

OFFICIAL



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
DUNGENESS SITE STAKEHOLDER GROUP (SSG)
HELD AT DUNGENESS B POWER STATION, ROMNEY MARSH, TN29 9PX
THURSDAY 17 JULY 2025**

Attendance/Apologies list

In attendance

Graham Finn
Cllr David Godfrey
Alastair Findlay
Ian Cuthbert
Cath Pritchard
Bill Hamilton
Jason Crook
Katharine Walker
Vanessa McKay
Gabriele Popp
Fiona Naylor
Claire Bruce
Gavin Lancaster
Rebecca Cavanagh
Adam Feacey
Cllr Tony Hills
Matthew Dent

Chair
Vice Chair
NDA (via MS Teams)
Dungeness A Site Director NRS
NRS
NRS
ONR Inspector, Dungeness B Site
ONR Inspector, Dungeness A Site
Environment Agency
Resident
Resident
Resident
Station Director, Dungeness B
EDF
Kent County Council
Folkestone & Hythe District Council
Minute Taker

Apologies

Miriam Allardice
Kezia White
Rod Lean
Cllr Alan Martin
Tudor Price
Cllr Bob Jones
Cllr Jean Jones
Kayleigh Ridley
John Mcnamara
Louise Barton
Javadi Mustafa
Cllr Peter Coe
Cllr Paul Redstone
Ken Obbard
Cllr Keith Glazier

Environment Agency
Environment Agency
Folkestone & Hythe District Council
Folkestone & Hythe District Council
Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce
Lydd Town Council
Lydd Town Council
NRS
NDA
Lydd Airport Action Group
EDF
New Romney Town Council
Local Community Liaison Council.
Natural England
East Sussex County Council

OFFICIAL

1. INTRODUCTION

The Chair opened the meeting at 10.02.

Gavin Lancaster provided the safety message.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were noted from Rod Lean, Cllr Alan Martin, Tudor Price, Cllr Bob Jones, Cllr Jean Jones, Kezia White, Miriam Allardice, Cllr Alan Martin, Kayleigh Ridley, John Mcnamara, Louise Barton, Javadi Mustafa, Cllr Peter Coe, Cllr Paul Redstone, Ken Obbard and Cllr Keith Glazier.

3. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

The Chair explained that every three years the Chair and Vice-Chair had to be reappointed. The Chair noted that he was happy to serve one more term.

There were no other nominations for Chair.

The SSG agreed to reappoint Graham Finn for another term as Chair.

Cllr David Godfrey had indicated he was happy to continue as Vice-Chair. The SSG agreed to reappoint Cllr David Godfrey for another term as Vice-Chair.

4. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Chair declared that he had formerly worked for EDF, ahead of retiring four years previously. Additionally, he was an independent advisor to the Sizewell C nuclear safety committee, and independent advisor to EDF Cyclife.

There were no other conflicts declared.

5. AGREEMENT OF CONSTITUTION

The Chair explained that the NDA had carried out a review of SSGs after 20 years of their existence, resulting in a document sent to SSG chairs outlining what SSGs should look like. The Chair had rewritten the Dungeness SSG constitution to reflect that. Fortunately there had not been much that needed to change.

The Chair outlined that one of the new additions to the constitution was the ability for people participate remotely. The NDA also felt that the SSG should approach the Marsh Academy, in order to have a representative from the local school. The SSG agreed to make this approach.

Action – Secretariat to approach Marsh Academy to ask them to become members of the SSG.

The Chair noted that the Romney Marsh Partnership was not included as a member of the SSG, and he proposed to invite it. The SSG agreed to this. **Action Secretariat to approach Romney Marsh Partnership to ask them to become member of the SSG.**

The Chair noted that Matthew Pardo was working on some additions he would like to make to the constitution. These comments would be circulated before going into the final version.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Chair invited comments on the minutes.

OFFICIAL

Gabriele Popp noted that she had been incorrectly credited with making a point she had not made under AOB.

