



**Minutes of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (“NDA”)
Board meeting held on 11 December 2024
at UKRI, Caxton House, Tothill Street, London and TEAMS**

PRESENT:	Peter Hill	Chair of the Board (“Chair”)	
	David Peattie	Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”)	
	Kate Bowyer	Chief Financial Officer (“CFO”)	
	Janet Ashdown	Senior Non-Executive Board Member	
	Harriet Kemp	Non-Executive Board Member	
	Kathryn Cearns	Non-Executive Board Member	
	Francis Livens	Non-Executive Board Member	
	Alex Reeves	Non-Executive Board Member	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Matthew Shaw	Group General Counsel & Company Secretary	
	Alan Cumming	Group Chief Assurance and Performance Officer (“CAPO”)	
	Paul Vallance	Group Chief Corporate Affairs Officer	
	s.40	Deputy Company Secretary	
	s.40	EA to NDA CEO	
	s.40	Health, Safety, Environment & Wellbeing Director	[Part only - via TEAMS]
	Rob Fletcher	NRS CEO	[Part only]
	Euan Hutton	Sellafield CEO	[Part only – via TEAMS]
	s.40	Group Development Director	[Part only – via TEAMS]
	Clive Nixon	Chief Nuclear Strategy Officer	[Part only – via TEAMS]
	Roddy Miller	Sellafield Nuclear Operations Director	[Part only – via TEAMS]
	Andy Munro	NRS Future Missions Director	[Part only – via TEAMS]
	Gordon Frisby	NRS CFO	[Part only – via TEAMS]
	Frank Rainford	Group Chief of Staff & Security Officer	[Part only]
	s.40	Commercial Policy and Procedures Lead	[Part only – via TEAMS]
	Corhyn Parr	NWS CEO	[Part only – via TEAMS]
	s.40	Head of Sanction	[Part only – via TEAMS]
	s.40	Assistant Company Secretary	[Part only]
APOLOGIES:	Evelyn Dickey	Non-Executive Board Member	

Agenda Item		Action Owner
1	Introduction	
1.1	Apologies	
1.1.1	Apologies for absence were received from E Dickey.	
1.2	Conflicts of Interest	
1.2.1	The Board considered the Register of Board Members’ Interests and APPROVED that all Board Members present could participate fully in the business of the meeting. s.40	
1.3	Chair’s Observations and Meeting Objectives	
1.3.1	The Chair outlined the agenda and highlighted the items that required particular attention and discussion by the Board including the NRS ‘Back to Green’ plan; the Spending Review; progress against the 2024/25 GKTs, project performance; and the GDF Site Characterisation Delivery Partner OBC in anticipation of the impact of the Spending Review on the group.	
	s.40 joined the meeting.	
2.	Safety	
2.1	Safety moment	
2.1.1	The CEO reminded the Board of the importance of driving safely particularly in wintry conditions and noted the corresponding safety shares being given around the group.	



