Date: 21st July 2020  
Subject: Summary of key points and actions from the NFLA Steering Committee video conference, 26th June 2020

1. Introduction to the meeting
The NFLA Steering Committee Chair, Councillor David Blackburn, welcomed all to the first NFLA Steering Committee being held as a full video conference meeting. Councillor Blackburn welcomed the good attendance for the meeting which was an indication of strong support for the work of the Secretariat.

2. The covid-19 outbreak and future meetings / ongoing work of the Secretariat
The NFLA Secretary noted that, whilst moves were beginning to take place to ease the three month complete lockdown across all the nations within the UK and Ireland, social distancing is likely to remain in place for some considerable time to come. This makes public events and meetings more limited for the foreseeable future, and the continued use of telephone and web-based meetings.

The NFLA Secretariat has taken a considered response to delivering its work programme on behalf of member authorities:
- In March / April, the Secretariat developed a number of reports on its core work programme, to respond to the impacts of the public health emergency and the wider climate crisis. There was also a NFLA Steering Committee and NFLA Scotland telephone conference to update and engage with members.
- In late April and through May many of these reports were published – a new analysis of how Councils are tackling the climate emergency, Covid-19 and its impact on the nuclear sector and for a green recovery, a NFLA Scotland Policy Briefing, a NFLA Steering Committee Policy Briefing, a response to the first round of consultation on Bradwell B, a consultation response to the ‘Hinkley mud’ issue, and a Mayors for Peace Policy Briefing progress report. There was also a NFLA Steering Committee telephone conference on the 1st May.
- June and early July has been centred on providing ‘webinars’ for the four National NFLA Forums, the Steering Committee and the Mayors for Peace Chapter. These have been timetabled for the 5th, 12th, 19th and 26th June and the 3rd July. Other reports are also being developed, including a reworking of a nuclear emergency planning report, a further report on green recovery, a report on divestment and a consideration of reports on Sellafield and aging nuclear reactors.

The plan over the summer months is as follows:
- To follow up action points from the NFLA web-based meetings.
- To develop and publish more of the reports noted above.
- To assist and promote official events for the 75th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic weapon attacks on August 6th and 9th 2020.
- To assist and promote events for International Peace Day on September 21st 2020.
- To start developing ideas to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the NFLA in November.
• To plan NFLA meetings in the autumn.
• To process NFLA annual affiliation fees.
• To support the development of the Mayors for Peace European Chapter.

The economic issues arising from the Covid-19 outbreak and lockdown is looking likely to have a severe impact on local government finance. Many Councils are lobbying relevant central governments for additional support, and there remains real uncertainty if it will be provided.

The NFLA Secretary has been also assisting internally in the development of new ideas for Manchester City Council to deliver its climate emergency action plan. Additionally, he has been supporting Mayors for Peace European Lead Cities on the development of its European Chapter.

The Steering Committee welcomed the large level of activity from the NFLA Secretariat in previous months and the successful development of web-based meetings in June.

**Action: To note the update and welcome the future development plan of the NFLA Secretariat.**

3. **NFLA Forums progress, elections and Brexit / nuclear policy**

**NFLA All Ireland Forum webinar, 5th June**

The NFLA All Ireland Forum Sustainable Energy Forum met on the 5th June in a webinar kindly hosted by Newry, Mourne and Down Council. The webinar was opened and closed by the Forum’s new Co-Chairs, Councillor Karen McKeveit and Councillor David Healy. Pete Roche and Sean Morris provided presentations to the meeting on NFLA reports on the climate emergency and Covid-19. In the discussion within the webinar it was felt that it would be really useful to increase the profile of theForum through councillor organisations. It was agreed that the NFLA Secretary will speak with the Forum Co-Chairs and other attendees on how to develop this further.

