

**Hunterston Site Stakeholder Group**

**THE TWENTY THIRD HUNTERSTON SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP MEETING  
HELD ON THURSDAY 3 MARCH 2011 IN THE LAURISTON HOTEL, ARDROSSAN**

**Present:**

**Magnox Ltd**

Mr Peter Roach  
Mr Reuben Phillips  
Mrs Kerry McMillan (Secretariat)  
Mr Tony Bale (Chair)

**Community Councillors**

Mr John Lamb - West Kilbride  
Mrs Rita Holmes – Fairlie (Vice Chair)

**Community Council Representatives**

Mr Peter MacFarlane – Largs  
Mr Ian Frame - Cumberae

**Hunterston Estate**

Mr Angus Cochran-Patrick  
Mr Ralston Ryder

**North Ayrshire Council**

Mr Hugh McGhee

**In Attendance**

Mrs Shelagh Milligan, Magnox Ltd  
Mr Derek Rooney, Magnox Ltd  
Mr Allan McRae, CNC  
Ms Claire Cook, British Energy  
Mrs Anne De Koning, British Energy  
Mr Andy Taylor, British Energy

**British Energy**

Mr John Morrison

**Community Member**

Mr John Robertson

**Councillors**

Cllr Robert Barr  
Cllr Alex Gallagher  
Cllr John Reid  
Cllr Elisabeth Marshall  
Cllr Elizabeth McLardy

**NII**

Mr Mark Tyrer

**NDA**

Mr David Rushton  
Mr Bill Hamilton

**SEPA**

Mr Ian Robertson

Mrs Elizabeth Gray, Scottish Government  
Mr Stuart Hudson, Scottish Government  
Ms Claire Dodd, Scottish Government  
Mr Neil Murchison, Scottish Government  
Mr Michael Piri, Scottish Government

A representative from the local press and several members of the public were also in attendance

**Apologies:**

Mr Keith Hammond, Mr Chris Kemp, Ms Annie Perrott, Mr Willie Jack, Mr Stuart McGhie.

### **1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS**

Chairman Tony Bale welcomed everyone to the 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Hunterston Site Stakeholder Group (SSG).

### **2. CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR UPDATES/CORRESPONDENCE**

Mr Bale announced that there had been a change of membership due to Mr Kenny MacDougall resigning from his position on the Ardrossan Community Council. Mr Bale wished to thank Mr MacDougall for all his input into the SSG over the years and stated that confirmation was still to be received as to who Ardrossan Community Council's new SSG representative would be.

Mrs Kerry McMillan confirmed she had received apologies from Mr Keith Hammond, SEPA, Mr Chris Kemp, NII, Ms Annie Perrott, Scottish Government, Mr Willie Jack, NFU and Mr Stuart McGhie, British Energy.

Mr Bale explained that an SSG sub-group meeting was held on Monday 24 January 2011 in order to agree a joint response to the NDA draft business plan. A response on behalf of the Hunterston SSG was submitted to the NDA as a result.

### **3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Mrs Kerry McMillan highlighted that an action had been placed upon her to make amendments to the minutes of 16 September 2010. Both Mr MacDougall and Mrs Rita Holmes had felt that more dialogue was required regarding contaminated land and the Graphite Pathfinder Project. Mrs McMillan explained that these amendments have been made which Mr MacDougall and Mrs Holmes are happy with, and the minutes of 16 September 2010 were approved.

Mrs McMillan added that, further to a request from Cllr Alex Gallagher, an action had been placed on Mr Reuben Phillips to explain the safety levels of radiation in further detail. A detailed explanation on this subject was provided to the members in the form of an information sheet.

The minutes of 16 December 2010 were approved.

### **4. SCOTLAND'S HIGHER ACTIVITY RADIOACTIVE WASTE POLICY 2011**

Mrs Elizabeth Gray, Head of the Radioactive Waste for the Scottish Government, gave a presentation to the group on Scotland's Higher Activity Radioactive Waste Policy 2011.

