



Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee

information

MEDIA ADVISORY – for immediate release, 7th November 2011

NFLA Ireland seminar will show examples of how Ireland can be a major exporter in renewable energy, with Irish Councils playing their part

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) holds its winter seminar in Wexford County Council offices this Friday 11th November. They will be discussing the non-nuclear ways Ireland can develop a renewable energy revolution, whilst providing an update over its concerns of what impact new nuclear build in the UK may have for Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland (1).

The NFLA's recently published briefing on potential future energy policy in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, which shows how the country can use its beneficial geography to become a major exporter of renewable energy to its European neighbours (2), will be highlighted. The report shows how the long-held NFLA energy policy of a wide renewable energy mix, a concerted energy efficiency programme and increased efforts to develop local microgeneration projects can provide more than adequate levels of electricity across Ireland, with Councils being at the cutting edge of this 'new energy revolution'.

An example of how some Irish Councils are seeking to lead the way in promoting renewable energy will be provided by the County Wexford based Frank Gethings of Eco Evolution, who will provide an overview of a major hydro-electric project and other sustainable energy projects the company is developing with Omagh District Council in Northern Ireland.

The seminar will also consider the potential development of new nuclear reactors on the Irish Sea coasts of England and Wales – Sellafield in Cumbria, Heysham in Lancashire, Wylfa in Anglesey, Oldbury in South Gloucestershire and, the possible first new reactor in the UK for 20 years, at Hinkley Point in Somerset. The NFLA strongly opposes such developments as a diversion of resources from more sustainable, waste free and low risk alternatives.

Independent marine pollution consultant Tim Deere-Jones will provide an overview of some of the radioactive isotopes that may be discharged into the Irish Sea from such a programme, as part of a forthcoming NFLA / Friends of the Earth / Stop Hinkley submission to a Hinkley Point environmental permitting regulations consultation (3).

The NFLA will also be holding its UK and Ireland Annual Policy Briefing in Newry on the 25th November directly following on with these issues. Confirmed speakers include Northern Ireland Environment Minister Alex Attwood, SEAI Board Member Grattan Healy, Friends of the Earth Northern Ireland Director James Orr and KIMO International's Rick Nickerson (4).

NFLA All Ireland Forum Co-Chair and Dundalk Town Councillor Ollan Herr says:

"I strongly encourage Councillors and Council Officers from across Ireland to attend this important seminar which shows why Councils should be concerned about nuclear developments in the UK and the far more effective renewable energy alternatives. Our report shows Ireland could meet its own needs and be a major renewable energy exporter and I strongly encourage both Irish Governments and Irish Councils to push forward in developing this exciting opportunity."

Wexford Borough Council and NFLA representative, Councillor Danny Forde added:

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“Wexford has long opposed nuclear power since failed attempts were made to develop a nuclear reactor at Carnsore Point in the 1970s. I am delighted to welcome the NFLA to Wexford Town and look forward to hearing more about the future development of Irish energy policy and how Councils like Wexford can benefit from getting involved.”

Ends

For interviews contact Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary on 00 44 (0)7771 930196.

Notes for editors:

- (1) The NFLA All Ireland Forum is on Friday November 11th in Wexford's new state-of-the-art civic offices. Details are as follows:

Irish energy policy developments and concerns over nuclear new build in the UK:

Friday 11th November, Wexford Civic Offices, Carricklawn, County Wexford

- 11.00am Opening welcomes by Councillor Danny Forde, Wexford Borough Council and Councillor Ollan Herr, Dundalk Town Council and NFLA All Ireland Forum Co-chair.
- 11.10am Can a renewable revolution happen in Ireland? The NFLA overview. Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary
- 11.30am Promoting renewable energy in Ireland with local authority support – a case study of the Omagh hydro-electric project – Frank Gethin, Eco Evolution (based in County Wexford)
- 11.55pm Fukushima, Sellafield MOX plant and nuclear new build in the UK – an overview and why Irish Councils need to be involved in this debate. Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary
- 12.20pm Will nuclear new build increase radioactive discharges into the Irish Sea? What are the risks if it does? Tim Deere-Jones, independent marine pollution consultant
- 12.45pm Panel discussion chaired by the Co-Chair of the NFLA All Ireland Forum, Councillor Michael Carr, Newry & Mourne District Council. (For a 1.30pm finish).
- (2) The NFLA Policy Briefing on the future development of Irish energy policy can be downloaded from the following web-link:
[http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A201_\(NB87\)_Ireland_and_renewable_energy.pdf](http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A201_(NB87)_Ireland_and_renewable_energy.pdf)
- (3) The Environment Agency consultation on environmental permits for the proposed new nuclear reactor at Hinkley Point is available on its website. The consultation is open until December 15th and the NFLA will be tabling a detailed response in support with other groups.
- (4) The NFLA UK and Ireland Steering Committee Annual Policy Briefing Seminar is on Friday November 25th in the Council Chamber, Newry. Details are as follows:

Nuclear policy developments and the real potential for renewable energy in the British and Irish Isles:

Friday 25th November, Newry & Mourne Council Offices, Monaghan Row, Newry

- 12.45pm **Registration:** Tea/Coffee
- 1.00pm **Welcome:** Councillor Michael Carr, Newry and Mourne Council
- 1.05pm Alex Attwood MLA, Environment Minister, Northern Ireland Government – UK new nuclear build and the future development of energy policy in Northern Ireland
- 1.30pm Grattan Healey, SEAI Board Member and member of the National Offshore Wind Association of Ireland – The potential for offshore wind power to provide Ireland & the UK with much of its future energy needs
- 1.55pm James Orr, Director of Friends of the Earth Northern Ireland – Irish Green Groups 'Vision for a Programme for Government' in energy and environmental policy
- 2.15pm Councillor Rick Nickerson, Shetland Islands Council and representing KIMO International – The Transport of Nuclear Materials by Sea in Northern Europe
- 2.40pm Panel discussion led by the new NFLA Chair (for 3pm finish).

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