

WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE BRADWELL MONITORING COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY 8 JULY 2021 AT 10.00AM

PRESENT Councillor John Akker
 Councillor Julie Baker
 Councillor Sophie Weaver
 Peter Banks, Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR), Government Department
 of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), Non-Governmental
 Organisations (NGO) Nuclear Forums, BANNG
 Jane Dixon, Tollesbury & Mersea Native Oyster Fishery Company Ltd
 Shirley Swan, BANNG
 Town Clerk, Vanessa Allen

21/010 APPOINT NEW CHAIRPERSON

Councillor Baker nominated Councillor Akker to Chair this meeting. Councillor Akker confirmed happy to Chair, Councillor Weaver seconded.

21/011 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Councillor Sylvia Wargent, Councillor Wood, Bea Chandler and Roger Mullis.

21/012 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were declarations of interest received by Councillors Akker and Baker as members of STOP350 and of Mersea Island Society. Councillor Weaver and Peter Banks as members of Blackwater Against New Nuclear Group (BANNG).

21/013 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 12 JANUARY 2021 AND MATTERS ARISING

Councillor Akker proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2021 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Councillor Baker confirmed.
There were no matters arising as these will be dealt with by Peter Banks' report.

21/014 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM MR PETER BANKS

Peter Banks gave an update to the Committee, divided into Past, Present and Phantasy.

Past

The former Bradwell Nuclear Power Station, we will label Bradwell A (BRA).
BRA was one of the first set of civil nuclear fission reactors built in the UK under the brand MAGNOX (which referred to the casing of the Uranium fuel). Opened in 1962 and closed in 2002.

Moving partially into the **Present**, what is left to deal with?

All fuel rods, classed as High Level Waste (HLW), taken to Sellafield. All Low LW taken to Drigg. Remaining Intermediate LW (ILW), after a disastrous move to dissolve it in Nitric Acid and dump the effluent into the Blackwater, is stored on site in the ISF (Interim Storage Facility) to be held there prior to shipping to a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) for High/Intermediate LW, more on that later.

The reactor vessel and the graphite blocks therein are all still there and will be for another 61 years at least, hence the shiny buildings strangely called Safestores. The waste on final decommissioning will be classed as ILW but could also contain some HLW because MAGNOX reactors required a Neutron source to trigger the fission process. This was (probably) highly radioactive and toxic Americium Am 241 (Ammer-iss-ee-um). As well as the ISF there is another Safestore building which covers the old fuel ponds, found to be too radioactive to level which was first thought.

Present

We then move to the proposed Bradwell B. There are a number of parallel streams going on here:

- A) The Bradwell B company is behind the Stage One consultation that commenced in March 2020 and was the first 'stage' in applying for a DCO, Development Consent Order, a bit like making a planning application but to central government rather than an LPA.
- B) Bradwell B also applied to Maldon District Council to extend the investigative works which MDC turned down. Now BRB has appealed but a decision has not yet been reached by the Planning Inspectorate.
- C) Additionally BRB applied for an electricity generating licence with OFGEM which has subsequently been granted.
- D) In 2017 an entity called the requesting party, General Nuclear Systems Ltd. (GNSL), supposedly a different part of the CGN empire, submitted their design for the reactor to the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) who, along with the Environment Agency. This process is called the Generic Design Assessment (GDA). The consultation for that was from January to April 2021.
- E) Without the GDA and a further raft of licensing and permissions plus the development consent order (DCO) the proposal would not be able to go ahead.

And the **Phantasies** (in vague chronological order)?

- A) SMRs on the old BRA site. Highly unlikely.
- B) Fusion. Belport Ltd has, very recently, managed to get Bradwell added to the list of the UKAEA of sites. Interestingly MDC knew nothing about this prior to the announcement. Fusion is still a long, long way off if it ever becomes a commercial possibility.
- C) Site for the GDF. Historically, in the mid 1980s, Bradwell was proposed as a potential site for a low level waste repository by a govt. Dept. called Nirex. Due to local opposition the plan was dropped along with the other sites proposed. However, astonishingly, at a meeting of the Radioactive Waste. Management Exchange (RWM Exchange) on 24th June, it was announced that two sites in the Eastern Region have been put forward as potential locations for a GDF. Remember these would take ILW and HLW, the latter including Spent Fuel (SF). Despite requests the secrecy surrounding the geographical locations has been maintained so whilst Bradwell has not been mentioned it is still worth bearing in mind that the East has an undue amount of 'preference' for the Nuclear Regional Centre.

Councillor Akker thanked Peter Banks for his comprehensive report and for his work on this Committee.

21/015 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The Chairperson will be set at the next Council meeting being held on Monday 12 July, the Chairperson will then set the date of the next meeting.

There was discussion;

- that links need to be maintained with Peter Banks, BANNG and Bradwell community groups,
- future Committee meeting to consider status, (Monitoring group or Committee), composition of the committee and its aims and objectives, terms of reference and the relationship that this committee has with BANNG.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12.10pm