Mrs Gray thanked everyone involved in the development of the policy which started in 2007 and was published in January 2010. Mrs Gray highlighted the following key points from her presentation:

- The policy remains as it was in 2007 with the long term management in near surface facilities;
- The policy is a framework which allows decisions to be made on how to best manage waste;
- The next stage in the process is to implement a strategy which looks in more detail at Scotland's waste and what technical options may exist;
- The development of this strategy will be engaged with stakeholders, regulators and made open in public.

The NDA Draft Strategy is approved jointly by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change in the UK Government, and the Scottish Ministers as regards Scotland. This strategy is under the ministerial approval process at the moment and is due for approval by end of March 2011. Scottish Government and Scottish Ministers also have the approval of the NDA's Annual Business Plan. These documents relate directly to the Scottish Government policy.

Mrs Gray informed the group that she would be leaving her position within the Scottish Government at the end of March 2011, and introduced her successor, Mr Stuart Hudson, who will take over the leadership of the Radioactive Waste team.

Mr Hudson wished to draw the group's attention to the fact that on Wednesday 2 March 2011, the Scottish Parliament's Rural Affairs and Environment Committee agreed to the Radioactive Substances Act (1993) Amendment Regulations 2011 which were laid before Scottish Parliament. These regulations amend what is defined as radioactive waste and radioactive material, defining what natural materials come into the definition of radioactive waste. This will come into effect on 1 October 2011 and was part of the review of the exemption orders and the radioactive substances act. This should receive approval by 31 March 2011.

Cllr Alex Gallagher thought that the definition of radioactive waste would have already been agreed to a certain international or scientific standard. Cllr Gallagher wondered how the Scottish Parliament could reach a decision on this matter. Mr Hudson stated that this was the result of a four and a half year process involving stakeholder engagement and public consultation. It is a project which spans the whole of the UK and the definitions, having existed since 1960, are in need of modernisation, so this will in effect make the UK's regulatory system clearer in terms of meeting the guidance issued by the European commission. Mrs Gray added that one of the key beneficiaries of this is hospitals and universities. It's merely the technical definition being amended.

On behalf of the Hunterston SSG, Mr Bale wished to thank Mrs Gray for her help and assistance over the past few years.

#### **5.A HUNTERSTON B STATION REPORT**

Mr John Morrison, Technical & Safety Support Manager, deputising for Mr Colin Weir, Station Director, took the B Station report as read. He stated that the station was about to complete a 30 day planned outage inspection of Reactor three core, a requirement undertaken on a regular basis to ensure that everything is as it should be. The inspections were completed successfully and the station was now looking forward to bringing the reactor back to service in the following few days. Reactor four had a stable period of operation during the period. There were no noteworthy events on safety or nuclear significant nature.

Mr Bale asked where the station was currently and where they would like to go with regard to extension to generation. Mr Morrison responded the current extension was to 2016 and the station was currently preparing a safety case to extend that to 2021.

Mr Bale said, from his point of view, this would be good news if a further five years of good quality "blue chip" jobs could remain in North Ayrshire, an area with among the highest unemployment in Scotland. Mr Robertson added his support to Mr Bale's statement. Mr Bale also congratulated B Station on their continued recruitment across the board, in particular their recruitment of apprentices

## **5.B NII REPORT**

Mr Mark Tyrer took his report as read. He stated that it had been a quiet period for the NII as Reactor three had been on an interim outage, with Reactor four operating steadily. He endorsed Mr Morrison's statement that they were just coming to the end of an extremely well planned and well executed outage. In addition to the report he stated that three weeks' previously the Government made an announcement on the future of the NII who were being formed as an agency under the Health & Safety Executive on 1 April 2011 until such time as the Government could lay the necessary statute to register them as an independent regulatory body. The NII are preparing a statement which will be included in the next report

Mrs Holmes asked Mr Tyrer what his personal feelings were with regard to the transformation of the NII to a statutory body. Mr Tyrer responded that personally he felt it would be an extremely positive move as the NII will be required to give everybody concerned a lot more information and be much more transparent e.g. that week he had issued a licence instrument to Hunterston B approving amendments to their Emergency Plan, to justify issuing this instrument the NII has to prepare a report which goes through an authorisation route. For the past two or three years the NII had published the executive summary of these reports on the internet, in future, as a positive move, the entire report will be published. He felt that transparency would develop further e.g. every time he visits the station he is required to give a site report which at present is an internal report, he could see a time in the near future when that report will be published on the intranet.

