Minutes of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority ("NDA") Board meeting held on 29 January 2026 at Caxton House, Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9HA/Teams

PRESENT:	Peter Hill	Chair of the Board ("Chair")	
	David Peattie	Group Chief Executive Officer ("Group CEO")	
	Kate Bowyer	Group Chief Financial Officer ("Group CFO")	
	Catriona Schmolke	Senior Non-Executive Board Member	
	Neil Bruce	Non-Executive Board Member	
	Kathryn Cearns	Non-Executive Board Member	
	Harriet Kemp	Non-Executive Board Member	
	Francis Livens	Non-Executive Board Member	
	Alex Reeves	Non-Executive Board Member	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Alan Cumming	Group Chief Assurance and Performance Officer ("CAPO")	
	Paul Vallance	Group Chief Corporate Affairs Officer	
	Frank Rainford	Group Chief of Staff & Security Officer	
	Matthew Shaw	Group General Counsel & Company Secretary	
	[redacted]	Deputy Company Secretary	
	[redacted]	EA to the Group CEO	
	[redacted]	Health, Safety & Environment Director	*(part only – via Teams)*
	Ciara Middlehurst	NTS Co-CEO	*(part only)*
	Ben Whittard	NTS Co-CEO	*(part only)*
	[redacted]	Chief Strategist, SDR	*(part only – via Teams)*
	Seth Kybird	NWS CEO	*(part only)*
	Clive Nixon	Group Chief Nuclear Strategy Officer	*(part only)*
	[redacted]	Special Programmes Delivery Manager	*(part only – via Teams)*
	Euan Hutton	Sellafield CEO	*(part only – via Teams)*
	Roddy Miller	Chief Operating Officer, Sellafield	*(part only – via Teams)*
	Rob Fletcher	NRS CEO	*(part only – via Teams)*
	[redacted]	Group Development Director	*(part only – via Teams)*
	Andy Munro	Managing Director – AGRs & Paired Sites, NRS	*(part only – via Teams)*
	[redacted]	Senior Legal Counsel, NDA	*(part only – via Teams)*
	[redacted]	Cambridge Programme Director	*(part only – via Teams)*
	[redacted]	Unity Programme Director	*(part only – via Teams)*
	[redacted]	Director of Socio Economics	*(part only – via Teams)*
	[redacted]	Deputy Director Civil Nuclear Safety, DESNZ	*(part only – via Teams)*
	[redacted]	Group Risk Director	*(part only)*
APOLOGIES:	None		

	Agenda Item	Action Owner
1	**Introduction**	
1.1	**Apologies**	
1.1.1	There were no apologies for absence. The Chair confirmed that the proposed board resolution to allow F Rainford to become a standing attendee of the Board as part of his handover from A Cumming had been passed. The Chair welcomed F Rainford to the meeting.	
1.2	**Conflicts of Interest**	
1.2.1	The Board considered the Register of Board Members' Interests. There were no conflicts of interest in respect of the business of the meeting and the Board **RESOLVED TO APPROVE** that all Board Members present could participate fully in the meeting.	
1.3	**Chair's Observations and Meeting Objectives**	
1.3.1	The Chair highlighted the agenda items that required particular attention and discussion. The Chair acknowledged the workload of the Executive as it managed the response to the	

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	Spending Review (SR25), Project Cambridge, Programme Unity, the AGR Transfer Programme, GDF Programme, and the Independent Review of the NDA, alongside other key projects and, fundamentally, the requirement to progress the Mission. The Board was mindful of what it could do to support the Executive.	
	s40 [redacted] *joined the meeting*	
2.	**Safety**	
2.1	**Safety moment**	
2.1.1	P Vallance shared details and photographs of a fire that had broken out [redacted] s40 [redacted] The incident had provided valuable lessons in how to react in and prepare for such circumstances.	
2.2	**Latest statistics, trends, incidents, near misses and health & wellbeing**	
2.2.1	The report on P7 – P9 notable events, decisions, insights and trends in all matters associated with health, safety, wellbeing, and the environment, was taken as read. [redacted] s40 [redacted] provided more detail on the key matters for the Board to be aware of.	
2.2.2	The NDA Group Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR) had further improved since P6 and was now 0.23. This was the lowest since NDA records began in 2011, except for the COVID period. s40 [redacted] explained how TRIR had spiked after Covid and the initiatives that had been taken to reach the current position, including the focus on leaders in the field. s40 [redacted] noted that whilst the positive TRIR performance should be acknowledged, most of these events were associated with slips, trips, falls and finger injuries. The focus must therefore remain on managing high risk activities and significant near misses. The Board noted the steps being taken to achieve this objective, including a new leading indicator metric relating to potential/significant events due to be implemented in 2026. The Board agreed that mental health and wellbeing were intrinsically linked to further improvements, ensuring that staff felt empowered to make interventions on safety.	
2.2.3	s24 [redacted]	
2.2.4	The Board reflected on the damage winter storms had caused sites such as Sellafield and Dungeness with areas being closed due to the risk of flying debris. It was noted that a list of the group sites most vulnerable to climate risks had been requested by the HSSSE Committee. The NDA Risk and Sustainability teams had worked closely with the OpCos to capture these risks in a climate specific risk log to inform sites characterisation from a climate risk perspective. The HSSSE Committee was due to consider the log at its upcoming meeting. **A Reeves asked for further detail on how work on degrading assets was prioritised, and A Cumming agreed to arrange an offline discussion.**	**A Cumming**
2.2.5	s40 [redacted] reported that planning was underway for the NDA group Health, Safety and Wellbeing Conference in February 2026 and explained the focus of this year's event and what it would cover. The conference themes related to the recommendations of the Nuclear Regulatory Taskforce Review and the implementation of Strategy 5 would be also explored. Members of the HSSSE Committee had been invited to the conference and D Peattie extended an open invitation to the full Board. Details of the conference would be sent out after the meeting.	
2.2.6	The Chair highlighted the significant focus the Board gave to matters related to health, safety and wellbeing, and the perception amongst some stakeholders that the role of the NDA in these areas would change post the implementation of Project Cambridge. The Board was clear that the role of the NDA in these areas was about oversight and assurance and that whilst it would utilise Cambridge to potentially make changes to perform that role as robustly as possible, the NDA would not assume day-to-day responsibility for health and safety matters. This responsibility sat with the OpCos and would not change.	

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	The Board discussed how it could utilise the Cambridge construct to fulfil its role most effectively and agreed that **a proposal be presented to the HSSSE Committee.** The Chair would convene a small group, including A Cumming, to assist in the development of the proposal.	**A Cumming**
	s40 [redacted] *left the meeting*	
	s24 [redacted]	
3.	**Administration**	
3.1	**Minutes of previous meeting**	
3.1.1	The Board considered the minutes of its recent meetings and **RESOLVED TO APPROVE**: (i) The minutes of the meeting held across 12-13 November 2025 subject to an edit to reflect that A Reeves was present for the full meeting and some rewording of minute 4.1.2. (ii) The minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2025 with no amendments.	
3.1.2	The Board confirmed that it wished to review the final draft questions for the NDA group 2026 Employee Engagement Survey. **The questions would be circulated to the Board offline after the meeting.**	**D Vineall**
3.2.	**Decision Log**	
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: (i) Noted that actions 2144 and 2145 would be addressed during the meeting; and (ii) Approved that all the other actions could be closed.	
4.	**Executive Updates**	
4.1	**Group CEO's Report**	
4.1.1	The Board noted the Report from the Group CEO. s40 [redacted]	
4.1.2	D Peattie referred to the range of significant items the Executive were and would continue to manage over the coming months, including: [redacted] s36 [redacted] *(ii)* *<u>Potential submission to the Secretary of State on the GDF</u>* S Kybird would brief the Board on the latest position as part of the agenda. [redacted] s36 [redacted] *(iv)* *<u>Independent Review of the NDA</u>* The Terms of Reference for the Independent Review had been published and shared with the Board. Further detail was awaited on the composition of the	

