



information

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Government Energy Policy Endangers Key Radioactive Waste Recommendations

Nuclear Free Local Authorities (1) today warned that Government support for new nuclear stations will jeopardise the implementation of key recommendations (2) for dealing with the 50 year legacy of higher level solid radioactive waste in the UK.

Extensive consultation over three years by the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM) has produced policy recommendations submitted to Government today. These recommendations urge safe and secure interim waste storage to allow time for geological disposal options and siting to be investigated. The recommendations enjoy broad public support but Nuclear Free Local Authorities believe this valuable work will be placed at risk by Government support for a new nuclear programme.

"Radioactive waste was high amongst the list of concerns that led most people to reject nuclear power during the Government's energy policy consultation earlier this year " said Stewart Kemp, Secretary to the Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee. "However, these concerns were disregarded and the Government decided in favour of nuclear power. The decision is bound to impact on the implementation of CoRWM's recommendations.

"Government is expected to accept CoRWM's recommendations and the search will soon begin for one or more locations to manage radioactive waste in the long term, but any community asked to take such wastes will want to know the volumes and types of material involved. The Government's commitment to a new nuclear programme, with decades of operational risks and uncertainties, means it is impossible to quantify what, at the end of the day, would need to be cleaned up and safely managed."

END

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Notes

1) Nuclear Free Local Authorities is a growing network of councils across, England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and Ireland campaigning to reduce nuclear hazards and increase public and environmental protection. For more information visit www.nuclearpolicy.info

2) Final recommendations of the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management can be found at: www.corwm.org.uk



THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES