

BRADWELL SITE LCLC

Draft minutes of the 77th Local Community Liaison Council (LCLC) meeting

held via Zoom

7.00 pm Wednesday 2 October 2024

ATTENDANCE

LCLC Executive

Brian Main	-	LCLC Chairman
Cllr John White	-	Deputy Chairman

LCLC Members

Alan Walker	-	Bradwell / Sizewell A Site Director
Alastair Findlay	-	Head of Regional Affairs, NDA
James Heavingham	-	Environment Agency
Kayleigh Ridley	-	Communications Lead, NRS
Cllr Ian Clarke	-	
Cllr Tony Fittock	-	Althorne Parish Council
Cllr John Akker	-	Tillingham Parish Council
Cllr John Driver	-	Maldon District Council
Cllr Nick Skeens	-	Burnham-on-Crouch Town Council
Cllr Gill Winsor	-	Latchingdon Parish Council

Members of the Public

Kim Avery	-	Virtual event host
John Noble		

I Introduction

3325 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked new members to introduce themselves.

II Apologies for Absence

3326 Received from Matthew Neall of Maldon District Council.

III Approval of the Previous Minutes

3327 The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting on 27 March 2024.

IV Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

3328 Matthew Neill and Tony Fittock were to look into how we publicise ourselves to the public. Tony reported that a note would be put on the agenda of all the parishes south of Maldon (ie 17 or 18 parishes in the Dengie area; not including those north of the river) to remind them to encourage people to attend these LCLC meetings.

Brian Main asked about a website; Tony stated that the parish councils all have their own websites and he could encourage them to put information on line if we wish to encourage more public participation.

3329 John Akker mentioned the issues raised by Ian Clarke about sea defences and the collapse of the wall in West Mersea. John had significant experience of this wall and asked if this issue would be dealt with within the agenda. Brian Main said this should come under the Environment Agency's report. James Heavingham stated that this was already within his report, it not being his area of expertise, but he would take away any issues to convey to appropriate colleagues.

V Bradwell Site Director's Report

3330 Alan Walker, the new Site Director of Bradwell and Sizewell A sites, summarised recent work:

- Safety, compliance and environment: no incidents or accidents at Bradwell since the last LCLC meeting. The next demonstration exercise was planned for 11 December 2024. Care and maintenance was going well thus far, although there had been incidences of fly tipping.
- A beach clean had been carried out on 26 September, working with Maldon District Council and SUEZ Recycling and Recovery. 10 bags of rubbish were collected.
- Waste received and dispatched: no waste packages received into the interim storage facility recently from Dungeness, due partly to a defect on the crane. Dungeness are now commissioning new waste retrieval plant and is expected to send only three packages to Bradwell before the end of the financial year. Bradwell no longer has any low level waste (LLW) facilities; any such waste is transferred to Sizewell to maintain the Bradwell inventory at zero. Fly tipping is a current issue.
- Asset and infrastructure care work: outage planned for September was brought forward to June, when 110 compliance and maintenance routines were conducted. 60 more were done in September, including work in the turbine hall void to seal wall penetrations. This water is currently being analysed and appears to be quite clean. A long-term strategy has been developed for inspections of the reactor building voids; defects in the concrete are monitored regularly and will be repaired, some during March to June 2025. If the repairs are successful, the period between inspections will be increased.
- Socio-economic scheme: NRS funding across all sites remains at £1.1m pa. All but £80k is committed for the current financial year. Just under £44k is allocated to Bradwell. Just under £479k is committed for multi-year projects across all 12 sites. For Bradwell, this includes support to Maldon District Council for U Fest and an officer role (£80k over two

years) to administer Rural England Prosperity Funding, which will provide >£430k in grants. The Good Neighbour funding remains at £6k per site and £2k per application. Applications can be discussed with Kayleigh Ridley or Jess Dawson. A new NDA Social Impact and Communities Strategy document was published in April and can be viewed at www.gov.uk/government/publications/nda-social-impact-and-communities-strategy-april-2024/nda-social-impact-and-communities-strategy-april-2024.

3331 John White asked what would be done to publicise the planned exercise on 11 December. Alan Walker stated that it was low-key, routine business for the site and was mentioned in order to avoid alarm if people saw vehicles around the site and did not know why they were there.

3332 John asked Alan to let every council know about any solutions found to the waste/fly-tipping problem and asked if the NDA would publicise the fact of anyone being caught dumping waste. Alan felt that publicising details of individuals could be difficult in case it prejudiced any prosecutions.