Subject to the above amendment, the minutes were agreed as a true and fair representation of the meeting.

7. MATTERS ARISING

The SSG had no outstanding matters arising.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

The Chair reported that the NDA draft business plan 2025-2028 had been sent out to SSG members.

The Chair reported that the NDA public consultation on Strategy 5 had been sent out. Comments were invited, and SSG members and members of the public could make them. Alternatively, comments could be submitted to the Chair to make on behalf of the SSG.

Claire Bruce asked whether Strategy 5 also mentioned the local communities. The Chair said it did not. It was an NDA government strategy document and concerned government-level strategy for everything nuclear in the UK. Cllr Tony Hills asked whether Strategy 5 included decommissioning of nuclear submarines. Ian Cuthbert explained that it did not, but it did include the military site Vulcan next to Dounreay. Once the MoD had finished with it, NRS would cover decommissioning.

9. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair reported that he and Cllr David Godfrey had met at Dungeness A with Ian Cuthbert and Lawrie Haines to discuss the impact of the government spending review.

The Chair and Cllr David Godfrey had also attended a meeting of the executive of NRS and NDA in Manchester. This had included an update on the government spending review, Sellafield operations and the geological disposal facility. In the previous year three sites had been under evaluation for a possible geological disposal facility, this was now down to two sites, both of which in Cumbria.

The previous week the Chair had attended a briefing on NDA strategy 5.

At the last SSG meeting there had been some money left over from the previous financial year. The funds had ended up being used, with some work in the car park at the lifeboat station. The current year had been quiet in terms of funding requests, with one request approved for a disabled sailing club in Rye harbour.

10. DUNGENESS A SITE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ian Cuthbert presented his report.

A group of Dungeness A staff had spent time clearing up the Romney Marsh community hub, this is part of the neighbourly initiative.

This was the third year of the work experience, and there had been so many applicants that interviews had had to be conducted. Students were with the site for a week, and at the end of that week presented to Ian Cuthbert and his leadership team. The students had done a good job. Eight apprentices had also been taken on and would be starting in August. Ian Cuthbert was intending to take on an additional five apprentices to do health physics in February, if he could secure the funding, and possibly another five in August 2026.

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

September would mark 60 years of reactor 1 coming online. The 60th anniversary would be marked by a beach clean-up.

An enforcement letter had been received earlier in the year in relation to a contractor. The contractor had been fully engaged with the ONR, and a lot of what had been raised had been sorted out on the same day. All actions had now been closed. Another enforcement letter had been received in the current week, in relation to a building which had originally been erected as temporary and did not now comply with fire safety regulations. Upgrades to this building would be completed by October at the latest.

Dungeness A had applied for a variation to their radioactive substances permit with the Environment Agency, to remove a gaseous discharge route, with the removal of a disused lab which was in the way of decommissioning and removing the boiler. At the same time a new gaseous discharge route was being added for a new building. Additionally there was a lot of groundwater on site, which currently goes through the active effluent treatment plant, to be pumped out to sea. This was the only current use of the treatment plant, and a request to vary the Environment Agency water discharge activity permit will be made to take that groundwater down surface drains.

Indication from the government was that the boiler project would go ahead. Three tenders had been received and were being reviewed. In the meantime preparatory work was ongoing. Turbine hall infill had been completed. The new stores building and the contents of the current stores building was in the process of being transferred. As part of the boiler project 11 buildings around the site had been demolished.

A project had been started about skip characterisation. Samples were being taken, and the first of the skips had been characterised. This project would run for another 12 months.

The UK government, through DESNZ, had informed NRS of its budget for the next four years. Ian Cuthbert anticipated the Dungeness A funding level to remain stable over the next four years, and it was one of the sites for continuous decommissioning.

Fiona Naylor queried what health physics was. Ian Cuthbert explained that it was monitoring for contamination. Claire Bruce asked how to get the word out locally about apprenticeship opportunities. Ian Cuthbert would have Dungeness A HR get in touch with Claire Bruce.

