ONR NGO Forum - Meeting Minutes
17 April 2024 (1000-1500) – The Wellington Suite, The Wellington by Blue Orchid Hotels, 71 Vincent Square, London, SW1P 2PA

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| In Attendance (ONR):  | In Attendance (NGO): |
| Rachel Grant (RG) – Director of Policy and Communications (ONR co-chair)Mark Foy (MF) – Chief Executive and Chief Nuclear InspectorSarah Brown (SB) – Head of PolicyAlistair Hillery (AH) – Deputy Director of Regulation – Core Operations and Regulatory DevelopmentKobina Lokko (KL) – Senior Policy Advisor**Secretariat/organisers:**Lydia Bower – Communications ManagerEnid Lovelady – Communications Officer | Dr Jill Sutcliffe (JS) – Low Level Radiation and Health Conference (NGO co-chair)Katy Attwater (KA) – Stop HinkleyRuth Balogh (RB) – West Cumbria and North Lakes Friends of the EarthPeter Banks (PBan) – Blackwater Against New NuclearProf. Andy Blowers (AB) – Blackwater Against New NuclearPeter Burt (PB) – Nuclear Awareness Group/Nuclear Education TrustPaul Collins (PC)– Stop Sizewell CDavid Cullen (DC) – Nuclear Information ServiceAlison Downes (AD) – Stop Sizewell CTony Fittock (TF) – Bradwell B Action NetworkAllan Jeffrey (AJ) – Stop HinkleyTor Justad (TJ) – Highlands Against Nuclear PowerIan Ralls (IR) – Friends of the Earth Nuclear NetworkJo Smolden (JS) – Stop HinkleyTrish Whitham (TW) – Nuclear Informaion Service Pete Wilkinson (PW) – Together Against Sizewell CChris Wilson (CW) – Together Against Sizewell CAlan McGoff (AM) – Environment Agency |

1. Welcome and introductions
	1. Rachel Grant (RG) opened the forum and thanked attendees for travelling to London to attend. Jill Sutcliffe (JS) welcomed RG back to her role after her time off recovering from surgery. JS went on to thank Peter Burt (PB) for organising the election for a new co-chair of the forum and Katy Attwater (KA) for her work in organising the recent climate change workshops. JS invited Mark Foy (MF) to deliver his presentation.
2. ONR Presentation – Mark Foy
	1. MF began his presentation by outlining the main themes, starting with Advanced Gas-cooled Reactors (AGRs). MF explained that AGRs are coming to the end of generation and that EDF is currently planning for all of the AGRs to be shut down by the end of 2030. He went on to explain that Hinkley Point B, Hunterston B and Dungeness B are now all shut down and are at various stages of defueling.
	2. MF advised that EDF is looking to justify whether it can extend the operating life of reactors for a couple of years. ONR has looked at the initial case and while there are no objections currently, the challenge for EDF will be to provide a well underpinned safety case.
	3. MF went on to explain that graphite cracking and ageing of steam generators are life limiting features and any extension must be supported by a safety case that addressed these aspects. He noted that EDF is seeking a lifetime extension for Sizewell B but reiterated that EDF will have to provide safety justifications for extended periods.
	4. Alison Downes (AD) asked whether MF could confirm that there is no expectation for AGRs to go beyond 2030.
	5. MF responded that 2030 is when AGRs will have ceased operation and it is difficult to see how they would go beyond that.
	6. Peter Burt (PB) asked whether ONR considered site specific requirements when looking at safety cases.
	7. MF confirmed that ONR does consider site specific requirements, assessing the adequacy of the site specific safety case prior to giving formal permission for the construction of a new facility to commence. He also added that ONR has to be satisfied that licensees are investing in the workforce and its capability. He reiterated that ONR will assess all the key facets of the site specific justification.
	8. MF gave an update on Taishan and explained that there was nothing new to report since Shane Turner (ST) provided an update at November’s NGO forum. This is because no work has been reported to ONR since the last meeting with other regulators. MF went on to say that ST has a meeting w/c 22 April with other regulators, where the Chinese will give their feedback regarding the various issues and what is needed to resolve them.

