

**OLDBURY ON SEVERN POWER STATION
SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT OLDBURY VILLAGE HALL
ON WEDNESDAY 22 APRIL 2009**

PRESENT:

Cllr M Lynden(in the chair)	-	Oldbury on Severn Parish Council
Cllr M Hawkins	-	Aust Parish Council
Cllr C Evers	-	Glos Assn of Parish and Town Councils
Cllr K Graupner	-	South Gloucestershire Council
Cllr N Halsall	-	Thornbury Town Council
Mr A Murdoch	-	National Farmers' Union
Cllr Ms P Parslow	-	Thornbury Town Council
Mr A Pinder	-	Friends of the Earth
Cllr M Riddle	-	South Gloucestershire Council
Rev D Primrose	-	Oldbury Power Station Chaplain
Cllr Mrs P Wride	-	Berkeley SSG

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr S Barker	-	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Dr J Verne	-	South West Public Health Observatory
Ms A French	-	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Mr R Griffin	-	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Mr M Lester	-	Civil Nuclear Constabulary
Ms F Montsho -Hammond	-	Health Protection Agency
Mr J Lamonby	-	Oldbury on Severn Power Station
Mr J C Bishton	-	Oldbury on Severn Power Station
Ms A Chapman	-	Oldbury on Severn Power Station
Mr N Griffiths	-	Oldbury on Severn Power Station
Ms C Ingham	-	Oldbury on Severn Power Station
Ms R Lyon	-	Oldbury on Severn Power Station
Ms T Owen	-	Oldbury on Severn Power Station
Mr M Pratt	-	Oldbury on Severn Power Station
Ms Z Young	-	Oldbury on Severn Power Station
Mr N Monckton	-	Magnox North
Mr T Jones	-	Magnox North
Mr N Barnard		
Ms L Bruchez		
Ms J Gaston		
Mr W Gill		
Ms L-J Gillespie		
Mr J Grey		
Ms Greenwood		
Mr Hanson		
Mrs Hanson		
Mrs J Kempster		
Mr B S Kirk		
Ms Lynden		
Mr S McPhail		

Mr P Page
Mrs P Page
Ms A Paine
Ms S Stagg
Mr P J Wilson
Ms L Hutchinson
Mr M J Davis (Secretary)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- 1 Cllr Lynden welcomed everyone to this meeting of the Oldbury Site Stakeholder Group.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs J Lyons, Cllr Mrs V Tutin, Cllr Mrs S O'Neill, Mr B Wilcox, Mr A Jardine, Dr P Mountford-Lister, Dr M Ghannad, Mr P Booth, and Mr G Locke.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

(a) Accuracy

- 3 The minutes of the SSG Meeting held on 21 January 2009 were approved as a correct record subject to the amendment of the second and third sentences of para 10 as follows:

“This had been demonstrated by studies conducted around various sites. He said that none of the claims of increased incidence of cancers in the area around Oldbury had been subjected to peer review.”

- 4 The minutes of the Socio-Economic Sub-Group Meeting held on 29 January 2009 were approved as a correct record

(b) Matters arising

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

PUBLIC FORUM

- 6 Cllr Lynden invited members of the public to raise any matter which might not arise in discussion on subsequent agenda items. No issues were raised by members of the public.

PRESENTATION IN RESPOSE TO PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS

- 7 Cllr Lynden introduced Dr Julia Verne, Director of the South West Public Health Observatory, who had been invited to the meeting to give a presentation in response to questions raised at the previous meeting on the incidence of cancers in the vicinity of the power station.

