this. He also highlighted the comments in the Jan –Mar report about the boiler tube safety case at the B Station.

## **10. LOW LEVEL WASTE DISPOSAL UPDATE**

The Chairman explained that the working group that attended the LLW workshops to discuss the project has continued to meet and are now known as the low level waste sub committee. The group had met with the project leads earlier in the year to ask questions about the project. Although this group already had a number of representatives, other members were welcome to join the group and should let the secretary know. It was pointed out that West Somerset Council did not have a representative on the group at present.

The Chairman explained that he had met recently with Magnox South representatives as well as Sedgemoor Council representatives to discuss the District Council community scheme. If the NDA save money by disposing of low level waste on site, the district council would seek compensation for the communities. Local media have referred to the fund as a payment for risk but the Chairman would prefer to think of such a fund as a benefit for savings.

Dr Meehan gave a presentation about the progress made within the project since the last meeting and also referred to the considerable media speculation.

Dr Meehan explained that at the end of March 2007, the government policy for the management of low level waste was issued which talks about looking at local solutions to low level waste management. The proposal at Hinkley Point a is consistent with that policy. A draft planning application has been prepared.

A wide range of stakeholder engagement material has been prepared. Letters have been sent out to neighbours and the offer of a presentation has been made to various community groups. A scoping report has been submitted to Somerset County Council and constructive feedback has been received from them. Meetings have also taken place with the SSG sub group. A drop in event is also planned at some time in the future for the local community.

Dr Meehan confirmed that the disposal facility would only take low level waste that would be produced from decommissioning at Hinkley Point A Site. The waste would comprise of building rubble, concrete, some items of plant and pipe work. The anticipated doses were compared with natural radiation within the UK to show how low the doses would be from the disposal facility. Maximum prohibitive doses for the facility would be around 3 microsieverts.

A 100 year phase of environmental monitoring of the facility would take place after the post-closure phase. Dr Meehan also explained that in addition to a planning application, an authorisation would also need to be granted by the Environment Agency.

### **Questions relating to the low level waste update:**

Cllr Williams asked if the removal of waste to another facility was still a reality. Dr Meehan explained that the current plan is to transport the low level waste to Drigg. He said that public consultations would take place as part of the planning process for the alternative proposal of on site disposal.

Mr Hudd asked Mr Roberts to clarify the timescales of the licence of the low level waste facility. Would this get in the way of the preferred end state of a nature reserve. Mr Roberts explained that the licence would be similar to that of a land fill site where the licence covers the disposal of the waste. The licence could be changed at a later stage in the process. Landfill sites can have the licence removed but other controls may be put in place to stop inappropriate building taking place in the future.

Ms Childs asked if Drigg is currently near capacity. Dr Meehan confirmed that Drigg does not have capacity for all of the UK's waste. It is felt that the Drigg facility should be used for the higher end of the low level waste from small users such as hospitals. Residents in Cumbria also feel that the facility should be used for waste produced in the Cumbria area.

The Chairman asked about solubility leach in the proposed store. Dr Meehan explained that a monitoring system would be installed. The vault will be a sealed vault with the aim of keeping water out, an extraction system will be installed to pump water out if any leach does occur.

Mr Hudd asked whether he was correct in assuming that the store would just take the low level waste leading up to the care & maintenance phase. Dr Meehan confirmed that the facility would only be to take waste from the early phase of decommissioning. Mr Hudd asked Dr Meehan to explain the discrepancy in volumes of waste in recent updates about the project. The original submission to the County Council mentions 24,000m<sup>3</sup> of low level waste but recent updates refer to around 8,000m<sup>3</sup>. Dr Meehan explained that the figure of 24,000m<sup>3</sup> refers to the total amount of waste that will need to be disposed of. However some of the waste taken into consideration in the original calculations will be non-radioactive waste. The actual volumes will be dependant on the degree of segregation of radioactive waste from non-radioactive waste.

The Chairman asked if the waste will be containerised before it is disposed of in the vault. Dr Meehan said that a range of options would be considered. The waste at Drigg is stored in transport containers. The Chairman asked what techniques would be used to minimise the escape of dust when segregating the waste. Dr Meehan explained that a number of fixatives were now available to minimise the spread of dust. Mr Lesinski explained that fixatives were being used in the current decommissioning technologies and had been very successful in reducing contamination events to workers.

Mr Williams asked if independent monitoring of site waste is carried out to ensure that it is categorised correctly. Dr Meehan explained that a large programme of characterisation is carried out at site. Mr Roberts also confirmed that the Environment Agency has laboratories at Winfrith, and a programme of sampling is carried out. Mr Lesinski explained that quality control checks are carried out throughout the whole process of characterisation.

## 11. CHAIRMANS COMMENTS

The Chairman thought it would be useful for the members to receive feedback from the NDA meetings that himself and the Vice Chairman had attended. He also wanted to ensure that the membership are happy with himself and the Vice Chairman to continue to represent the SSG at these national meetings.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> August, the Chairman attended a meeting to discuss the results of the 'End State' consultation process at each site. A majority of the sites had agreed with the Hinkley SSG preferred end state of a nature reserve or similar. The Chairman did point out that the timing of an end state would probably be around 100 years down the line and that low level waste disposal could also have an effect on the end state.

