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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CHAPELCROSS STAKEHOLDER GROUP (SSG)
HELD AT ANNAN ATHLETIC FOOTBALL CLUB, ANNAN
WEDNESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2025**

Attendance/Apologies list

Attendance

Cllr Archie Dryburgh MBE	Annandale East and Eskdale (Chair)
Cllr George Jamieson	Annandale South (Vice Chair)
Cllr Sean Marshall	Dumfries & Galloway Council
Willie McNairn	2km Resident Representative
Carol Midwood	Federation of Community Councils/Canonbie and District CC
Peter Dreghorn	Restoring Annan's Waters
Emilie Wardhaugh	Galloway Fisheries Trust

Operators and Officers

Claire Aitken	NRS
Bill Hamilton	NRS
Richard Murray	Site Director, Chapelcross
David Wallace	NDA
Georgia Irving	NRS
Helen Emberson	Dumfries & Galloway Council, CX Programme Lead
Jaime Nicholson	Dumfries & Galloway Council
Max Anderson	GA Consultants
Neil MacGregor	SOSE
Matthew Dent	Minute Taker

Apologies

David Stone	SEPA
Peter Hughes	ONR
Neil Carruthers	Royal Burgh of Annan Community Council
Donna Mounce	SOSE
Diane Hamilton	Scottish Government
Cllr Stephen Thompson	Councillor for Annandale North

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1. CHAIR'S WELCOME

The Chair opened the meeting at 10.01.

It was noted that David Wallace would be retiring on 31 December. The Chair expressed the thanks of the SSG to David Wallace.

2. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from David Stone, Peter Hughes, Neil Carruthers, Donna Mounce, Diane Hamilton, Ian Park and Cllr Stephen Thompson.

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by Sean Marshall and seconded by Willie McNairn and were duly accepted.

Claire Aitken confirmed that there were some dates in February which had been suggested for the SSG site visit.

Claire Aitken confirmed that she had received a diagram of the new NRS reporting structure following the organisational restructure and would circulate it following the meeting.

Claire Aitken reported that the Ironside Farrah Masterplan had been circulated to SSG members.

Claire Aitken reported that Richard Murray's presentation would be uploaded to the SSG website following the meeting.

4. CHAPELCROSS SITE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Richard Murray (Site Director, Chapelcross)

Richard Murray presented his update.

The total recordable injury rate had been 0.46, with no significant issues since the last SSG meeting. This would hopefully soon return to zero, as it was due to a slip reported in January. There had been no major audit findings during the period. There had been a successful security demonstration exercise, and annual reviews had been carried out with the ONR and SEPA, both of which had gone well.

7.18 tonnes of ILW had been retrieved, against a target for 2025/26 of 18.6 tonnes. 23 packages had been transferred to ISF, against a target of 39. 12 of 16 LLW consignments had been completed, with another planned for the next few weeks. The reactor 4 south face cladding and glazing had been completed at the end of May. The potable water project had been finished, with a supply now available to the site. The design assessment review 4 for the pond skip enablers had been completed.

Recruitment on site was very busy. Two new EC&I technicians had started, alongside a lead team administrator, systems engineers and two new high-activity waste engineers. There had been a number of internal promotions, and the age demographic had shifted. NDA and NRS were undergoing a mutually agreed voluntary exit programme, and over the last six weeks CX staff had been asked whether anybody wanted to leave through that. There had been some interest, and it was anticipated people would leave.

Teams had been busy dismantling pipework from process lines, by clamping shut the pipes and cutting them, to avoid release of tritium. The trialling work on this had demonstrated that

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it could be done whilst managing the associated hazards. The team had been doing exceptionally well.

There had been knowledge sharing with UKAEA around decommissioning the fusion facility at JET. There had been visits to CX, to explore common issues between the two decommissioning projects.