**NFLA English and Welsh Joint webinar, 12th June**

The NFLA English Forum and NFLA Welsh Forum held a joint seminar focusing on two cross-border issues of interest – the consultation around the ‘Hinkley mud’ application to dump over 600,000 tonnes of sediment from the Hinkley Point site into the Cardiff Deep Grounds, and the ways English and Welsh Councils can tackle the climate emergency. These were provided by Tim Deere-Jones and Sean Morris. Following the webinar, the NFLA Secretary had a short meeting with Stop Hinkley representatives over issues around ongoing construction at the Hinkley Point site and increases in keyway route cracking at Hinkley Point B.

**NFLA Scotland business meeting and webinar, 19th June**

The NFLA Scotland Forum held a business meeting and webinar. Pete Roche provided a presentation based on a more detailed written report. There was also reports from the NFLA Secretary Sean Morris and CND Scotland’s Janet Fenton. There was discussion on the divestment issue after an April meeting between the NFLA and the Strathclyde Pension Fund. There was also discussion on the continuing issues with the aging Hunterston B reactor as well.

The presentations from all of these Forum meetings have been placed on the NFLA website. Affiliation fee invoices will be issued in the summer once the NFLA Scotland Secretary is fully back at work and to allow the financial issues affecting Councils as a result of Covid-19 are clarified in reference to central government support. It is likely that the autumn Forum meetings in September and October are likely to be held again as webinars.

**Action: To welcome the resumption of web-based NFLA meetings and assist the Secretariat in the processing of affiliation fee invoices over the summer.**

4. **New nuclear**

A concerning accident occurred at the Hinkley Point C construction site which the NFLA Secretariat is following up with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR). An investigation has been launched by the ONR and EDF Energy after a silo tower at the Hinkley Point C development sustained “structural damage” and released a large dust cloud around 7.30am on
June 10th. The silo tower is a 35-metre high structure that weighs around 5,000 tonnes. According to Somerset Live, the silo, which contains ground granulated blast furnace slag, is described as “important” by EDF Energy and plays a “pivotal role” in the station’s construction by reusing the material within its concrete. Photos on media outlets showed a section of the silo has collapsed inwards. NFLA and other groups have sought clarification on the incident from the ONR. Whilst the ONR have confirmed the incident did not have any nuclear safety implications, they are awaiting the results from EDF of an internal investigation into the incident.

NFLA have also raised concerns with the ONR over the ongoing construction of Hinkley Point C during the Covid-19 lockdown. Whilst improvements have been made and staff reduced to around 2,000 staff, there remains concerns over whether social distancing can be maintained on such a complicated site. It should be noted that construction workers have one of the highest death rates during the pandemic and the ‘R’ infection rate for the south west of England is around the highest in England.

In reference to the other two sites being put forward, EDF Energy has applied to the Planning Inspectorate for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for Sizewell C. This is despite considerable disquiet from local MPs, councillors, NGOs and the NFLA of submitting such an application during the Covid-19 lockdown. A DCO would be the final planning stage, and if approved, would then initiate a final public inquiry. There is extensive and well organised opposition in Suffolk to the development, particularly from environmental groups, including the RSPB and the Suffolk Wildlife Trust. A legal challenge has been accepted by the High Court for a judicial review of a planning decision by East Suffolk Council to allow destruction of the 100 year-old Coronation Wood as part of the preparation for the site. NFLA continues to liaise with local groups and councillors on the development.

CGN / EDF has continued with its first round of consultation on the Bradwell B development in Essex. As requested by the Steering Committee, the NFLA has responded in detail to it, and the response can be found on the NFLA website. The response concludes that the development is not required as renewable energy and energy efficiency measures are more easily realisable and cheaper. It is also concerned about the levels of radioactive waste the development would generate, the disruptions to the local economy, emergency planning concerns and longer-term concerns over coastal flooding and erosion.