Mr Bale asked, with the changes to the agency, would they be losing jobs or recruiting jobs. Mr Tyrer advised that no-one in the nuclear side of the civil service was being allowed to leave on voluntary redundancy. NII is recruiting aggressively within Division one, which deals with power reactors. There is currently a requirement for more than 70 inspectors, which meant a doubling in size, in order to regulate the eight new build power stations.

## **5.C SEPA REPORT**

Mr Hammond was unavailable to review his report and it was taken as read. Cllr Barr asked Mr Hammond's colleague Mr Robertson, SEPA Inspector for Hunterston A Site, if SEPA received full cooperation from B Station. Mr Robertson confirmed this was so. Mr Andy Taylor, B Station Environmental Safety Group Head, also confirmed full cooperation was always provided to SEPA without hesitation.

Mr Lamb requested elaboration of the statements in paragraph three where B Station had effectively asked for variation to its RSA authorisation. Mr Taylor said the application was for a small change in the definition of what constitutes disposal or final disposal. Low Level Waste Repository (LLWR) receives waste from operators across the UK and is dealing with the final disposal of those wastes in a number of different ways, the one you may be most familiar is burial at Drigg. It is also developing other process e.g. smelting and other waste volume reduction techniques in order to minimise the amount of material being buried. The authorisation variation will enable use to be made of new waste handling processes by LLWR prior to disposal.

Mr MacFarlane requested an elaboration on the definition of RADSAFE and NAIR as stated in paragraph three of the report. Mr Taylor explained that the RADSAFE scheme supports the transportation of certain nuclear materials and enables safe collection and storage of waste in the event of unforeseen circumstances or delay, prior to onward disposal. As part of the scheme, Hunterston and other operators in the area are licensed to receive that waste for safekeeping.

A good example of a NAIR (National Arrangements for Incidents involving Radioactivity) event would be a legacy industrial site or factory owner finding some material which may be radioactive and requires safe storage for instance luminescent dials or paint materials. The arrangements in place are for safe custody and protection for the environment and public, pending safe onward disposal.

#### **6. SOCIO-ECONOMIC/HALL AITKEN UPDATE**

Recent reports in the local press have suggested that Hunterston A Site has a £10 million sum of money intended for socio-economic purposes, referred to as the “Magnox millions”. Mr Roach began his update by emphasising that, contrary to reports, this money did not exist. Mr Roach explained that these reports were detracting from what is a very important matter for the SSG, and it is essential that consideration is given to the socio-economic impacts of decommissioning Hunterston A Site. There are approx 400 jobs which currently operate out of Hunterston A on a daily basis, and there is an obligation on the NDA to ensure that when these jobs come to an end, plans are in place to mitigate the impact of job losses.

Mr Roach added that there are opportunities for local charities, clubs and organisations to benefit from Hunterston A Site funding, which has been the case for a number of years. Occasionally, requests are received for larger sums of money, and the Site have been looking at the best process to ensure these requests are maximised to their full potential. Traditionally, a SSG socio-economic subgroup existed to discuss and consider any proposals put forward. This subgroup decided from its early stages that it would never prevent any of the proposals from being passed onto the NDA. Mr Roach explained that he did not think this particular method added a great deal of value and that, as a group, it was essential to find a way of sharing any properly proportioned socio-economic funding to this area which enables priorities to be met and people to profit from it. Mr Roach finished by issuing a challenge to the SSG to find a better way forward for the area.

Cllr Elizabeth McLardy stated that she believed one of the main problems was that all the various communities are looking for something which will only benefit their respective community. Cllr McLardy added that she had previously suggested that a motion be put forward to identify an area within the Hunterston locality, currently identified in the National Planning Framework as heavy industry, for tourism. She explained that there have been industrial sites lying unused for over 20 years which there may be a possibility of regenerating, thus creating employment. Cllr McLardy confirmed that North Ayrshire Council are currently looking at including this in the new local plan, and discussions will be taking place with the Scottish Executive and various other organisations to find out its feasibility.