Work was taking place on the Zeolite skips which had been used to scrub caesium from the pond water, and which were being removed from the pond at present. Six had been removed to date, which was not the pace which had been envisioned. The removal was not the issue, but rather the grounding area and the drying time. There had been learnings from the six packages so far, around how they behaved and how much off-gassing was happening. A plan had been arrived at to move more quickly going forward. NRS was working with a company called NSG on skip removal with a mock-up pond to trial different approaches to skip removal. Sludge had also been removed from the pond.

The full design review report had been received for the cooling towers. The concrete had been sampled and there was enough to go to the market with a functional specification outlining that no high-gauge runoff water was wanted in the future. The remediation specialists could then come forward with their proposals. Market engagement would start early in 2026.

Low-level waste was still being moved offsite. There were a number of problematic areas, from asbestos to contaminated sludges, but the legacy waste programme was well underway with 85% of legacy waste dealt with

The reactor cladding and glazing was the most visible project at present. The south faces had been completed, with the east and west faces underway. Building the scaffolds had been quite straightforward, but the trouble had been with the wind loading; stabilising it had involved going into the centre of the reactor building. The first full elevation was now complete, and the bulk of the power had been isolated from the reactor buildings, with a very simple electrical overlay system installed.

The next phase of work would be removal of the blower house louvres and the reactor building electrical installation. There were also roof repairs after damage from a number of storms.

The Chair noted there had been an SSG chairs and vice-chairs meeting in the previous week discussing the ONR reducing the number of site visits, which was important to the SSG. He asked whether any conversations had taken place with the ONR. Richard Murray explained that six weeks previously there had been a large meeting with the ONR. The deciding factor was the level of risk. CX no longer had any mechanism to cause a chain reaction on the site which could push any contaminated materials across the site boundary, so the hazard to the external environment and the public was significantly reduced. There was still a lot of asbestos on the site, which was probably a bigger hazard than anything nuclear onsite.

George Jamieson welcomed the collaboration and knowledge transfer and queried how much was and was not known about future decommissioning. Richard Murray said CX had gathered a great amount of information and would programme its approach to be learned from. George Jamieson noted the need to convince the public that nuclear power should be embraced, that decommissioning was sound and that enough was known about the consequences of nuclear power. Richard Murray noted that historically power stations had been put up very quickly in the late 1950s, with decommissioning as an afterthought. Now there had to be a comprehensive decommissioning plan within the initial design. George Jamieson said going forward communications needed to be candid to provide reassurance, and the worst possible outcome was an information vacuum. Sean Marshall noted that decommissioning was a journey and was much improved.

Sean Marshall queried the approach with the remediation around the cooling towers. Richard Murray explained that the intention was to go to the market with the desired outcome. Sean Marshall queried the exit strategy across NRS, and the criteria around savings. Richard Murray said there were criteria for how much savings contributed to the overall programme. By the time he came back to the SSG in March he would have more detail. Sean Marshall

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said he had heard that the CX charity fund would be winding up, which had put hundreds of thousands into the community. Richard Murray said it was a TU-run scheme, and there had been a lack of volunteers to run it going forward.

Willie McNairn noted that, in 2023, NRS had said there would be consultation on a solar farm, which would be 10MW with 4MW battery storage. This had been consulted on six weeks earlier. Willie McNairn asked whether NRS had been involved in this. Richard Murray said Green Energy International ran the consultation, and the solar farm was being built on NRS's site licensed area, with the land leased to Green Energy International. Willie McNairn stated that in April 2023 it had been indicated it was for CX's benefit. Richard Murray confirmed the bulk was for CX's benefit. Willie McNairn noted that now it was looking at 50MW to power 12,000 houses. Richard Murray clarified there was not 50MW on the site. It was only a 10MW facility. Willie McNairn said this was not what had been consulted on. Claire Aitken said that a copy of what was provided at the consultation could be found

ACTION: Claire Aitken to secure a copy of what had been provided in the solar farm consultation.

Carol Midwood noted that Richard Murray had spoken about crimping the pipes to stop something from being released. The Chair clarified it had been tritium. Carol Midwood queried what happened to the pipes after they had been cut. Richard Murray explained that they went into drums, which were welded shut and placed into the storage facility. Within 130 years they would become low-level waste.

