



**HARWELL-CHILTON CAMPUS LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS GROUP**  
**Minutes of the 74<sup>th</sup> meeting held at the HPA centre on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2011**

**PRESENT**

Chairman: Terry Joslin, Didcot Chamber of Commerce  
Secretary: Angela Vincent, RSRL  
Minutes Secretary: Malcolm Crook, RSRL

**MEMBERS**

Dee Boughton-Waite	Harwell Parish Council
Lesley Cox	RSRL
Ken Heider	RSRL
Andy Staples	RSRL
Alan Neal	RSRL
Terry Fraser	Deputy Chair LSG
Margaret Turner	Vale of the White Horse District Council
Bill Hanks	Sutton Courtenay Parish Council
David Marsh	Harwell Parish Council
Trevor Brown	Oxfordshire County Council
Susan Holdroyd	PROSPECT Rep RSRL
Derek Whitmell	Upton Parish Council
Sandra North	Chilton Primary School
John Sharp	East Hendred Parish Council
Paul Bryant	West Berkshire Council

**OBSERVERS**

David Rushton	NDA
Brian Burnett	NDA
Dave Jackson	CNC
James Bishop	CNC
Martin Root	CNC
Kelly Duane	Babcock
Emma Burwood	RSRL (Winfrith)
Sarah Merritt	Thames Valley Police
Eric Hollis	UKAEA
Reg Waite	VWHDC

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Dr John Wilkins  
Malcolm Andrew

**APOLOGIES**

Nick Blackburn	ONR (no ONR representation)
Chris Lloyd	Environmental Agency (no EA representation)
Natalie Bealing	STFC (no STFC representation)
Isabelle Boscaro-Clarke	Diamond Light Source Ltd (no Diamond representation)
Edward Eyston	Hendred Estate
Stewart Lilly	Oxfordshire County Council
Margaret Palling	Oxfordshire Federation of Woman's Institutes
Alison Thomson	VWHDC
Susan Adams	RSRL
Paul Atyeo	RSRL
Gareth Thomas	RSRL
Victoria Thomas	RSRL
Sally Ann Forsyth	Goodman
Duncan Rogers	Goodman
Chris Broad	Chilton Parish Council



**HARWELL-CHILTON CAMPUS  
LOCAL STAKEHOLDER GROUP  
74<sup>TH</sup> MEETING**

**Date:** Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2011

**Time:** 10.00 for refreshments, meeting starts 10.30 – light buffet lunch on conclusion

**Venue:** The Training Centre Lecture Theatre, Health Protection Agency, Fermi Avenue, Harwell Science and Innovation Campus, Didcot, Oxon

**AGENDA**

1. Chairman's remarks:
  - Welcome guests
  - Chairman's Notes
  - Apologies for absence and changes in membership (10)
2. Minutes of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Meeting held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2011
3. Matters arising:
4. **RSRL Licensed Site Matters**
  - (a) Closure Director's Site Report – Ken Heider (15)
    - Harwell programme update
    - General report
  - (b) Special Nuclear Materials – Andy Staples Thomas (10)
  - (c) Harwell Site Emergency Exercise – James Bishop Stonell (10)
5. **Reports**
  - (a) Office for Nuclear Regulation – Nicholas Blackburn (report only)
  - (b) Nuclear Decommissioning Authority – David Rushton (15)
  - (c) Environment Agency – Chris Lloyd (report only)
6. **Campus Matters** (newsletters available)
7. **Any other business:**
8. **Date of next meeting:**
  - 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2012 at 10:00
  - 5<sup>th</sup> July 2012 at 17:00
  - 7<sup>th</sup> December 2012 at 10:00

**(1) Chairman's Remarks:**

**Welcome Guests**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 74<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Harwell Campus Stakeholder Group which is the longest running group in the country. He explained there was a curtailed programme at the meeting due to apologies from campus organisations.

He welcomed Derek Whitmell a new member representing Upton Parish Council and other guests attending the meeting for the first time.

