

# *Nuclear Free Local Authorities* **briefing**



Date: 25<sup>h</sup> October 2013

No.116

**Subject: Summary of NFLA Steering Committee, Manchester Town Hall, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2013**

## **1. Introduction**

The NFLA Steering Committee was opened by the NFLA Chair, Councillor Hackett, who welcomed all to Manchester Town Hall.

The NFLA Steering Committee held a minute's silence in memory of its former Chair, Councillor Mike Rumney of Fife Council, and the former Glasgow NFLA Scotland ex-officio representative, Councillor Allison Hunter, who both sadly died in July.

## **2. National NFLA Forum meetings**

The NFLA Secretary provided a report of the work of the NFLA Forums:

### **NFLA Scotland Forum –**

The NFLA Scotland Forum held a business meeting in the Council Offices, Western Isles, Stornoway on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August. The meeting involved a long discussion on Dalgety Bay and other former MOD sites which may contain radioactive material contamination. There was also discussion about the next stage of the MOD's submarine dismantling process and seeking potential sites for the storage of intermediate level radioactive waste. The meeting agreed that the NFLA Secretariat should develop a Policy Briefing on both matters. The NFLA Scotland Policy Advisor's extensive report on renewable energy and climate change was also considered and found to be both highly informative and useful. It was agreed by members to convert this report into a NFLA Policy Briefing and it can be found on the NFLA website.

The business meeting also included two useful and informative presentations from Tor Justad of the newly formed community pressure group Highland Against Nuclear Transport (HANT) and Rachel Thompson of the Campaign Against Depleted Uranium (CADU) on the work of both groups. The Forum agreed to support both campaigns and co-operate further on relevant issues of mutual interest.

NFLA Scotland also held a joint seminar, which was opened out to all NFLA members, considering the concerns of a number of groups over the safety of MOD nuclear weapon convoys and the wider issues of the civil and defence nuclear emergency planning regime. This very well attended seminar held in Glasgow on the 20<sup>th</sup> September included presentations by the freelance journalist Rob Edwards, Peter Burt from the Nuclear Information Service, Jane Tallents from Nukewatch and the NFLA Secretary. A brief report on this seminar is outlined later in this briefing.

The Forum also warmly welcomed Midlothian Council, who have decided to rejoin the NFLA.

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**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES**

### **NFLA All Ireland Forum –**

The NFLA All Ireland Forum is holding its autumn seminar in Galway City Hall on 11<sup>th</sup> October. This is the first NFLA All Ireland meeting on the west coast of Ireland. The seminar is focusing on two issues – the grid capacity, planning and political issues in stepping up renewable energy in Ireland; and the level of radiation discharge on the west coast of Ireland. Confirmed speakers include former Councillor, TD and Senator Dan Boyle and independent marine pollution consultant Tim Deere-Jones. The NFLA Secretary will also provide an overview to members of the UK new build debate and its European dimension. The All Ireland Co-Chair Councillor Mark Dearey recently took part in an Eirgrid event on the future direction of Irish energy policy.

### **NFLA English Forum –**

The joint NFLA English Forum / Steering Committee seminar in Manchester Town Hall on the 28<sup>th</sup> June was well attended and informative. The NuLEAF Secretary Stewart Kemp provided a useful overview of the future direction of radioactive waste management policy following Cumbria County Council's decision not to go forward with finding a site for an underground waste repository. There was particularly lengthy discussion raised by the presentation of Friends of the Earth Senior Energy Campaigner Tony Bosworth on the issues facing Councils in reference to developing shale gas extraction and local planning policy. There was also significant interest in the presentation by the NFLA Secretary considering a number of recent developments linked to both safety in the transportation of nuclear materials and wider issues around contaminated scrap metal. These presentations have been placed on the NFLA website.

The NFLA Secretary is also continuing to research the issues raised in his presentation in order to develop a wider seminar, which will be hosted in Rotherham Town Hall on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November.