- 8 Dr Verne explained the role of the South West Public Health Observatory as being to improve the health of the population in the South West of England by monitoring and analysing health statistics, drawing attention to action needed on any issues of concern.
- 9 Dr Verne presented statistics on the incidence of cancers and mortality rates. The statistics covered Gloucestershire as a whole, the areas within 5 and 10 kilometres of the power station site and within 5 kilometres of the estuary coastal area. These statistics were compared with those for the South West of England. Dr Verne said that analysis of the statistics demonstrated that there was no increased risk of cancer around the Power Station and that overall rates of cancer in the area were in fact falling. Only one of the cancer types studied, Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia, which mainly affected people over the age of 70, showed a rate significantly above the average for the South West. Dr Verne said that there was no evidence linking this form of leukaemia to radiation exposure and that this increased rate was likely to be a chance finding.
- 10 In summary Dr Verne said that there was no evidence from the statistics to suggest a link between Oldbury Power Station and rates of cancer incidence and mortality in the area. She said that she was confident that the station did not pose a risk to the health of the local population. She said that the Public Health Observatory would continue to monitor cancer statistics and highlight any other issues that might have an impact on the health of local people.
- 11 Referring specifically to questions on the incidence of childhood leukaemias, Dr Verne said that a number of recent studies had indicated an increased risk in areas close to nuclear facilities; other studies had not shown this effect. She said it was known that childhood leukaemias tended to cluster in areas irrespective of proximity to nuclear installations. She said that the causes of childhood leukaemias were complex and only partially understood. Although some studies showed a correlation with proximity to nuclear installations no causal link had been demonstrated. There were other hypotheses as to cause such as viruses which might lead to clusters in certain areas associated with population mixing.
- 12 During discussion Mr Grey commented that the statistics presented by Dr Verne covered cancers reported during the past 15 years. He said that there had been relatively little operation at Oldbury or Berkeley during that period and suggested that there might have been a greater incidence of cancers in earlier years. Dr Verne said that due to the length of time taken for cancers to develop those reported in the past 15 years would potentially cover any associated with exposures within the previous five to ten years.
- 13 Mr Pinder drew attention to the study of cancers in the vicinity of nuclear sites in Germany to which Dr Verne had referred earlier. That study had indicated a correlation between childhood leukaemias and proximity to the sites. He said that the German sites were located closer to areas of population than sites in the UK and suggested that this might explain why the effect was not seen in the statistics for Oldbury. Dr Verne said that the analysis of the statistics took account of the numbers of people living in proximity to the site. She emphasised

that the German study had concluded that there appeared to be an association between childhood leukaemias and proximity to the sites but it did not claim that this was a cause of the diseases.

- 14 In response to comments by Mr Pinder on the effects of radiation exposure on unborn children Dr Verne referred to a recent report on mothers working in the nuclear industry during their pregnancies. This report had concluded that their exposures had no effect on their unborn children.
- 15 Mr Gill said he felt that despite the concerns raised by anti-nuclear groups members should be satisfied with the clear conclusion from the various studies that there was no evidence of a causal link between proximity to nuclear sites and incidence of cancers. Mr Lamonby referred to a report on childhood leukaemia near British nuclear installations prepared by the Childhood Cancer Research Group at Oxford. This report followed a study of British data which had been conducted as similar as possible to the German study referred to earlier by Dr Verne and Mr Pinder. The report had concluded that there was no significant evidence of an elevated risk of acute leukaemia in young children near nuclear power stations in Britain. An abstract of this report had been made available for members.
- 16 Mr Lester drew attention to the potential effects of natural radioactivity in areas such as Cornwall and asked whether any comparative statistics were available. Dr Verne said that she did not have any statistics readily to hand. She said that the risks were generally low and that she was aware of work undertaken by the Health Protection Agency and local authorities to identify buildings with the greatest risk and take action to prevent the ingress of radon gas where appropriate.
- 17 Cllr Lynden expressed members' thanks to Dr Verne for her helpful and informative presentation. She said that the Health Observatory would continue to monitor the health of the population in the south-west.

QUARTER 1 REPORTS

Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

- 18 Ms French presented a report on matters of current interest to the NDA, drawing particular attention to the following:
 - (i) The NDA had been pleased with the return to service of Oldbury Reactor 1 following the completion of an extensive programme of inspection and testing. The station's operation provided much-needed electricity from a low carbon source while generating income to support the NDA's decommissioning work.
 - (ii) The NDA had nominated land near Wylfa, Oldbury and Bradwell power station sites for consideration under the Government's Strategic Siting Assessment process to identify sites suitable for new power station

construction. Surplus land at these three sites was currently being disposed of by an auction process.

- (iii) The NDA had published its Business Plan for 2009-12. The plan was available on the website and copies could be made available to members on request.
- (iv) Safe, secure operation of the plant at Oldbury remained the priority for the NDA and the Magnox team.

19 In response to a question from Mr Gill, Mr Barker explained the auction process for the land at Wylfa, Oldbury and Bradwell. The process had commenced on 10 March and the bidding process was ongoing. Cllr Riddle drew attention to the importance of ensuring that land acquired by potential developers of a new power station was managed appropriately.

