



Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee

information

NFLA Media release - for immediate release, 8th September 2014

As groaning nuclear decommissioning budget continues to balloon, NFLA calls on all parties to get a grip of costs and to abandon new nuclear build

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) is sadly unsurprised at figures showing another £6 billion added to the UK's long-term bill with decommissioning its 60 year old nuclear legacy.

The entire bill for dealing with the UK's nuclear decommissioning projects has now grown from a £63.8 billion estimate in 2011-12 to £69.8 billion in 2012-13, with the expectation it will continue to significantly rise in the next few years, according to the independent Office for Budget Responsibility, who oversee the UK's public finances. (1)

The main reason for the £6 billion increase is the ongoing problems in identifying the decommissioning and clean-up issues within the Sellafield site, where over 1,000 buildings will eventually need to be decommissioned. The Sellafield site has been shown in reports of the National Audit Office, KPMG and the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee to continue to be struggling with the massive challenges of decommissioning. NFLA agrees with the concerns made by trade unions on the site and by the Shadow Treasury Secretary Chris Leslie that much of this comes out of the confused management of the Sellafield site owners NMP, and it remains puzzled as to why the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) decided to renew their contract for managing the site. (2)

The NFLA remains astonished that billions of pounds more of public money may be spent on building a reprocessing plant on the Sellafield site for the world's largest stockpile of weapons-usable plutonium, and more again with the potential construction of one of the largest nuclear power plants ever proposed at the 'Moorside' development close to the Sellafield site.

The NFLA awaits the decision from the European Commission on the legality of the UK Government's proposed deal with EDF to provide billions of pounds of public money to fund new nuclear power plants at Hinkley Point. NFLA implores the Commission to reject the deal. (3)

This is at a time when four nuclear reactors are currently out of action for at least 4 months, and a report by Price Waterhouse Coopers calculates a 34% increase in renewable energy generation. (4)

The NFLA calls on the NDA and the nuclear industry to fully get to grips with the nuclear legacy. Billions more of public money should not be spent on new nuclear generating facilities, but rather be diverted to continue to build on a highly successful renewable energy revolution, local authority-led energy efficiency programmes and the rapidly increasing popularity of microgeneration schemes. Reform of the electricity market should facilitate this, not favouring lumbering nuclear utilities who have no real concept of value for money.

NFLA Chair, Councillor Mark Hackett said:

"I am not surprised at the continuing evidence of ever increasing decommissioning costs with the UK's nuclear legacy. In my time as NFLA Chair I have read with depressing regularity many examples of the wasting of billions of pounds of public money on such projects. What other industry would get away with annual costs rising by £6 billion? In this age of austerity, nuclear power remains the one part of public expenditure that is 'cuts proof'. So I call on the Government to abandon the nuclear new build programme, to get a grip on the expenditure of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and the nuclear industry and to realize that it is in renewable energy that our future energy security lies."

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES



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For more information please contact Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary on 0161 234 3244.

Notes for editors:

- (1) Office for Budget Responsibility, 'Fiscal sustainability report 2014'
<http://cdn.budgetresponsibility.org.uk/41298-OBR-accessible.pdf>
- (2) Independent on Sunday, 7th September 2014
<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/sellafield-nuclear-cleanup-bill-will-soar-by-billions-9716610.html>
- (3) NFLA New Nuclear Monitor 34 – submission to the European Commission on proposed state aid bid for new nuclear reactors at Hinkley Point, March 2014
http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/nuclearmonitor/NFLA_New_Nuclear_Monitor_No34.pdf
- (4) Financial Times 7th September 2014
<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/6ca7daae-34de-11e4-ba5d-00144feabdc0.html>

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