John pointed out that waste dumped on farmland has to be cleared up by the farmer and waste on highways by the local council. He asked about the situation at Bradwell; Alan confirmed that the NDA has to deal with any such waste.

3333 Ian Clarke asked whether the problems with the crane would create a backlog of waste packages to be dealt with, would it require an extension to the licence for bringing packages in and when would this end/what per centage of the store would

Alan stated that there was a short-term backlog issue and currently there is only one package ready to come to site from Dungeness. He did not expect this to affect the required period of the licence as the crane issue is not impacting Dungeness. He expected store capacity to be 220-225 packages, depending on configuration; this would cover Dungeness and Sizewell.

3334 John Akker asked for clarification of medium-term plans for Bradwell with regard to taking nuclear waste from other sites. Alan Walker stated that planning permission covers Dungeness A and Sizewell A ILW waste. There were no plans to extend storage capacity at Bradwell. Should any such plans arise in the future, these would be subject to normal planning and consultation.

3335 Paul opined that Maldon seemed to get almost no social funding in comparison with other sites and asked why. Alan did not have the breakdown of moneys allocated to sites so was unable to say what other sites were benefitting from but suggested that there may be useful information on the website. He suggested it may be to do with where the greatest need lies.

3336 Paul was concerned about the leaks in the turbine hall and how regular and intensive the surveys are. He asked how confident we could be that the building would not crumble before its demolition in 2071. Alan pointed out that the issue with the turbine hall void was not leaks but rainfall; therefore the problem changes according to the weather. The decision to leave the void in existence was made on a five-year period and the amount of evaporation for normal annual rainfall in that area. In normal circumstances, the evaporation would keep pace with the rainfall. He emphasised that water was not leaking in from anywhere but the void is open to the weather and is not covered by aluminium cladding.

3337 Paul noted that the NDA had recently been fined for issues with communications. As Bradwell is a remotely-monitored site, he was concerned that communications are adequate, the site is checked and we are safe. Alan confirmed that it is checked and we are safe and noted that a security inspection had taken place that very day. There is a security presence at Bradwell as well as the ability to monitor it from Sizewell.

Alastair Findlay commented that the fine mentioned was for Sellafield Ltd in relation to cyber security failings but there had been no evidence of exploitation and improvements had been made during the last year. No other NDA sites were concerned.

- 3338 Ian Clarke asked whether the historical water ingress into the waste vaults] had been addressed. Alan Walker said that investigations were still being carried out into those vaults, which still contained very low levels of water and was being monitored to look for any seasonal fluctuations. During decommissioning any contaminated vaults had been emptied of water and the walls cleaned as much as possible.

VI Nuclear Decommissioning Authority Update

- 3339 Alastair Findlay introduced himself and noted that we now had a new Government and a new set of ministers, our minister being Lord Hunt, who visited Sellafield in August. The NDA hoped to get both him and Ed Milliband to visit other sites in the future.

Work was being done with the National Audit Office on a review of the work of the NDA, looking particularly at Sellafield but also at how the NDA operates. This should be published on 25 October 2024 and a Public Accounts Committee should be elected in January.

A one-year spending review would be incorporated into the forthcoming Budget, which would set spending targets for 2025-26 and would lead into a three-year spending review for the following years.

The next five-year strategy is due to be published in 2026 and is currently being formulated, with a public consultation in 2025.

- 3340 Stakeholder updates: an NDA Stakeholder Summit was held in September, in Manchester which discussed the NDA's missions and forthcoming issues. A review of site stakeholder groups was being conducted and would be finalised soon, with discussions being held with group Chairs about NDA plans. The annual stakeholder survey would be issued in the next couple of months. Regarding the recent fine, a link to the ONR statement would be published shortly.

- 3341 The GBN process for SMRs (competitions) selection process is now down from six to four and the results are expected at the end of this year or beginning of next. The NDA is working with GBN on various aspects, particularly decommissioning.

- 3342 Ian Clarke asked whether there were any changes to the anticipated dates for the end of care and maintenance and final site clearance, which were previously given as 2071 and 2094, and wanted to understand what final site clearance would look like.

Alistair said that NRS would be talking about some of the strategies around that. The NDA is looking at possible strategies regarding the old Magnox estate and what decommissioning might look like. There had been policy exchanges to consider other ways to look at this. NRS is looking at how to engage with local communities more. Various options were being considered, such as new nuclear, green options, etc. Strategies would be developed over the next three to four years on a site-by-site basis, factoring in what local communities want, what would work for the site and cost-effectiveness. The NRS could discuss this in more detail.