**Chairman's Notes**

The main points were as follows:

- There was confirmation the Credible and Preferred Options programme regarding movement of Harwell's intermediate level waste (ILW) to Sellafield and Winfrith's to Harwell had been approved and was announced on the NDA website. Under proposals waste materials could be moved to locations where the existing facilities could better manage them.
- Movement of waste under the proposals would mean lifetime cost savings of £147 million by reducing the need for expensive 24/7 armed guard security at RSRL sites by centralised storage at Sellafield. The announcement indicated that if approvals are obtained, movement of waste could begin by Spring 2013.
- A sub-group meeting was held at Harwell on 16<sup>th</sup> September at which there were presentations and open discussions on legacy waste processing, Liquid Effluent Treatment Plant (LETP), groundwater remediation, Winfrith early closure business case and transfer of nuclear materials to Sellafield.
- The sub-group were unanimous in favour of transfer of RSRL waste to Sellafield recognising cost savings to be made and the fact it could be better managed there. They were delighted at the prospect of achieving site clearance in the order of 25 years ahead of the previous schedule. A statement to this effect was composed and forwarded to NDA.
- A second sub-group meeting comprised a trip to Winfrith on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> November. The purpose was to provide an appreciation of advanced decommissioning that has taken place there plus an idea of the scale of waste material to be received at Harwell. The Chairman put on record his appreciation to Andy Staples and his team for how the sub-group were received and looked after during the visit to Winfrith.
- At a recent national stakeholder meeting in Manchester LSG had learned improved ways of working throughout the UK nuclear estate and this was

- The Chairman made reference to resignation of NDA CEO Tony Fountain and said it was evident from discussions with senior staff that his two years in charge had had a dramatic effect. NDA is now leaner, sharper, and more effective and brimming with new ideas and able to see its way forward with clarity and clear intention. The Chairman suggested a letter of appreciation be sent to Tony Fountain thanking him for his efforts over the past two years. This was to be discussed outside of the meeting.
- Ministers had been persuaded to engage with decommissioning to the extent they are now applying pressure for a speedier clean-up of Sellafield, bringing forward the deep repository by 10 years and approving a programme of moving waste materials to more appropriate locations. The conclusion was NDA and the decommissioning industry is in good shape and as good as any in the world and is an exportable commodity.
- On 13<sup>th</sup> December the Chairman was to attend a presentation by Dr Mike Weightman on events in Fukushima and their impact on western new-build programmes. There are lessons to be learned and incorporated in the UK's regulatory procedures. Dr Weightman's conclusion was current UK safety regimes were working well and regulators and industry should work together to make continuous improvements in safety. He sees no reason to curtail operation of power plant and other nuclear facilities in the UK as a result of Fukushima.
- The Chairman felt nuclear decommissioning and new build are in a healthy state in the UK and stand up well to scrutiny.

### **Apologies for Absence**

A list of absentees was available at the back of the room.

#### **(2) Minutes of 73<sup>rd</sup> meeting held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

These were accepted.

#### **(3) Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

#### **(4) RSRL Licensed Site Matters**

##### **(a) Closure Director's Site Report – Ken Heider**

##### **Harwell programme update and general report**

The main points were as follows:

## **Safety and Environment Snapshot**

- There had been a good safety performance but two lost time accidents due to a sprained ankle from stepping on a hose and a bruised heel incurred when closing a gate.
- Ken stressed these injuries occurred whilst the person was involved in routine day to day tasks and hence the importance of retaining focus when carrying out day to day activities.
- RSRL has rolled out a programme of Human Performance Error Avoidance Tools to focus on pre-job briefs so everyone know what is expected of them, post task analysis – i.e. what went well, what didn't go so well and recording of lessons learned to avoid similar problems where they have occurred.
- This error avoidance tool had been borrowed from Magnox and was an example of organisations within the industry sharing best practice.
- An environmental permit had been issued allowing RSRL to close Sutton Courtenay Pipeline in order to commence decommissioning activities plus allowing discharge of very low levels of radioactive effluent to the sewer and Thames.
- The permit allows RSRL to ship consignments of solid radioactive waste to the Augean disposal site. It was hoped this work would commence once outstanding insurance issues had been addressed.
- The issue of the permit paved the way for future decommissioning that would allow transfer of solid waste materials off site.

## **2011/12 Programme Highlights**

- Over 500 cans of intermediate level waste (ILW) stored at B462 and 32 radium cans from B220 had been processed whilst two and stored before sending them to the geological disposal facility once it became available. Two tanks of Liquid Effluent Treatment Plant (LETP) sludge had been cemented. The LETP wastes would be transferred to the low level waste repository near Drigg.
- A large amount of work had been done to decommission on-site drainage systems. As part of this work 4,000m of new main active drain (NMAD) had been removed and Ken commented this was a very good piece of work carried out in a challenging environment with a number of safety issues. The work was well planned, executed and completed ahead of schedule.
- 12,000m of former trade wastes drain (TWD) had been removed whilst remnants of old main active drain (OMAD) were being decommissioned and removed. Removal of these drains allowed shut-down of waste streams leading to LETP allowing commencement of decommissioning of that facility.

