



Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee

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NFLA Media release - for immediate release, 12th October 2015

NFLA Welsh Forum members resolve to oppose Hinkley C, cuts to renewable energy, Trident replacement and raise concern on nuclear emergency planning risks

At the Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) Welsh Forum meeting in Cardiff City Hall last Friday, members present heard from expert speakers about progress over Hinkley Point C, renewable energy subsidy cuts, Trident replacement and concerns over post-Fukushima UK nuclear emergency planning. (1) It was resolved to issue a media statement outlining their resolved concerns. (2)

Members heard from Roy Pumfrey of the group 'Stop Hinkley', who outlined the many reasons why the proposed new nuclear reactor planned for Hinkley Point, Somerset, just 15 miles from the south Wales coast, was in jeopardy. This is due a combination of reasons including its £24.5 billion projected cost and associated safety and waste concerns. Members agreed that they believe Hinkley Point C should not go ahead due to the large financial cost to the taxpayer, the length of time it will take to build when the urgency of climate change grows, and the safety faults found in similar reactors being built in Finland, France and China. Members were also concerned that the huge public finance guarantees being offered to EDF and Chinese nuclear utilities would hinder the growth of the sustainable renewable energy sector.

Members also heard from David Clubb of Renewable Energy Cymru, who outlined the prospects for tidal energy and other forms of renewable energy in Wales. He outlined the urgent concerns of the renewable energy sector following announcements of large cuts to subsidies by the UK Government for solar and wind energy, and question marks over whether financial guarantees would be provided to develop tidal lagoons in Swansea (and eventually in Cardiff Bay and Newport). Members resolved that they were opposed to cuts to renewable energy subsidies and called on the Welsh Government to challenge the UK Government over such harmful policies to this growing industry.

Members heard from CND General Secretary Kate Hudson of changes within the political debate over the proposed replacement of the UK's Trident nuclear weapons programme. She noted that an expected Parliamentary debate over the 'Main Gate' decision permitting full replacement of four Trident submarines was expected imminently and a wide campaign to oppose this was being implemented. Members agreed that they fully opposed Trident replacement because of its £100 billion lifetime cost and its skewing of the conventional military budget. They felt that the UK should live up to its multilateral treaty commitments for nuclear disarmament and support the 'humanitarian pledge' of over 115 states calling for a renewed multilateral disarmament commitment at the United Nations.

Finally, members heard from the NFLA Secretary of its report on post-Fukushima nuclear emergency planning in the UK and Europe. The presentation raised concerns over proposed changes to emergency plans around the size and flexibility of evacuations after a major incident. Concerns were also raised over the problems and issues related to extending an emergency evacuation – with 12 Welsh Councils being situated within 50 miles of Hinkley Point and 6 Welsh Councils being situated within 50 miles of Wylfa – and a lack of openness and transparency in talking to such communities on these matters. Members resolved to raise these concerns within their own Councils and with the Welsh Government to improve local nuclear emergency plans for responding to an incident at Hinkley Point or Wylfa. Members felt there was a need as well to increase funding in emergency planning, where all emergency services and local authorities have had to trim budgets back significantly in recent years.

NFLA Welsh Forum Co-Chair Councillor Ernie Galsworthy said:

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“The NFLA Welsh Forum heard four expert presentations on various aspects of concern with UK nuclear policy. I fully support the resolution of Welsh councillors present to call for significant support for the renewables industry, say no to Hinkley C new nuclear build or Trident replacement and to improve the Welsh and UK nuclear emergency planning regime. I will be writing to Welsh Councils, Welsh Government and the UK Government to reiterate these concerns”.

NFLA Welsh Forum Co-Chair Councillor Ed Bridges added:

“Amidst the range of concerns noted in this excellent seminar, the cuts to renewable energy alarm me most. Many excellent renewable energy companies around Wales are under great threat, along with the thousands of jobs that rely on central financial support. In addition, local authority energy policies may be damaged by such changes. Support for new nuclear may also damage the great benefits that tidal energy and offshore wind can bring in realising sufficient low carbon energy is produced in a timely fashion. With the malign effects of climate change increasing year on year, I believe only a wide renewable energy mix, energy efficiency and microgeneration can provide a sustainable, low carbon energy strategy for Wales, increasing energy security and reducing the scourge of fuel poverty”.

Ends

For more information please contact Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary on 0161 234 3244 or 07771 930196.

Notes for editors:

- (1) NFLA Welsh Forum Seminar, 9th October, Cardiff City Hall
New developments in nuclear and energy policy in Wales – an update for Councils
FINAL PROGRAMME:
 - 10.00am **Registration**
 - 10.30am **Welcomes:** Councillor Sue Lent, Deputy Leader of Cardiff City Council and Councillor Ed Bridges, NFLA Welsh Forum.
 - 10.35am Prospects and risks from developing a new nuclear reactor at Hinkley Point – Roy Pumfrey, Stop Hinkley campaign.
 - 11.00am Fukushima – a game changer for UK nuclear emergency planning - Sean Morris, National Secretary, Nuclear Free Local Authorities.
 - 11.25am Tidal power in Wales: could it be a real game changer for Welsh energy policy? David Clubb, Renewable Energy Cymru.
 - 11.50am Is it time to Rethink Trident and refocus UK defence policy? – Kate Hudson, General Secretary, CND.
 - 12.15pm Panel discussion chaired by Councillor Ernie Galsworthy, NFLA Welsh Forum Co-Chair.
 - 1.00pm **Conclusion.**
- (2) The Councillors that were at the meeting that resolved to raise these issues with their own Councils, Welsh Government and UK Government included NFLA representative Councillors Sue Lent and Ed Bridges from Cardiff City Council, Councillor Ernie Galsworthy from Merthyr Tydfil County Council, Councillors Jessica Powell and Stuart Ashley from Torfaen Council, Councillors Christine Forehead and Sean Morgan from Caerphilly County Council and NFLA individual members Councillor Kevin Jones from Flintshire County Council, Councillor Alun Williams from Ceredigion County Council and Councillor Chris Williams from the Vale of Glamorgan County Council.
- (3) NFLA Policy Briefing 133 on post Fukushima UK nuclear emergency planning, 29th June 2015, [http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A247_\(NB133\)_Fukushima_Nuclear_EP_update.pdf](http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A247_(NB133)_Fukushima_Nuclear_EP_update.pdf)