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	review panel. The Communications team were working on briefings for the Review team and NDA group participants.	
4.2	**Group CFO's Report**	
4.2.1	The Board noted the Report from the Group CFO that provided an update on the 2025/26 financial performance of the group; an overview of progress against the 2025/26 Group Key Targets (GKTs); the production of the Annual Report & Accounts 2025/26; the process to be undertaken to agree the GKTs for 2026/27; and the preparation of the Nuclear Provision as at 31 March 2026. K Bowyer provided further detailed narrative on each area.	
4.2.2	K Bowyer highlighted the illustration in the '2025-26 Update on RDEL and CDEL Outturn' slides of some of the key moving parts in the management of the group's RDEL Income, RDEL Expenditure, and CDEL Expenditure portfolios over the SR25 period. s43 [redacted]	
4.2.3	The Board noted that whilst 2025/26 GKT performance was generally strong, one target had been missed (GKT5: Sellafield First Generation Magnox Storage Pond ILW Retrievals) and two were now at risk (GKT4: Sellafield Silos ILW Retrievals and Transfers to Stores, and GKT11: Functional Excellence). The Boad explored how far at risk GKT11 was. The Executive anticipated that Part A of the target (reduction in the rate of functional overhead spend in-year) could be delivered, with Part B (reduction in function overspend in the following years achieved through plans for improved efficiency). It was anticipated Project Cambridge would provide the mandate for functions to achieve Part B. s24 [redacted] and K Bowyer invited the Board to provide any observations on the proposed GKTs for 2026/27 to her offline.	
4.2.4	s36 [redacted]	
4.3	**Performance and Project Delivery Report**	
4.3.1	The Board noted the Performance and Project Delivery Report on matters related to the Major Projects Portfolio and Operations. A Cumming provided updates to the report including that defueling of the Dounreay Fast Reactor had recommenced, and that Sellafield had found a potential solution to the Skip Handler issue at the First Generation Magnox Pond at Sellafield but further work was required at Rosyth, the testing facility.	
	C Middlehurst, B Whittard s40 [redacted] *joined the meeting*	
5.	**Main Board Topics**	
5.1	**Review of NTS**	
5.1.1	The Chair welcomed the Nuclear Transport Solutions (NTS) Co-CEOs, C Middlehurst and B Whittard. The paper was taken as read. C Middlehurst and B Whittard introduced themselves, outlined their respective backgrounds and tabled a presentation focusing on the programmes NTS was involved in across the group, with the MoD, in Japan, and across the Rest of the World. As well as focusing on NTS' current programmes of work the presentation outlined the opportunities available for the future in these areas. A similar approach was taken to describing NTS' culture and how this was anticipated to evolve.	

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	The Co-CEOs referenced Project Cambridge and made a request of the Board to support the commercial activities of NTS throughout and post implementation.	
5.1.2	The Board noted its willingness to support the Co-CEOs and NTS however possible and explored several areas with C Middlehurst and B Whittard in more detail, including: • How it could best provide support to NTS. • NTS' ability to grow further in Japan. • The hurdles / barriers that existed to NTS' ambition to become the public sector nuclear transport partner of choice. • The impact of environmental pressure to move from diesel to electric locomotives. • s36 [redacted]	
5.1.3	A Reeves noted his interest in receiving more insight on how NTS and the markets it operated in were developing, and to have a sense of the strategic decisions the Co-CEOs had to make, the significance to NTS of the MoD business etc. **The Co-CEOs undertook to liaise with A Reeves offline on how best to provide this additional information.**	**C Middlehurst/ B Whittard**
5.1.4	C Middlehurst invited the Board to attend an NTS open day during 2026. The details of the next open days for Rail and the Ships would be provided offline. The Co-CEOs also invited the Board to visit any of their sites.	
5.1.5	s40 [redacted] thanked the Chair for the invitation to attend the Board and the Co-CEOs for their presentation. She reported that the Co-CEOs were delivering with pace and imagination and endorsed their request that the group be encouraged to consider how it could make the best use of NTS' skills and resources, for the benefit of the Mission.	
5.1.6	The Chair thanked C Middlehurst and B Whittard for an insightful session and reiterated the Board's ask that they escalate any matter or area where they potentially felt restricted, and that equally they request the Board's support wherever it was felt they could help or facilitate their ambitions for NTS.	
	C Middlehurst, B Whittard and s40 [redacted] *left and S Kybird and C Nixon joined the meeting.*	
5.2	**NWS Strategic Review**	
5.2.1	S Kybird reminded the Board that the conclusions of the strategic review of NWS had been that NWS should be retained as a pillar of the NDA group, [redacted] s43 [redacted]	
5.3	**GDF Update**	
5.3.1	S Kybird updated the Board on the development of the potential submission to the Secretary of State (SoS) in March 2026 on the GDF Programme. The Board discussed the actions that would need to be taken once a decision had been made and that those steps were highly dependent on the decision taken. The Board also discussed the expectations of Government upon any submission and the governance process to be followed. The Chair put the Board on notice that it may be necessary to convene an ad hoc Board meeting to support the potential submission to the SoS.	