The Chairman explained that the NDA's previous strategy that suggested possible accelerated decommissioning suggestions of 25 years, were now probably not a feasible option with the funding issues. Dr Warner, representing the NDA, agreed that this was probably the case.

The Chairman explained to the membership that during the national meeting in Manchester earlier in the year, representatives from Winfrith and Harwell had expressed a wish for their decommissioning to be accelerated because the radioactivity is seen as a deterrent to other companies wishing to work at the technology park. Dr Roxburgh had written to all SSG chairs to ask if the other sites could be convinced to contribute some of their funding to the Winfrith and Harwell sites. The Chairman had responded on behalf of the SSG after talking to the site licence company to say that although there was great sympathy towards the sites in questions, Hinkley Point A had no discretionary funding available. He also felt that it was the NDA's responsibility to organise the funding for decommissioning.

The Chairman explained that himself and the other Chairmen of the SSGs receive an emolument payment of £300 per meeting. To date, the Vice Chairmen have not received anything other than hotel and travelling expenses. Hinkley's Vice Chairman has taken unpaid leave in the past to attend meetings. It is also expected that the Vice Chairman should eventually take over the position of Chairman. He felt that it was unfair for the Vice Chairman to be out of pocket and asked for the members to support him in continued dialogue with the NDA and the site licence company to ensure that any personal out of pocket expenses are recompensed. There were no objections to the Chairman's proposal.

The Chairman also commented that the financial contribution made by British Energy towards the running of the SSG was the donation of the meeting facilities. He asked if British Energy would consider contributing some financial assistance to cover other SSG expenses.

The Chairman asked if the SSG felt that two meetings per year were enough. Some of the other SSGs meet up to four times a year. If it is felt that two meetings per year are enough, then the Chairman would like the chance to communicate with smaller groups to discuss any issues that arise between meetings.

The Vice Chairman felt that six months between meetings was sometimes too long, he suggested that the group should meet on a quarterly basis. Mr Williams suggested that we move to three meetings per year. The membership agreed to trying this new arrangement. The Chairman suggested that the low level waste sub group could be used in the future for any emergency decisions that needed to be taken and also to discuss future agendas. If any member has any suggestions for agenda items they should contact the secretary. The names of members of the sub group will be circulated to the full membership.

The Chairman apologised to Dr Warner, NDA, for not having an item on the agenda to discuss NDA business, but invited him to talk about any NDA issues.

Dr Warner said that the NDA has just published their accounts which are available to download from their web site, alternative hard copies can be sent out by arrangement, please contact the SSG secretary to arrange this. This contains a summary of where funds have been spent. The NDA have also published their Health and Safety report.

The NDA will be launching their new three year business plan in early November, this will outline future funding for the sites. Hazard prioritisation is a key part of this document. The plan will be subject to a three month public consultation process.

In relation to the recent press articles about community funds associated with the LLW disposal facility, Dr Warner wanted to make it clear that the NDA have not offered any funds for community compensation. Although discussions have taken place with the local councils, the NDA have made it clear that they have no mechanism for sharing savings. As things move

forward with planning, the councils may feel that some sort of mechanism needs to be put in place.

The Chairman confirmed that when he met with Sedgemoor Council recently to talk about a community fund being set up, it was felt that a section 106 agreement could possibly be used in conjunction with a planning consent. The NDA's current socio-economic replenishment criteria would put the Hinkley Point community low on their list of priority areas within the country.

## **12. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN & VICE CHAIRMAN**

The Vice Chairman took control of the meeting to discuss the nominations for the position of Chairman.

The secretary confirmed that four nominations had been received for Mr Short. No other nominations had been received. Mr Short was therefore re-elected for another year.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their support and said he hoped that he shows independence from the two sites when carrying out SSG business. He felt that knowledge of the sites was useful when attending meetings, and that the aim of the induction courses were to give all members a greater understanding of the business at each site.

The Chairman asked how many nominations had been received for the position of Vice Chairman. The secretary confirmed that the only nominations that had been received were for Cllr Caswell. Cllr Caswell was therefore re-elected for another year.

## **13. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chairman mentioned that Ms Childs had served on the SSG for many years and is also part of the SSG sub group for low level waste. Although she no longer represents West Somerset Council on the group, Ms Child has expressed a wish to continue to attend SSG meetings as a non-voting co-opted member. The Chairman asked if anyone had any objections. The SSG were supportive of this request.

## **14. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chairman said that although previous votes had been almost unanimous to hold meetings at the site, it was agreed that the SSG would discuss at each AGM, the option of using other venues at each AGM. There was an alternative venue at Cannington College that could be used. The Vice Chairman proposed that the next meeting be held at Cannington and the following two meetings back at the site. The majority of the SSG were in favour of this proposal with only one vote against.

Details of the venue will be circulated. The date and time were set for Friday 22 February 2008 at 10am.