**Action 23.21 - ONR to provide NGOs with an update on Taishan following Shane Turner’s meeting with other regulators**

**Post meeting note:**

**ONR met with the nuclear regulators of China, Finland and France in late April, where the current situation regarding the EPR reactors was shared and discussed. In terms of Taishan fuel and core operational experience:**

* **At the time of the meeting, Taishan unit 1 was reported as back operating (in fuel cycle 3) and unit 2 was in its third planned refuelling outage. No new fuel and core phenomena were reported and it was noted that measures to address the phenomena are being progressively implemented.**
* **In terms of Olkiluoto 3, at the time of the meeting this was in its first refuelling outage. No fuel rod clad failures were reported to have been detected in its first fuel cycle.**

**The regulators agreed to ongoing collaboration to ensure the phenomena are fully understood and consistent approaches are taken to address them.**

**ONR continues to engage with the Hinkley Point C (HPC) licensee on proposed changes to the fuel assembly design and investigations into potential measures to reduce reactor coolant flow turbulence (via, for example, a potential double drum modification (DDM)). ONR’s specialist inspectors will assess the basis for these changes once they are submitted to ONR, and before they are implemented at HPC and Sizewell C.**

* 1. MF continued that there would be ample time to address any learning from Taishan should they impact the Hinkley Point C (HPC) project. The technical understanding is still being developed so that both ONR and EDF obtain the full learning.
	2. Allan Jeffrey (AJ) asked whether Taishan 2 had been working all this time.
	3. MF responded that he was not aware that Unit 2 has had any prolonged periods of non-operation, and that Okiluoto had not encountered the same challenges as Taishan.
	4. MF moved on to update the forum about Sizewell C (SZC), outlining ONR’s position in 2020 when the application for a nuclear site license (NSL) was received. MF explained that there are currently two areas where assurance is needed, including 3rd party liability insurance. ONR is looking at arrangements around funding and insurance. MF said ONR will be in touch with NGOs about visiting the SZC community to explain the processes and decisions that are made\*.
	5. AD asked about the funding of the SZC project.
	6. MF explained that ONR is looking to get assurance regarding ongoing funding for the SZC project, so is currently unable to provide a figure on the funding limit. AD said that EDF had reached its funding limit.
	7. Pete Wilkinson (PW) asked whether the absence of a water supply/desalination plant would affect ONR’s ability to issue a site license.
	8. MF said this would not impact the decision for a NSL. ONR is aware of the issue and will consider how it is resolved by EDF but it won’t affect the decision on whether or not to grant a NSL.
	9. MF explained that ONR, working with the Environment Agency (EA), would be mindful of all the issues relating to climate change on site. Alan McGoff (AM) added that the EA has an arrangement with ONR about how activities regarding flood risk and coastal erosion are conducted, which are available on ONR’s website.
	10. Chris Wilson (CW) asked about the NSL license and sea defences, which are separate from the Development Consent Order (DCO) and questioned whether the possible tie in of Sizewell B (SZB) defences would affect whether a NSL was issued.
	11. MF explained that the impact of climate change on sea defences plays a role in ONR’s decision making, and the team have ensured ONR is satisfied that there will be no detrimental impact on the SZB site. This has been considered by civil engineers as well as environmental specialists and will be subject to ongoing review.
	12. MF went on to explain that ONR wants to ensure the funding provision made at the outset of the SZC project is sufficient to take the project forward safely and securely, adding that there must be provision available for any necessary restoration work, should at some point the project not proceed.
	13. Andy Blowers (AB) asked whether MF would agree that the SZC site isn’t ideal for sea defences.
	14. MF responded that ONR will regulate SZC to ensure the design is robust enough to remain safe, emphasizing that it is EDF that has the responsibility to demonstrate that the design remains safe in the various hazard conditions.
	15. MF said that the team have looked at many aspects of climate change including flooding and are satisfied with what EDF is proposing to date. MF pointed out that ONR has already demonstrated it will not grant a license if at any point it is not satisfied, citing its initial decision not to grant a nuclear site licence. He also added that ONR has the powers to require changes or to stop operations.
	16. Paul Collins (PC) asked about the new spent fuel strategy.
	17. MF said that it will be dry cask fuel storage; the intention is to take the irradiated fuel from the reactors, place it in the cooling pond for a defined period of time, then move it into a dry cask for onsite storage. This is accepted as a safe way of storing fuel. When the fuel strategy is mature enough EDF will share the technical details with ONR.
	18. Following on from this, KA asked a further question about the fuel strategy, to which MF said that ONR will consider the design to make sure it is adequate; the intention is that eventually the fuel will go into a geological disposal facility (GDF).
	19. AD asked for an update on the turbine disintegration issue at Sizewell.
	20. MF explained that EDF is still developing the detailed solution for the turbine disintegration. MF explained he was unable to go into the technical detail but provided assurance that ONR will be ensuring that an appropriate solution is in place and is working with EDF to ensure this.

**Action 23.22 – ONR to provide details of the plan for turbine disintegration at Sizewell when possible.**

**Post meeting note:**

**ONR is continuing its regulatory engagements on the development of Sizewell C’s Design and Safety case, including the safety case for Turbine Disintegration. At this stage of the project, ONR is content with the direction of travel.**

* 1. KA explained that NGOs had offered to provide local knowledge in a meeting with ONR inspectors but this hadn’t been taken up on the basis of the detailed designs having not yet been received. MF reiterated that ONR will be in touch with NGOs about coming to Suffolk to talk to communities affected by SZC and to take up the NGOs offer.
	2. PW asked for ONR’s perspective on the most recent report on the effects of low dose radiation. MF explained that the topic had been discussed and debated with NGOs a number of times previously and ONR did not have anything new to add to the existing response.

**Action 23.23 - Rachel Grant to check our response from Gareth Thomas as reports may be more recent and if necessary will come back with a new response*.***

**Post meeting note:**

**ONR’s response has not changed. We will ensure we have the latest position in advance of the next NGO forum.**

* 1. MF then gave an update on cyber security at Sellafield. He explained that ONR is prosecuting Sellafield after a lack of traction on delivering needed improvements. There have been changes in senior leadership on site and progress is now being made, but ONR was not content with the response in the intervening period. It is for this reason that ONR is taking Sellafield to court. MF reiterated that the site is safe and secure in relation to information technology (IT) and operating technology (OT). He explained that IT and OT are two distinct systems and ONR’s concerns are with IT processes and procedures. ONR is content that Sellafield is safe and secure but cyber security remains an ONR priority and is a commitment in the CNI annual report.
	2. Ian Ralls (IR) asked whether the separation between IT and OT was absolute.
	3. MF responded yes as this is a requirement for nuclear sites.
	4. IR asked what software Sellafield is using.
	5. MF responded that modern systems are used but Sellafield wasn’t providing ONR with assurance around certain issues even when prompted. MF again reiterated that these issues were not to do with the OT systems.
	6. David Cullen (DC) shared some feedback and said ONR had issued a non-denial denial which didn’t feel very transparent; MF explained that the language used was chosen for a reason, due to the nature of the topic, but ONR will take the feedback on board.
	7. Ruth Balogh (RB) commented on personnel security at Sellafield. MF responded that Sellafield has a security plan to cover all facets of security, which includes the requirement for appropriate vetting of its staff. ONR assesses the arrangements set out in the Security Plan, including how people are managed and trained, areas also covered as part of our inspections.
	8. MF moved on to update on Zaporizhzhia, where he explained that the reactors have been shut down for two years. He explained that natural heat losses account for the low levels of decay heat from the fuel. ONR has gained assurance that the site is safe, based on our own regulatory work as well as the work the Ukrainian national regulator has completed and shared with the international regulatory community.
	9. IR asked about the reactor design at Zaporizhzhia.
	10. MF replied that they are Russian designed VVERs. He went on to say that the reactors at Zaporizhzhia are a modern design and regulated by a good regulator operating in a legal framework that has been subject to international peer review.
	11. MF acknowledged that although the IAEA has a presence on the Zaporizhzhia site, they have to notify Russian occupiers in advance when and what they want to inspect, making it likely they are not getting a true picture. There is a maintenance backlog on site. MF explained that he is meeting with other Western regulators and will be asking Ukrainian colleagues to be open and honest about what we can do to help them from a nuclear safety perspective.
	12. AB said that Zaporizhzhia is on the front line under Russian control and protecting the site may or may not be in Russian interests, which could be an element of warfare. AB asked whether the regulators are looking at the strategic issues of the consequences of this.
	13. MF responded that all issues and what they mean are being considered by other agencies, including what it means to have nuclear reactors in a war zone and the challenges this presents to regulation and safety. Europe as a whole is very mindful of the situation.
	14. DC asked for the NGOs to be kept updated if there are changes in international regulation regarding warfare.