5. NDA UPDATE

A. David Wallace (NDA)

David Wallace's report was taken as read.

The NDA chief executive, David Peattie, had announced he would be standing down after 10 years in March 2027. It usually took around a year to recruit a new chief executive. This process had started.

The strategy 5 consultation had closed at the end of September, with 360 submissions received. The team were reviewing these submissions, and feedback would be issued in the new year.

An invitation for the next meeting of the cross-party group would be going out that day, for a meeting on 10 December at the Scottish Parliament from 18.00 to 20.00. The main topic would be a follow up to the skills topic discussed a year previously. Skills Development Scotland (SDS) had been invited back to present on what had been done since the last meeting. At the meeting a year ago, it had been announced there would be a Scottish skills hub on decommissioning and David Wallace had invited them to come and give an update. Decom Mission had also been invited. This meeting would also serve as the AGM. The co-convenor, Colin Smyth, had been suspended from the Scottish Parliament pending investigation, so a new chair and vice-chair would need to be elected. The Parliament would close down from 26 March until the elections on 6 May, so there was unlikely to be another cross-party group until Summer 2026.

The Festival of Politics in August had given a focus to what was happening in nuclear commissioning, with a presentation on 70 years of Dounreay.

The second SCORS meeting had taken place the previous week, both face-to-face and online. 22 local authorities had been represented. The NDA had committed to funding SCORS from February 2026 to February 2027, which provided some continuity, and the plan was to move to three meetings per year. The first one in 2026 would be in February.

Over the next five years, the NDA had received a record settlement of £21 billion. A number of presentations had been given to the Scottish Government, to provide reassurance around the Scottish sites. Scotland also had the AGR transfers, such as Hunterston B, which would

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come over to the NDA and NRS in April 2026. This was a ringfenced fund. 97-98% of staff requirements in terms of redeployment had been satisfied. Employees would be upskilled and retrained, to be redeployed to new roles when they moved over to NRS in April.

The Chair noted that skills would be needed in relation to decommissioning, via the colleges and universities. He queried the feedback on this from SDS. SDS had issued something in regional skills, which included CX and the green energy hub. Nothing had been seen yet on decommissioning, and David Wallace had expressed disappointment on this. This would be something which would be queried with them in December.

George Jamieson noted that SDS sat at the top and needed partners to put work into action. Where work had been developed in agriculture, there had been collaboration with colleges and employers represented by NFU Scotland, which had led to action. David Wallace noted that eight or nine weeks earlier, SDS had facilitated a workshop on nuclear decommissioning, which had included Dumfries & Galloway College, Ayrshire College, and North Highland College.

Sean Marshall noted that the SSG had identified a massive opportunity for skill development, and it was disappointing that SDS had not made the most of this. It had also been on SCORS's agenda. Hopefully there would be movement on this.

Sean Marshall noted that, on the NDA strategy, the SSG secretariat had put forward a strong representation, as had SCORS. Claire Aitken noted that after the presentation from SCORS at the cross-party working group, it had been mentioned that not all local authorities were represented. She queried whether all local authorities had put forward a representative. David Wallace said all of them aside from North Ayrshire Council were represented. North Ayrshire Council was being pursued and claimed to be going through a process to elect a councillor to SCORS.

6. NRS UPDATE

A. Bill Hamilton (NRS)

Bill Hamilton presented his report.

The AGR transfer programme would see Hunterston B transfer in April. It had been an exemplar programme in terms of engagement with employees, trade unions, management and stakeholders. It was very important that the first transfer went well. The second site, Hinkley B, would be transferring in October.

The spending review had been more positive than had been anticipated. After Christmas there would be some communications around the business plan.

Sean Marshall noted the new reactors planned for Wylfa. Bill Hamilton noted that there were other potential sites, and the Secretary of State's announcement had also indicated that some sites in Scotland were being explored.

7. OTHER REPORTS FROM SSG BODIES

ONR

Claire Aitken reported that the ONR had submitted its report. The Chair noted that this would be taken as read. Claire Aitken noted that Peter Hughes had said that any comments or questions could go back to him directly.