- Three buildings had been demolished this year with work ongoing to remove part of the B220 facility.
- Four delay tank facilities have been decommissioned and removed from site.
- The Nuclear Materials Shipment Business Case had been approved by NDA.

### **Recent Harwell Demolition Projects Completed**

- Former Chemical Engineering Pilot Plant Building B392. Amongst issues to be dealt with in B392 included removal of a small amount of radioactivity plus asbestos and mercury. This building has been completely removed.
- Former UKAEA Corporate Office Building B521 previously home to Research Reactors and Materials Physics Divisions. This building has been completely removed and the footprint seeded with grass.
- Ken showed photographs of difficult working conditions for contractors engaged in removal of NMAD. The images showed removal of the plastic inner sleeve of the drain from the casing before it was cut into pieces and placed in bags. This significant task was carried out safely and showed the importance of good pre-planning in order for a project to be successful on the grounds of both safety and cost.

### **North Gate Area De-Licensing in December**

- Ken showed an aerial view of the Eastern Area of Harwell campus and said it was expected that North Gate Area (NGA) would be delicensed by the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) by the end of the year releasing the entire eastern area of the site for redevelopment. It was planned de-designation cases covering Eastern Area Facilities (EAF) and NGA and B146/149 Areas be issued next year to be signed off by the Secretary of State and to achieve final release of the land.

### **New Work Planned and Underway at Winfrith**

- In response to a comment by the Chairman in his opening address in which he had stated transfer of waste from Winfrith to Harwell had been approved he said that this was not the case. NDA are still considering the business case and have not yet made a decision. If it goes ahead it will involve taking around 100 containers of waste for storage in the new store to be built at Harwell to manage intermediate level waste (ILW).
- Ken showed an aerial photograph of the Winfrith site and provided details on ongoing projects such as decommissioning and demolition in the A5 area and removal of machinery associated with DRAGON reactor. Other work include sodium processing and removal and SGHWR decommissioning.

## Questions

**Q1:** We see lot's of programmes on television showing industrial archaeology and what has been lost from the past and not recorded. To what extent is this being documented for posterity so people can read the history of the site and see what was there in detail rather than having to get our television experts to do excavations not that they will find much now.

**A1:** Hopefully they would find much at all now as we will have taken everything off site. We have a large amount of records associated with facilities and those are all archived as part of our activities. All drawings and technical records associated with these facilities have been or will be forwarded to the National Archive and would be available for use. Also Nick Hance has written a very good book on the history of Harwell.

**Q2:** Is the document archive publicly available?

**A2:** I believe they are but probably through Freedom of Information but I can get back to you on that. I believe they are available via the archive at Harwell.

**NB:** Since 2008, the Archive record collection, held at Harwell, transferred ownership from UK Atomic Energy Authority to Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA). The Archive contains historic and recent records of UK Atomic Energy Authority since its formation in 1954 plus records of its predecessors, Ministry of Supply and A.E.R.E., since late 1930s. Over the years, following a structured review programme, the majority of the legacy records have been opened to the public and are now available at The National Archive at Kew.

The information contained in the records at Harwell is subject to the access rights conferred by Freedom of Information (FOI/EIR) and Environmental Information Regulations. The Nuclear Records team at Harwell respond to FOI/EIR requests received via the NDA and RSRL, and wherever possible do make information available to the general public in hard copy or digital format as required. The main Archive is not open to the general public however the photographic section of the archive, known as Image Resources, has been conferred as a Place of Deposit by The National Archive and as such visits can be made by the general public, by arrangement, to view still or moving images. Regular responses to FOI/EIR requests are also met from Images Resources with the supply of hard copy or digital images.

FOI/EIR requests should be made in writing to the NDA at [enquiries@nda.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@nda.gov.uk) or alternatively via the RSRL website: <http://www.research-sites.com/information-centre/freedom-of-information>

**Q3:** The Harwell pipeline that goes through Sutton Courtenay what will you be doing with it? Will you be just grouting it up or will you be removing it?

**A3:** We have to figure out exactly what the best way of handling the pipeline is. Our current programme is to remove the pipeline however in certain areas removal maybe more significant environmentally than cleaning and grouting.