Cllr David Godfrey noted the enforcement letter in relation to a structure under fire regulations and queried whether regulations had changed. Ian Cuthbert explained that the original building had been erected in 2017 with the intention for it to stand for around a year. It was still in use and required a better fire escape as the building was expected to be used for at least another four years. The building had been shut down and emptied, and around five months was needed for the works.

11. DUNGENESS B SITE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Gavin Lancaster presented his report.

On safety, a lot of training was continuing to ensure that safety was embedded in the team. A number of safety cases had been delivered early, and there was a lot of support within the EDF fleet. A further nine operators had been recruited who had been successfully trained. Gavin Lancaster was very proud of the training programme.

An Environment Agency radioactive waste processing inspection had taken place which had been positive. There had also been a Lloyd's quality assurance inspection, for which there had been no nonconformities. There had also been a review regarding organisational capability. There had been a minor loss of fluorinated gasses from on site. This had been reported to the Environment Agency.

OFFICIAL

A strategic anchoring had been undertaken looking at what the power station needed to do in the next few years in readiness for transfer to NRS, particularly around permitting. Communications to staff were being prepared for rollout.

Work had been taking place to drive sustainability, including reducing use of natural resources, such as water. The reactors no longer needed to be warmed up to remove fuel, which meant the gas circulators did not need to be run.

Cold defueling would soon be starting, continuing all the way up to 2029. 136 channels of fuel needed to be removed in the current year. This had been late starting.

The formal strategy for the shingle bank had been worked through, with plans for the bank to be retained. A planning application had also been made for around £20 million investment in the new administration facilities. Some of the car parking facilities were being relocated in preparation.

Fiona Naylor asked whether the new administration building was going to be where the electric car charging facilities were. Gavin Lancaster confirmed that it was. Minimising the environmental impact required reusing land already built on. Fiona Naylor queried what the life of the building would be. Gavin Lancaster explained that the current plan was to go into a care and maintenance strategy up 2119.

Cllr Tony Hills noted that at the shingle bank, the shingle below was quite small and not very effective in blocking wave energy. When the shingle was replaced, it should be larger shingle. Gavin Lancaster explained there was a 15-year planning consent at a volume of 45,000m³/p.a.

12. ONR REPORT FOR DUNGENESS A

Katharine Walker presented her report and noted that it was her first SSG.

During the period there had been an inspection against requirements set out in the ionising radiation regulation. This had been rated green. Inspections had also been undertaken against the management of health and safety at work regulations. The management regulations inspection had been rated green, and the construction design and management intervention rated amber due to inconsistent application of standards for managing risk to workers, managed by a contractor.

An inspection had also identified shortfalls in fire safety arrangements in the temporary building already mentioned. Action was being taken by Dungeness A to address the shortfalls.

Katharine Walker had undertaken a demonstration of emergency arrangements at the site in the previous month, which had been rated green.

13. ONR REPORT FOR DUNGENESS B

Jason Crook presented his report.

Inspections over the period had included management of nuclear safety changes at the plant and control of asbestos both of which had been found to be appropriately managed.

In April the station delivered its combined security and safety demonstration exercise which was a challenging and demanding scenario. ONR judged that the station demonstrated that it could respond satisfactorily to a safety and security event.

In addition, during the period ONR carried out a LC36 organisational capability inspection looking at the capability and capacity of the site to deliver its mission. ONR found that DNB was appropriately managing its organisational capability with the site continuing to evolve its arrangements and in some areas demonstrating fleetwide good practices.

One of the station's and ONR's focuses has been ensuring that personnel on site understand and are committed to the delivery of the important defueling mission the station is tasked with.

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

As such an important element is the people strategy that the station had developed and DNB has been putting a lot of effort into delivering. An ONR leadership and management for safety specialist inspector had attended site to provide a specialist assessment of the progress made with deliver of the people plan. ONR concluded that DNB's people strategy was being effective and that and tangible and sustained improvements were evident.

