

EXECUTIVE REPORT

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

COUNCILLOR MISS E WOODBURN – PORTFOLIO HOLDER

1 Key Issues – Progress Report

1.1 Nuclear Issues

Thorp

A lot of members benefited from a presentation on Thorp at the Sellafield quarterly meeting. The presentation reported that the situation within the cell remains safe and secure and the recovery of all liquid back into primary containment was completed two weeks ago. BNG have successfully accounted for all of the material on the floor of the cell and have been able to focus their attention on finalising the best repair option and working to implement the recommendations of the Board of Inquiry report. The repair options presented by the engineering team have been independently reviewed on behalf of the NDA. This review was supportive of BNG options for repair and dialogue with the NDA and regulators to select and act upon one option are continuing. The view of the NDA and ourselves to get Thorp back up and running as soon as possible is one that we have passed on to the DTI Minister Alan Johnston MP who will ultimately make the decision. There were other recommendations made in the Inquiry report and BNG has giving these the highest priority and a dedicated project team under the supervision of a senior manager and ultimately accountable to Barry Snelson, Managing Director has been established to quickly but methodically implement the recommendations. Barry Snelson at the quarterly meeting stated BNG are confident that they have the capability to return thorp back to service.

1.2 LLWR Drigg

The Environment Agency (EA) has reviewed all four current RSA 93 Authorisations for the LLWR at Drigg. The review has considered the regulatory control of all discharges and disposals made on the LLWR site and proposed changes where appropriate. The EA has concluded that the repository site is being managed in compliance with their regulatory controls and the impact from all the disposals on the LLWR are and will be very low.

However, the EA are concerned by BNG's assessment, which predicts that destruction of the repository by coastal erosion is possible in as little as 500 years from now. Regardless of the calculated risks, the potential for the destruction of the repository by coastal erosion means that disposal of long-lived LLW on the site might be creating undue

burdens on future generations, as a result of mitigating engineering measures and contamination.

The EA recognise that it would be unreasonable to expect historical practices (e.g. past disposals at Drigg) to fully comply with present day guidance and modern standards, but there may be reasonable options to optimise the performance of the site as a whole and BNG needs to demonstrate it has considered, and implemented them where appropriate.

They note that the volume of LLW that will be produced in the UK during nuclear plant decommissioning is likely to far exceed the capacity of the LLWR, and that the results of the BNG studies may reduce the capacity further. There is an urgent need; therefore, to identify the most appropriate national strategy for the future management of the UK's LLW, including the consideration of the possible need for one or more alternative disposal sites. The EA will continue to work with Government, the NDA, the waste producers, and other stakeholders to address this issue, and are actively contributing to the current Government initiated review of LLW management policy. The EA are seeking views on the proposals outlined in the Explanatory Document during this consultation. We are invited to submit comments by Friday 26th August 2005.

1.3 **Site Security**

Following the incident in London on Thursday the 7th July 2005, The Sellafield site security status was increased to Amber and on the time of writing this report remains so. The Site responded with a series a security measures including the initial 'sending home' of non-essential workers and the restriction of transport onto the site. Existing car parking facilities around the site have been utilised and external car parking at Egremont have been used along with a park and ride scheme to and from the site (all at BNG cost). It is worth saying that BNG were put in a no win situation in that if they had not taken the decision they did they would have caused tailbacks on the A595, yet they also came under heavy criticism for the action they did take.

Non-essential workers are now back to work however; the transport measures are still in operation and will be for an undetermined period. The event has initiated a review of the BNG transport strategy, which may include the transfer of some of the temporary transport measures as potential permanent options. However, BNG have stressed that any permanent measures that affect the community will include community involvement. The current temporary transport measures and additional staggering of work times have also contributed to relieving the congestion on the local roads during peak periods.

There are a number of enhanced security arrangements planned across the Sellafield site, which meet with the Office of Civil Nuclear Security (OCNS) expectations. These arrangements include Special

Nuclear Material Detection Systems for Vehicles and Pedestrians along with an Automatic Vehicle Number Plate Recognition System. These systems will be installed at all main vehicle and pedestrian entrances and exits to the site.

The installation work is intended to take place later in the year and details regarding the execution of these planned works will be communicated nearer the time. When operational it is not intended that the Special Nuclear Material Detection Systems will impact greatly on the time required for employees to enter and leave the site. Further information regarding these systems will be made available to employees.

1.4 **NDA**

Both the Deputy Leader and myself recently met with the NDA `Chief Executive Ian Roxburgh where we took the opportunity to make our views known with regard to the need for more regular contact with Council and as a result regular meetings are being arranged. There have been recent discussions with regard to the NDA headquarters and I can inform the Council that the board has agreed to move the headquarters into one of the newly built properties on the Westlakes site.

The NDA draft strategy will be launched on the 21st July and if agreed by the board will then go out to full consultation it will go to the NWG at the appropriate time for comments.