An increasing debate centred on Bradwell, but also of interest to the financing of Hinkley Point C and Sizewell C, is the increasing concern of the security issues around Chinese involvement in these projects. There is a growing level of concern amongst a number of Conservative MPs about China’s involvement in the 5G mobile phone development, and across UK critical infrastructure. This links in as well to the growing disputes between China and the United States. Media reports suggest Chinese authorities are acutely sensitive to this criticism, and are making representations at the highest level that they would withdraw their support for UK new nuclear if other projects are scaled back. NFLA will keep a close eye on this debate. Steering Committee members commented on these concerns and how they could have a major impact on the support for new nuclear build.

The need for public financing through the Revenue Asset Base model still remains important for either of these developments to go ahead. There remains silence from the government over this model, though it is expected that some major public investment decisions on critical infrastructure may be made in July.

Intense lobbying from the pro-nuclear sector on the potential development of small and advanced nuclear modular reactors from the government is ongoing. Rolls Royce and Atkins are part of a consortium suggesting as many as 10 such reactors could be developed in the north of England in the late 2020s onwards. Whilst media reports suggest talks are continuing, the challenge behind these developments comes from the other financial pressures facing the government in the middle of a major stimulus following the end of the Covid-19 lockdown. The Steering Committee requested that the NFLA Secretariat continue to monitor these issues.

**Suggested discussion and action points: To note the report.**
5. **Radioactive waste**
The NFLA Secretary and the NFLA Chair met in late May with the new Chief Executive of RWM, Karen Wheeler, and other members of the organisation to discuss their concerns over a deep underground repository. The meeting was useful and the NFLA Secretary has been in touch with independent radwaste consultants to discuss their issues with the new CEO. A joint NDA RWM NGO Forum is being held online on the 24th June, and the NFLA Secretary will provide a verbal report of the meeting to the Steering Committee.

NFLA representatives attended the most recent web-based meeting of NuLEAF on the 10th June in Manchester. The meeting included a presentation from the NDA on how they are operating sites at a limited level during the current pandemic, and their plans for developing a Sustainability Plan to reduce their own carbon emissions. They are in intensive internal discussions on developing their next five year strategy, which they hope to consult on in the autumn. Plans to hold a September Stakeholder Summit in Edinburgh may not take place now due to the ongoing issues with social distancing. The NDA are looking at ways to actively engage with stakeholders, which has been delayed due to their limited availability of IT.

NuLEAF have now been provided with funding from RWM and NDA of £114k. With additional membership income this allows them to have a healthy income and a small surplus. The RWM income is to assist NuLEAF in supporting councils that register an interest to host a deep underground radioactive waste repository. The NFLA Secretary is seeking to speak to the Co-Chairs of the SCCORS group to understand how this group is developing, and its own financing. The NFLA Scotland Vice Convener will assist the NFLA Secretary in this discussion.

The NFLA Secretary has written on behalf of the English and Welsh Chairs to the Welsh First Minister Mark Drakeford over the composition of an ‘expert panel’ that will advise Natural Resource Wales (NRW) over EDF’s application to dump over 600,000 tonnes of material from the cleared Hinkley Point C site to the offshore Cardiff Deep Grounds, 2 miles away from Cardiff Bay. A joint letter from WANA, the NFLA, other groups and academic researchers had called for the Welsh Government to ensure the Well-being of Future Generations Act is upheld, and offered a list of independent researchers to join the expert panel.

To date, no one on this list has been invited to join the panel. In its response to the consultation, NRW has discounted the concerns of groups like NFLA and largely supports the application taking place. NFLA is liaising with other groups about challenging this application further, and seeking to develop a similar broad-based campaign as occurred with the previous application. It will be important to try and get the support of local Councils and cross-party Assembly Members.

The Ministry of Defence have invited the NuLEAF and the NFLA Secretary to visit the Rosyth site to look at progress with dismantling submarines. A visit is being considered for September, but it depends on issues around travel and social distancing. It has been suggested linking it to the Edinburgh NDA Stakeholder Summit, should it take place.

**Action:** To note the report. To work with Welsh anti-nuclear and environmental groups to develop a cross-party and effective campaign over the ‘Hinkley mud’ issue.