The first part of our programme will be to remove a section of pipeline between the Liquid Effluent Treatment Plant (LETP) and the main road where the break tank is situated. We will take that out, measure levels of radioactivity associated with it and look at how easy it is to clean and use that as a guide to future decommissioning of the facility.

Some of it runs above ground, some of it runs quite a bit below ground, some runs under the A34. We need to be able to figure out what the best approaches are to each of the sections then work with EA so we come up with the best approach in terms of condition at the end.

**Q4:** On the little bit of ground between B392 and where B424 was there was the most wonderful bed of orchids. Do you still have the record of where those orchids are and are you still managing to protect them?

**A4:** I will have to check the story on those particular orchids but we do have a report covering all environmentally significant areas on site which points out where particular orchids or other flora and various animal species are found.

**Q5:** The Northampton waste site where the application is under appeal what is the current status of that appeal?

**A5:** An appeal heard in November was rejected. The parties have re-engaged but my understanding is the appeal has been accepted but it has not affected availability of the site.

Harwell and Winfrith will make great use of the site once available and it will be available for other NDA sites. It is an important element of the overall low level waste (LLW) process throughout the country.

There is a valuable asset up in Cumbria at Drigg which is appropriate for higher levels of low level waste. Sites such as the Augean site at Northampton will allow us to ship higher volumes of low level waste.

## **(b) Special Nuclear Materials – Andy Staples**

Andy explained that in relation to proposed transfer of nuclear materials from Harwell to Sellafield his presentation would go through why we are doing, what we are doing, how we do it and when we do it.

The main points were as follows:

- This work is subject of a business case compiled over two years during negotiations between RSRL and Sellafield together with a input from NDA. The decision was taken by NDA in mid November that we move into the operational phase of this work.
- Andy said this is not an unusual piece of work but involves large volumes. Much of the material involved has already been moved around in small operations during the last 10 years.

## Why?

- Primary benefit would be an overall saving to the UK taxpayer of £144M that would be made by moving Harwell to a civilian guard force meaning the site would still be secure but without the need for an armed force.
- We will not need to build facilities at Harwell in order to process relatively small amounts of material and this material will be processed in much larger existing or planned future facilities located at Sellafield.
- The material held at Harwell will be processed much faster and there will be less material for eventual transfer to the national geological disposal facility and this will bring forward final closure for Harwell.

## What?

- Materials to be transferred from Harwell include fuel from former Winfrith Dragon reactor in 40-litre containers, Low Enriched Uranium (LEU) in 200-litre drums, Contact Handled Intermediate Level Waste (CHILW) in 200-litre Drums and Concrete Lined Drums measuring 200, 450 and 670-litre. The work will require minor infrastructure modifications on Harwell site.
- Andy explained Dragon fuel was irradiated experimental fuel from the reactor consisting of micro-spheres coated in carbon mixed with graphite and made into compacts stored in stainless steel containers. Andy explained the material had been repackaged 12 years ago into the form shown on the slide and showed the tube store where the material is held at B462 complex.

## How?

- **Dragon Fuel** will be removed from tube stores and packaged into a transport container known as a modular flask. Transfer will require around 150 trips with one or two containers per trip. Andy showed slides of the Dragon retrieval flask and modular flasks used when transferring fuel to Harwell.
- On receipt at Sellafield the fuel will go to the Waste Encapsulation Plant (WEP) where the modular flask is removed from its containment box, and the fuel moved to the Sellafield Magnox Encapsulation Plant where the containers are placed in a drum, cemented over before transfer to the encapsulated cemented products store.
- **Low Enriched Uranium** comprises uranium oxide with a small % of metal. The route for this is to use a container called a Novopack for long term storage in the Thorp UO<sub>3</sub> store at Sellafield. It is hoped the material could be recycled back to the nuclear fuel cycle using facilities located at another SLC.

Andy showed slides of Low Enriched Uranium pellets and a “Harwell” can in which the pellets are stored. These cans are placed in other cans and stored in drums for eventual transfer via the Novapacks.