### **NFLA Welsh Forum / NFLA AGM 2013 –**

The next NFLA Welsh Forum seminar will be part of the 2013 UK & Ireland NFLA Annual General Meeting which will be held in Cardiff County Hall on the 6<sup>th</sup> December. The afternoon seminar, which will follow the NFLA Steering Committee and AGM, will consider issues around nuclear security, nuclear proliferation, nuclear weapons and nuclear new build. Confirmed speakers for the seminar are Paul Flynn MP, Dr Rebecca Johnson and Dr David Lowry. This seminar will be made available to all NFLA members, non members and relevant NGOs.

***Agreed: To note the report. To encourage NFLA members to attend their relevant Forum seminars and the 2013 NFLA AGM.***

### **3. Membership recruitment and administration issues**

The NFLA Steering Committee welcomed Midlothian Council's decision to affiliate to the NFLA. They are the fourth new NFLA member in the past 18 months.

The NFLA Secretary has now relocated to work in newly refurbished offices in Manchester Town Hall Extension as part of the City Policy Team.

***Agreed: To note the report. To welcome Midlothian Council as the NFLA's newest member.***

### **4. Nuclear new build**

The NFLA Secretary provided an update on a wide range of issues around the proposed development of new nuclear power stations in England and Wales.

#### ***Developments relating to a new nuclear reactor at Hinkley Point –***

Since the last meeting, there had still been no formal agreement between the UK Government and EDF over the long-term 'strike price' and other financial guarantees in the negotiations to build a new nuclear reactor at Hinkley Point. EDF have said it is unlikely a final investment decision will be formally agreed until the end of the year. Media reports suggested EDF are looking for a strike price of £93TWh, but the Government will not go above £90TWh. The other key factor in this decision will be if EDF can find an investment partner. Media speculation suggests advanced talks are in place with Chinese nuclear companies to take a 49% stake in the project. Government Ministers remain 'confident' an agreement will be signed imminently.

Should an agreement be struck, one of the most significant hurdles remaining for new nuclear build would be for the UK Government to get approval from the European Commission over permitting it is a legal form of state aid. A leaked Commission document suggested it would positively support such an initiative, but the Commission has publicly stated it has not made any decision yet. A meeting on this matter is being held in Brussels on the 8<sup>th</sup> October. The NFLA Secretariat has been liaising closely with Vienna City Council. Vienna is leading an initiative, through the new Cities for a Nuclear Free Europe Network; to lobby MEPs, national Government and the European Commissioners on this matter.

Two legal challenges of the Hinkley C project will be considered by the High Court in early December. The Irish National Trust / An Taisce have submitted a review of the Energy Minister Ed Davey's planning approval decision for Hinkley C. An Taisce argue that the UK Government should have formally consulted the Irish Government over this decision, as they argue this is a condition of pre-application environmental consultations. Greenpeace UK have also tabled a judicial challenge relating to the lack of a long-term policy for storing radioactive waste from Hinkley C, now that Cumbria County Council has abandoned the process for finding a site for a deep-waste repository.

#### ***New consortium at Sellafield Moorside?***

Media reports have suggested that Westinghouse, which is owned by the Japanese utility Toshiba, is considering buying part or all of Iberdrola's share in the 'NuGen' consortium looking to develop a new nuclear reactor close to the Sellafield site. The decision by Hitachi to buy the proposed sites for new build at Wylfa and Oldbury, and take forward its own design, leaves Westinghouse / Toshiba with no proposed new site to take up its AP-1000 design in the UK. However, it should be noted that separate media reports quoted by Reuters suggest the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) and the Government are considering auctioning off the land it has awarded to the NuGen consortium close to Sellafield to try and reinvigorate interest in the project. Though the NuGen consortium was set up in 2009 to move forward new nuclear build at Sellafield, there appears to be much less progress with it than with other new nuclear projects.

#### ***Developments at Wylfa and Oldbury -***

The Office for Nuclear Regulation are progressing the initial phase for assessing Hitachi's UK Advanced Boiling Water Reactor (ABWR) design under the Generic Design Assessment (GDA) process. The ONR are expecting to receive detailed documentation from Hitachi imminently and will discuss with the company timescales and deadlines for the project shortly. EDF's EPR design took four years to get outline approval from the ONR and Environment Agency. With Hitachi's design already being used in China it may undertake this assessment slightly earlier, though it is likely that approval would not be finally given until 2017 – 2018.