Mr John Robertson commented that he was part of the original socio-economic subgroup, and to his recollection, Hunterston A Site were to acquire a manager to the subgroup. He felt that without a professional manager, the subgroup was never going anywhere. Mr Robertson added that the subgroup needed someone who can offer professional expertise and advice in order to benefit the Hunterston peninsula.

Cllr John Reid highlighted that five North Ayrshire Councillors had visited colleagues from Dumfries and Galloway to gain an understanding of how these matters were operated at Chapelcross. Cllr Reid explained that valuable knowledge was learned from the visit, and hopefully the Councillors could take this knowledge forward with the rest of the socio-economic subgroup to address the employment issues. Cllr Reid proposed a subgroup meeting be held in the interim with findings reported back at the next main SSG meeting in

June 2011. Cllr Gallagher agreed that the visit to Dumfries was very informative, and stated that the focus should be on job losses. Cllr Barr added that the best way forward is to involve a number of agencies in order to gain their expertise.

Mr Roach was heartened by the Councillors visit to Dumfries and Galloway, and stated that a key factor to a successful subgroup would be learning from others. He went on to explain that socio-economic subgroups play a part in the success other sites have, and gave his backing to the formation of a similar subgroup at Hunterston.

Mrs Holmes said that when the earliest constitution was written up, it stated that everyone on the SSG would be able to attend subgroup meeting. If a socio-economic subgroup was to be set up, Mrs Holmes asked if all members would be able to attend. Cllr Reid stated that whilst he has no problems with anyone attending the meeting to listen to discussions, it was his recommendation that a tight knit working group be set up in terms of voting.

Cllr Gallagher suggested that the group move quickly to set up such a subgroup and welcomed any input from Scottish Enterprise and other organisations. He did however make it clear that the more people involved, the slower the process would be. Mr Roach offered to provide an administrative service to the subgroup.

Cllr Reid proposed that the subgroup be set up now, with the authority given to the Chair and Vice Chair to come up with the required numbers that would provide a balance. Mr Bale stated he would be happy to take this role on.

Mr Bill Hamilton stressed that the group take heed of what was learned from the Councillors visit to Dumfries and Galloway. He recommended involving democratically elected partners, enterprise and regeneration partners and key experts who can all help formulate proposals clearly linked to the socio-economic regeneration following the eventual closure of Hunterston A. Mr Hamilton added that there was no fund or pot of money available, as the NDA do not get money from the Government to support socio-economic regeneration. Funding is all generated through efficiency savings.

Mr Bale concluded that work would now progress in terms of taking this piece of work forward quickly. Mr Bale wished to note that it was unfortunate no representative from B Station was present at this time to witness the discussions as they will be facing the same problems as Hunterston A Site in the future.

#### **7.A HUNTERSTON A SITE REPORT**

Mr Roach presented the Hunterston A Site report and explained that on 12 January 2011 Magnox North and Magnox South remerged into a single licence entity called Magnox Limited. He added that there would be some overall reductions made, largely in centralised functions, and as a result, there was likely to be a modest impact at Hunterston A at worst.

Mr Roach also confirmed that the forward funding profile for Hunterston A has been supported by the NDA and it was hoped that the Site can continue to secure their ongoing support in subsequent years.

Mr John Robertson asked if the training programme to enhance skills for the rigging and slinging of loads was a new course. Mr Roach explained that the course was merely an update, as the Site never stops learning with best practises being shared. This is merely a refresher course for those who require the training.

Mr Hugh McGhee referred back to the December 2010 meeting where it was asked of Dr. Adam Meehan if graphite material was thermally stable. As a result of being told that yes, it was stable and difficult to burn, Mr McGhee had carried out some research on this, which showed that graphite presents problems with the sudden release of Wigner heat energy together with carbon dioxide and methane. Mr McGhee asked if this had been taken into consideration in the safety case. Mr Roach confirmed that his answer could not be more of an emphatic yes. He went on to explain that the Wigner energy was attributed ultimately to the cause of the wind scale fire in 1957. This recognised that a significant burst of energy could occur within the graphite core and, if not monitored properly, could propagate a fire. After 1957 and some profitable learning from experience, the view was taken that the fuel elements would be put into graphite sleeves. It is these graphite sleeves today which are being spoken about with regards the opportunity to bury in the ground. Mr Roach added that the burning in the ground being referred to in Mr McGhee's question was another method of treating or disposing of the material which is not favoured in the UK. Mr Roach confirmed that graphite is a very stable material, and stated that Wigner energy is a reactor physics issue.