- **Contact Handled Intermediate Level Waste (CHILW)** will be transported using three types of container which are Nupak Type B Transport Package, Novapack Type B Transport Package or Re-sealable Full Height ISO Container (LSA). The intention is to move all of this material up to the Engineered Drum Store (EDS) at Sellafield. Andy showed CHILW drums currently stored in a building at Harwell and a re-sealable FHISO.
- **Concrete Lined Drums (CLD)** will be transported using either re-sealable Full Height ISO containers or Gemini Type B Transport Packages (non-LSA) and received into a new store at Sellafield but the possibility of using an existing store is being developed. Use of the existing store will allow movement of material much sooner than planned. Andy showed concrete lined drums at Harwell plus the Gemini container.

Some CHILW and CLDs comprises super-compactable material that will be transferred to the Waste Treatment Complex (WTC) for compacting.

Non-compactable CHILW and CLDs will be held in storage pending a future processing plant which Sellafield have on the books to treat a significant volume of material already held at Sellafield of which the Harwell material will form a very small part.

Material for long term storage will then be transferred to the Geological Disposal Facility (GDF). Again the advantage is RSRL will not have to build these facilities.

- Work is ongoing to decide the best transport operations for the material. The issue of whether to use rail or road transport would be examined taking into account stakeholder expectations, cost, proposed Low Level Waste Repository (LLWR) Transport Framework and how transfers would be timed i.e. in parallel or series. The possibility of using the existing store at Sellafield to store the concrete lined drums would significantly speed up the project.
- In relation to when transfer operations may begin Andy explained there was the need for a year and a half of preparatory work at RSRL and Sellafield with the hope work could commence during the financial year 2013. Andy emphasised that if the existing store for concrete drums could be used this would knock up to 4 years off of the work programme.

## Questions

**Q1:** Why can't the DRAGON fuel be reprocessed or recycled?

**A1:** DRAGON fuel is a very difficult fuel in which to get at the uranium in order to dissolve it for return to the fuel cycle. Past research to try and achieve this did not prove successful as the fuel is very solid and difficult to break open.

**Q2:** It's been mentioned about the possibility of moving ILW material from Winfrith to Harwell. What's the current position on that because there has been a recent consultation by the Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) on waste (including

radioactive) and the OCC came out strongly against moving in any new waste into Oxfordshire.

**A2:** It's correct to say OCC came out with their minerals and waste consultation document which identified the potential for moving ILW from Winfrith to Harwell. When we were looking at decommissioning of Winfrith we identified we would generate about 100 packages of ILW for transfer to Harwell which we proposed in a business case. The business case has not been approved. We consulted with OCC because we have to build an ILW store at Harwell anyway and thought that it would be disingenuous if we didn't put that into their plans when they were going out for the consultation. However as I said this is a business case that is not approved by NDA.

**Q3:** When you said there was going to be a new ILW store at Harwell anyway, what's that for because I didn't recognise that?

**A3:** We need a store at Harwell to store wastes when we start decommissioning BEPO, PLUTO and DIDO, plus there will be materials from decommissioning of Culham, plus waste from B220. At the moment we have a store for upper end ILW which is the Vault Store in B462 that currently stores drum waste. We need a bigger store for when we actually do significant size decommissioning projects that will generate lots of large items of ILW.

**Q4:** What timescale is that on?

**A4:** In the baseline the first plant that would generate that sort of waste is BEPO which I believe is due to commence around 2017/18 but the store would have to be constructed before then in order to allow decommissioning to start.

Ken explained the reasoning behind the need to release the front part of site to the campus before consolidating facilities around B462 and said removal of BEPO and similar plant would require construction of the new store.

In answer to a supplementary question Ken said there would be open liaison between RSRL and stakeholders on any plans to construct the store and reiterated that proposals were still part of a business case to be passed by NDA. After the NDA make a decision on that we will enter into the planning process which as you know has a very public element associated with it.

Ken said RSRL had engaged with OCC on their plans and felt the questioner had characterised their position rather strongly. He felt they had said that if waste comes from outside the county then it has to provide value to the county and therefore we have to do that. RSRL has provided the OCC with our comments on the plan and our justification for it.

The questioner (quoting from an OCC document) said that their position was that "any proposal for storage of waste from outside Oxfordshire at Harwell would need to be strongly justified".

The Chairman stated that "from discussions I have had elsewhere the amount of waste leaving Harwell is about 5 times that coming into Harwell".

In closing this question Andy emphasised that all of the material due to leave Harwell as part of this process will be ILW and this will result in a large amount of radioactive waste leaving the site whilst at the same time LLW will be leaving site via other waste streams.