#### ***UK Government draft energy bill –***

The UK Government's Energy Bill is in its last stages of consideration by the House of Lords and the Government is hoping it will receive Royal Assent by the end of the year. The main area of concern in the debates in the House of Lords has been a suggested loophole identified by 'green' groups that coal-fired power stations will be able to remain open until well into the 2020s.

A cross-party amendment will seek to extend the Emissions Performance Standard to prevent unabated coal powered stations from being built. The UK Government has said that such power stations can only remain open with carbon capture and storage technology. A carbon floor price will also regulate the system. However, coal prices are so low at the moment for some energy utilities to consider keeping some of these power stations open by fitting technology on them to limit pollutants, in line with EU Directives.

***Agreed: To note the report and continue to respond pro-actively with this issue.***

## **5. Radioactive waste management**

The NFLA Secretary provided a report on developments in radioactive waste management policy.

### ***Managing Radioactive Waste Safely (MRWS) process: new DECC consultation -***

Following the decision by Cumbria County Council not to go ahead with the next stage of the MRWS process to find a potentially suitable site for a deep-underground radioactive waste repository, the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) has published a new consultation on the next way forward with the process.

One of the most notable elements of the latest consultation is a proposal that will take the decision-making process away from County Councils (as Waste Management Authorities) and allow District Councils to 'volunteer' without the need to refer to the County. This appears to be clearly directed at the situation in Cumbria, where the County Council rejected going ahead with the MRWS process, whilst the two West Cumbrian District Councils voted in favour of moving ahead to the next stage. The consultation also suggests that a planning application for an underground repository would go to the National Infrastructure Directorate, in a similar manner to the Hinkley Point C application.

The Steering Committee considered and approved an advice note for NFLA members in responding to the consultation, which was highly critical of the centralising changes to the process put forward by DECC. The draft response also argued that DECC needed to also consider alternatives to a deep-underground repository – particularly improvements to 'interim' storage of radioactive waste. It was agreed that the advice note would be issued as a NFLA Radioactive Waste Policy Briefing and form the basis for the NFLA's full response to the consultation. It would also go on the NFLA website. Further information to be included in the final NFLA response will be approved by the NFLA Chair, Vice Chairs and Forum Chairs after attendance at a number of DECC stakeholder events. The closing date for responses is December 5<sup>th</sup>.

### ***NDA stakeholder dialogue -***

The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) is holding its annual Stakeholder Dialogue meeting in Essex on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> October. The meeting will include a site visit to the Bradwell site, which is one of the first Magnox sites to be decommissioned and placed in 'Care and Maintenance'. The NFLA Chair and the NFLA Secretary will be attending the meeting. The Stakeholder Dialogue will discuss the Care and Maintenance process, NDA strategy, the MRWS process and the NDA policy consultation process.

### ***Developments at Sellafield –***

Media reports prior to the Steering Committee meeting suggested that the NDA could potentially take the Sellafield site 'in house' when the new contract for running the site comes into place in April 2014. This follows ongoing criticism of the Sellafield NMP consortium. A decision on the contract is expected to be made imminently.

A NDA audit report has published expenses of senior Sellafield staff. In total, there were 606 sample expenses claims considered in the report, costing £483,202. The report criticised the use of company credit cards for "home leave flights" for seconded US staff. NMP has admitted "a very small proportion" of expense claims had been registered to Sellafield Ltd in error and repaid but "there was no evidence or suggestion of impropriety." The GMB Union have called for an Inquiry by the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee following the publication of the report. The local MP has called it a "sickening use of public money". This follows a further report that Sellafield Executives received over £6 million in taxpayer-funded bonuses over the last 3 years.

The 'Sellafield Workers Campaign' has been set up to promote improvements at the site. It calls for a new nuclear power station and a new plutonium reprocessing plant on the site. It also advocates the Government works with Copeland and Allerdale Councils to progress a deep underground radioactive waste repository in West Cumbria. The Campaign has been set up by the trade unions on the site with the support of local MPs.

### ***Dalgety Bay and Dounreay matters –***

The former Prime Minister and local MP Gordon Brown has called on the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to pay in full for the clean-up of the beach at Dalgety Bay. A recent report of radiation

contamination published by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) found that the MoD was responsible for the radioactive particles and high-activity radiation at Dalgety Bay. However, the MoD is still refusing to accept responsibility for full clean-up costs.

