



Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee

information

NFLA Media release - for immediate release, 27th March 2012

NFLA Welsh Forum Chair formally addresses the Welsh Assembly energy inquiry on the need for a 'nuclear free, renewable rich' future energy policy

This Thursday 29th March the Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) Welsh Forum Chair Councillor Stephen Churchman will be formally addressing the Welsh Assembly's Environment and Sustainability Committee to further discuss the NFLA's assessment of the future direction of Welsh energy policy. This follows on from the NFLA's recent letter to the Welsh First Minister Carywn Jones and the Welsh Environment Minister John Griffiths, noting its dismay with an important change in Welsh Government policy to support new nuclear power generation at Wylfa in Anglesey (1).

The NFLA Welsh Forum submitted a detailed response to the Welsh Assembly's energy inquiry on how Wales could take advantage of its location and its geography to develop a wide renewable energy mix involving wind, tidal, wave, hydro-electric and combined heat and power. The NFLA submission also advocated a considerable expansion of funds for energy efficiency, administered by Welsh Councils, to reduce the huge problem of fuel poverty in Wales (2). The NFLA called this a 'renewable energy revolution' bringing in many new jobs and financial benefit to the country.

At the Welsh Assembly Committee meeting the NFLA will strongly disagree with the Welsh Government's recent policy change on nuclear power in its 2012 energy statement, which it believes is premature given this current Welsh Assembly Energy Inquiry.

The NFLA believes the Welsh Government have not answered the concerns they raised about nuclear power in the Government's prior 2010 Energy Statement, including (3):

- "We remain of the view that the high level of interest in exploiting the huge potential for renewable energy reduces the need for other, more hazardous, forms of low carbon energy and obviates the need for new nuclear power stations.
- We have a way to go in justifying to the public what must done in dealing with future nuclear waste. We therefore support the call for a public inquiry on dealing with the waste arising from new nuclear build on the grounds of concern over the safety and security of its management. This carries with it the implication that any proposed new nuclear power station must contain credible plans for nuclear waste management.
- Maximise energy savings from energy efficiency and low-carbon energy production from renewables in Wales."

The NFLA believe all these risks remain the same and that the factors relating to the Fukushima incident have increased rather than reduced them.

NFLA Welsh Forum Chair Councillor Stephen Churchman said:

"I am delighted that the Welsh Assembly has given me the opportunity to discuss the NFLA's submission to its energy inquiry with Assembly members. I strongly believe that Welsh energy policy should become a fully devolved power from Westminster. The NFLA advocates an enlightened energy policy including a wide renewable energy mix, a major expansion of community-led local microgeneration energy projects and a concerted energy efficiency programme to insulate Welsh homes and reduce the scourge of fuel poverty. I look forward to debating with Assembly members our response and encouraging it to adopt a similar view when it determines its final report."

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES



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Ends

Further information - Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary 0161 234 3244 or 07771 930186.

Notes to editors:

- (1) NFLA letter to Welsh First Minister, 14th March 2012.
http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/news/NFLA_Welsh_First_Minister_letter.pdf
- (2) NFLA submission to the Welsh Assembly energy inquiry,
http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/consultations/NFLA_Welsh_Assembly_energy_inquiry_submission.pdf
- (3) Welsh Government Energy Statement, March 2010.
<http://www.wales.gov.uk/docs/desh/policy/100331energystatementen.pdf>

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