**Q5:** I'm slightly confused. It seems to me that the overall plan is to keep Sellafield as a storage base for various waste, is that correct? Here our future is envisaged as clearing the site and putting it into use as an enterprise area. Is the overall view of Sellafield going to be the place where all this stuff is kept and Winfrith from what we heard on Tuesday you want to return to heath land as much as you can? I'm slightly concerned that whilst we will be shipping material out, we will also be shipping it in and therefore will not be wholly clean.

**A5:** The overall decommissioning programme is vitally part of the NDA and David Rushton may wish to comment on that after me. At the moment what we are looking at is making best use of facilities that exist now. When I spoke earlier about these materials going to Sellafield, they already have or have planned facilities for dealing with these materials whereas if we kept them we would have to build the facilities which would not be a good use of tax-payers money.

What we are trying to do as part of the NDA is maximise the use of facilities within the estate. There is no real drive to move everything to Sellafield, what we are doing is making best use of facilities that already exist. It is clear Sellafield has a much bigger backlog of materials that to be processed so in the overall scheme of things to decommission and clean Sellafield will take far longer than many of the other sites.

In order to put the issue into context Ken said that "this is a good example of how NDA is helping to look at the overall facilities in the country and making a determination on how best to integrate them into a cohesive programme". If we were all to go it alone which was how the baseline for Harwell was originally developed then Harwell decommissioning would be complete around 2065 when the last amounts of ILW would be shipped off-site to the national repository provided it was constructed in 2040.

By taking an approach where we work with other SLC's to use the entire infrastructure available throughout the country more efficiently we are able to get Winfrith complete to a point where the public have access to that site much earlier and we would also be able to do the same for Harwell.

By doing the programme we are looking at we have shaved more than 10 years off the Harwell programme by moving materials to Sellafield and bringing in a very small amount of materials in the overall scheme of things and temporarily storing them. In addition by working with others we are able within the county to take materials that would have been stored at Culham which leaves another area of country available for future use.

Ken stressed the important role played by NDA helping to facilitate transfer of waste to Harwell which had been a site objective for many years.

**Q6:** Isn't there an option of sending DRAGON fuel directly to Sellafield?

**A6:** The material from Winfrith should it arrive here will be no different from that which will be generated from decommissioning operations on site and will make no difference to security requirements. As Ken was saying its making use of existing infrastructure and we need an ILW store here at Harwell anyway. It makes a relatively small difference to the overall size we are talking about something in the order of 15-20% size difference. To move the materials directly to Sellafield it depends whether they have facilities available that could store it and at the moment I don't think they do.

**Q7:** Terry you made the point Harwell was going to become like a university campus. That's not what I expect it to be in terms of security if that's the case I am missing something. The Chairman said "I've heard many times that it can be like a university campus because they have contract level security systems". The reason for going to Winfrith on Tuesday was to see the level of security there and that's way above university level.

**A7:** Alan Neal commented that the level of security we would have would be very similar to that which we have got at Winfrith. "We are still a nuclear licensed site and we still have an obligation under our site license to provide security. So whilst there will be some relaxations specifically we will not have to have an armed response force it will still be security that will be beyond that of most universities."

Andy stated Harwell would move to a security system more like the LSG Sub-Group saw during their recent visit to Winfrith. Plus there is the work that Ken is looking at which ultimately reduces the footprint of Harwell and the size of the secure site will over time slim down. The ultimate aim in the medium term is to end up with most of the nuclear liabilities centred in B462.

**Q8:** We heard at Winfrith that the railheads were being maintained presumably for movement of waste. In a report I read it states that a railhead has been identified. Would that be Didcot?

**A8:** We have been looking with BRS which is the organisation that moves nuclear materials within the UK and they have identified 4 potential railheads and the most likely is the one located at Didcot.

At this point former Head of Harwell Site John Wilkins commented that "RSRL and NDA should be congratulated on the work that's been done in transporting this waste and other materials from Harwell to Sellafield. It's something that has been talked about for 10 years plus and now we are in site of seeing come to fruition and it really is in my view a major step forward in clearing the Harwell site and well done to all those involved.

### **(c) Harwell Site Emergency Exercise – James Bishop CNC**

The main points were as follows:

- James explained that on the evening of Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December a site exercise would be taking place based on a realistic scenario that would usually attract a multi agency response including police, fire, ambulance and government agencies.
- On this occasion only police and ambulance would be involved as the exercise would be focussing on specific operational elements.
- It was likely staff would notice more movement of police officers and vehicles and more emergency staff than usual on the day which would mostly be during the afternoon and evening.
- There would be no “Blue Light” response on public roads as they would be operating in a specific dedicated area of Harwell site.
- There was likelihood of seeing and hearing pyrotechnics and smoke and loud and unusual noises in the vicinity of Harwell complex but these would be kept to a minimum where possible and the exercise was due to be complete by around 9pm. There was a possibility the site emergency alarm may be activated during the exercise.