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2.1.2	A Cumming reported on the largest single use of electronic detonators and cartridge explosives ever used in the first stage of demolition of four concrete plinths as part of the work to decommission the turbine hall at Sizewell A. A quite hazardous operation had been well executed. The method had saved time and money and reduced a prolonged period of noise and dust pollution. Special approval for the approach had been required from the ONR and was a good example of a site licensee (NRS) and the regulator working together to find a solution.	
2.2	Latest statistics, trends, incidents and near misses	
2.2.1	The Board noted the update on the latest (P5 to P7) safety and environment statistics and trend, significant events and near misses, and health and wellbeing across the group. A Cumming reported s.40 and a process was underway to identify her replacement.	
2.2.2	<p>s.40 presented the key messages from the update and outlined four key areas of focus: (i) enhanced scrutiny of near misses and causation; (ii) regulatory issues and relationships; (iii) concern around the capability and capacity of specialist EH&S resource and the actions being taken to address this; and (iv) the sharing of learnings across the estate. The Board explored several points in more detail with A Cummings and s.40</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The actions being taken to address the EH&S resource issue which was industry wide and shared by the regulators and would not be possible to remedy quickly. The Board requested that it be kept up to date on this area of vulnerability. • The content of the H&S improvement plan to be presented to the HSSE Committee in January. It was noted that A Cumming had requested that s.40 investigate dose rates and whether there were opportunities to work more consistently across the estate and remove self-imposed restrictions. • The cause of the fire at Sizewell A during the Summer and the remediation being undertaken. • Dounreay’s progress on meeting the requirements of the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) regulations and on sodium storage. It was noted that Dounreay’s acceptance of the related risks and relationship with the regulator was much improved. Dounreay was targeting moving out of special measures with ONR by the end of March 2025. • The approach to safety and safety culture across the estate. A Cumming explained that safety culture was strong with most concern centred around process safety. There was a requirement for greater end-to-end accountability, personal awareness and responsibility, and a consistent approach from leaders taking their responsibilities seriously, reinforcing good behaviours, and calling out sub-standard behaviour etc. 	
2.2.3	The Board thanked s.40 for the transformational change she had introduced in the way H&S was approached across the group.	
	s.40 left the meeting	
3.	Administration	
3.1	Minutes of previous meeting	
3.1.1	The Board discussed the minutes from the 3 September, 26 September and 14 November 2024 and RESOLVED TO APPROVE each set subject to the removal from minute 5.10.1 of the minutes of 26 September of the reference to Fiona Rayment assuming the role of Chair of the AGR Group Advisory Committee upon the conclusion of J Ashdown’s term at the NDA. This role would always be fulfilled by the Chair of the NDA Programmes & Projects Committee (P&PCo) and F Rayment would provide coverage if required on an ad hoc basis. Contingency arrangements involving K Cearns would be deployed if J Ashdown retired from the Board prior to the appointment of a new NDA P&PCo Chair.	
3.2.	Decision Log	



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3.2.1	The Board noted the Decision Log.	
3.3	Actions Review	
3.3.1	The Board considered the actions arising from previous meetings and discussed the response to its request that the division of responsibilities within DESNZ on AGR programme delivery be clarified (Action 2060). The Board was content with the response and that Action 2060 be closed but requested that its concerns that DESNZ’s SRO arrangements for the AGR Decommissioning Arrangements Business Case were not what it would expect for such a significant project, be raised with Chris Heffer.	D Peattie
3.3.2	The Board agreed that Actions 2025, 2045, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059 be closed. Action 2026 would be considered later on the agenda.	
4.	Reports/Updates	
4.1	CEO’s Update	
4.1.1	<p>The Board noted the Report from the CEO and D Peattie highlighted the key matters for the Board to be aware of, including those that had arisen post circulation of the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The latest position on the NDA’s 2025/26 Spending Review settlement. [REDACTED] A reduction in the number of qualified staff at the AGR dismantler. Output was impacted and the associated GKT was at risk. The Sellafield CEO would provide more detail later in the meeting. The success of the recent Nuclear Industry Association event. The DESNZ Parliamentary Select Committee hearing on 18 December would be attended by the NDA CEO, Sellafield CEO and NWS CEO. The hearing would provide the opportunity to explain the work of the group. A preparatory call with the Chair of the Committee would take place in advance of the hearing. The preparations underway for the Parliamentary Accounts Committee visit to Sellafield in February and thereafter the hearing in March. 	
4.2	CFO’s Update	
4.2.1	The Board noted the Report from the CFO and K Bowyer provided an overview of the P8 financial performance of the group, which looked broadly similar to P7. K Bowyer also provided an update on the 2024/25 GKTs and plan for development of the 2025/26 GKTs. The latter required reflections from the Remuneration Committee to be incorporated and discussion by GLT. It was noted that the usual correspondence from DESNZ that assisted in shaping the GKTs was outstanding but was not currently impacting the process.	
4.2.2	<p>The Board discussed the Spending Review process in more detail. [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED] K Bowyer noted that the All Boards event had been helpful in co-ordinating group board members behind the challenge posed by the Spending Review and in providing additional information that would be valuable to Phase II of the Review. [REDACTED]</p>	