At the previous meeting Jason Crook had provided information on the formal investigation into the vending machine incident. This investigation was continuing and as such further comment could be made at this time. Gavin Lancaster noted that a lot of businesses attended the site, and the incident had made EDF challenge how those businesses were controlled.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE FOR DUNGENESS A AND DUNGENESS B

Vanessa McKay presented her report. She noted that Miriam Allardice and Kezia White were unable to attend. The report covered from January to May, but there had been some updates from May and July.

At Dungeness A, a radioactive gaseous discharges inspection had been conducted in February, for which no non-compliance had been found. Engagement has continued on aqueous waste management. With the water discharge activity permit variation request coming in, the Environment Agency would be reviewing the reactor voids water best available techniques document.

At Dungeness B there had also been a gaseous monitoring inspection carried out. No non-compliances had been identified.

In September 2024, Dungeness A had self-identified an issue with the formal submission of their techniques document. The Environment Agency had reviewed Dungeness A's investigation, and had raised three non-compliances, and had provided advice and guidance. There were a number of actions with the site and we will monitor progress of completion.

In February Dungeness A had identified issues with ventilation inspections, identifying two small holes in their reactor blowdown stack discharge route, and a crack in the Magnox dissolution plant area. The site had carried out initial investigations, and NRS identified there were no environmental impacts. The Environment Agency report would be concluded shortly. There had been an event in May 2025 relating to the current wet waste transfer facility. Again, the site had concluded there had been no environmental impact and the report was currently being concluded. In October 2022 there had been an event at Dungeness A relating to the Magnox dissolution plant, and an active drains leak. The site had concluded all actions for this, and the matter had been closed out.

The Environment Agency had received the radioactive substances permit variation for the removal of the laboratory stack and the new wet waste transfer facility stack for Dungeness A. This was available on the Environment Agency website for comment.

Both sites had submitted their aqueous and gaseous discharge returns, and no issues had been identified. Issues had been identified with regard to Dungeness A's environmental monitoring returns and historical missing data. Recommendations have been provided to the DNA and we will monitor progress of completion. No issues were identified for Dungeness B's environmental monitoring returns.

Cllr Tony Hills noted that two of the bays had recommended no bathing due to water quality. He was concerned about effluent discharge coming round from the sites in terms of effluent which was not UV treated. Vanessa McKay would take this away to speak to her colleagues.

ACTION: Vanessa McKay to consult with colleagues regarding possible effluent discharge.

15. NRS CORPORATE UPDATE

Bill Hamilton presented his report.

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

The government spending review had been agreed. Over the five years, £2.72 billion had been allocated to NRS, equating to £549 million per year, which was in line with current funding. Inflation would reduce the value, so there would need to be efficiencies, but this was more positive than initial rumours had suggested.

There was a huge level of ignorance around what happened at Dungeness, despite huge passion for the area. NRS had been carrying out 'deep dives' into local communities, with one about to start in Dungeness. This consisted of a mobile exhibition which would target areas of high footfall to inform people about what was happening at Dungeness A, and that Dungeness B would be coming over as well and engage about people's concerns. A polling company had also been engaged to obtain feedback, and to carry out focus groups, which would include the SSG.

Fiona Naylor asked what references to Dungeness referred to. Bill Hamilton explained he meant the site, rather than the community. It would incorporate up to a 20/30-minute drive from the site, starting closest to the site and working outwards. Cllr Tony Hills noted that the big concern locally was around jobs. Until defueling was completed, there would be jobs provided in the area.

16. NDA PRESENTATION

Alastair Findlay presented his report.

The Energy Act required the NDA to publish a strategy every five years. This was due in 2026, so the NDA were consulting on the strategy currently. One of the focuses for the next five years was the retrieval and consolidation of waste, as well as proportionality between actions and risk. The consultation included nine questions across a range of topics.

The Chair noted that SSG members could send individual responses to the consultation, or feed comments to him for a collated SSG response. Alastair Findlay noted that responses had to be received by 29 September.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair thanked those present for attending and closed the meeting at 11.42

Next Meeting date: Thursday 23 October 2025