**Q1:** Some of the houses in East Hendred are in the emergency zone. Are they going to be told what’s happening?

**A1:** Yes I think there have been communications that have gone out from Harwell and also from us informing everyone of the exercise.

**Q2:** I don’t think our parish council have received any information.

**A2:** Angela Vincent confirmed that information was being sent out to all relevant local stakeholders via a text and telephone system. But she agreed to double check that all relevant parties had been informed.

## **(5) Reports**

### **(a) Office for Nuclear Regulation – Nicholas Blackburn (Report Only)**

Nicholas had sent his apologies. A paper copy of the ONR report was available at the meeting or can be accessed via For LSG HSE Q3 2011 Report, see link: <http://www.research-sites.com/archived-records?folder=/Stakeholder%20Groups%20Minutes%20and%20Papers/Harwell%20Local%20Stakeholders>

### **(b) Nuclear Decommissioning Authority – David Rushton**

The main points were as follows:

- David explained that he would be focussing on wider NDA issues as well as RSRL site specific issues.

- As previously reported the current NDA CEO was stepping down and the process to recruit a replacement was ongoing.
- The NDA issue a document called NDA Incite which comprises a roundup of activities going on across the estate. The latest copy includes an item regarding retrieval of the 5000<sup>th</sup> can at a Harwell facility as well as decommissioning activities ongoing across the estate.

For NDA INSIGHT Newsletter issue 7 2011, see link:

<http://www.nda.gov.uk/documents/upload/Insight-into-nuclear-decommissioning-7th-edition-September-2011.pdf>

- At the national event last week we updated and reissued our national engagement plan which can be found on the internet.

For NDA SSG Briefing November 2011, see link:

<http://www.research-sites.com/stakeholder-relations/nda-stakeholder-briefs>

- We have discussed at great length the transfer of materials option papers.
- The draft business plan will come out for consultation early this month with a view to issuing the final document in March 2012. This plan will lay down how NDA will operate for the next three years.
- It was unfortunate that there had been the two safety incident reported earlier but overall there had been a good safety performance and it was good that RSRL were learning from those accidents and engaging with the wider estate and SLCs to prevent future events.
- There had been significant movement in project delivery with excellent progress on B462 retrievals, B220 Drum processing, LETP retrievals. There was innovation with the NMAD pipe removal resulting in significant savings and acceleration meaning completion nearly half a year ahead of schedule. It was good to see money saved on this project could be re-circulated into extra decommissioning activities on the RSRL estate.
- RSRL were tasked with reviewing plans for Harwell and Winfrith. One area was to look at early closure of Winfrith and a business case was presented to NDA at the end of September which is being reviewed by NDA executive. There is more work to do on this and to develop the scenario before reporting back to RSRL.
- Alongside the Winfrith project NDA are developing a credible options paper for RSRL ILW which covers material stored at Harwell and Winfrith that won't move to Sellafield as part of those moves. The paper is in the process of being developed. It is hoped it will be released in the early part of the next calendar year. There will be a form of consultation and engagement before we get to the final phase.

- With regard to movement of material from Winfrith to Harwell there are a large number of issues to be considered before a final solution is reached.
- At Harwell the SLC looked at their lifetime plan and we recognised there were refinements that could be done and RSRL are building in experiences gained whilst undertaking previous decommissioning. Around site there are lots of areas of grass that show considerable amounts of decommissioning that have been done. RSRL is implementing the learning from this work back into the plan through continuous improvement. It is thought experience gained in decommissioning reactors at Winfrith will be able to be used at Harwell.
- The beauty of Winfrith is that it is possible to reach a point where NDA has completed its mission in a relatively quick position. Final decommissioning can be considerably accelerated from its current final date of 2048. It's one of the few NDA sites where we can clear everything in a relatively short time and return it back to heath-land. The impact of moving the material from Winfrith to Harwell if that is what the final decision is will not impact on Harwell's end-date which is reliant on availability of the geological disposal facility (GDF). Proposed movements of material to Sellafield will reduce the amounts of material to be transferred directly to the geological facility.