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5.3.2	s36 [redacted]	
	s40 [redacted] *joined the meeting*	
5.4	**Response to Nuclear Regulatory Review Taskforce Report**	
5.4.1	The Board noted the paper detailing how the NDA would work with Government and Regulators on the recommendations of the Nuclear Regulatory Review Taskforce's final report. C Nixon provided an overview of the background to the formation of the Taskforce; the intent of the recommendations; the NDA's input into the Review; Government's response to the final report; the recommendations that impacted the NDA both directly and indirectly; the risk and impacts associated with the recommendations; and how the NDA's response to the recommendations was being co-ordinated and compiled. The topic would be covered in more detail at the March Board meeting when an outline approach to implementation would be shared. C Nixon clarified that the NDA was not working to produce a response to the report but were supporting DESNZ in preparing its response.	
5.4.2	The Board noted that Government was working to have an initial draft response to the report and a forward plan by the end of January 2026 and queried whether anything had been shared with the NDA noting that there was only a short period before Government had committed to formally issue the same. C Nixon confirmed that this was anticipated shortly. In the interim, some information had been shared into the NDA, and the team were comfortable with the direction of travel.	
5.4.3	The Board explored whether implementation of the recommendations had the potential to impact applications for planning consents required by the group and noted that this was not considered a risk. The most significant risk was in relation to the evolution of the GDF programme. The Board agreed that engaging and co-ordinating with the OpCos would be key to the successful implementation of the recommendations. It was observed that some of the timescales associated with the implementation of the recommendations were challenging, but the benefits to be obtained were significant, and there were also some 'quick-win' recommendations.	
	s40 [redacted] *left the meeting*	
5.5	**Report from the Programmes & Projects Committee**	
5.5.1	The Boad noted the update from the Programmes & Project Committee (P&PCo) meeting held on 8 January 2026 and N Bruce reported that on reading the papers submitted in support of the business cases he had felt it necessary to request further information from the project teams. This request had been satisfied in the form of a Q&A document and had allowed for a more informed discussion and ultimately approval of the submissions for onwards governance. The Executive would ensure paper writers were aware of the P&PCo Chair's expectations for future submissions.	
5.5.2	N Bruce provided an update on the matters considered at the P&PCo meeting held on 27 January 2026, including the Sellafield Very Low Active Analytical Services Contract FBC to be considered by the Board at agenda item 5.6. The Board noted the update and in particular the discussion P&PCo had had on the significant pipeline of sanction business and bandwidth of the associated teams.	
5.6	**Sellafield Very Low Active Analytical Services Contract FBC**	
5.6.1	The Board noted how Very Low Active (VLA) Analysis was a critical enabler to the Sellafield mission and provided an essential service across the organisation. Taking into account the recommendation of the P&PCo, the Board **RESOLVED TO APPROVE** that the VLA Analytical Services Contract Full Business Case proceed to HMG [redacted]	