6. **Climate change, green stimulus and alternatives to nuclear power**
In early May, the NFLA released its latest progress report on how Councils should tackle the climate emergency. This report provided a ‘state of play’ in how local government is involved in this issue and interacting with central government across the UK and Ireland. It also provided a list of 47 best practice examples of Councils developing various aspects of decentralised energy. The report has been very well received and was profiled at the recent Forum webinars. The report, and a summary presentation of it, can be found on the NFLA website. It has also been sent by APSE Energy to all of its members.

NFLA has published a second report which considers the impact of Covid-19 on the nuclear sector and on the climate crisis. The report notes there has only been a limited, but beneficial impact to carbon emissions. It has though led to potentially positive changes in behaviour in favour of walking and cycling. The report goes on to argue there is a real and urgent need to use
the response to the economic crisis brought on by the lockdown to develop a green stimulus. The Steering Committee warmly welcomed these reports and were encouraged to disseminate them through their Councils.

A plethora of recent reports from local authority groups, think-tanks, political parties, energy agencies and a wide range of businesses is calling for a move to ‘Build Back Better’ with a more equitable and huge fiscal stimulus to support renewable energy, energy efficiency, smart energy, renewable heat and transport solutions and energy storage projects. The reports also suggest a large jobs potential is a core part of such projects, and urge a ‘Just Transition’ to help transfer jobs from the fossil fuel and nuclear sectors to the renewable economy.

The NFLA Secretariat will review all the major recent reports on green recovery that have come out for a new report on the way forward for Councils. It is hoped to publish this in July. The Steering Committee are encouraged to make suggestions for inclusion in this report.

The extent of the ‘green stimulus’ within a wider economic recovery is expected to be announced by the UK Government in July. It is known the Energy Secretary Alok Sharma has brought together a wide range of energy specialists to advise the government on what a green stimulus may look like. The scale of what it could be can be highlighted by the EU Commission planned spending of €100 billion on a green recovery out of a €750 billion stimulus plan. The German Government has announced €30 billion of a €120 billion stimulus package will be given to a green recovery.

The size of a green recovery package in the Republic of Ireland could also be substantial if the planned coalition between Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and the Irish Green Party is approved by its members. The draft programme for government includes extensive climate action measures to reduce Ireland’s greenhouse gas emissions, the end of direct provision and a major programme of investment in walking and cycling infrastructure and public transport provision. It will include a substantial increase in a carbon tax and a major commitment to reduce Ireland’s carbon emissions by 7% a year, much more than in previous years.

The Scottish Government has started its push for a green recovery by announcing additional initial funding of £5.5 million for renewable energy projects. Communities will be able to bid for a share of £4.5 million through the Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES), which funds local renewable projects. A further £1 million is being made available through the Low Carbon Infrastructure Transition Programme (LCITP) – a scheme which provides support for innovative energy projects such as heat networks and integrated energy systems.

The Welsh Government is considering its green recovery plans at the moment. The Welsh Future Generations Commissioner Sophie Howe has advised it to prioritise green jobs for the unemployed and a multi-million pound package to decarbonise housing. The Welsh TUC calls for a clear and funded pathway to net-zero that maximises the opportunities to create good quality green jobs that offer ‘fair work’. It suggests workers should be given a central voice in planning the transition to ‘net-zero’, through discussions with Welsh Government and through workplace ‘transition agreements’ agreed with unions. It argues employers should work with unions to develop workplace sustainability initiatives and that workers need more funding for skills to provide a clear pathway to new, greener jobs. Friends of the Earth Wales also calls for a Clean Air Act to be part of a green and public transport friendly recovery plan.

Significant calls for similar policies from the Northern Ireland Government have also been made. Relevant to local authorities is a call for councils to play a pivotal role in a green recovery from Sustainable NI. The group outlines consultations by a wide number of Councils and it calls for central government resource to make them more effective. This report, like others, will be reflected in the summer NFLA briefing.

