

Nuclear Industry Council – Summary of Meeting

28th February 2019, 10:00 – 11:30, 1 Victoria Street Conference Centre, London

Attendees: Richard Harrington (co-Chair), Tim Stone (co-Chair), Robert Bish, Christopher Bowbrick, Simon Bowen, Humphrey Cadoux-Hudson, Ian Chapman, Martin Chown, Mike Clancy, Rob Fletcher, Tom Greatrex, Duncan Hawthorne, Terry Hill, Paul Howarth, Robert Hoyle, Peter McIntosh, Fiona Rayment, Stephen Speed, Andy Storer, Matt Tuck, Mike Tynan, Andrew Van Der Lem, Clive White.

Apologies: Paul Foster, Sue Ion, Campbell Kier, Paul Hollinshead, David Peattie, Tom Samson, Ken Skates, Paul Westbury.

1. Chair's Opening Remarks

Tim Stone welcomed members, a safety share was discussed, and the minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

2. Government update and the future of the sector

The Minister assured members that despite the winding up of NuGen and suspension of Horizon's Wylfa Newydd project the government sees nuclear as a key part of the energy mix and the Industrial Strategy, providing vital baseload to the grid. The Government is fully committed to seeing new build projects beyond Hinkley Point C but acknowledged there was a remaining challenge to find a more sustainable way to finance the projects. The Minister referenced BEIS' work on the Regulated Asset Base model and a target to publish an update by the Summer.

BEIS underlined that engagement with communities impacted by the recent decisions on Moorside and Wylfa was very important, consistent with one of the Industrial Strategy's main objectives – to maximise economic potential in the regions.

Following questions from Tim Stone about the stress on the supply chain following the suspension of work on Horizon and the end of the NuGen project, the Minister confirmed that a number of public sector contracts were due to be announced shortly, the work on which should be significantly helpful for the nuclear supply chain.

Members discussed the ongoing issues surrounding the perception of nuclear and why it has become separated from the clean energy narrative rather than being a key part of it. It was agreed that the Energy White Paper planned for the Summer provides an opportunity to address that issue and improve trust and confidence both domestically and internationally in the UK's commitment to new nuclear. Members also discussed ideas to reduce the risk to investors such as creating an infrastructure investment pool, as well as looking at fleet approach to new build to reduce costs. Members agreed that it was right to think creatively about long-term solutions to facilitate new build, but at the same time sharpen focus on solutions for projects in the short-term.

ACTION: NIA to collate the industry's views to help feed in to the Energy White Paper.

3. Nuclear Sector Deal update: Programme Management Office and Working Groups

Members were given an update on the agreement reached with Frazer-Nash Consultancy to set up a PMO to drive the Nuclear Sector Deal.

The 5 Working Group leads provided an update on progress to form their respective groups, highlighted some of the early achievements and outlined their plans for next steps. Members agreed that a wider communications function/outlet was needed to ensure that regions and stakeholders not directly involved in the work are reached.

BEIS suggested that the Nuclear Sector Deal was the organising framework through which the industry should work; it needed to be a flexible framework capable of evolving to meet the needs of the country and the sector.

ACTION: NIA to work with the PMO to design a communications function for wider stakeholder outreach on the Nuclear Sector Deal.

ACTION: Members to provide feedback to the Working Group leads and offer assistance as necessary.

4. NIC membership refresh update

Tim Stone set out how the current membership would be refreshed ahead of the next meeting (given the commitments made by current members of the Council to establish structures for the NSD, it had previously been agreed that the refresh would take place before the May 2019 NIC)

ACTION: Members to send any comments on the refresh process to NIA, who will agree the final details with BEIS.

5. Chair's closing remarks

Tim Stone closed the meeting by acknowledging the positive progress on the structures to implement the Sector Deal and thanking members for a constructive discussion.

6. Next Meeting

Following the appointment of a new Minister, Andrew Stephenson, the next meeting of the Council will now take place on Monday 24 June at 10.30am at BEIS.