



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CHAPELCROSS STAKEHOLDER GROUP (SSG)  
HELD AT ANNAN ATHLETIC FOOTBALL CLUB, ANNAN  
WEDNESDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2024**

**Attendance/Apologies list**

**Attendance**

|                          |                                                           |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Cllr Archie Dryburgh MBE | Annandale East and Eskdale (Chair)                        |
| Cllr George Jamieson     | Annandale South (Vice Chair)                              |
| Neil Carruthers          | Royal Burgh of Annan Community Council                    |
| Cllr Sean Marshall       | Dumfries & Galloway Council                               |
| Willie McNairn           | 2km Resident Representative                               |
| Carol Midwood            | Federation of Community Councils/Canonbie and District CC |
| Jaime Nicholson          | Dumfries & Galloway Council                               |
| Ian Park                 | NRS Trade Union Representative                            |
| Andy Stott               | Restoring Annan's Waters                                  |

**Operators and Officers**

|                  |                            |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| Claire Aitken    | NRS                        |
| David Carson     | Amentum                    |
| Colin Hargreaves | NRS                        |
| Richard Murray   | Site Director, Chapelcross |
| Peter Hughes     | ONR                        |
| David Wallace    | NDA                        |
| Geoffrey Dore    | Minute Taker               |

**Apologies**

|                       |                                                |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Cllr Lynne Davis      | Annandale North                                |
| Helen Emberson        | Dumfries & Galloway Council, CX Programme Lead |
| Bill Hamilton         | NRS                                            |
| Diane Hamilton        | Scottish Government                            |
| Donna Mounce          | SOSE                                           |
| David Stone           | SEPA                                           |
| Cllr Stephen Thompson | Annandale North                                |

## 1. CHAIR'S WELCOME

Cllr Archie Dryburgh welcomed the attendees to the Chapelcross SSG meeting. He thanked Cllr George Jamieson for chairing the previous meeting.

## 2. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Lynne Davis, Helen Emberson, Bill Hamilton, Diane Hamilton, Donna Mounce, David Stone and Cllr Stephen Thompson.

There were no declarations of interest.

## 3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

Andy Stott noted that there had been an action for Claire Aitken to circulate a document from Scottish Water. Claire Aitken apologised for the delay.

**Action: Claire Aitken to circulate the document from Scottish Water regarding the water extraction on the Annan.**

Andy Stott noted that, during the last meeting, Peter Dreghorn had advised on the difference between the definitions for green energy and renewable energy. However, the definitions had not been included in the meeting minutes. The definitions were as follows:

*All installation and maintenance of energy production units have an impact on the environment in their structures and materials. Green energy production has least impact on the environment at the point of production, for example solar, water and wind power. There is no fuel involved in green energy production. Renewable energy uses fuel but that can be replaced. The wood fired power station at Lockerbie uses willow and soft wood. Unlike green energy, the growing, delivery and burning of trees has an environmental impact.*

Cllr George Jamieson clarified that there had been an action to provide members of the SSG group with the memorandum of understanding (MoU) between SOSE, Dumfries & Galloway Council and the NDA.

Subject to the amendments, the minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by Ian Park and seconded by Willie McNairn.

## 4. CHAPELCROSS SITE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

### A. Richard Murray (Site Director, Chapelcross)

#### **EHSS&Q Performance**

Richard Murray reported that the total recordable injury rate (TRIR) was 0.46. He noted that, prior to the last meeting, a contractor had suffered an injury to his arm while attempting to install pipework, and the contractor had received five stitches. An investigation had commenced, and the individual had fully recovered and returned to work. The environment had been proactively governed, while the radiation dose was being managed in compliance with NRS safety rules. Work had started on the potable water project.

#### **Site News**

The CXPP drum filling was progressing well, and 28 were complete. The design for the cooling tower land remediation had been completed, and the objective to deliver £5 million of asset care improvements remained on target.

Sellafield's head of final decommissioning had visited the site, and there had been much shared learning between Chapelcross and Calder Hall. Jayne Scott, who was a recently appointed independent non-executive director at NRS, had also visited the site.