NFLA have given support to the first report and the creation of a new group called 100% Renewable UK. Developed by Dr David Toke and others, with support from a range of environmental groups, its first report highlighted how the development of windfarms was being stymied by having to keep inflexible baseload nuclear power reactors operating. The report and
a media release on the report can be found on the NFLA website. The group is expected to continue to develop further reports that will outline how a 100% renewable system can be developed. The Steering Committee welcomed this initiative.

On other energy issues, the UK Government Energy Minister Kwasi Kwarteng said in a television interview for the BBC North West Tonight that, unless the science changes, ‘fracking is over’ for now in the UK. The interview came within an announcement of a new ‘CryoBattery’ facility, at Carrington, in Trafford, which he argued marked a significant move from fossil fuels to renewables. This facility will be one of the world’s first commercial liquid air batteries. It could store enough energy to power 200,000 homes for up to 5 hours. Its capacity is double that of Tesla’s largest chemical battery in Australia. The Trafford plant has attracted a £10 million government grant and is due to start operating in 2022. It will use surplus energy from renewable sources to chill the air, turning it into a liquid. When extra power is needed, the liquid air is released and turns back into a gas, driving a turbine to provide electricity.

The Steering Committee welcomed many of these developments as part of the growth of renewable energy across the UK and Ireland.

**Action: To welcome and disseminate NFLA reports. To produce an additional report on the positive impacts of a green recovery later in the summer.**

**7. Mayors for Peace and 75th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic weapon attacks**

The NFLA Secretary, in his role as UK and Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter Secretary, has developed a Chapter webinar on the 3rd July. This will look at progress nationally and internationally with the Mayors for Peace, as well as a consideration of events for the 75th anniversary of the first use of nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Chapter meeting will also profile the work of a colleague of the NFLA Secretary who did a work placement with the Hiroshima Secretariat. Another good example of peace education best practice will be profiled in the work of Peace Partners with schools and community groups. NFLA members are encouraged to join this meeting, which has been advertised both to NFLA, Mayors for Peace members and to peace groups involved in organising events for the 75th anniversary.

The Hiroshima and Nagasaki Peace Ceremonies will take place on the 6th and 9th August, but with a much reduced attendance. Mayors for Peace are developing a separate webinar on youth peace education to promote its work in this area, and students from Manchester will take part in it. The Lord Mayor of Manchester is one of the figures who will speak within a Mayors for Peace YouTube video.

The Hiroshima Prefecture and a global collection of NGOs, including Peace Boat, are developing a 24 – 48 hour of events under the title of the ‘Global Peace Wave’. This will include music and singing events, webinars and live events. ICAN have also linked into this event and are supporting the ICAN Peace Academy that will encourage youth to understand more of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in a peace education programme. There is also a push to use the slogan ‘No More Hiroshimas! No More Nagasakis!’ through the anniversary period.

ICAN are working with Hiroshima City and Hiroshima Prefecture on developing new materials and content about the survivors’ stories and call to action. This will include regular email updates with new resources, such as video, images, and a pledge for new supporters to take forward the call of the hibakusha. A new website as a platform to commemorate the anniversaries and spur action to end nuclear weapons.

Events are being encouraged around the world, which now have to take place around the difficulties of social distancing. In the UK and Ireland, the NFLA Secretary is seeking to develop a new report which can summarise some of the events that will take place, as well as highlighting some of the big events taking place around the world. Steering Committee members agreed to engage with their Councils and peace groups like CND to host appropriate events.
The NFLA Secretary is also heavily involved in the development of the European Chapter of Mayors for Peace. Whilst delayed a little due to Covid-19, the Chapter is in the process of developing a new logo and website, legal statutes and eventually a new Executive Advisor. Funding from the Provincial Council of Barcelona for four years is being provided, and will be based through the Lead City of Granollers. There is also a strong connection with the global local government body UCLG, which is based in Barcelona. The Chapter wants to promote the Mayors for Peace core campaign around nuclear weapons, but also developed the other campaign of the development of safer, resilient and more peaceful cities. Granollers and Manchester have asked ICAN if they would like to support an autumn web-based event around the European nuclear weapons debate, perhaps linked to the 40th anniversary of Manchester’s ‘nuclear free’ declaration. The Steering Committee warmly welcomed this initiative as a positive move forward.