Oldbury Power Station

- 20 Mr Lamonby presented a report on recent activities at Oldbury Power Station, drawing particular attention to the following:
- (i) Reactor 2 had been shut down for statutory maintenance on 12 February. The major programme of inspection and maintenance work was now nearing completion.
 - (ii) Reactor 1 had been returned to service on 14 March and had operated safely and reliably since that time. Regulatory consent for the restart of this unit followed a major programme of work during the extended shutdown including detailed inspections of channels in the graphite core. This reactor would be shut down for a statutory overhaul later in the year.
 - (iii) An accident had occurred on 1 April when a member of staff trapped his hand under a heavy container and sustained a broken finger. There had been no accidents involving time lost from work during the previous 881 days.
 - (iv) RoSPA had recognised the station's occupational health and safety performance by the presentation of its President's Award. This followed the presentation of consecutive RoSPA Gold Awards during the previous 10 years.
 - (v) Decommissioning plans were kept under review and consultation would take place in due course on certain reviews of best practicable environmental options.
 - (vi) Some recruitment had taken place in order to maintain the staffing levels required to support the extended generation on the site. This included some recruitment from Berkeley Nuclear Licensed Site where staff numbers were being reduced.

- 21 In response to a question from Cllr Riddle, Mr Lamonby confirmed that weather conditions during the winter had not caused any problems for staff gaining access to the site.
- 22 Cllr Lynden expressed members' congratulations to the station staff on the receipt of the RoSPA President's Award and two other awards presented for success in the Magnox North i4 competition. He felt that these awards indicated high standards of morale and a well motivated workforce.

Nuclear Installations Inspectorate

- 23 Dr Ghannad had been unable to be present at this meeting but his report had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Cllr Lynden drew attention to recent organisational changes within the Health and Safety Executive's Nuclear Directorate.

Environment Agency

- 24 Dr Mountford-Lister had been unable to be present at this meeting but his report had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Cllr Lynden drew attention to an application which the station had made to the Environment Agency for a variation to its authorisation under the Radioactive Substances Act. This was related to a proposal to dispose of certain radioactive sludges and involved a short-term increase in solid low level waste transfers to the national waste repository at Drigg in Cumbria. Cllr Lynden had received information on the proposal from the Agency and offered to make copies available to members if they wished.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC SUB GROUP REPORT AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 25 Ms Young gave a presentation on the station's socio-economic development plan for the coming year and reported on the activities of the sub-group during the past year. She pointed out that socio-economic funding for the current year remained the same as for the past year with £30,000 allocated for socio-economic development and £10,000 allocated for community support. This funding was consistent with the other Magnox North sites. Ms Young explained the process by which the sub-group reviewed all applications for funding. She invited members to help identify any local projects or activities which might be worthy of support.
- 26 Mr Barker thanked members of the sub-group for their work in assessing applications and thanked Mr Bishton and Ms Young for their help in administering the scheme. Cllr Lynden expressed the thanks of the various recipients for the funding which had clearly been of significant benefit within local communities.

SSG CONSTITUTION

- 27 Cllr Lynden presented a revised draft constitution of the Group which had been prepared following a meeting of the sub-group nominated to carry out such a review. Views were expressed by members on possible further amendments. It was agreed that members should submit any comments they wished to make in writing to the power station by 5 May. Cllr Lynden would then convene a further meeting of the sub-group to consider those comments and a further revised draft constitution would be circulated to members in advance of the next meeting of this Group. It was hoped that it would then be possible at the next meeting to approve the revised constitution without the need for extended further discussion.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 28 Mr Kirk said he hoped that the station's experience with the deposition of silt in the river would be taken into account in discussions on the possible construction of a Severn barrage. Cllr Hawkins supported this point and said that he had raised the issue at a number of consultation meetings but had not received a satisfactory response.

- 29 Mr Pinder asked whether members might wish to invite a speaker with a different point of view to give a presentation on potential health effects of the power station's operation. Cllr Lynden said he believed that Dr Verne was the most appropriate independent authority on this subject. He felt that her presentation had been clear and factual and that members could be reassured by the information she had given. This view was strongly supported by members. Mr Barker said that it was part of the role of this Group to seek information from officials who were responsible and accountable to the public for their advice; it was not acceptable for this Group to provide a platform for those without such responsibilities who might use the opportunity merely to promulgate their own views.

DATE TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

- 30 It was noted that the next meeting of this Group was scheduled to be held on 22 July 2009. The venue and arrangements for the meeting would be confirmed in due course.

MJD
28 April 2009