



*Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee*

# information

**NFLA Media release - for immediate release, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2013**

## **As new nuclear flounders, the NFLA advocate the UK Government taking up the NFLA's 'Energy Plan B'**

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) welcomes some of the main points in the report of the UK Parliamentary Energy & Climate Change Select Committee, particularly its central argument that the Government must start planning for an alternative scenario 'Plan B' in energy policy.

The Select Committee report, 'Building New Nuclear: the challenges ahead' (1), is highly critical of the Government not having contingencies in place in the event that developments to build new nuclear power stations either do not get built at all, or at too slow a rate to fill gaps created by the decommissioning of many existing coal, gas and nuclear power stations.

With indications that EDF and the UK Government are struggling to agree on a contract for public subsidies for constructing a new reactor at Hinkley Point (2), media reports suggesting that Iberdrola is now looking to pull out of its investment to build a new reactor near Sellafield (3), and no long-term policy for finding a solution to the management of higher activity radioactive waste (4), it looks obvious to the NFLA that a 'Plan B' is now needed more than ever.

The NFLA also shares the Committee's deep concerns around the lack of transparency in the negotiations between EDF and the UK Government and that the reported subsidies being offered are far too generous to EDF. The Committee's advocating of a 'Plan B' should be seen as a damning indictment of the Department of Energy and Climate Change. The UK Government has put too much emphasis on delivering new nuclear without considering in any details the significant problems - in an austere financial environment - of the energy sector having enough capacity to build such reactors without recourse to huge public subsidy.

The NFLA believe a 'Plan B' should not though be simply a 'dash for gas' or the commencement of a shale gas revolution – an energy source with many environmental risks.

The NFLA urges the UK Government to follow the example of Germany and many other European governments by:

- putting its full political and financial support behind developing a wide range of renewable energy sources (wind, solar, tidal, wave, geothermal, district heating and so forth);
- directing support into a concerted effort at demand management energy efficiency programmes;
- encouraging increased investment into community-based decentralised microgeneration projects.

NFLA have produced a copious amount of reports in advocating this enlightened energy policy and, along with many other groups, have forwarded this information to the UK Government (5). Now is the time, as the Select Committee have noted, for the Government to act.

NFLA Chair, Councillor Mark Hackett said:

"I welcome the Energy & Climate Change Committee's report on new nuclear build. It provides a chilling warning of the alarming consequences of no 'Plan B' in the event of new nuclear build developments not taking place. NFLA would go further and saying new nuclear should not take place at all as it will put too high a financial burden on the harassed electricity consumer. It would also produce increased levels of highly radioactive waste at a time when there is no prospect of an early

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solution to securing the existing nuclear waste legacy. NFLA have been advocating a Plan B for many years. Our 'Plan B' would both keep the lights on, stop the bills reaching ridiculous levels, secure the climate and bring thousands of high quality jobs into an economy that desperately needs it. A nuclear free future that benefits all of us."

Ends

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**Notes to editors:**

- (1) UK Parliamentary Energy and Climate Change Select Committee, 'Building New Nuclear: The Challenges Ahead', 26<sup>th</sup> February 2013  
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmenergy/117/117.pdf>
- (2) Guardian, 'EDF want 40 year nuclear contract plan' 19th February 2013  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2013/feb/19/edf-40-year-contract-nuclear-plant>
- (3) The Times, 'Toshiba unveils plans for Sellafield plant', 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2013  
<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/business/industries/utilities/article3703587.ece>
- (4) BBC Online, 30<sup>th</sup> January <http://bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cumbria-21253673>
- (5) See for example the most recent NFLA energy report:  
[http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A220\\_\(NB106\)\\_Energy\\_scenarios\\_2020-2030.pdf](http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A220_(NB106)_Energy_scenarios_2020-2030.pdf)

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