



Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee

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NFLA Media release - for immediate release, 10th December 2012

NFLA elects new Chairperson and hears about 'Energiewende' and developing new partnerships in the nuclear policy field

The UK & Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) elected a new Chairperson at its 2012 Annual General Meeting (AGM) – Councillor Mark Hackett of Manchester City Council. Councillor Hackett was unanimously elected by members of the NFLA and takes over from Councillor Brian Goodall of Fife Council.

Councillor Hackett has been a long-time supporter of NFLA. He noted in his acceptance address to the 2012 NFLA AGM that one of the first sub-committees he attended as a Manchester councillor related to the NFLA some 25 years ago. As a former Lord Mayor of Manchester, Councillor Hackett also hosted the commemorations for the thirtieth anniversary of the NFLA in 2010, including a civic visit of the Mayor of Nagasaki (1).

NFLA members approved all key policies and its Service Plan for 2013 where a continuing focus on its key areas of concern was endorsed – objecting to new nuclear build, developing strategies on safe radioactive waste management, protecting the public in the areas of nuclear safety, low level radiation and public health and nuclear emergency planning; and co-operating with like-minded groups to seek ways to create a consensus for a Nuclear Weapons Convention and a future nuclear weapons free world. Within this, the NFLA agreed to accept an invitation to become a partner organisation to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN-UK) (2).

At its accompanying Annual Policy Seminar, members heard about the positive moves led by Vienna City Council to develop a European Network of Cities opposed to nuclear power. They also heard about the process to develop a broad-based coalition of groups like Mayors for Peace, ICAN and Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) to negotiate with national governments on nuclear disarmament through the auspices of the United Nations structure.

A fascinating overview of Germany's energy transition was also provided by Dr Paul Dorfman from the Nuclear Consulting Group, containing information such as (3):

- Within six months of the Fukushima incident, over half of Germany's 17 nuclear reactors were closed, and the rest will be closed by 2022;
- Yet, within six months of Fukushima, Germany had already become a net energy exporter despite closing down so many nuclear reactors;
- Over the past decade its renewable sector has increased electricity generation fivefold;
- 4 German regions are now producing 45% of their power from wind energy production;
- Solar power generation has increased by 60% in just the last two years alone and is set to provide 10% of total electricity generation in Germany by 2020;
- Germany plans a 10% reduction in energy demand through a huge energy efficiency programme by 2020, and by 25% over the next 3 decades;
- Germany's Energy Research Programme Budget has increased by 75%;
- Much of this is achieved through community-orientated programmes led by local government;
- This is important for the UK as Germany consumes around a sixth of the EU's electricity – decisions it makes are a key factor in wider energy policy in the European Union.

New NFLA Chair, Councillor Mark Hackett said:

"I am honoured to be elected as the new Chair of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities, an organisation I have been personally committed to for many years. With 2013 being a pivotal year in both the energy

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debate and the international nuclear weapons debate I will be dedicated to ensuring the NFLA will play its usual important role in representing its Members views and challenging the medium-term necessity for either nuclear power or nuclear weapons. Sustainable alternatives clearly exist to nuclear power, with Germany showing the way, whilst if we don't find a solution to reducing the stockpiles of nuclear weapons we will have a much more uncertain and unsafe world."

Retiring NFLA Chair, Councillor Brian Goodall said:

"It has been a real honour to be Chair of the NFLA, an organisation that does much to represent local government on all aspects of nuclear policy. I want to put on record my thanks to all the NFLA Member Councils and delegates, particularly those active delegates who make up the UK & Ireland Steering Committee. I'm pleased to have been able to lead the NFLA's support for the newly formed European Cities Group campaigning against nuclear power stations. Working with the NFLA, Mayors for Peace and CND to continue the campaign against nuclear weapons will always be one of the primary motivations behind everything that I do."

Ends

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

Notes to editors:

- (1) Nuclear Free Local Authorities, 30th anniversary commemoration report, December 2010, http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/recent_events/NFLA_30th_anniversary_report.pdf.
- (2) For further information on ICAN-UK visit <http://www.ican-uk.org>.
- (3) For a detailed report on energy transformation in Germany and Japan consult the Chatham House report by Anthony Froggatt, Catherine Mitchell and Shunsuke Managi, July 2012, <http://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/papers/view/185005>.

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