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	[REDACTED] The Board noted the hard work of the teams across the group on the Spending Review submissions and need to monitor this workload.	
4.3	Performance and Project Delivery Report	
4.3.1	<p>The Board noted the Performance and Project Delivery Report and A Cumming provided more detail on the key messages, including performance against the 2024/25 GKTs. A Cummings responded to questions from the Board on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • s43 [REDACTED] This was necessary to monitor progress on the projects. • The decision to defer consideration of the planned paper on asset degradation. The Board agreed with the decision to allow the GLT to discuss the challenge of how focus could be directed towards progressing the work against the constraints of process and procurement. s36 [REDACTED] • His reflections on how project and programme performance could be improved. There was consensus that developing a workforce plan was key and potentially identifying a pilot area to trial a new approach could be beneficial. 	
4.3.2	The Chair thanked A Cummings for an insightful paper and presentation which aligned well with the update he had provided to the Department on progress against the priorities in the Chair’s Letter FY2024/25.	
4.4	Progress on Key Matters	
4.4.1	The Board confirmed that it was content with the Mid Year Review the Chair had provided to the Department on progress against the priorities in the Chair’s Letter FY2024/25.	
4.4.2	M Shaw reported on the update given to the Nominations Committee on progress against the Project Oxford recommendations. A further update on progress and implementation would be given in the New Year.	
	<i>R Fletcher joined the meeting.</i>	
5.	Main Board Topics	
5.1	s36 [REDACTED]	
5.1.1	[REDACTED]	
5.1.2	s41 [REDACTED]	
5.1.3	[REDACTED]	



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • s36 [redacted] 	
	[redacted]	
5.1.5	<i>E Hutton, s40 [redacted] C Nixon, R Miller, A Munro and G Frisby joined the meeting.</i>	
5.2	AGR Quarterly Summary Report and Dashboard	
5.2.1	The Board noted the quarterly update on AGR defueling, transition & transfer, and strategic alignment and the additional verbal overlay provided by the programme team.	
5.2.2	E Hutton updated the Board on the unanticipated absence of SQEP and duly authorised resource, due to sickness, at the AGR dismantler. R Miller outlined how Sellafield was responding to minimise the impact. It was noted that the good relationship built with EDF was proving valuable in managing their targets and expectations, particularly as EDF were currently requesting an above average (for the year-to-date) number of skips. The Board requested that it be kept updated on changes to projected revenue from the AGR defueling programme.	
5.2.3	<p>s43 [redacted]</p> <p>[redacted] Board would be kept updated on progress. The GAC had also discussed the latest developments in relation to AGR Funding Agreement (AFA). An agreement in principle had been reached with the NLF Trustees and one point of debate was around whether the NDA group would be subject to an additional contractual obligation to demonstrate value for money to the Trustees in addition to its existing obligation to do so to the Department. Work was underway to clarify the duties of the Trustees and whether this request was consistent with those legal duties and/or whether the NDA’s existing value for money obligations were sufficient.</p>	
	<i>R Fletcher, E Hutton, s40 [redacted] C Nixon, R Miller, A Munro and G Frisby left and F Rainford and s40 [redacted] joined the meeting.</i>	
5.3	Supply Chain Risk update	
5.3.1	The Board noted the current position on key/critical supplier vulnerability across the group and the changes that had occurred since the last presentation to the Board in January 2024. F Rainford acknowledged that there was a significant amount of work to do around the suppliers under hyper-care and increased monitoring, and that whilst the team was working well, resource remained a challenge. F Rainford outlined the support that was being provided by HR to address this. The Board discussed F Rainford’s proposal for the oversight that would be provided to the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee (ARAC). K Cearns clarified that a list should be provided to ARAC of the suppliers under hyper-care or increased monitoring that showed the plan and timeline for, and in due course completion status, of the risk mitigation and contingency planning activity for each supplier.	