**Action: To note the report. To encourage attendance at the July 3rd Chapter meeting. To support local events for the 75th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic weapon attacks, and the end of the Second World War.**

8. **Nuclear weapons and defence nuclear safety**

The NPT Review Conference planned for May 2020 has now been moved to January 2021. The move to January 2021 comes after the US Presidential elections, and allows some time to find ways to reduce the real tensions between the nuclear weapon states, and also with the delicate relationship they have with non-nuclear weapon states.

Lesotho have become the 38th country to ratify the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and Fiji are expected to shortly become the 39th. Expectations that a further 11 states will ratify over the next year remain high. The European Leaders Network have noted that a wide range of groups have come together to look at the key factors to bring progress at the NPT, they include:

- An affirmation by all NWS of the Reagan-Gorbachev statement that a "nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought";
- A commitment by NWS to reinvigorate the pursuit of nuclear disarmament as required by their repeatedly reaffirmed obligations under the NPT;
- Strengthened dialogue among NWS on nuclear doctrine and strategic stability within the P5 process (including the creation of a Working Group); and
- Broadening the P5 dialogue to include crisis avoidance and management (including the creation of a Working Group) to identify actions in a crisis that could lead to misinterpretation, miscalculation, and possible escalation and to pursue measures to address them.
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The ICAN Cities Appeal continues, and the Belgian city of Ypres is one of the most prominent new cities to support it. The NFLA Secretary has been in discussion with a number of peace NGOs who are lobbying Councils to support it. It was planned for a number of resolutions to be put forward in June after proposed local elections. Steering Committee members are encouraged to see if there is a chance to put forward such resolutions at reconstituted Council meetings.

An ICAN report calculates that 2019 spending on nuclear weapons reached almost $73 billion, an increase of $7.2 billion from the previous year. Almost half was spent by the US Government, who also intimated in late May that they may recommence a nuclear weapons testing programme. In the report, the UK spent $8.9 billion in 2019.

The latest report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute calculates the global stockpile of nuclear warheads decreased slightly last year. However, that is only because the U.S. and Russia, the two countries that still account for more than 90 percent of global nuclear stocks, dismantled some of their obsolescent warheads. All nine nuclear weapon states are modernizing their other warheads and delivery systems. In a test last week, France successfully fired, from a submarine, a nuclear missile that can travel between continents at 20 times the speed of sound. Other countries, most notably China, are adding to their nuclear stockpile as fast as they can. There remains concern as well that these states are amending their policies on when they could use such weapons, with suggestions of softening such policies.

In terms of defence nuclear safety and the existing Trident nuclear programme, there is considerable evidence to suggest that there are only 3, and perhaps as little as 2 active Trident submarines in operation due to technical issues in maintaining them. The current financial problems created by the Covid-19 lockdown are impacting on the defence budget, which could be under further pressure if major spending cuts are required. A Sunday Times investigation suggested that “…according to military sources, ‘A top candidate for the chop is the nuclear submarine HMS Vanguard, armed with the Trident missile, which has been languishing in a dockyard in Plymouth for five years. A project to refuel its reactor is more than a year late after serious technical hitches, raising fears that its £400m budget is out of control and could double’.”

The report goes on to suggest that Vanguard may be broken up for parts to keep the other three Trident subs going until the replacement comes on stream from 2030. With Trident replacement itself under financial pressure and ongoing reports of cost and time overruns, pressure remains on the other three submarines to be maintained adequately to keep the ‘Continuous at Sea Deterrent’ policy going.