Alan Walker stated that no significant change was envisaged regarding the dates but the biggest impact on them was funding: if more funding was available, plans could be accelerated; if the Government had other priorities, things could be delayed. NRS was looking at logic links between sites, the availability of contractors, the condition of sites. Currently Dungeness had priority over Sizewell, which had priority over Bradwell.

- 3343 John Akker referred to item 3313 in the previous minutes, which referred to planning and GDF, and wondered whether more information could be shared by the agencies involved on what was happening as this could be of great benefit to the relevant communities.

Alastair stated that the primary level of involvement was with the potential host communities, in Cumbria and Lincolnshire, but appreciated that information could be helpful to other

communities too and offered to talk to Nuclear Waste Services and to incorporate wider updates into the NDA updates.

Alan mentioned a report from Nuclear Waste Services that is available on the Government website, issued in July, which contains information on indicative timescales and mentions being able to accept waste in the 2050s.

- 3344 John also asked where the principal amount of money for decommissioning is spent as he was concerned that the Government may look for ways to cut back on financing such things.

Alastair agreed that the Treasury was always looking at funding and said that we have a good relationship with them. There is an amount for nuclear liability which has to be funded but, no doubt, the NDA will be under pressure in whatever funding it gets. Most NDA money is spent at Sellafield as it has the world's largest stock of nuclear waste but they are emphasising their need to spend more money at other sites too.

- 3345 John Driver referred to the change in scope from six to four SMRs and asked whether Bradwell was still in scope for possibly having an SMR located here. Alastair did not know but said that GBN had bought two nuclear sites, including Wylfa, and had looked at others, including Bradwell, but he did not have any further information.

Brian Main stated that the nuclear industry has, in the past, always received favourable treatment with regard to Government funding and believed that the Government was well aware of the need to spend money on this activity.

VII Environment Agency Site Inspector's Report

- 3346 James Heavingham continued to hold monthly meetings with the Sizewell A Environment Management team, who oversee Bradwell, to discuss emerging issues and projects, and also to hold meetings between the EA, NRS and ONR. No matters of regulatory concern had arisen since the last LCLC meeting. Review of the care and maintenance arrangements at Bradwell was continuing and an in-depth review had been done in 2023

- 3347 The resources in place to maintain site staffing levels had been looked at in the past quarter, as had internal auditing and insurance and the NRS's management of information. He was in the process of reviewing the site operating processes. He would be considering the issue of water ingress into the sub-surface voids and how it was being addressed.

Regarding the ILW on site, a review had been done of the waste stored in the ISF in March 2024 and all was satisfactory. No non-compliances had occurred since the last meeting.

- 3348 Regarding Bradwell B and their water discharge activity permit application, Bradwell Power Generation Company Ltd has decided to withdraw their application. The Water Resources Waste Transfer licence for Bradwell Power Generation Company Ltd has expired and the EA has decided to stand down from their Bradwell B project team as there is no longer any active engagement from Bradwell B.

- 3349 A public consultation will be launched in the Autumn on the EA's guidance for operators applying for a permit to operate a solid radioactive waste disposal facility and the views of those in this community were invited.

John White asked if this guidance was for people going for the GDF or else why this group should want to do anything about solid radioactive waste at Bradwell. James confirmed that this was not relevant to Bradwell.

VIII Any Other Business

- 3350 John Akker referred to his question on the points raised at the last meeting about flooding and noted that there should have been a meeting between the EA and the local authority about the possibility of flooding at Bradwell and issues with the sea wall. He asked for a report on

this meeting as the issue is of concern because of rising sea levels and the generally high water levels at the present time.

James Heavingham did not believe that a meeting was to have taken place with the local authority but he had spoken at the last meeting about shoreline action plans and there had been an action for this topic to be raised with the EA by the interim Bradwell site manager. James gave a link to the shoreline management plans: <https://environment.data.gov.uk/shoreline-planning>.

Ian Clarke mentioned the collapse of stronger sea walls at West Mersea, opposite the Bradwell site, and said that our, earth-topped, walls were more likely to collapse. He had submitted a photograph to the previous meeting which showed how close to the top of the wall a surge tide had been; this is why there was such concern. Stronger walls than ours had collapsed at West Mersea, possibly due to wind direction.

Brian Main asked for this issue to be taken back to the Environment Agency and a response brought to the next meeting.

- 3351 Ian Clarke mentioned the group's desire to increase participation in it, particularly amongst parish councils, and asked whether further work was needed. Brian confirmed that a very lengthy list of councillors existed that information is sent to but wondered whether that was the limit of what we could do. In the current state of the site, he queried whether aiming for a much larger attendance was a valid objective.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting.