

# **Sizewell C Joint Local Authorities Group meeting**

**24 May 2013**

## **Suffolk Coastal District Council**

### **Meeting Notes**

#### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Cllr Andy Smith – <b>Chairman</b>	SCDC Deputy Leader Cabinet Member for Planning and Coastal Protection
Cllr Richard Smith MVO – <b>Vice Chairman</b>	SCC Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Environment and Planning SCC for Leiston and Aldeburgh
Cllr Graham Newman	SCC Cabinet Member for Roads and Transport
Cllr Ray Herring	SCDC Leader of Council
Cllr Andrew Nunn	SCDC Cabinet Member for Green Environment
Cllr Tony Cooper	SCDC and Leiston TC
Cllr Geoff Holdcroft	SCDC Cabinet Member for Leisure and Economic Development
Cllr Andrew Reid	SCC for Wilford (Cabinet Member Assistant for Finance & Property)
Cllr Trevor Hawkins	SCDC and Leiston TC
Cllr Stephen Burroughes	SCC for Framlingham & SCDC

#### **SUPPORTING OFFICERS**

Michael Wilks	SCC Spatial Planning Projects Manager
Bob Chamberlain	SCDC Principal Planning Officer, Major Projects
Philip Ridley	SCDC/WDC Head of Planning Services
Arthur Charvonia	SCDC/WDC Assistant Chief Executive
Graham Saward	JEPU District Emergency Planning Officer
Bryn Griffiths	SCC Assistant Director Environment

#### **INVITED GUESTS**

Tom McGarry	EDF Communications and Engagement Manager
Tim Norwood	EDF Planning Manager
Kate Stinton	EDF Communications Team

## **APOLOGIES**

John Pitchford	SCC Spatial Planning and Sub-Regional Partnership Manager
Stephen Baker	SCDC/WDC Chief Executive

## **ACTION POINTS**

**AP:** EDF to provide a set of notes with details of responses received during Stage 1 Consultation.

**AP:** Site visit to be organised (possibly last 2 weeks in June, to be combined with a short-agenda meeting at Leiston).

**AP:** Workshop plans for EDF's planned series of workshops to be sent to members.

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

RS thanked previous members of the Group, in particular Cllr Guy McGregor, for their input to the programme and JLAG up to this point.

AS echoed these thanks.

### **2. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman**

RS wished to nominate AS as Chairman of the Group. The nomination was seconded by GN and with a unanimous show of hands in favour of this nomination, AS was elected as Chairman.

AS nominated RS as Vice-Chairman, seconded by AR, and with a unanimous show of hands in favour, RS was elected as Vice-Chairman.

### **3. EDF Programme Post Stage One**

Following granting of the development consent order (DCO) for Hinkley Point C by the Secretary of State in March, the nuclear site licence and design licence, along with a number of other important permits, have been issued

Discussions continue with government around the strike price and EDF's rate of return, and EDF are hopeful to reach agreement (known as commercial close) in the near future. EDF will then seek investment partners before reaching financial close later this year, and after this will proceed to construction.

EDF are looking to refocus priorities, concentrating this year mainly on design and engineering aspects of the programme.

Work is underway to complete analysis of the Stage One Consultation response.

EDF are committed to continuing discussions with officers, and are developing a programme of workshops around the main themes of the programme.

Several councillors expressed concern that there has been a reduction in the volume and pace of work being undertaken by EDF from that originally expected by both authorities.

It was highlighted that, with the reduced pace of the project, our job as local authorities, of dealing with local perceptions/aspirations/fears becomes more difficult.

EDF explained that in its view the profile of the project will be maintained to help alleviate the feeling of “peak and trough”, and pledged EDF’s commitment to work with officers to ensure steady progress is maintained and the priorities of local authorities and communities are adhered to. Steady progress avoided the need for rushing through any stages of the process and was suggested as likely to be conducive to producing high quality documentation. There was some scepticism amongst members over whether peaks of activity could be avoided.

Several councillors sought reassurance from EDF that sufficient time would be allowed in the project plan for them to engage fully in discussions.

Some questions around levels of resource available from EDF were raised and assurance sought that the current level would be maintained, and that EDF would be prepared to increase resource as necessary if the project pace accelerates.

EDF explained that officer time will continue to be reimbursed as it currently is, even if the pace increases, and highlighted that their expenditure in this regards is around £100,000 up to April 2013. He also said it was premature to talk of an increase in pace and therefore spend.

#### **4. Stage 1 Consultation Responses: Presentation by EDF**

EDF gave a presentation taking the Group through a series of charts depicting the response received against each element consulted upon, with around 1300 responses having been received. It was emphasised that analysis of responses was a qualitative as well as a quantitative one, i.e. the consensus of view would be looked at alongside the strength of arguments

Discussion was had concerning the publication of individual respondents’ comments on the consultation (with appropriate details redacted), as councillors felt strongly that the responses should be published in full now, as there would be a lot of value in some of the detailed comments made. There was also concern around EDF’s apparent lack of

transparency in this regard.

EDF were clear that the responses will not be published in full until the DCO is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), and feel it inappropriate to release the full responses now as they only present a snap shot of the story so far. All the responses from Stage 1 and future stages of consultation will be made available alongside the Consultation Report when it is submitted to PINS. EDF suggested it was the role of PINS, rather than the local authorities (as consultees themselves) to evaluate the consultation responses. EDF's approach was said to be consistent with that taken by all other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects to date

Councillors were surprised and not satisfied with this position and requested to see a copy of the notes which accompanied EDF's presentation at today's meeting, as these contain further detail behind the figures given in the charts. It was confirmed that EDF would be prepared to provide these notes.

**AP:** EDF to provide set of notes containing detail behind today's presentation, to the Group.

[EDF left the meeting at this point]

#### **5. Actions from previous meeting**

All actions are complete with the exception of one – the site visit which is still to be organised by the project office.

#### **6. Sizewell C Programme Update/Resources**

The Group reflected on the update given by EDF, with most councillors expressing dissatisfaction with the pace EDF are seeking to work at. Some councillors were concerned that the programme of workshops was not extensive or detailed enough and that further work was needed on this programme to ensure that consultation was adequate

The consensus at the meeting was that we needed to respond to EDF in a strong, assertive manner making very clear our dissatisfaction with the proposed timeline.

A letter is being sent out imminently to Richard Mayson at EDF by Bryn Griffiths (for Suffolk CC) and Stephen Baker (for Suffolk Coastal DC) with this purpose. At the request of several members of the Group, BG agreed to circulate a copy of this letter to the Group once it was sent.

Officers reiterated to the Group that this is EDF's project and that the pace of activities will inevitably therefore be set by them.

The series of workshops were discussed. There will be 18 in total with subjects including design, park and ride north/south, transport strategy, social-economic assessment and rail linkages.

Each workshop will have a set of objectives and associated requirements around resource, attendance and cost. It was agreed that officers would

circulate the current workshop plans to the Group.

**AP:** EDF's workshop plans to be circulated to the Group.

**AP:** A copy of the letter to Richard Mayson to be circulated to the Group.

**7. Future Agenda Items**

- Workshops and reporting back

**8. Any Other Business**

A site visit is to be organised around the last 2 weeks in June, combined with a short agenda JLAG meeting on site.