**Action 23.24 - ONR to keep NGOs updated if there are changes in international regulation regarding warfare.**

* 1. PW asked whether ONR is concerned that SMRs could be built in numerous places around the country which could be targets for future terrorist activity. He asked whether ONR could bring this concern to the government’s attention, as SMRs will cost a lot of time and money and will ultimately end in disaster.
	2. MF replied that there is lots of ambition being expressed around SMRs and about what they can do and their levels of safety. He confirmed that if ONR doesn’t believe an SMR is safe and secure to deploy to a specific location we will not allow it to happen. He added that the government is developing siting criteria, which will be consulted on, that will set out the requirements in relation to the siting of new reactors in the future. The subject will be covered in detail in the next item.
1. Update on National Policy Statement for new nuclear power generation – Kobina Lokko
	1. Kobina Lokko (KL) started his update on siting criteria by outlining the development of policy options on siting criteria for the new nuclear National Policy Statement (NPS).
	2. KL explained that ONR had been working with the government on the consultation document on the siting approach for the new nuclear NPS. ONR’s points had been taken on board and reflected in relevant parts of the DESNZ consultation document. KL commended DESNZ NPS policy colleagues for the structured approach to their engagement of the regulators, including ONR, in the production of the NPS consultation document on siting criteria.
	3. KL highlighted that the consistent theme in ONR’s advice had been to ensure government understood the distinctions between different public/regulatory bodies when it came to judgements about the processes for which they were responsible.
	4. KL gave the example of the Planning Inspectorate for England (PINs), who make decisions about the adequacy of a developer’s site suitability assessment (SSA) and readiness to move through the planning process. Separately, ONR makes judgements about a prospective licensee’s safety submissions as part of the nuclear site licensing process. KL continued that ONR didn’t want our role in licensing to be confused (or fettered) by planning matters that were judgements for PINs to make.
	5. KL said that the reverse was true for PINs and DESNZ needed to ensure the NPS policy properly reflected that. Despite the advice ONR gave to PINs under the planning process, the judgements that were required under the planning process were for PINs to make.
	6. KL said that, although ONR’s and PIN’s respective processes were discrete, ONR needed to be clear where planning and licensing might inform each other. KL highlighted that ONR gives advice to PINs on developer’s SSA under PINs process. ONR also requires the developer to submit a site justification report (SJR) as part of the ONR licensing process. The SJR will reference the SSA required under the planning process.
	7. KL said that, in respect of ONR’s nuclear site licensing process, the recently issued early engagement framework was launched so that those new to nuclear licensing engage with ONR at an earlier stage to understand our process. The ONR process also highlights the need for developers to pursue their separate planning obligations at the same time with PINs. As mentioned previously, ONR would also highlight where the two processes informed each other. KL explained that going forward, ONR would continue to ensure its advice informed the DESNZ policy development process. KA asked who is submitting advice; KL highlighted that ONR had provided its advice in a formal response to the consultation and as part of the engagement. KL was the co-ordinator of ONR’s advice supported by a team of the relevant regulatory colleagues.
	8. IR said that ONR should be telling DESNZ what’s acceptable, not the other way round.
	9. KL responded that government departments can ask for advice and listen but ONR cannot control whether or not they act on it. He added that the team ONR is engaging with did listen, consider and act on ONR’s advice. MF added that if our advice wasn’t listened to we’d have to be very robust on our position and if we felt strongly that it was not listened to ONR would escalate to more senior levels.
	10. KL highlighted that SSAs were essentially submitted under the planning process to demonstrate that a site wasn’t a ‘non-starter’. That was a judgement for PINs to make, informed by ONR advice. The prospective licensees arrangements for safe operation of the site were for ONR to judge as part of the nuclear site licensing process.
	11. KA said that PINS rejected SZC because of issues with the water supply but they were overridden, therefore they can’t be the decision maker.
	12. KL responded that while PINS is the decision maker regarding the site suitability assessment, their recommendations can be overridden by ministers. AM followed up to explain that PINS does the work and research to make a recommendation to the minister. The Secretary of State could either accept or reject that recommendation as they are the final decision maker.
	13. DC asked whether ONR would have sight of the draft response to consultation before it goes to ministers. KL said that ONR would be helping them understand the regulatory issues arising from the consultation responses and ensuring ONR’s advice had been properly captured.
	14. AB said that ONR’s role in siting decisions is crucial and ONR is now involved in policy making. He said the situation is critical and it would be useful to know how far ONR would consult with the wider community who have a stake in the future development, as otherwise it’s very one-sided. AB asked whether ONR would be open about the sites that are not suitable early on, and asked if not, why ONR wouldn’t say so? AB continued that we don’t know who these developers are and it is ONR’s role to make sure they are viable entities, yet perception is that many are not viable. AB explained he wanted ONR to be more open and honest about sites that won’t get the go-ahead, and hoped ONR will take the responsible decision in its attitudes.
	15. MF responded by recognising the importance of what AB had said. He explained that currently there is no consultation on the sites being considered by new nuclear; the only sites available are the eight previously identified associated with existing nuclear power reactors, either operating or in decommissioning. He added that ONR, as part of its site licensing and assessments, will confirm that a site and the reactor design being deployed is suitable and will remain safe. He also stated that ONR has an ethos of openness and transparency and that major regulatory decisions will always be communicated to stakeholders.
	16. MF continued that ONR’s new early engagement framework invites vendors to speak to ONR at an early stage as they develop their designs. It allows ONR to engage with them, to ensure they understand regulatory expectations and requirements early in the project, so that they do the right things. This also helps ONR prioritise resource.