**Q1:** "You talked about the logic of doing Winfrith and how it's not going to impact on the end-date of Harwell but what you are talking about doing in changing things and in looking back at how things have happened over previous years, there has been a lot of "see-sawing" in terms of NDA funding for RSRL and different sites which has had an impact on the workforce and what you are potentially proposing now will have more impact on the workforce."

We have had redundancies at Winfrith recently and you are now talking about accelerating Winfrith. When you look at it from that point of view it is not a good use of tax payers money to fund redundancies and then to move to a state where you are going to accelerate the work again.

Going forward we are in dire economic circumstances in the country we should be focusing our money on making sure spending it and then having to re-spend it on something else later. Can you say something about how the NDA sees it going forward and what impact it will have on staff?"

**A1:** We are conscious of the see-sawing that has happened previously and one of the criteria we set for RSRL when we looked at Winfrith optimisation was that we had to have a solution that was very close to the funding level that we had already got for RSRL. We are also conscious we don't want to start the work and 1 or 2 years down the line have to reign it back in again if something happened.

We are committed to once we press the button to start on this to see it through to the end. Once we start decommissioning the reactors we must see it through to the end. Rest assured this is something we are aware of and the impact on the workforce on both sites is something we have thought about long and hard and will continue to do so.

**Q2:** Taking this point a little bit further, when you restore Winfrith to heath-land obviously there is no potential for jobs there. Now when we have our cleaned site we are hopeful there is going to be a great potential for jobs so it does tie in a bit with your comments.

**A2:** Alan Neal commented this was an excellent point. The idea of leaving a legacy of jobs was very important at Winfrith. At its height Winfrith employed about 2000 people which is in an area of rural Dorset where most of the industry is either tourism or agriculture and if you want hi-tech jobs you have to move to the Poole area conurbation.

This was a key driver and therefore a programme was set up to try and develop Winfrith as a technology centre to bring in new jobs. Alan explained that when he took over the site there were 1600 people employed on the site and but they reached a stage where 1100 were doing work that was nothing to do with the nuclear site but was by tenants so the programme was very successful. When the Technology Centre had been taken as far as it could it was sold off to the English Partnership.

Brian Burnett NDA Head of Programmes for Magnox and RSRL commented “We must be careful about what the NDA is here to do, primarily which is to clean up in the most cost-effective way to the tax payer but we also have to take into account all of the other socio-economic factors. When we look at a business case its not just about the money or funding or anything else its about the value of the proposition and that includes consciousness of jobs, redundancies, community, end use of site and other factors.

What we are doing here though it’s no means complete is looking at re-optimising the whole of the RSRL programme at Harwell and Winfrith. Can we reduce costs, can we make better use of facilities, and the solution is far from optimised so we are looking again to see how we can get best value.

One of the reasons we are unable to make decisions at the moment is that Government has asked us to look at enhanced security at various sites and this is very expensive.

Once this issue is resolved we will have a pretty good idea of how much cash we will have available.

**Q3:** Are the government going to fund us right the way through to the end of the programme?

**A3:** We are always nervous about changes in government because that could affect our funding. Our experience of this administration is that they are extremely supportive and we got a very good deal out of the last spending round.

**(c) Environment Agency – Chris Lloyd (Report Only)**

Chris had sent his apologies. A paper copy of the EA report was available at the meeting or can be accessed via <http://www.research-sites.com/archived->

[records?folder=/Stakeholder%20Groups%20Minutes%20and%20Papers/Harwell%20Local%20Stakeholders](#)

**(6) Campus Matters**

Goodman, STFC and Diamond had all sent apologies but newsletters were available.

**(7) Any other business**

- The Chairman described a magazine called “Nuclear Future” which is the journal of the Nuclear Institute. He said that some while back there had been a presentation on a laser project called HIFAR. In the magazine there is an article about proposed collaboration between STFC, AWE and the National Nuclear facility in America who have signed a memorandum of understanding which means subsequent research could lead to the design of power plants based on laser fusion energy. It was possible that a facility related to this project would be established on this campus in the future.
- Angela Vincent reminded delegates of other means of LSG communications which included the web pages, email, a by-annual newsletter and our annual review.

- (8) Date of next meeting:** 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2012 at 10:00  
5<sup>th</sup> July 2012 at 17:00  
7<sup>th</sup> December 2012 at 10:00

**Angela Vincent – LSG Secretary**

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