

Nuclear New Build Nominations

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Leader Elaine Woodburn
LEAD OFFICER: Fergus McMorrow. Director of Development
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Summary and Recommendation:

This report considers the issues around the nomination of New Nuclear Power sites In Copeland.

It is recommended that

1. The Nuclear Working Group note the fact based site specific response to the initial Government consultation, due to conclude on the 14th May.
2. The NWG consider how the council should be involved in the major consultation in the Autumn and express any views on the nature of that consultation, and

the Executive is asked to :

3. Clarify the Councils policy position as set out in para 4.1
4. Authorise officers to explore all means of covering the costs of work involved and in particular by exploring agreements with the industry
5. Agree in principle to engaging with the LGA special interest group looking at this
6. Urge the NDA to move as quickly as possible towards the sale of the site next to Sellafield

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In January 2008 following extensive consultation, the Government issued its White Paper 'Meeting the Energy Challenge: A White Paper on Nuclear Power'. The White Paper outlines the Government's belief that new nuclear power stations should have a role to play in the national future energy mix alongside other low carbon sources. It also states that that it would be in the public interest to allow energy companies the option of investing in new nuclear power stations; and that the Government will take active steps to facilitate this. In addition, it will be for energy companies to fund, develop and build new nuclear power stations in the UK, including meeting the full costs of decommissioning and their full share of waste management costs.

2. CONTEXT: ENERGY COAST MASTERPLAN

- 2.1 The Energy Coast Plan, which is fully supported by this Council, takes a positive stance in relation to the development of new nuclear power stations in Copeland as part of the transition of our local economy. We have been actively working with partners to promote such development in the vicinity of Sellafield one of the three nominated sites. The latter was submitted by the NDA but is not yet available to the private sector as it has yet to be auctioned.
- 2.2 The employment that would be created by new nuclear power stations would make an important contribution to Copeland's future. The construction period will create many thousands of jobs and, if timed well, could offset the decline of jobs on the Sellafield site itself. The long term operational jobs created would also make a significant contribution. We need to continue our work with partners to develop the business case for new nuclear power stations in Copeland. In particular, we need to resolve issues with government and the private sector around the infrastructure needed for future electricity transmission.

3. NATIONAL PROCESS

- 3.1 However, whilst that work continues the national process for preparing the National Policy Statement that will agree the location of specific sites and provide a planning framework for decisions of the Infrastructure Planning Commission, is moving forward. Initially this involves the nominations of sites around the Country. Eleven have been nominated including three in Copeland. The site next to Sellafield, a site near Braystones and a site near Haverigg . Details of these nominations are separately available for examination in Libraries. Nominations were notified by the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) on 15th April. An initial one month consultation window is open until 14th May purely for comments to be submitted on the accuracy of the information in the nomination submissions. This allows a check to be done by local communities before the government start assessing the nominations in detail. Significant amount of work will be done to check the suitability of all sites submitted including sustainability and habitat appraisals.
- 3.2 Whereas, the current consultation is short and aimed at allowing factual check , a major consultation will take place in the autumn and there will be the opportunity to consider in more detail the suitability of the sites proposed. DECC are seeking our views on how the Council would wish to be engaged in that process which will be led by DECC.
- 3.3 I have indicated to DECC that they will need to consider the means of consultation in each area as all areas are very different. In Copeland, of course, we have three sites, one we have promoted and two brought forward

- 3.4 Whilst the planning decision on the development will not be a local one as it will be taken by the new Infrastructure Planning Commission, the resource burden on this authority will be, not just in the planning department. This is a major area of concern for other Local Authorities with nominated sites. This is borne out by the experience of West Somerset where EDF are already forging ahead on the planning side at their own risk. We are unusual in having three nominated sites two of them being Greenfield. In addition, the full extent of our role in relation to the IPC has yet to be unravelled.
- 3.5 It may be some time before the preferred site or sites for development in Copeland are identified. This will create great uncertainty for local residents and major resource issues for the council. The situation may be considerably eased by the early auctioning of the NDA site next Sellafield. Depending on the successful bidder a rationalisation of proposals could result.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The three sites have a different history of Council involvement. Some confusion may exist regarding the Council's position and it may be helpful to clarify the Council's position. It is proposed that this could be stated as being:
- 1) The Council continues to support the principle of new nuclear power stations being built in the Borough.
 - 2) The council continues to support the nomination of the site next to Sellafield.
 - 3) The Council will consider the need for alternative sites for nuclear power stations in the light of detailed consideration of the suitability of the site near Sellafield and further consideration of the alternative sites that have now been nominated. In doing so the council will have regard to the views of local people and the wider effects on the economy and the environment
- 4.2 In addition, The Council should request that the NDA move ahead as quickly as possible with the auctioning of the Sellafield option to help remove uncertainty.

5. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)

5.1 The issue of Council resources to engage adequately in the process should be addressed as a matter of urgency so that the local community can be properly represented in these national level decisions. All options should be explored for resolving this including the use of powers for charging for discretionary service under section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 and Planning Performance Agreements. We are in discussion with the LGA about support for this and a LGA special interest group is being set up. It does however also take resources to engage in this!

6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

6.1 Nuclear New Build has major implications for delivering elements of our Promoting Prosperity theme. This not only relates to the direct economic effects of such a development but also the potential affect on infrastructure and environment and housing.

List of Appendices: A – Nomination for land adjacent to Sellafield
B – Nomination for Braystones
C - Nomination for Kirksanton

List of Background Documents: NDA Draft. Site nomination documents

List of Consultees:

Corporate Team, Leader; Deputy Leader Councillor Allan Holliday

CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed. This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the report in which it has been covered.

Impact on Crime and Disorder	None directly
Impact on Sustainability	Yes significantly
Impact on Rural Proofing	None directly
Health and Safety Implications	None
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	None directly
Children and Young Persons Implications	Major implications for future employment opportunities
Human Rights Act Implications	None
Section 151 Officer Comments	
Monitoring Officer Comments	