## **Recruitment**

Two lab technicians had been onboarded, while the site was also in the process of recruiting instrument mechanics. The operational apprentices had completed their apprenticeships.

## **CXPP Commissioning**

Richard Murray reported on the process line retrieval enablers and stated that installation and inactive commissioning of the lifting equipment had begun. Much test work had taken place in the workshop, and when the VPE tank removal is started there is an objective to swiftly remove it from the plant area and package the cut sections to minimise discharges..

## **Pond Decommissioning**

Zeolite skip commissioning is on-going with an objective six have been retrieved from the ponds and grouted into concrete boxes this financial year. The site would also review the ILW and LLW skips, furniture and sludge from the ponds, utilising divers. NSG had been engaged to assist with the programme of work.

One active drop had been processed through the Modular Active Effluent Treatment Plant (MAETP).

Regarding the cooling tower remediation, sealing of the 4' culverts had been slightly delayed, and physical work was now planned to commence in November. A contractor was on site, who would cut into, and seal, the culverts. The short contract was due to be completed in January. Other works associated with the final remediation of the cooling tower would be subject to a design cycle during the next financial year.

## **Waste**

10 shipments of LLW had been despatched from the site, with a year end target of 14. 103m<sup>3</sup> of legacy waste had been removed from the site that year, while Chapelcross also continued to progress problematic legacy wastes, including oils and liquids and graphite. There had been significant WEEE and redundant assets disposals.

## **Asset Care**

Glazing replacement was complete on reactors 1 and 2, with work taking place to complete up to level 4 on reactor 3. The potable water replacement work had commenced. The project consisted of three phases, and it was anticipated that the work would be completed by April 2025.

Carol Midwood asked if there was much crushed concrete. Richard Murray responded that there was thousands of cubic metres of crushed concrete. Carol Midwood asked if it had been offered to local builders. Richard Murray explained that it would be sent to a waste brokerage for recycling.

Neil Carruthers asked if the VPE tank would be cleaned or a sealed entity. Richard Murray explained that the circumferential cutter would cut the tank and plastic end caps would be placed on the cut ends, the cut sections would then be inserted into a foil bag and sealed. Neil Carruthers asked if the internals had been cleaned. Richard Murray said it had not been. It would be joined to the ventilation.

Ian Park noted that the recent apprentices had had to be trained at Bridgwater and proposed emphasising access to a local training provision. Richard Murray said there had not been any progress in this area, but it was a view for the future. Cllr Archie Dryburgh said there needed to be a strategy in place for decommissioning of all nuclear sites in Scotland.

Cllr Sean Marshall noted that the recent Cross-Party Group (CPG) meeting had addressed skills, and several sites in Scotland had stated that it was not ideal for apprentices to be trained at Bridgwater. Disappointment had also been expressed regarding the lack of involvement of Skills Development Scotland (SDS). There had been an action for the area representative to increase their involvement with Dumfries & Galloway College. There was no avenue to train apprentices other than Bridgwater.

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Cllr Sean Marshall highlighted the cooling tower remediation work and noted that the previous minutes had stated that there would be a contract to create a pad around the area with the crushed concrete, which would take the heat exchanger when they were set down for disposal. Richard Murray stated that this remained the favoured management position. However, some concrete would still be disposed.

Andy Stott asked if there was any synergy between nuclear, oil and gas. Cllr Archie Dryburgh replied that there was between the major companies which addressed decommissioning work. While there had been many discussions regarding apprentices and university degrees, there was still a requirement for other functions, such as crane and forklift drivers.

David Wallace explained that Decom Mission wanted to include nuclear in its story. Many Scottish Parliament members were unaware of the amount of money that Scotland had spent on decommissioning. There would be an increase in the profile of the issues and what needed to be addressed.

Cllr George Jamieson said there was a clear gap in the market for high-skilled specialist jobs. He also noted that Chapelcross had several contractors and asked if it was a case of supply and demand. Richard Murray said there was a real demand-driven market. Through the NDA, Chapelcross would encourage small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), while local businesses also presented a challenge. The sustainability programme would encourage bigger companies to employ local people.