Mrs Holmes asked if the Wigner energy would still play a part should work to dismantle the reactors start at this point in time. Mr Roach explained that there has been no fuel in the reactor core since 1995, and fuel would be required for the Wigner energy to cause a problem.

Mr Ian Frame asked for clarity on whether the weather barrier at Hunterston A was still secure following the winter months. Mr Roach confirmed that the barrier has gone through full testing and is perfectly engineered.

Mrs Holmes referred to recent flooding and asked if higher activity levels had been found anywhere other than the catchment pits. Mr Roach explained that Mrs Holmes was referring to the issues which happened during September 2010 with the high rise floods, and confirmed that there had been no repeat of these events. He added that the Site's mitigation, which occurs every week, involves a working party of around four or five digging out silt and gravel from a confined space, therefore preventing it from being washed down. Results have shown very little contamination, however if these mitigation activities are not carried out there is the threat of a repeat event, and SEPA have been made aware of these mitigation activities.

Mrs Holmes asked if there was an alternative to people digging this material out of the catchpits. Mr Roach explained that there is an optioneering study underway which highlights several alternatives. As a result, the Site are running an engineering study which will offer recommendations for SEPA and other interested parties to decide the best way forward. Mr Roach highlighted that there is also an affordability issue, given that there is approximately 8000 cubic metres of soil representing a price tag of several millions of pounds when in actual fact, the soil is of no hazardous significance to the environment or the public.

Cllr Barr wished to congratulate the Hunterston A workforce on maintaining its excellent safety record throughout the months of inclement weather.

Mrs Holmes stated that she was pleased to see a future presentation would be given to the group on multimedia and discharge authorisation and asked if this was something which would be in the near future. Mr Roach stated that he did not think this would be presented in the near future.

Mrs Holmes enquired about what funding had been made available for decommissioning the cartridge cooling pond. Mr Roach stated that there has been significant progress made and the Site has secured funding to deal with this particular issue for the next 18 months. Mrs Holmes wished to state that when Fairlie Community Council was detailing their response to the NDA Draft Business Plan, they had supported the Site's request for additional funding.

#### **7.B NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING AUTHORITY**

Mr Dave Rushton presented the NDA report before welcoming any questions from the group.

Mr Rushton stated that the number one priority across all industries, especially nuclear, was safety. He thanked Magnox for the efforts being taken to continually improve upon its safety record.

Mr Rushton was pleased to note that Hunterston A was looking towards a good year end in terms of project performance and was on target to meet the various efficiency challenges set by the NDA.

With regards the NDA Draft Business Plan, Mr Rushton explained that this was due to be published towards the end of March 2011, but stated it does require approval from both the Scottish and UK Governments, as does the NDA Draft Strategy.

Finally, with regards to the NDA Draft Business Plan, Mr Rushton wished to note that it is not the NDA's policy to respond to every response they receive, however all comments are taken into consideration.

#### **7.C SEPA REPORT**

Mr Ian Robertson took the SEPA report as read, but wished to comment that SEPA are taking a close interest in the long term measures being considered for a satisfactory solution to the contamination in the Site's CP7 compound area.

In reference to an earlier question regarding Hunterston A Site's co-operation with SEPA, Mr Robertson confirmed that SEPA is entirely satisfied with the co-operation received from personnel.

#### **7.D NII REPORT**

In the absence of Mr Chris Kemp, to the report was taken as read without any questions.

#### **8. AOCB**

Mr Bale explained that an application had been received from Saltcats Community Council to have a representative on the SSG. Following discussions at the annual housekeeping meeting, it was agreed in principal that there were no objections to this request. However, the constitution would have to be amended accordingly to allow for this.

#### **9. DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date and venue of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 2 June 2011 at 1.30pm in the Seamill Hydro, West Kilbride.

**Mr Tony Bale**  
**SSG Chairman**