SEPA

Claire Aitken reported that SEPA had submitted its report. The Chair noted that this would be taken as read. Claire Aitken noted that David Stone had said that any comments or questions could go back to him directly.

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Sean Marshall said the variation to the SR permit had been awaited for two years. It would be beneficial to have a date for when the consultation would start, as it had been meant to start earlier in the year. Claire Aitken said the SSG could write to SEPA to ask this.

ACTION: Claire Aitken to write to SEPA on behalf of the SSG to query when the SR permit variation consultation would start.

Scottish Government

Claire Aitken reported that Diane Hamilton had submitted her report, and any comments or questions could go back to her directly.

8. EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND INVITATIONS

The Chair noted that he and the Vice-Chair had attended the following meetings:

- A number of online meetings with the SSG chairs and vice-chairs. The most recent meeting had been looking at the West Cumbrian sites and their desire for a different setup.

Sean Marshall noted that at the last meeting the Chair had reported on consultation regarding the new rules for SSG constitutions. The Chair said all SSGs had responded to the consultation, and there would be a response in the New Year. Claire Aitken confirmed that she had submitted the CX SSG consultation response.

George Jamieson noted that he had been disappointed with the Sellafield representative and there had been acceptance that the situation had not improved. It was unfortunate that everyone was not in the same camp.

The Chair presumed that the next SSG chairs and vice-chairs meeting would be online. David Wallace said a decision had not been made. Face-to-face would probably continue.

9. CHAPELCROSS PROJECT UPDATE

Helen Emberson presented the report.

In the previous year Dumfries & Galloway council had commissioned a development framework. At the time that had been published, Avison Young on behalf of the NDA had gone out to the market with an RFP process to understand the market interest. That process had concluded and reached a preferred development partner for 54 hectares of land at the north end of the site. On this occasion the NDA had agreed to a press release on the heads of terms. Helen Emberson introduced Max Anderson from GA Consultants, who wanted to present to the SSG at the next meeting.

Helen Emberson presented the press release. She explained that this multi-million-pound development with CX Power would generate hundreds of high-value jobs and attract skills and investment.

George Jamieson said it was important to manage expectations and have a credible pathway to developing the site and creating jobs. Helen Emberson confirmed that this was a major step forward and was credible, looking at the track record of CX Power. Sean Marshall noted that work was starting to happen, and he would welcome a presentation.

Max Anderson explained that GA Consultants was based in Annan, and the project was local to it. It had experience in energy and large infrastructure. Over the next 12 months it would be working with SOSE and Dumfries & Galloway Council to make the case. Sean Marshall queried the relationship with Global Mutual Properties. Max Anderson explained that CX Power was a combination of investors, GA Consultants and Global Mutual. GA Consultants was the delivery team, and Global Mutual would handle asset management and finance models.

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Following the CX Power update, Archie Dryburgh asked whether there would be a community benefit fund as part of the redevelopment of Chapelcross. Max responded that obviously at this time there will be community consultation and this will be brought up through that process.

SOSE UPDATE

Neil MacGregor reported that most of the works on the front part of the site were done, with the exception of some minor drainage work and energising the substation. The application was quite complex but was expected to be submitted soon. The Chair noted that there would be a lot of consultation ongoing and noted that the SSG spoke for the local community.

Peter Dreghorn asked whether this project was to do with hydrogen manufacture. The Chair said it was not. Peter Dreghorn asked whether there were any details about the hydrogen project. The Chair said that information would be coming out over the next year.

Willie McNairn noted the SUDS tank at the bottom of Oaklands, where a problem had arisen because of the works done on the road, with a puddle having developed. Neil MacGregor explained that there was still some work to do, and the delay was with Scottish Water. The drain on that side of the road would likely be replaced.

The Chair asked whether as an area committee there could be a presentation to elected members for the area. George Jamieson agreed this would be very sensible.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

11. PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public were present

Next Meeting date: Claire Aitken would circulate dates for future meetings with the minutes.

Next Meetings

26 August

4 November