



Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee

information

MEDIA ADVISORY – for immediate release, 11th May 2011

NFLA All Ireland Forum Chair welcomes Wexford Borough Council as its newest member

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) announces its newest member after Wexford Borough Councillors agreed to join the NFLA at its full Council meeting on the 9th May (1).

Wexford Borough Council has a long history of raising concerns about developing nuclear power. In the 1970s, Carnsore Point in County Wexford was the proposed site for building Ireland's first nuclear power station. A large and popular cross-party supported movement was established to successfully oppose it. The Irish Government cancelled the development and declared the country as legally 'nuclear free'. The anti-nuclear festivals of 1978 and 1979 in County Wexford were seen as the touchstones for the birth of the anti-nuclear and broader environmental movement in Ireland.

Over 30 years on, Wexford Borough Council (like many other Irish Councils) are now increasingly concerned about developments across the Irish Sea as a number of new nuclear reactors are proposed to be built over the next decade in England and Wales – at Sellafield, Heysham, Wylfa and Hinkley Point. The motion, put forward by Borough Councillor Danny Forde, deplores this development at a time when the Fukushima accident has concentrated concerns in Ireland and across the world over the continuing risks of nuclear power.

The resolution was passed by a large majority across all parties represented on the Council. A number of other Irish Councils are due to debate resolutions to join the NFLA All Ireland Forum, which has members in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland (2). The Forum has recently written to Environment and Energy Ministers Phil Hogan and Pat Rabbitte to urge the new Government to maintain support for Ireland's nuclear-free status and to meet them to discuss mutual concerns over nuclear developments in the UK.

NFLA All Ireland Chair, Councillor Ollan Herr, says:

"I am delighted that Wexford Borough Council has joined the Nuclear Free Local Authorities. It joins us, post Fukushima, in raising concerns around nuclear development, nuclear material shipments and concerns over radioactive discharges from Sellafield into the Irish Sea. As an All Ireland Forum, and in co-operation with like-minded councils in England, Scotland and Wales; Wexford have joined a dynamic forum seeking to reduce nuclear hazards across the British Isles. I urge other Irish Councils to join our Forum."

Wexford Borough Councillor, Danny Forde, added:

"Fukushima was a wake-up call to the world, and to Ireland, of the continuing risks of nuclear power. I am pleased my Councillor colleagues agreed to support my motion to join the Nuclear Free Local Authorities. Wexford has a long history of being concerned about the risks of nuclear. Our declaration of support for the NFLA allows us to be part of this progressive and important movement challenging the need for nuclear and advocating a greener, renewable Ireland."

Ends

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES



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information

For interviews with Councillor Forde or Councillor Herr contact Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary, on 00 44 (0)7771 930196.

Notes for editors:

(1) The resolution approved by Wexford Borough Council is as follows:

"That this Council, in light of the potentially catastrophic danger to public health posed by various nuclear reactors in Japan;

- Renews its opposition to UK Government plans to build 5 new nuclear power stations along the Irish Sea coast in Britain,
- Calls on the Minister of the Environment to voice strong concern to his UK counterpart, in the strongest possible terms,
- Calls on the appropriate Departments to take further legal steps confirming Ireland's status as a Nuclear Free State,
- Replace the "Nuclear Free Town" signage which informed Wexford town visitors of our Nuclear Free status,
- Renews its lapsed membership of the NFLA (Nuclear Free Local Authorities).

If this motion is adopted I request that it be circulated to other Local Authorities in Ireland for their support."

Motion submitted by Councillor Danny Forde (Green Party), Wexford Borough Council.
The resolution was formally approved by the Council on May 9th 2011.

(2) The NFLA All Ireland Forum is one of four constituent Forums that feeds into the NFLA Secretariat Steering Committee based in Manchester (the others being England, Scotland and Wales). The All Ireland Forum Secretariat is hosted by Newry and Mourne District Council and its co-chairs are Councillor Michael Carr (SDLP) from Newry and Mourne and Councillor Ollan Herr (Green) from Dundalk Town Council. It holds nuclear policy seminars, participates in nuclear policy stakeholder events and responds to all relevant nuclear policy consultations. It initiates ground-breaking research and works within the remit of its powers to highlight issues around public safety, public health and environmental protection.

Further information on the extensive work of the NFLA can be found at its website <http://www.nuclearpolicy.info> or by contacting the NFLA Secretariat on 44 (0)161 234 3244.

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