1.5 **Greenpeace**

The Council has received a FOI request from Greenpeace requesting all the information we hold with regard to long-term waste storage. After trawling through historical information there is nothing really to report apart from, in the main our responses to the COWRM work, where we have constantly relayed our thoughts on the importance of a community veto and the need for community compensation to be considered for wherever a long-term storage site would be located. It is our intention to meet with Greenpeace to further discuss their request.

1.6 **COWRM**

The Council has made a response to the consultation document produced by COWRM on the long-term waste storage of nuclear waste. The response was agreed by the Nuclear Working Group and included the following response specifically to be made to government

- a. Radioactive waste facilities should only be located in local areas with the community's agreement. The community, therefore need to have a veto.
- b. Government should work in a genuine partnership with affected areas. Inevitably this will lead to discussions on a package that would allow the aspirations of the community to be realised

despite the presence of a radioactive waste facility. The Government should be prepared to support such a package and recognise such an approach is common practice throughout the world.

- c. In agreeing arrangements with affected communities the Government should recognise the timescales involved and the intergenerational impacts on local communities.

The full response can be accessed through the NWG minutes on the intranet or on request.

1.7 **Finance**

Final Accounts

The finance department have worked extremely hard to ensure we achieved the statutory deadline for the production of the final accounts. We have provided all our statutory services and much more within a gross budget of £47 million with only a small underspend of £300K that will transfer to the Major Projects Fund.

1.8 **Budget Strategy**

The budget and policy framework within the Councils constitution includes a requirement for the Executive to publicise a timetable for making proposals to the Council for the budget and its proposals for consultation after publication of these initial proposals. We will be proposing to follow the same strategy as we have the past 2 years with the additional elements that will have to take into consideration the efficiencies we need to make through the Gershon review and the new CPA methodology that requires a more rigorous scrutiny of the budget process. The OSC committees apart from OSC P&R who have the responsibility for overall scrutiny of the budget, therefore cannot be involved in the early stages will carry out this scrutiny.

2 **EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

Subject: Statement of Internal Control

Date of Decision: 5 July 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/0032

Portfolio Holder: Councillor E Woodburn

Context: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 require a statement on Internal Control to be published with the financial statements

Decision

That

- a) Council be recommended to approve the statement of internal control
- a) The action plan be approved; and
- b) an updating report be submitted to the Executive in six months.

3 **EXECUTIVE DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

Subject: Draft Revenue Outturn 2004/05 For General Fund and Housing Revenue Account HRA

Date of Decision: 14 June 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/021

Context: This report informs members of the draft, unaudited revenue outturn General Fund and HRA for 2004/05. The report makes recommendations forwards and transfers

Decision

That a) the outturn position be noted

- b) the carry forwards to 2005/06 as totalling £302,178 for General Fund be approved;
- c) the balances on L&ES activities of £96,403 be transferred to the Strategic Reserve Account;
- d) the balance on Contingencies as at 31st March 05, of £117,505, (uncommitted £30,077) be transferred to 2005/06 Contingencies;
- e) the proposed potential allocations on L&ES Strategic Reserve Account for 2005/06 be approved;
- f) the earmarking of the £100,000 contribution made to General Fund Reserve from Leisure and Environmental Services (L&ES) Strategic Reserve, for future alterations to Moresby Depot, be approved in principle subject to a further report to the Executive in July.

Subject: Capital Programme Outturn

Date of Decision: 14 June 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/022

Context: This report informs Members of the pre-audit outturn position of the capital programme, for the financial year 1st April 2004 to 31st March 2005

Decision

That

- a. the changes as detailed in Appendix A of the report be approved;
- b. the carry forward of £1,879,118 (£769,085 CBC and £1,110,033 external funding), Appendix B be approved;
- c. the transfer of the net CBC under spend of £37,429 to the Major projects Fund Appendix C and D, (paragraph 3.11) be approved subject to :-
 - i) £3015 (Egremont Shop Front Scheme) & £8644 (Millom HERS), detailed in paragraphs 3.3 7 3.4 of the report, be carried forward and used as match funding for future market town initiatives; and
- d. the position at the year-end be noted.

Subject: Overview and Scrutiny Report Back on Call-In

Date of Decision: 5 July 2005

Decision Reference: EXE/05/0037

Context:

Item 14 of the Executive of 24th May 2005, with respect to a financial irregularity pertaining to a Dignity at Work Case was called in by three members. The Chair and Vice Chair agreed to the call-in with the proviso that it dealt only with the financial irregularity, which had taken place and the way in which it was reported. This is a report back to the Executive with the findings of the Committee.

Decision

That a) the report be noted; and

b) the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder – Resources and Local Democracy be appointed to attend the sub group meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Performance and Resources to review the Dignity at Work policy, which would recommend a revised policy to the Joint Consultative and Safety Panel and thereafter to Council.