



Committee on Radioactive Waste Management

Final: 05.05.09

Meeting summary

Please could one CoRWM Member complete this for each meeting attended and e-mail it to Sam Bains who will give it a document number.

1. Date, place and title of meeting attended:

28th April, 2009

The Wave, Maryport

Meeting of the Steering Group of NuLeAF

2. Who attended for CoRWM:

Brian Clark, Mark Dutton and John Rennilson

3. Others present:

Cllrs Allan Holliday (Copeland – Chair), Mike Davidson (Allerdale), Tony Markley (Cumbria), Bernard Whittle (Lancashire), Ken Williams (Barrow) Sam Standage (Allerdale), Tim Heslop (Allerdale and Cumbria) Tim Knowles (Cumbria and Copeland), Neil Swannick (Manchester), Peter Kendall (Allerdale), Alan Smith (Allerdale and Allerdale ALC), Geoff Lilley (Hartlepool);

Officers: Fred Barker (Executive Director), Catherine Draper (Secretariat) Adrian Hurst (Hartlepool), Stewart Kemp (Cumbria), Fergus McMorrow (Copeland), Sean Morris (Manchester), Charles Holmes (Allerdale),

4. Purpose of attending meeting:

To obtain comments on the version of CoRWM's report on geological disposal dated 8th April, 2009 and the section on funding presented to the Edinburgh Plenary

5. Main points discussed / information acquired:

- John Rennilson presented the executive summary of the report including the four recommendations agreed at the Edinburgh Plenary. He also drew attention to the main changes which had been incorporated into the Consultation Draft version of the report

- **Section 2 –Voluntarism and Partnership in the Geological Disposal Process.** There was a general view that Cumbrian stakeholders would welcome other communities Expressing an Interest but the opportunity for communities to Express an Interest should not last indefinitely.
- Several Members thought that it should end when a Decision -making Body makes the Decision to Participate in the ongoing process. It was considered that communities expressing interest after then would undermine the confidence of the ongoing work in communities that had Decided to Participate. Those communities would have had the disbenefit of a stigma when they Expressed an Interest and that would be greater when they made the Decision to Participate. There was concern that, if communities did Express an Interest after a community in Cumbria made the Decision to Participate, that community would have to wait until the new community caught up. Thus, competition after a Decision to Participate could be detrimental to the process.
- There was concern that there is still uncertainty about who the Decision-making Body/ies is/are. Discussions are underway to seek to find a mutually acceptable way forward in Cumbria.
- It was suggested that, after the local government elections on 4th June, Government should communicate directly with the leaders of local authorities, as well as chief executives, and point out the potential benefits, particularly the economic benefit, of being a host community.
- The current lack of interest outside Cumbria was attributed to the lack of incentives to Express Interest more than a lack of awareness of the contents of the White Paper. Members were of the view however that, outside Cumbria, there may be a lack of understanding of the GDF siting process. Further, there appeared to be a perception that implementation in West Cumbria is a 'done deal'. It was emphasised that the latter is not the case.
- CoRWM's concerns about the practicality of the co-disposal of ILW and HLW/SNF may illustrate the benefit of more than one community Expressing an Interest.
- Some Members raised the issue of how the concerns of affected areas would be addressed including those neighbouring the Host Community and those on transport routes. At a later stage, this may affect how Community Benefits may be formulated and disbursed.
- The importance of engagement with the community at large was recognised including the risk that many people may not engage until potential sites are identified.
- **Section 4 – Funding.** There was a general view that Government should provide clarity on how the ongoing funding of the implementation of geological disposal would be assured. There was concern that the current economic climate may threaten the provision of the funding that is necessary to implement disposal.

The strength of the views that were expressed suggested that the conclusion in Para 4.8 should be strengthened.

- Some Members expressed concern at the lack of commitment in the White Paper to benefits other than those that were directly required to support the facility.
- The potential contents of Benefit Packages were also raised such as funding the Skills Academy. One Member expressed the view that infrastructure issues should be addressed under the developments for the Energy Coast and the Benefits Package should address longer term issues.
- DECC has covered the cost of the West Cumbrian MRWS Partnership for 2008/9. The Partnership is developing its work programme for 2009/10 so that it can be costed and submitted to DECC and there is confidence that it will do the same for 2009/10. Thus, there was support for CoRWM not indentifying Funding for Engagement Packages as an outstanding issue in its report to Government.
- **Section 8 – Regulation**
The key concern for many Members was how safety would be demonstrated. This included the issue of whether proceeding with a facility in West Cumbria would compromise safety compared to implementation in another part of the country.
- **Section 12 – Developing Concepts for Geological Disposal.**
Concern was expressed that requiring too much flexibility would cause unnecessary delays to the process.
- The importance of the monitorability and retrievability of the waste was raised. It was agreed that the extent and timescale for retrievability should be decided in collaboration with siting partnerships and local decision-making bodies.
- **Section 13 –Screening out Unsuitable Areas.** The issue of whether there is sufficient expertise in the UK outside the BGS to carry out a peer review of the BGS study was raised.
- **CoRWM Members input.** Members answered the queries raised above and undertook to take the views of NuLeAF into account when developing the report.
- **NuLeAF Comments**
Fred Baker said that he and the Chair would agree comments on CoRWM’s report based on the afternoon’s discussion and a reading of the Consultation Draft version and submit them to CoRWM’s secretariat by 22nd May.
- **NuLeAF Papers**
Earlier in the day, NuLeAF Members had discussed papers on
 - Taking account of public and stakeholder views in decisions about managing radioactive wastes
 - Approaches to community funds associated with facilities for managing radioactive wastes
 - Consultation on strategies for managing low-level wastes
 - NDA strategy review and developments
 - Updates on the GDF siting programme, reviews of interim storage, new nuclear build and international projects.

These papers are available on the NuLeAF website (www.nuleaf.org.uk) or from Mark, Brian or John.

6. Actions for CoRWM (what, when, whom):

To take NuLeAF's comment into account when it prepares its report to Government

7. Utility to CoRWM

The meeting was an extremely useful way of understanding the views of key stakeholders in local government on CoRWM's report.

8. This note written by:

Mark Dutton