Cllr Mark Hackett new NFLA Chair

Councillor Mark Hackett of Manchester City Council was elected as the 2013 Chair of the NFLA at its AGM held in Manchester Town Hall.

Cllr Hackett takes over the role from Cllr Brian Goodall of Fife Council and was unanimously elected as Chair. Cllr Hackett thanked Cllr Goodall for his service as Chair and as Fife’s NFLA representative.

Councillor Hackett has been a Manchester Councillor for over 25 years and was Lord Mayor of Manchester in 2010, where he hosted a meeting of the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Board meeting and a civic visit from the Mayor of Nagasaki.

NFLA seminar consider international nuclear policy issues

The NFLA Annual Policy seminar looked at the international nuclear policy agenda and how the NFLA can influence it.

David Reinberger from Vienna City Council gave an overview of its new European Network of Cities against Nuclear Power and discussion took place on how NFLA could interact with it in 2013.

Paul Dorfman of the NCG gave an overview of the major changes in German energy policy and how they should impact on the UK context.

Dave Webb, Chair of CND, highlighted the international cooperation on campaigns over the nuclear weapons issue and the key Forums for lobbying states in 2013.

Rob van Riet concluded the seminar by noting the work of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament in lobbying governments involved in the nuclear weapons debate.

See the NFLA website for further information.
UK Energy Bill supports renewables but also new nuclear

The NFLA has given its early assessment of the UK Government Energy Bill which was launched in early December.

The Bill outlines future aspirations for the development of ‘low carbon’ infrastructure in the UK over the next 30 years in order to ensure energy security.

In its media release on the Bill the NFLA welcome the increased financial support given to renewable energy and a parallel discussion on increasing energy efficiency programmes.

The NFLA though are disappointed about the overt support given to nuclear power and the lack of information given on the ‘strike price’ for new nuclear. There is also no decarbonisation target for 2030, which may affect certainty in renewables investment.

The media release is on the NFLA website and a more detailed briefing is being developed by the NFLA Secretariat.

Irish report suggests ‘few risks’ to Ireland from Sellafield

The NFLA Secretariat has responded to an Irish Government report that suggests there are few substantial risks to Ireland from the Sellafield facility in Cumbria.

The Irish Government commissioned a number of nuclear specialists to consider the risks to Ireland of Sellafield using a probabilistic risk assessment process.

The main findings of the Irish report claim no significant health risks can be found for most scenarios using this model.

In a media release and letter to the Irish Government the NFLA question the report, much of which is not published for security reasons. The NFLA also question the lack of radiobiologists in the study and other health reports which find quite a different result.

A meeting with officials is being pursued.

NFLA attends publication event for Barrow & Trident report

The NFLA Secretariat has submitted its views to the independent Nuclear Education Trust on the prospects for the Barrow area with the Government’s Trident Alternatives Review.

The NFLA note its opposition to Trident replacement and the benefits of defence diversification for a number of renewable energy projects in the Barrow area. The response is on the NFLA website.

The NFLA Secretary also attended the publication of NET’s report at an event in Westminster on December 13th.
Mayors for Peace closes in on target of 5,500 members

The NFLA welcomes the continuing increase in membership to the Mayors for Peace group, which at Dec 1st 2012 had reached 5,490 members.

Mayors for Peace are preparing for a detailed involvement in the next major UN international conference on nuclear weapons, which takes place in Oslo in March.

This will consider the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear weapon attack. Mayors for Peace will also hold business meetings of its Board whilst in Oslo.

The next UK & Ireland Mayors for Peace meeting is planned to be held in the new year, hopefully by one of its London members.

Meanwhile, at its AGM the NFLA agreed to become a partner of ICAN UK - the domestic arm of the International Campaign to Ban Nuclear Weapons.

Other news in brief

NCG seminars at Westminster - The NFLA plans to co-operate and publicise the NCG’s upcoming seminars on UK energy policy. These will look at the Energy Bill and German energy changes and will be in February & March 2013. Further information will follow in January’s newsletter.

Hunterston & Hinkley extensions - NFLA have issued a media release raising its concerns over EDF’s planned life extensions for these two reactors until 2023.

Dounreay & SEPA - NFLA have raised concerns with SEPA over increased authorisations for discharges from the Dounreay site. This response will be placed on the NFLA website.

GDA Approval - The ONR and Environment Agency have given its approval to EDF’s EPR nuclear reactor design. A full overview of this and other new build issues will be in the January newsletter.

Forthcoming meetings of interest to NFLA members

NFLA Steering Committee, 25th January 2012, Manchester Town Hall.

NFLA Scotland Forum, 1st February, Glasgow City Chambers.

Dates of NFLA English Forum, Welsh Forum and All Ireland Forum meetings will be provided in the January 2013 NFLA Newsletter.

NFLA Steering Committee dates for 2013:
- 25th January
- 22nd March
- 28th June
- 4th October
- 6th December (NFLA AGM).