SEPA's investigation confirmed that the MoD deposited a large amount of ash and other waste, known as clinker, on the coast at Dalgety Bay before the town was developed, which created radioactive sources. The agency found that significant amounts of material remained buried on the coast where they continued to decay and re-contaminate the area. The MoD disputed the findings and questioned the "*adequacy and validity*" of SEPA's approach to the report. Mr Brown told Parliament that in the next few months SEPA will have to designate this area, which is part of the Fife coastal path, as the only radiation-contaminated area in the United Kingdom if action is not taken by the MOD as soon as possible.

Furthermore, radiation monitoring is to be carried out on sand dunes near to the former RAF base at Kinloss. Moray Council has said monitoring will be carried out at Findhorn from August. Geophysical surveys have suggested the land may be contaminated by radiation. Like with the Dalgety Bay incident, it is believed large numbers of aircraft were broken up and buried there at the end of World War II. Some of the parts may have been coated with radium-based paint, which was used to illuminate instruments.

At its business meeting in Stornoway, NFLA Scotland members felt it was important for a wider report on the implications of contamination at Dalgety Bay and a consideration of whether there are other MOD sites which may have similar issues. This report is being developed by the NFLA Scotland Policy Advisor and will be issued to member authorities shortly. The Steering Committee welcomed the development of this report.

In reference to Dounreay, its site operators have confirmed there will be no underwater sweeps for radioactive particles this year. The seabed has been scanned for several months each year since 2008. By the end of 2012 2200 particles had been removed. 409 of these were considered to be significant in terms of their potential impact on health. Dounreay Site Restoration Ltd (DSRL) is also to upgrade detection equipment used to search for radioactive particles on beaches, but have also applied to reduce the frequency of monitoring on Sandside Beach from monthly to quarterly.

#### ***Update on NuLEAF and SCCORS -***

NuLEAF (Nuclear Legacy Advisory Forum) is holding its AGM and a business meeting in London on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October. The business meeting will be considering the MRWS process, submarine dismantling and community benefits packages. The NFLA Chair is attending a major European Commission Conference on radioactive waste issues in Lithuania later in October, as part of a NDA funded NuLEAF delegation.

The SCCORS (Scottish Councils Committee on Radioactive Substances) Secretariat is beginning to move forward following a change in the Secretariat to North Ayrshire Council. A meeting is planned with a potential site visit to Hunterston. The NFLA Secretary is seeking to clarify its progress with the SCCORS Secretary.

#### ***MOD Submarine Decommissioning Project (SDP) -***

The NFLA Secretary attended the latest sub-group meeting of the Submarine Dismantling Project held in Bristol on the 26<sup>th</sup> September. The move towards a public consultation on shortlisted sites for storing intermediate level radioactive waste (ILW) from dismantled submarines is gathering pace. At the NFLA Scotland meeting in Stornoway, it was agreed that a NFLA Radioactive Waste Briefing be developed to put the new round of consultation in context with what has already taken place, and what is planned eventually with the project. The specific aim of the briefing will be to make member authorities aware of the ILW consultation and how the project could widen out beyond consideration of the Rosyth and Devonport sites.

***Agreed: To note the report and endorse the NFLA Policy Briefings on waste issues.***

## 6. **Mayors for Peace and Nuclear Weapons update**

The NFLA Secretary provided an overview of the NFLA's involvement in co-operating with the Hiroshima and Nagasaki-led Mayors for Peace, and wider issues in the nuclear weapons debate.

### ***a) Mayors for Peace matters -***

#### ***International development of Mayors for Peace -***

As of September 1<sup>st</sup> 2013, 5,736 towns and cities were members of Mayors for Peace in 157 countries.

The Mayors for Peace International Secretariat organised its four-yearly conference in Hiroshima on August 2 – 6, 2013. The meetings held included the Executive Conference, a 2 day General Conference and the annual Hiroshima Peace Ceremony. The NFLA Secretariat and NFLA Scotland had representatives at all of these events. Over 300 delegates attended the General Conference and over 30,000 people were present at the annual Peace Ceremony. A full report of the meeting has been developed and is on the NFLA website.