Action: To note the report and continue to monitor the issues. To reconsider the ICAN Cities Appeal campaign in light of the public health emergency.

9. Civil nuclear safety and Fukushima update

Issues with the aging Advanced Gas Reactors (AGRs) managed by EDF appear to be increasing in complexity, suggesting all of them may be closed earlier than originally planned.

Hinkley Point B’s reactor 3 shut down for a graphite inspection outage on 8th June. It is not expected to go back on-line until at least 14th December. Reactor 4 has already been offline for a similar inspection since February and is not expected back until November.

The same type of reactors at Hunterston B (which started operating in 1976) have been closed for much of the past two years. Reactor 3 has been offline for more than two years, since March 2018. Reactor 4 was first shutdown on 2nd October 2018 but was allowed a trial operation between August 2019 and 10th December 2019. The safety case for restarting Reactor 3 was finally submitted to the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) for its assessment in mid-May and for Reactor 4 on 29th May. EDF now says it is hoping that Reactor 3 can restart in July.

There remain increasing concerns, consistently noted by the NFLA, that the graphite cores of the two reactors have begun to crumble as cracks spread. At least 58 fragments and pieces of debris have broken off the graphite bricks that make up the reactor cores. According to the ONR
there is “significant uncertainty” about the risks of debris blocking channels for cooling the reactor and causing fuel cladding to melt.

EDF says it has spent more than £200 million on tests, inspections and creating quarter-scale models of the reactor cores that are shaken to mimic a quake to try to prove that the graphite is safe. If approved for six months at Hunterston, it may allow approval for Hinkley Point B with “pretty much the same safety case”.

The suggestion that the reactors may not run until 2023 have arisen as EDF chose not to enter the two Hunterston B reactors into the capacity market auction for the period October 2022 to September 2023. And, although Hinkley Point B was entered into the auction it exited above the clearing price and did not get an agreement. In addition, EDF has announced plans to submit scoping requests to North Ayrshire Council ahead of planning applications for waste facilities to support future decommissioning activities. Such an intermediate level waste (ILW) store and two waste processing facilities on the B site suggests early preparation for the closure of the existing reactors at Hunterston.

Confirmed at the recent NuLEAF meeting, discussions are underway between BEIS, EDF Energy and the NDA to examine the future decommissioning of the AGR fleet when it is time for the reactors to come of line. Recently published Periodic Safety Reviews at Torness and technical issues at Heysham and Hartlepool suggest these reactors are beginning to show similar early issues as Hunterston, and may well not be able to operate up to their 2030 planned closing date. NFLA will look to develop a report summarising these issues over the summer.

In terms of the stricken Fukushima plant, Japanese environmental and anti-nuclear groups have started an international petition over ongoing concerns the Japanese Government will give permission for TEPCO to slowly drain radioactively contaminated water from storage tanks into the Pacific Ocean. No official decision has still been published, but increasing evidence suggests the action is being actively considered. The NFLA Steering Committee Chair and NFLA National Forum Chairs have signed this petition, and the Steering Committee welcomed the initiative.

**Action points: To note the report. To develop a summer report on the aging issues with AGRs.**

10. **Nuclear emergency planning and transport**

The NFLA Secretary is reworking a detailed report on progress with Councils implementing offsite emergency plans for civil and defence nuclear plans. This report should be completed shortly. There has again been some focus to the Hunterston and the Sizewell sites, where active Site Stakeholder Groups have challenged the assessments made. Engagement with the nuclear regulator has also taken place.

John Finnie MSP has tabled a number of questions on REPPIR implementation to the Scottish Parliament, and the answers will be included in the briefing, which will come out in the summer.

The additional time allowed with no major meetings in the near future also permits the Secretariat to reconsider and complete a full review on nuclear transport, which again can be published over the summer.

**Suggested discussion and action points: To note the report.**

11. **Date of next Steering Committee meeting**

This is planned as a web-based meeting for Friday 4th September from 11am – 12.30pm.