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	s43 [redacted]	
	E Hutton, R Miller, R Fletcher, A Munro, s40 [redacted] *joined the meeting.*	
5.7	**Report from the AGR Group Advisory Committee (GAC)**	
5.7.1	The Board noted the Report from the GAC meeting held on 19 January 2026 and D Peattie outlined the GAC's consideration of the Defueling Quarterly Update; Transfer Quarterly Update; the Hunterston B Transfer Readiness Criteria (TRC); and proposed certified completion date for Hinkley Point B. E Hutton and A Munro provided an update on their respective areas of responsibility. D Peattie highlighted the positive feedback received from the Department on preparedness for the transfer of Hunterston B on 1 April 2026. The Board acknowledged the work of the AGR Transfer Programme team and assurance that the Executive were in close contact with HMT on their recent comments on the AGR Funding Agreement which had the potential to impact the transfer if not resolved.	
5.7.2	The Board noted the GAC's consideration of and recommendation that the Integrated Assurance and Approvals Plan (IAAP) which would be used to inform the remaining approval requests from the NRS and NDA Boards and sub-committees, and DESNZ, be approved. The Board **RESOLVED TO APPROVE** the IAAP.	
5.7.3	The Board noted the GAC's consideration of and recommendation that the land documentation associated with the transfer of Hunterston B s36 [redacted]	
5.7.4	EIR 12(5)(d) [redacted]	
5.7.5	Finally, in connection with the transfer of Hinkley Point B, the Board **RESOLVED TO APPROVE** that the NDA Group Chief Nuclear Strategy Officer agree the Completion Date with the SoS and EDF on behalf of NDA and NRS pursuant to the Option Agreement.	
	E Hutton, R Miller, R Fletcher, A Munro, s40 [redacted] *joined the meeting.*	
5.8	**Project Cambridge Implementation Plan**	

5.8.1	P Vallance provided an update on progress on Project Cambridge including the implementation team's continued engagement with stakeholders. The Board discussed the associated Implementation Plan, focusing in detail on: • s43 [redacted] • [redacted] • [redacted] • [redacted] • The benefits Cambridge was expected to realise and highlighting the same in the Implementation Plan.	
5.8.2	The Board **RESOLVED TO APPROVE** the Implementation Plan for Project Cambridge in principle, subject to **the incorporation of the feedback provided by the Board and any further comments Board members may provide to P Vallance offline after the meeting.**	**P Vallance**
5.8.3	The Board discussed the proposed composition of the joint Cambridge and Unity Steering Committee ("Steerco") and the role that the 'Nuclear NEDs' were to perform in respect of Cambridge. The Chair reported that he had envisaged that the Nuclear NEDs, led by F Livens, would provide 'red team' challenge internally and would not form part of the Steerco. F Livens outlined his proposal for engaging the Nuclear NEDs, which except for one individual, mirrored the composition of the HSSSE Chairs group. **The composition of the Steerco would be revisited, including a reference to F Livens' proposal, and an updated Terms of Reference (ToR) provided to the Board.** In the interim, the first meeting of the Steerco would be deferred.	**P Vallance**
5.8.4	The Chair referred to the letter he had received from the Department the previous day, and subsequently circulated to the Board, responding to his letter of 21 November 2025 setting out the Cambridge construct in detail. The Chair detailed the engagement that he together with D Peattie and P Vallance had had with C Maxwell and L McDonough following his letter of 21 November. The Chair described the matters the Department had sought further insight and comfort on. The Board discussed the letter and concluded that the Department were content for the NDA to commence development of the Management of Change and formal engagement with Regulators. The Chair would respond to the Department's letter acknowledging their points and confirming the NDA's next steps.	
5.9	**Unity**	
5.9.1	The Board noted the progress update on Programme Unity. s43 [redacted]	