1. Update on recently concluded climate change workshops
	1. KA gave some background to the climate change workshops and said that NGOs believe that ONR is excellent at regulating existing stations and their waste. However, NGOs want ONR to explore questions about whether new nuclear is the right way to go and whether a GDF will happen in time.
	2. KA explained that MF suggested organising the climate change workshops which went on to cover most of the issues discussed in detail. RG expressed her thanks to KA and the committee who helped to organise the workshops. She went on to say that part of the reason for the workshops was ONR’s commitment to openness and transparency. Both ONR and NGOs recognise that the Q&A approach has its role, but NGOs had wanted a mature dialogue and the extended opportunity to have a thorough engagement on the topic.
	3. RG explained that the workshops were a journey as the first session was virtual and following mixed reviews, subsequent workshops were held in person. For the first time in the forum’s history, the second and third workshops were externally facilitated, and while we are unsure that we will use external facilitation again, it was a productive exercise to get us to the point we’re at now.
	4. RG outlined the next steps and explained that the draft report written by the facilitators was not suitable to share in its original form, and had since been heavily edited. RG said this was nearly ready to be shared with the committee.

**Action 23.25 – ONR to share climate change report with NGO climate change committee.**

**Post meeting note:**

**The revised draft of the climate change report was shared with the NGO climate change committee and in July was shared with the wider NGO forum. Planning is now underway for the next round of climate change workshops.**