Manchester City Council has agreed to be a 'lead city' of Mayors for Peace to assist the development of a formal UK & Ireland Mayors for Peace Chapter. As part of this, the NFLA Secretary will be developing a strategy paper and considering dates for a launch of such a group.

#### ***UK and Ireland development of Mayors for Peace -***

There are now 89 members of Mayors for Peace in the UK and Ireland. The NFLA Secretary plans to develop a seminar and business meeting for the next UK & Ireland Mayors for Peace Working Group, open to NFLA authorities, to outline the post Hiroshima Conference outcomes, provide an overview of the nuclear weapons issue and consider using the meeting to formally launch a cross-national chapter.

#### ***Making Peace exhibition –***

Manchester City Council has been approached by the International Peace Bureau to host a major outdoor photographic exhibition in June 2014, the centenary of the First World War, on the subject of 'Making Peace'. This exhibition includes five strands, one of which is disarmament and development. The exhibition was first held in Geneva in 2010 and in 2013 has been held in Utrecht and Stockholm. In 2014 it is also being planned to be concurrently held in Sarajevo as the commemorations of the centenary of the 1914 – 1918 'Great War' commences. It is planned that the main exhibition will be outside the BBC's 'Media City' development at Salford Quays with a smaller satellite exhibition organised with the Manchester-based Mines Advisory Group. This will take place in Cathedral Gardens in front of the National Football Museum.

### ***b) Nuclear weapons matters -***

#### ***NET independent inquiry on the UK's national defence needs and its international nuclear disarmament responsibilities***

The NFLA Secretariat has been approached by the Nuclear Education Trust (NET) to participate in an independent inquiry which will consider the UK's national defence needs in a period of deep defence cuts. The inquiry will also consider what the UK's international nuclear disarmament responsibilities should be and whether it is living up to them. The Steering Committee agreed that a response should be developed and issued to NET.

#### ***Trident Alternatives Review***

The Trident Alternatives Review, published by the UK Government's Cabinet Office, has concluded that there are credible alternatives to replacing the UK's current Trident nuclear weapons system. However, it has calculated that these alternatives would cost more and might not guarantee the same "degree of resilience" as the government's preferred 'like-for-like' replacement option.

The Review was conducted as part of the UK Government Coalition Agreement to allow the Liberal Democrats to make the case for alternatives to 'like-for-like' Trident replacement. The Liberal Democrat Party Conference endorsed the report and agreed to support a reduced Trident replacement programme (3 rather than 4 submarines) and the end of the 'continuous at sea deterrence' military strategy. The Review is also likely to set the scene for debate and discussion

on Trident replacement leading up to the 2015 General Election. The NFLA Secretary has invited Dr Phil Webber from Scientists for Global Responsibility to talk to the Steering Committee about UK nuclear weapon readiness and the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear weapon attack. Dr Rebecca Johnson of ICAN-UK has also agreed to speak to the NFLA Annual Policy Seminar in Cardiff on Trident replacement and the wider party political debate.

***UN General Assembly debate on nuclear disarmament –***

For the first time in its history, the United Nations General Assembly decided to discuss nuclear disarmament in a full session. The new Iranian President Rouhani announced a desire to negotiate with the US, Russia, China and 3 European Union representatives over its nuclear programme and said that Iran would not pursue a nuclear weapons capability. The Mayors for Peace took an active part in the NGO delegation that addressed the General Assembly and held a meeting with the UN's Disarmament Director.

***Agreed: To note the report and endorse a response to go to NET.***

**7. Alternatives to nuclear energy**

The NFLA Secretary provided an update on work around advocating alternatives to new nuclear power generation.

Over the past year, the NFLA Secretariat has developed a whole suite of documents for member authorities on various aspects of energy policy highlighting the benefits of renewable energy, microgeneration and energy efficiency. These include national reports for England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland and specific reports on fuel poverty, energy efficiency, shale gas, energy scenarios 2020-2030, the Green Deal and the Green Investment Bank. These can all be found on the NFLA website. These adequately explain NFLA policy and the opportunities to develop realistic and sustainable alternatives to new nuclear build and fossil fuels as part of a campaign to mitigate climate change and the negative effects of fuel poverty. All NFLA members are encouraged to disseminate these reports to relevant officers in their authority.