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	<i>F Rainford and s40 left the meeting.</i>	
5.4	Programmes & Projects Committee (P&PCo) Report	
5.4.1	The Board noted the report from the Programmes and Projects Committee (P&PCo) meeting on 12 November 2024.	
	<i>C Parr joined the meeting.</i>	
5.5	GDF Site Characterisation Delivery Partner OBC (NWS)	
5.5.1	The Outline Business Case (OBC) for the GDF Site Characterisation Delivery Partner (SCDP) was taken as read. It was noted that approval was sought to commence the procurement process for a SCDP for the GDF Programme s43 The SCDP would provide the specialist technical skills required to progress the Site Characterisation programme for the GDF and would enable NWS to deliver a Site Descriptive Model that would underpin the design and safety case development of the GDF.	
5.5.2	J Ashdown reported that the Projects & Programmes Committee (P&PCo) had reviewed the OBC on 12 November and had resolved to endorse it to the Board subject to sufficient consultation with the NDA Board Chair on the details of the request. It was noted that the P&PCo had also requested that the business case more clearly address what aspects of the programme responsibilities would be covered in the contract and the Board noted that this had been actioned. P Hill confirmed that further to his request at P&PCo he had met with the NWS CEO and had been suitably assured on the further details he had required. P Hill noted that the OBC appeared to require a significant spend over a long period, but the reality was quite different. There had been much more flexibility and contingency in the OBC, and it had to provide for the possibility that both potential GDF locations were progressed in parallel, which was not guaranteed. P Hill reported that approval was being sought to compile and issue the tender for the SCDP and that if not given, the GDF Programme would halt entirely. It was necessary to keep momentum as several significant workstreams could not be advanced until the SCDP was procured. The Board noted the robust governance review that the OBC had undertaken prior to being presented to it. D Peattie reiterated that although a high ceiling figure was being presented for approval the outturn was anticipated to be significantly less. A Cumming outlined the assurance target operating model that would be applied to the SCDP and related contractors.	
5.5.3	C Parr tabled an additional slide that was not included in the papers for the meeting that provided more detail on the request for approval. C Parr explained in more detail how the intention was for a lower draw down than anticipated in the OBC. It was noted that the OBC did not seek sanction for any expenditure at the current time. Sanction to spend under the SCDP contract would be requested via future scope business cases. s43 had been provided for within the GDF Preparations for Site Investigations OBC, which was currently progressing through governance.	
5.5.4	After consideration of the feedback from the NDA Board Chair on his further conversation with C Parr and the additional information presented by the NWS CEO the Board RESOLVED TO ENDORSE the OBC for the procurement of the Site Characterisation Delivery Partner, s43	
	<i>C Parr left and C Nixon re-joined the meeting.</i>	
5.6	The Group Action Plans (GAPs)	
5.6.1	The Board noted the update on the progress and development of Group Action Plans (GAPs) for the strategic interventions that were agreed following engagement with the Board earlier in the year as the top priorities for the group, which could reduce the mission estimates by ‘billions and /or decades’.	