* 1. RG considered what was next for the climate change workshops and asked the room about outstanding matters and whether we should continue with the same theme. RG said she would be happy to explore more topics but was conscious that this requires an investment of NGO time too. RG said that ONR will arrange a follow up meeting to agree what to do next and where to focus.
	2. AD added that she would welcome including people from other organisations, for example from policy backgrounds, in the next round of workshops.
	3. RG responded that she will build this idea into thinking about next time.
	4. PB thanked RG and KA for all their work, saying it was a useful journey. He asked whether ONR could run an evaluation before the next workshops. PB added that the climate change work was not finished yet and he would like to see it move forward with the policy initiatives from ONR’s side and the proper outcomes seen. RG responded that this was on ONR’s mind.
	5. MF said that the CNI themed inspection this year was on climate change and will look at how nuclear facilities are equipped to consider and tackle climate change issues. He added that the report is due at the end of this year.
	6. RG added that the recent NRC report highlighted ONR as an example of good practice in this space. MF stated the view that ANVS (Netherlands national regulator) was probably ahead of ONR in terms of climate change considerations but others were probably not as advanced in their thinking.
	7. AB said that there must be an enthusiasm to move forward on climate change to see real progress. AB suggested a focus on resilience and timescales as ONR is involved in limited timescales. AB said that NGOs and ONR seem to share the same views about moving forward but added he didn’t think we should be searching for outcomes as we all have different views on climate change. He suggested outcomes may be theoretical.
	8. MF added that if the timing could align with the CNI themed inspection, any new workshops could pick up the outcomes of the inspection.
1. Collaborative session on ONR’s future strategy
	1. Sarah Brown (SB) led the session and explained that in a number of smaller groups, NGOs and ONR staff should identify key drivers of change using the PESTLE analysis that will impact on ONR’s operating environment. SB asked groups to map these drivers onto sheets before facilitators would share the key drivers from discussions.
	2. NGOs and ONR staff were part of three groups that discussed different drivers and how they will affect ONR’s actions. After a 20 minute discussion, each group reported back. Key themes that arose were societal drivers, including conversations about community, who and what community engagement is/is for, and where this sits in terms of local authorities and demographics, noting that although NGOs are often well represented, they don’t often engage with the general public or the younger generation.
	3. Discussion also covered fact versus misinformation, using examples of social media, and clarity over holding developers and government to account.
	4. Groups felt that political and economic drivers were important on a spectrum of certainty. Some drivers were less easy to pin down in terms of implications, including the general election and what the outcome might be, and threats from cyber and AI and how this could impact on ONR’s regulation.
	5. Groups felt that the economy, both domestic and international in terms of investment into nuclear, was a driver, and considered the likelihood of investment in China or elsewhere. They discussed energy security and how that might drive certain decisions.
	6. Less important factors included monitoring the carbon output of nuclear, but NGOs acknowledged this was outside ONR’s vires, conversations about low level radiation, and potable water at sites which is important for sites to operate.
2. Update on ONR staffing and skills
	1. Alistair Hillery (AH) explained that his role was about asking whether ONR is doing the right things to inform regulatory decisions. He explained that one piece of work was about considering whether ONR inspectors have the skills, confidence, and capability to deliver effective regulation.
	2. AH added that ONR knows there are things we could do to improve our position and outlined the challenges of resourcing future demands. He explained the inspection work required for the transition of the AGR fleet including life extensions will demand resource. ONR needs to make sure there are assessment inspectors available.
	3. AH said that we are starting to see an acceleration of new build design and construction and ONR is trying to support government ambitions through GDA, which is a big commitment. AH explained that ONR must balance requests from government and focus resources on risk, which is a balance that is continuously considered.
	4. AH said that ANTs are an international piece of work but ONR is unable to dedicate too much resource in this area as this would mean taking inspectors away from front line regulation.
	5. AH added that all UK nuclear facilities are ageing and it is ONR’s role to ensure any emerging problems are considered by EDF and satisfactorily addressed.
	6. AH explained that ONR has more projects ahead and has grown from having 200 to 400 inspectors in post. ONR used to have a single safety purpose but this has expanded to cover five purposes. However, ONR recognises this level of growth cannot continue and instead will consider how to use those already in post more effectively and efficiently.
	7. RB asked why this was the case.
	8. AH replied that while some areas of ONR’s work are growing in need for capacity, others are shrinking so we need to consider the risk of things happening. AH added that ONR had to diversify pipelines in order to make better decisions and new approaches that are beneficial to the organisation. AH explained the new pipelines, including nuclear grads, nuclear equivalence (which is less senior) and degree apprentices. However, upon joining ONR these recruits don’t have the expertise and so ONR has had to develop the way we recruit and train inspectors.
	9. AH outlined the changes ONR has made to job adverts and where those roles are advertised to appeal to a broader audience. Judith Hackitt (JH) added that the demographic of ONR has to change to reflect society; AH acknowledged that ONR has chosen to do so.
	10. AH explained that ONR’s new inspector development programme for new recruits aimed to give new inspectors confidence, which is a key skill for inspectors to develop before they start working in regulation.
	11. AH moved on to talk about flexible working and how ONR is trying to find the right balance of being both office based and remote. AH outlined that it is an international challenge to find recruits. In order to help address this we have seen the demand for ‘nuclear skills’ change to a broader ‘skills for nuclear’.
	12. AH explained that ONR’s organisational review is helping to bring greater efficiency and saving resource. He added that ONR’s workforce uses two planning methodologies, looking at it in tactical terms (how we will go about achieving the goals) and strategic (how we will have sufficient capability in the next five years). AH added that work is underway so there will be a detailed plan within 1-2 years when ONR will know what work is coming in and how it will be resourced. ONR will also step back and make planning assumptions and plans for the next five years. AH explained that this ensures more resilience for safeguarding capability.
	13. AH outlined how ONR had improved processes. He explained using WIReD has saved time and effort in capturing data and enables us to interact with dutyholders more openly.
	14. AH added that international collaboration is saving time and money and by working with regulators with similar standards to ONR through information exchange agreements (IEAs), we can be more efficient. AH made clear that ONR has to be careful who to share this information with.
	15. AH said that risk informed and targeted engagement is the right way to work and we have to be risk informed, which doesn’t always mean a safety risk, but any risk, e.g. financial or reputational. AH added that ONR needs to educate inspectors so they are aware it covers all risk.
	16. PW asked how ONR incorporates uncertainty of risk factors into that model.
	17. AH responded that ONR has always made decisions in a risk informed way.
	18. RB said that the government has ambitions to expand the nuclear sector and workforce but there is a risk that workforce will be poached from the next industry that needs highly skilled people ONR has invested in. RB asked whether ONR anticipates that risk for the future.
	19. MF responded that the nuclear industry has started to be more proactive regarding recruitment, recently launching a national campaign to advertise itself as a destination for graduates and others. He added that a senior level working group set up by the government is focusing on securing people with the right skills and capabilities from other industrial sectors.
	20. MF added that ONR can offer a rewarding career, different to licensees, as employees can work across all sectors of the nuclear industry, influence change and engage at senior levels quickly which is appealing. MF said that ONR already had a package in place to retain employees and works to ensure people remain in the organisation. ONR remains an attractive place to work and the attrition rate of 6% demonstrates this. MF added that this rate is monitored to ensure action can be taken to address any increase.
	21. AB asked what would happen to the skilled workers if the nuclear sector starts to diminish.
	22. JH replied that more than 80% of skills are common and it’s possible to mix and match talented people from different backgrounds to create a multi-skilled workforce. MF added that nuclear skills are a small part of what is necessary to support nuclear.
3. AOB
	1. MF went back to cover some previously discussed issues on siting, and reinforced that ONR’s role is very important. MF explained that ONR is involved in the whole process and has the opportunity to influence the framework and criteria and secure the right outcomes for the public. ONR has a duty to ensure the protection of society.
	2. MF continued that openness and transparency are key to ONR and are part of the reason why we work closely with NGOs, through the NGO forums and other sessions. MF said that ONR will look to improve communication and consultation under the new framework when it starts to be implemented, engaging with local communities, setting out what the framework is and ONR’s role within it, alongside what ONR will be doing on behalf of the public. MF reiterated that if ONR is not satisfied that standards are being met, we will say no to government or a developer. He added that ONR is independent and will inform government from an independent perspective.