The NFLA Scotland Policy Advisor's latest detailed report for the NFLA Scotland Forum on developments in renewable energy, microgeneration and energy efficiency has been converted into a NFLA Policy Briefing and published on the NFLA website.

The NFLA Secretary informed the Steering Committee that NFLA member Glasgow City Council has recently decided to commence a policy process and market engagement to assist it to develop an Energy Services Company that will lead to formal procurement. The aim of this process will be to consolidate the pilot projects in developing solar, district heating, geothermal and hydro-electric schemes in the city into a more strategic approach and deliver further renewable energy projects. Such a company would allow the Council to act as an enabler, helping it to coordinate projects that other organisations originate and influencing specification in a way that allows a more integrated network build. This could then deliver affordable energy with reduced environmental impacts and support the Council's energy and carbon reduction commitments, whilst maximising the financial returns for the Council.

***Agreed: To note the report and welcome the NFLA Policy Briefing. To welcome developments in Glasgow City Council and other councils promoting renewable energy.***

**8. Fukushima and nuclear safety**

The NFLA Secretary provided an update on the state of the stricken Fukushima nuclear reactors and wider issues around nuclear safety standards.

***European Nuclear Safety Directive -***

In mid September the European Commission signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Atomic Energy Authority (IAEA) to collaborate on improving nuclear safety in Europe. As part of this agreement both bodies will work to develop an improved framework for planning and reviewing cooperation in nuclear safety. This will include peer reviews and building up emergency awareness and response capabilities. The NFLA Secretariat is liaising with Vienna's 'Cities for a Nuclear Free Europe' Network to monitor these developments.

### ***General Fukushima update -***

In mid August, following an announcement by Tokyo Electric Power Co (Tepco) that 300 tons of highly radioactive waste was leaking from a storage facility close to Fukushima reactor No 4, and probably leaking directly into the Pacific Ocean, the Japanese Nuclear Regulation Authority (NRA) had declared the incident a Level 3 ('serious incident') event. This declaration raised both the political temperature of the incident in Japan and internationally. It also made the wider public aware of the environmental consequences of ongoing problems at the Fukushima facility.

The Level 3 announcement has led to the Japanese Government taking a much more pro-active approach to the facility. It is putting more active pressure on Tepco to fix the leaks, which appear to be numerous across the site. The problems with water leaks on the site is immense as there are more than 1,000 water storage tanks on the site, 350 of which are bolted – it is one of these tanks which was found to have five loose bolts from which the 300 tons of water leaked out. Many of these tanks are built to a cheaper design than a sturdier welded type. At present, every day an extra 400 tonnes of irradiated water need to be stored. The Japanese Government has advocated development of an "ice wall" by running pipes through the affected ground and pumping coolant to try and stem some of the leaks. It has also told Tepco to shut down reactors 5 and 6, which were undamaged by the tsunami. These will now be used as a training centre to teach engineers the best way to decommission reactors. According to Greenpeace International, the process to fully decommission and decontaminate the other four reactors is expected to take at least forty years.

***Agreed: To note the report.***

## **9. Low level radiation and health issues**

The NFLA Secretary provided an update on issues relating to the potential effects of low level radiation on human health.

### ***Cancer rates in proximity of UK nuclear sites report –***

A recent study led by Professor John Bithell of the Childhood Cancer Research Group and published in the British Journal of Cancer argues that there is no such causal link between increased childhood cancer and proximity to nuclear sites. This research project studied 10,000 children aged under five and analysed birth records for nearly every case of childhood leukaemia in Britain from 1962 to 2007. Professor Bithell argued his study should reassure the public around nuclear sites. The study had been funded by the UK and Scottish Governments and the charity Children with Cancer UK. The charity Cancer Research UK called the results of the study 'heartening'. It cautioned that the results cannot rule out any possible risk and that further monitoring of radiation levels near nuclear power plants and cancer rates of local communities should continue.