Ian Park said there needed to be small packages of training. The apprentice route would bind an individual to a fixed pattern of two to three years, while the trainee path would provide the necessary requirements in a short period. Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) and short packages would provide more benefit. Cllr George Jamieson acknowledged Ian Park's comments. Discussions could take place with the colleges to identify the best approaches to train people.

Ian Park said there was no way to mimic the work that was taking place on site. Richard Murray noted that Chapelcross had trained three local individuals to a certain standard, and the site had learned much during this process. Cllr Sean Marshall said there needed to be an earlier solution to allow sites to train and support apprentices, and it was hoped that there would be a Scottish solution. He suggested that the issue be raised in different forums. Richard Murray stated that Bridgwater had advanced hundreds of apprentices. There needed to be a commitment, and if there was not a pipeline there would be a cycle of nothingness.

David Wallace highlighted skills as a major issue and proposed that the SSG formalise its views to the chair of the CPG, the NDA and NRS.

**Action: The SSG to formalise its views regarding skills, training and support of apprentices to the chair of the CPG, the NDA and NRS.**

Cllr Sean Marshall asked if there was a forum where the SSGs could express their views. David Wallace explained that the Scottish Government hosted a meeting for sites. Susie Stirling, whose remit focused on skills, had attended the last CPG, and David Wallace would propose that she attend the next Scottish Government meeting to discuss the topic.

## 5. NDA UPDATE

### A. David Wallace (NDA)

David Wallace's report was taken as read. The CPG had tasked SDS with forming connections with CPG stakeholders and devising a plan. David Wallace intended to request a progress report and provide an update to the SSG.

Emma Harper MSP would introduce a motion into Scottish Parliament in January regarding skills. David Wallace and Gail Ross were assisting Emma Harper in wording the motion.

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The next CPG meeting would take place on 17 December and would address radioactive waste in Scotland. The Scottish Government was due to consult on the high-activity waste policy in early 2025, and the CPG would also make a submission to this.

An NDA secondment into the Scottish Government was due to conclude on 18 December. Another NDA employee would be seconded for 18 months, but this was likely to be delayed to March 2025. The NDA would undertake a spending review, and it was hoped that there would be an awareness of the settlement in early January.

David Wallace highlighted the Scottish Councils Committee on Radioactive Substances (SCORRS). The NDA and the Scottish Government would appoint an engagement officer, who would work for the chair of SCORRS, and SCORRS meetings would recommence.

Corhyn Parr had resigned as chief executive officer of Nuclear Waste Services (NWS). Dave Wilson had commenced his role as managing director at Dounreay.

David Wallace reminded the SSG that the NDA and NRS had launched a review of the SSGs. A meeting had taken place with SSG chairs and vice-chairs on 15 November, and next steps needed to be agreed. The NDA and NRS would welcome feedback from Chapelcross.

Cllr Sean Marshall welcomed the impending recommencement of SCORRS meetings. David Wallace explained that SCORRS had had its funding doubled, and it would be administered through Nuleaf. Nuleaf would also be able to offer additional resource.

Cllr Sean Marshall noted that neither the Scottish Government nor NRS had not submitted a report. Richard Murray explained that he would provide a short update on behalf of Bill Hamilton.

Ian Park said there were six to seven packages that were all specific. While there needed to be a waste strategy for final disposal, there also needed to be an awareness that there were enough packages that had been standardised throughout the industry. There was a 'constant turmoil' of having to learn new processes. David Wallace acknowledged Ian Park's comments. MSPs would receive a presentation at the next CPG that would address the topline issues in relation to radioactive waste. The intention of the CPG was to ask a question in the House regarding the upcoming consultation, and the follow-up question would be related to whatever arose after the meeting.

Richard Murray stated that a strategic view of the final disposal options was necessary. David Wallace noted that the policy had been formed 10 years ago, and there had been many changes. There needed to be a view on how matters had advanced. Cllr George Jamieson said civil servants were often key, as they would review topics from an objective standpoint and make recommendations to the politicians.

