



Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee

information

MEDIA ADVISORY – for immediate release, 8th August 2011

NFLA shows leading role English Councils are playing in leading the local energy revolution without recourse to new nuclear build

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) publishes today a detailed briefing on energy strategy in England and how the long-held NFLA policy of a wide renewable energy mix, a concerted energy efficiency programme and increased efforts to develop local microgeneration projects can provide more than adequate levels of electricity without recourse to new nuclear build.

The NFLA Policy Briefing also shows the highly positive role English Councils can, and are, playing in developing such policies and recommends the UK Government harnesses and supports these imaginative projects (1). The briefing is the second of four briefings considering the future energy security needs of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The Scottish briefing was published in July 2010 and many of its points were reiterated in the influential Garrard Hassan 'Power of Scotland Secured' report, which showed how Scotland can become a world leader in renewable technologies (2). NFLA Policy Briefings on Irish and Welsh energy policy will be published within the next couple of months.

The NFLA briefing on English policy considers the increasing problem of fuel poverty and the need for radical action across all aspects of energy policy. It urges the UK Government to move away from its centralised energy model, which is so heavily reliant on new nuclear power production, to a more sustainable model where, in partnership with local government and smaller local communities, England's energy needs, future energy security and the mitigation of climate change can be achieved.

The briefing notes that:

- There is a pressing need to put in place a programme to refurbish England's housing stock with up-to-date energy efficiency / demand management measures;
- Decarbonisation of the power sector by 2030 should be undertaken in the most environmentally sustainable way, without recourse to environmentally hazardous new nuclear power;
- With improved interconnection infrastructure between the European energy grids, it is technically feasible for England to receive the overwhelming majority of its electricity from renewable sources without endangering the reliability of the electricity system;
- Wave and tidal power could provide up to 20% of the country's electricity production;
- As noted by the National Grid, 15% of the UK's electricity could come from microgeneration by 2020;
- An industrial strategy is required for the English regions to take advantage of the potential huge jobs bonanza in renewables, energy efficiency and microgeneration.

Local authorities, despite the large cuts to their budgets, are still providing leadership to develop this alternative energy revolution and the briefing gives a large number of excellent examples in the likes of Manchester, Hull, Leeds, Rotherham and Oxford.

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NFLA UK and Ireland Chair Bailie George Regan says:

“This briefing outlines what the NFLA has consistently said for a number of years – that England and the wider UK and Ireland can, with the sufficient political will, develop a local energy revolution involving renewables, energy efficiency and microgeneration. I urge the Government to consider it seriously. We will be sending it to English Councils to show the importance of being involved proactively in national energy policy. England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland would all benefit from such a sustainable energy policy, and we challenge Councils and Governments to be as imaginative as the ideas outlined in the briefing.”

NFLA English Forum Chair, and Leeds City Councillor, Ralph Pryke adds:

“The Councillors that attend the NFLA come from across the political spectrum but we are united in the belief that there is a viable alternative to new nuclear build. I am delighted this briefing shows the positive ways English Councils can be part of this local energy revolution. I hope the Government can see the benefits of this valuable partnership and looks to build upon it.”

Ends

For interviews contact Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary on 07771 930196 or Pete Roche, NFLA Policy Advisor on 0131 444 1445.

Notes for editors:

- (1) The NFLA Policy Briefing on English energy policy is attached with this media release.
- (2) The NFLA Policy Briefing of July 2010 on Scottish energy policy is also attached with this media release. An excellent summary of the Garrard Hassan ‘Power of Scotland Secured’ report can be found at <http://www.foe-scotland.org.uk/power-explained>.

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