**Action 23.26 – ONR to look at the NGO response to the siting consultation and consider adding 45 mins to a future forum to talk about it.**

* 1. In answer to a question about SZC, MF reiterated that ONR will be in touch with NGOs about coming to Suffolk. KA asked about local community input; MF said ONR will take this on board too.
	2. PW shared a complaint from Richard Bramhall about ONR’s refusal to make this forum hybrid. RG said ONR will revisit whether hybrid meetings are an option.
1. Summary and Close
	1. JS explained that after PB’s election process, David Cullen will take over as co-chair from the next meeting.
	2. JS thanked Dan Jones, Katie Day and Adrienne Kelbie who have been helpful from the start of her role as co-chair. JS also thanked John Large, Christine Albury, Phil Davies, and Rachel Weston who have all helped to understand the issues discussed.
	3. RG gave her thanks to JS for her big contribution over the years. RG said they had built a trusted relationship which was much appreciated, and stated that the forum would not be in the place it was now without Jill’s input.
	4. MF also expressed his thanks to JS, adding he was looking forward to working with David.

Meeting closed at 15.00

**\*Post meeting note**

**We are currently seeking to establish some potential dates for a meeting in October or November. We are mindful that if there are any legal challenges to our licensing decision, we won’t be able to discuss related matters while they are ongoing which is likely to mean we would postpone the SZC engagement until they were concluded. This will then enable us to have a full and meaningful engagement.**