The NFLA Secretary asked the independent radiation consultant Dr Ian Fairlie for his views on the Bithell study. Dr Fairlie notes that the report authors admit that their negative findings are not statistically significant and that their study is statistically underpowered when compared with many other studies, especially the German KIKK study, which comes to a quite different conclusion. Dr Fairlie concludes that the 'normal rule' is that weak epidemiological studies which are not strong enough to pick up effects should be careful about making negative conclusions, as the Bithell study does unfortunately. A full link to Dr Fairlie's initial analysis of the Bithell study can be found on the NFLA website.

***Agreed: To note the report.***

## **10. Nuclear emergency planning**

The NFLA Secretary outlined its work in the area of nuclear emergency planning.

### ***National review of nuclear emergency planning arrangements -***

In early September the NFLA Secretary, Peter Burt of NIS (Nuclear Information Service) and Pete Wilkinson of CANE (Communities Against Nuclear Expansion) met with officials from DECC, the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) and the Environment Agency to discuss NGO concerns over

nuclear emergency planning. The aim of the meeting was to allow the NGO representatives to raise concerns over different parts of the nuclear emergency planning regime and to encourage a greater level of openness and transparency in this policy area, wherever possible and practical.

There was a robust but well reasoned discussion on the positive role that community groups and national nuclear concerned groups can provide to public authorities on various parts of the nuclear emergency planning regime. An update was provided by DECC on the national nuclear emergency planning review. DECC staff noted that a number of additional staff had been recruited to its emergency planning team and over this year they have been acting on the action points from the ONR's Fukushima reports. This includes doing additional work on improving emergency resilience and planning for prolonged severe incidents, strengthening the national nuclear emergency planning exercise regime and updating national published guidance. DECC has also held bilateral talks with France and within the G8 group to improve international nuclear emergency planning guidelines.

The meeting also involved a detailed discussion on the size of detailed emergency planning zones (DEPZs) around nuclear sites under the Radiation (Emergency Planning and Public Information) Regulations, or REPPIR. The UK has some of the smallest zones of nuclear reactors in the world. A major issue for NGOs under REPPIR is that there is no procedure for feeding in public comments to the review of the zones, particularly in reference to the 20kms evacuation required at Fukushima. Within this meeting it was agreed to take this matter to the separate ONR NGO Forum for further consideration. DECC did indicate that a review of the REPPIR nuclear emergency planning regulations is being considered. The meeting also agreed that the main public document for emergency planning – the Nuclear Emergency Planning Liaison Group's Consolidated Guidance – would be reviewed with the potential development of a chapter on public consultation, openness and transparency.

A follow-up meeting will be held in January 2014 and further discussion on the REPPIR regulations will be considered at the ONR NGO Forum on November 5<sup>th</sup>.

***NFLA special seminar on nuclear emergency planning –***

The NFLA organised a joint seminar to consider civil nuclear and defence nuclear emergency planning in association with Nuclear Information Service, CND Scotland and Nukewatch. This was held in Glasgow City Chambers on the 20<sup>th</sup> September. The seminar followed up two media articles on nuclear emergency planning – concerns that originated from a Ministry of Defence emergency planning exercise of an accident scenario involving a nuclear weapon convoy, and concerns over the amount, location and arrangements for distributing potassium iodate tablets for a wider evacuation of a civil nuclear reactor.

Presentations from the well received seminar have been placed on the NFLA website and sent to all NFLA members. A key action point from the seminar will be for the NFLA Secretary to develop an updated NFLA Policy Briefing on civil nuclear emergency planning and, in liaison with NIS, a new briefing on defence nuclear emergency planning. These reports will consider the post Fukushima emergency planning regime, concerns over the transportation of nuclear materials and to highlight issues from recent exercises and incidents.

***Agreed: To note the report and thank the speakers at the recent special seminar on nuclear emergency planning.***

**11. Date of next NFLA Steering Committee meeting**

The next meeting will be on ***Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December in Cardiff County Hall from 10am – 3pm.*** This will include the 2013 NFLA AGM and the NFLA Annual Policy Seminar.

**12. Special presentation on the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear weapon attack**

Phil Webber of Scientists for Global Responsibility and ICAN-UK gave an expert presentation to the Steering Committee on the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear weapon attack. This presentation will be placed on the NFLA website.