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	[redacted]	**P Vallance**
	s40 [redacted] *left the meeting*	
5.10	**NDA Centre - Spending Review Commitments and Changes to Performance and Assurance Team**	
5.10.1	K Bowyer presented the overview of changes planned to NDA Centre expenditure to address the efficiency requirements of SR25 and confirmed that it was anticipated these would generate SR25-compliant expenditure for the Centre. [redacted] s43 [redacted]	
5.10.2	The Chair reminded the Board that it had determined that it was more appropriate for the Nominations Committee (NomCo) to consider the planned changes to the Performance and Assurance team due to A Cumming's exit from the business in June 2026. The NomCo had considered and approved the proposed changes at its meeting the previous day.	
5.11	**Sanction Streamlining Pilot**	
5.11.1	The Board noted the update on the progress of the sanction streamlining pilot it had approved in September 2025 for requests exceeding NDA delegations (typically >£100m). Four pilot submissions had been selected, and it was proposed they would be considered in March 2026.	
5.11.2	K Bowyer outlined the proposed composition of the two committees at Executive and Non-Executive level with the latter replicating the GAC style utilised for the AGR Transfer Programme, which would necessitate subsequent approval by the Board. The Board discussed the proposed composition of the Non-Executive level committee in detail, noting that this was not in line with the composition of group committees anticipated under Cambridge. The Board explored whether the GAC style model would provide specific benefits in this scenario e.g., specialist knowledge, considering that the OpCo Chairs, or their Project NED, rather than their CEO, were proposed as the OpCo members. The Board considered the learnings from the formation of the Group Remuneration Committee and whether it might be most efficient to delegate the required Board approval to a sub-set of the Board. The Board confirmed that it was content to run the pilot on the basis described in the paper and would reassess the composition of the Non-Executive committee based on the learnings of the pilot.	
	s40 [redacted] *joined the meeting*	
5.12	**Update on revised BEC governance arrangements & Aggregated Investment Fund**	
5.12.1	The Board noted the update to the September 2025 paper presented to it in response to requests to strengthen the governance of British Energy Coast (BEC) and consider a joint investment fund for West Cumbria. s40 [redacted] detailed the NDA working group's analysis, stakeholder discussions, and set out the recommended next steps.	
5.12.2	s43 [redacted]	

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	[redacted]	M Shaw K Bowyer
5.12.3	[redacted]	
	s40 [redacted] *joined the meeting*	
5.13	**SIRO Report and GSR010 Deep Dive**	
5.13.1	The Board noted the update on the current strategic, operational, and performance position of Information Governance, Information Risk Management, Cyber Security, IT, and Digital Transformation across the NDA group; and the presentation on GSR010 (Cyber threat).	
5.13.2	F Rainford referred to the DESNZ Public Bodies: Cybersecurity Briefing Session that took place earlier in the week and thanked the Board for its strong attendance at the session. F Rainford noted that he would circulate a recording of the session to those Board members who had been unable to attend together with a request for all Board members to confirm that they had reviewed the additional materials referenced in the session.	
5.13.3	F Rainford reported that earlier that day the NDA had received confirmation that it had secured its Cyber Essentials certification. D Peattie would write to congratulate the individuals involved in securing this certification and to recognise the assistance they had provided to the OpCos going through the same process.	
5.13.4	s40 s24 [redacted] reiterated this view, highlighting the significant work of the team under F Rainford, liaison with the OpCos, and focus on business continuity.	
	s40 [redacted] *left the meeting*	
6.	**Other**	
6.1	**Reading pack items**	

6.1.1	The Board noted the Reading Pack items. No material points raised by Board members. M Shaw highlighted several points from the Quarterly Group Litigation Report for the Board to be aware of.	
6.2	**Forward Agenda**	
6.2.1	The Board noted the Forward Agenda. It was noted that C Maxwell had been invited to join the Board for a working lunch at its meeting in March 2026. A similar invitation would be extended to L McDonough in respect of the November 2026 Board meeting. Lord Vallance would be invited to join the Board dinner ahead of the March 2026 meeting. The Board discussed potential options for a site visit as part of its June 2026 meeting.	
6.3	**Board Reflections**	
6.3.1	The Board remarked on a further heavy agenda and its appreciation of those agenda items where there had been no pre-read, and it had been able to engage in less structured but consequently more insightful conversations with the individuals in attendance.	
6.4	**Any Other Business**	
6.4.1	s43 [redacted]	
6.4.2	There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting.	