## **6. OTHER REPORTS FROM SSG BODIES**

### **ONR**

Peter Hughes took the report as read. He explained that he had been on site in October and November, and both inspections had received an 'adequate' rating. A transport issue had been raised due to some paperwork not being properly completed. The transport inspector had considered the licensee response as appropriate.

Cllr Sean Marshall asked Peter Hughes to elaborate on the paperwork errors. Peter Hughes explained that several packages would be sent out in one consignment, but due to a lack of clarity in the supporting procedure, only one package had included the paperwork. The error had been minor, and the public had not been exposed to any risk.

### **SEPA**

The report was taken as read.

Cllr Sean Marshall noted that SEPA had stated that it was determining the site's application for a variation to its EASR permit and that SEPA would be undertaking a public consultation

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on the application in early 2025. He asked if this would cause any operational issues or delays. Richard Murray said it would not.

### **Scottish Government**

It was noted that there was no report. Claire Aitken stated that she had asked Diane Hamilton if she would submit a report, and Diane Hamilton had replied that she did not have an update. She had added that the Scottish Government was reviewing the feedback from the high-active waste responses. Cllr Archie Dryburgh said he would ask the Scottish Government to submit an update.

### **SOSE**

It was noted that there was no report.

Cllr George Jamieson noted that, during the last meeting, he had requested visibility of the MoU. He also noted that one requirement included an annual review of the MoU and asked if a review had taken place. David Wallace agreed to check this.

**Action: NRS to provide a brief on the MoU at the next SSG.**

### **NRS Update**

Richard Murray reported that the Chapelcross roadshow was planned for March 2025 and would involve a mobile exhibition and several interviews with members of the local community. NRS was also keen to obtain the views of those who were between the ages of 15 and 24.

## **7. EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND INVITATIONS**

Cllr Archie Dryburgh noted that an NWS annual review and NDA SSG Chairs/Vice Chairs Review Teams meeting had taken place, while a National Audit Office report had been issued.

David Wallace stated that Euan Hutton had been promoted to the permanent position of Sellafield CEO.

Cllr Sean Marshall explained that he had attended the Stakeholder Summit on 17 and 18 September on behalf of the Chapelcross SSG. Although the panel sessions had been informative, there had not been much interaction with the audience. There had been many networking opportunities and good interactions. He and Helen Emberson had attained interest from other sites regarding the Chapelcross project. David Wallace stated that Trawsfynydd wanted to visit the Chapelcross site.

David Wallace explained that the CPG aimed to attend sites in 2025 and wanted to visit Chapelcross first.

## **8. CHAPELCROSS PROJECT UPDATE**

It was noted that Helen Emberson had offered her apologies but had sent a written report. The report was taken as read.

Cllr Sean Marshall stated that the recent economy and environment and area committees had addressed the B-class road that linked Annan to the B725. There was a need to review the nearby U-class and C-class roads and not only concentrate on the main road that would feed the main development on the Chapelcross site.

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Peter Hughes reported that the Chief Nuclear Inspector's annual report had been issued in November and was available on the ONR's website. Chapelcross's regulatory attention level remained as 'routine'.

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Richard Murray stated that NRS had observed continual fly tipping at its effluent pipeline property in the town and asked the SSG to provide support in this area.

Claire Aitken explained that the aim was to advise the community that people should not be fly tipping. NRS staff were not responsible for removing items. It would welcome NRS and representatives from the SSG engaging with the local newspaper to highlight the issue. Jaime Nicholson proposed that Claire Aitken discuss the matter with the Wheatley Homes group.

Ian Park noted that the SSG had previously discussed a cycle route to the site and suggested that it was less likely that items would be left on the pipeline if a cycle route were to be in operation. Cllr Sean Marshall proposed making an appeal through the press and reviewing ways to restrict access to the pipeline. It was agreed that the SSG would make an appeal via the local media.

Carol Midwood asked if there was an update on the site visit. Claire Aitken responded that the initial dates had needed to be rearranged. There were two additional dates that Claire Aitken would circulate.

### **10. PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no comments.

**Next Meeting date: Wednesday 12 March 2025.**