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5.6.2	<p>The Board noted the request that it emphasise the importance of OpCo commitment to the GAPs and that it support their delivery when interacting with OpCo Chairs and Boards. [REDACTED] s36 [REDACTED]</p> <p>This would make securing buy-in on the ‘Optimisation of End-States’ strategic intervention challenging. [REDACTED] s40 [REDACTED]</p>	
5.7	Committee Reports	
5.7.1	<p>The Board noted the reports from the meetings of the Health, Safety, Security & Environment Committee (HSSE) and Environmental, Sustainability & Governance Committee (ESG) on 10 October and updates provided by the Chairs of the ARAC and Remuneration Committee of which meetings had taken place on 5 December. The Chair provided an update on the Nominations Committee (NomCo) meeting held earlier that day and highlighted the proposals NomCo had resolved to endorse to the Board for approval. It was noted that E Dickey and K Bowyer had not been present / in attendance at the NomCo and the Chair requested that they be briefed on the decisions i.e. that the resignation of J Ashdown from the Remuneration Committee, the reappointment of [REDACTED] s40 [REDACTED]. The necessary approvals from the Board would then be sought offline by email.</p>	s40
	[REDACTED] joined the meeting	
5.8	Committee Structure	
5.8.1	<p>The Board noted that the proposal that it delegate its endorsement/approval of Sanction requests (business cases/ investment decisions) to the P&PCo where those requests met a set criterion, had been updated in line with the feedback it had provided at its last meeting.</p>	
5.8.2	<p>The Board discussed the perception that NDA elements of the sanction governance process were unduly contributing to the overall timescale. The Board agreed that it was important this perception was dispelled in the OpCos. Further the importance throughout the process of quality papers and evidence of challenge by previous governance forums, and how this had been resolved, should be emphasised. A Cumming would share the paper presented to the Board with the OpCo Chairs and request that they brief their boards accordingly. [REDACTED] s40 [REDACTED] explained the criteria outside of which any Sanction request must be approved by the Board.</p>	
5.8.3	<p>The Board considered the ongoing recruitment processes for two Independent Non-Executive NDA Board Members and that in due course there would be a new P&PCo Chair. The Board agreed that the changes proposed should not be put on hold pending this change and RESOLVED TO delegate its endorsement of Sanction requests to the P&PCo on the following basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The strategic fit was clear and already approved. (ii) The request was “business as usual” and there were no special factors, or high degrees of complexity in the request. (iii) There was limited impact on stakeholders and reputation. (iv) NDA Assurance were content with the submission. 	
	[REDACTED] s40 [REDACTED] left the meeting.	
5.8.4	<p>F Livens reported that since the Board’s consideration in September 2024 of the proposal to merge the HSSE and ESG Committees, the committees had agreed a way forward on the merger. The Board considered the summary of the duties, responsibilities and oversight to be retained by the new Health, Safety, Security, Sustainability and Environment (HSSSE) Committee and those elements which it was proposed be moved to either the Board or other committees. The Board also considered the draft Terms of Reference for the new HSSSE Committee. F Livens explained how it was proposed meetings of the HSSSE Committee would be structured. F Livens extended his thanks to [REDACTED] s40 [REDACTED] for her support on the merger.</p>	



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5.8.5	The Board was supportive of the proposal and RESOLVED TO APPROVE the merger of the HSSE and ESG committees into a Health, Safety, Security, Sustainability and Environment (HSSSE) Committee and the proposed Terms of Reference for the new HSSSE Committee.	
5.8.6	H Kemp provided an update on progress on the formation of a group remuneration committee. A further update would be provided to the Board in January.	
5.9	Reflection on recent board activity	
5.9.1	The Board reflected and provided its feedback on recent board member activity including the Group Incentive Review Meeting, visit to UKAEA Culham, ARAC conference, and the All-Boards event. P Hill had been unable to attend the visit to UKAEA Culham. The Governance team in conjunction with M Brownridge would arrange an individual visit and explore the possibility of the Chair combining this with a visit to Harwell. M Shaw extended his thanks to the Governance and Communications team for their organisation of the All-Boards event. The Board noted that a date was being held in December 2025 for the next All-Boards event and requested that this be brought forward to Summer 2025.	s40
6.	Other	
6.1	Reading pack	
6.1.1	The Board noted the items in the Reading Pack for the meeting. The Board discussed the proposal received from HMG for a more streamlined set of oversight meetings with the NDA. A Reeves provided context on the proposal and what it was intended to achieve. The Board provided its initial thoughts on the proposal, particularly concerns around the volume of work for the NDA Executive and impact on the role of the NDA Board. It would be necessary to request a delay to the implementation of the proposals to allow further consideration to take place. It was noted that a glossary of the proposed HMG oversight meetings and comparison of the current and proposed meetings had been produced. The Chair requested that these be circulated to the Board by email with a request that any further reflections on the proposed structure be sent to himself and the CEO. The Board would discuss the proposal in further detail at its next meeting. In the interim, the Board’s initial feedback on the proposed HMG oversight meeting structure would be shared with DESNZ.	s40 D Peattie
6.1.2	The Chair requested that the paper included in the Reading Pack summarising the reporting obligations of the OpCo Chairs and how practically these could be discharged be circulated to the Board offline by email with a request for feedback in order that a final version could be produced. Action 2026 would remain open.	s40
6.2	Forward Agenda	
6.2.1	The Board noted the Forward Agenda.	
6.3	Any Other Business	
6.3.1	There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 15:40.	