



## **Update for Irish Local Authorities**

This Briefing updates members and officers of local authorities in Ireland about the All Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities conference in Drogheda and key points from the Forum business meeting that followed.

### **Conference calls for study of hidden Chernobyl health impacts upon Ireland**

John Urquhart, a leading health statistician, reported to the All Ireland Forum conference hosted by Drogheda Borough Council on 30 September, that an analysis of health areas in England and Wales showed a significant increase in neonatal deaths and genetic defects in those areas affected by heavy rainfall during May 1986 – days after the Chernobyl disaster. Urquhart argued that radioactivity from Chernobyl was washed out of the clouds by heavy rain over England and Wales and caused these increases. He identified 210 excess neonatal deaths in the rain-affected areas and 93% of this excess could be accounted for by congenital causes. Urquhart urged Irish authorities to undertake a similar study as he expected similar Chernobyl impacts.

### **Implications for Ireland of a new UK nuclear programme**

At the same conference speakers updated delegates on developments at Sellafield, Wylfa and Hunterston – 3 nuclear sites across the Irish Sea on the UK's west coast. At each site campaigns were developing to build new nuclear stations. Speakers appealed to conference delegates to work with their NFLA colleagues in the UK to resist these proposals. The Conference carried the resolution annexed.

The conference closed with a detailed presentation on the way forward for Ireland by developing renewable energy sources. The All Ireland Forum business meeting that followed the conference agreed to investigate the development of an action plan for local authorities to help them cut their carbon emissions.

### **Membership update**

The Forum had increased to eleven councils. Meath County Council and Roscommon County Council had membership under consideration. An enquiry by Leitrim County Council would be followed up.

### **Next meeting**

The next All Ireland NFLA Forum business meeting and Annual General Meeting will be hosted by Newry & Mourne District Council in the Spring of 2007

#### **Joining the All Ireland Forum**

The All Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities Forum welcomes new member local authorities in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. To become a member of the forum a local authority will need to pass a motion of affiliation and pay the appropriate subscription fee. It is recommended that the motion of affiliation is referred to the council by the Environment Strategic Policy Committee or other relevant committee with cross-party support.



**Statement from the All Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities Conference  
Drogheda, 30 September 2006**

**Meeting our Energy Needs without Nuclear Power**

We, the local authority participants in the above conference:

- note the body of evidence assembled in both Ireland and the UK showing that future energy needs in both countries can be met by secure and sustainable renewable energy sources combined with more efficient energy use and energy saving;
- recognise that both Ireland and the UK enjoy substantial resources for the generation of renewable electricity. The Atlantic ocean provides the opportunity to harness the power of offshore winds, marine currents, and tidal flows, particularly on the north and west coasts of Ireland and the UK;
- believe that climate change is the most urgent environmental issue to confront the international community and recognise immediate and substantial investment in renewable generating capacity and further energy conservation measures will provide faster and deeper cuts in CO2 emissions than investment in new nuclear build;
- remain committed, as local authorities, to promoting energy efficiency, renewable and decentralised energy by the use of public procurement and local planning policies both within our own buildings and other buildings within our boundaries;
- remain concerned that the potential for nuclear accidents or incidents with transboundary impacts, causing serious long term damage to the environment and threatening the health, safety and livelihoods of very large populations, is ever present;
- consider nuclear sites on the west coast of Britain at Hinkley Point, Oldbury, Wylfa, Heysham, Sellafield, Chapelcross and Hunterston are of particular concern to Irish local authorities;
- remain concerned by the pollution of the Irish Sea through past and present nuclear waste discharges and by the medium term threat of coastal erosion breaching the Low Level Waste Repository at Drigg near Sellafield. We again call for an end to the marine discharge of radioactive wastes and for solid wastes at Drigg to be relocated inland.
- call on all local authorities in Ireland to contest the need for new nuclear generating capacity by objecting to the proposed 'statement of need' contained in the UK Department of Trade and Industry consultation on the policy framework for new nuclear stations.
- agree that this statement be circulated to all local authorities in Ireland under covering letter urging a) that they lodge an objection to new nuclear build with the UK Department of Trade and Industry, and b) that they consider membership of the All Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities Forum.

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