



**Minutes of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority ("NDA") Board meeting
held on 26 March 2026 at 09:45 Park Plaza County Hall, London, SE1 7RY/Teams**

PRESENT:	Peter Hill	Chair of the Board ("Chair")	
	David Peattie	Group Chief Executive Officer & Accounting Officer ("Group CEO & AO")	
	Kate Bowyer	Group Chief Financial Officer ("Group CFO")	
	Catriona Schmolke	Senior Non-Executive Board Member	(via Teams)
	Neil Bruce	Non-Executive Board Member	
	Kathryn Cearn	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	
	s40	Deputy Company Secretary	
		EA to the CEO	
		Health, Safety & Environment Director	(part only – via Teams)
		Risk Director	(part only – via Teams)
		Head of Business Planning	(part only – via Teams)
	Clive Nixon	Group Chief Nuclear Strategy Officer	(part only – via Teams)
	s40	Special Programmes Delivery Manager	(part only – via Teams)
		Group Head of Sanction	(part only – via Teams)
	Rob Fletcher	NRS CEO	(part only – via Teams)
	s40	Cambridge Programme Director	(part only – via Teams)
		Unity Programme Director	(part only – via Teams)
APOLOGIES:		None	

Agenda Item		Action Owner
1	Introduction	
1.1	Apologies	
1.1.1	There were no apologies for absence.	
1.2	Conflicts of Interest	
1.2.1	The Board considered the Register of Board Members' Interests. It was noted that A Reeves and N Bruce had provided amendments to their interests. s40	
1.2.2	The Board confirmed that there were no conflicts of interest in respect of the business of the meeting and 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. s40 joined the meeting	
2.	Safety	
2.1	Safety moment	



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2.1.1	D Peattie briefed the Board on his experience [REDACTED] of only NDA staff leaving a venue when a fire alarm sounded. The Board discussed the importance of robust procedures, the requirement to ensure these were communicated and understood, and followed in practice.	
2.2	Latest statistics, trends, incidents and near misses	
2.2.1	The report on P10 – P11 notable events, decisions, insights and trends in all matters associated with environment, health, safety and wellbeing was taken as read. [REDACTED] provided more detail on the key matters for the Board to be aware of and responded to questions on the topics that had been focused on at the recent Accounting Officer Reviews (AORs).	
2.2.2	The Board discussed the success of the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Conference held on 25 February 2026. The satisfaction scores were above 90% and the event workshops had scored 10/10. The Board sought assurance from the Executive that momentum would be maintained to keep the topics covered front of mind, recognising that a return to BAU had the potential to focus attention elsewhere. [REDACTED] noted that leadership time in the field had been a key theme and that through engagement with the OpCo CEOs and site safety directors, the NDA would ensure progress in this area. The recordings and slides from the Conference would be shared with the Board.	H Webb
2.2.3	The Board explored several points in the report in detail. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The Board was supportive of the request that NTS provide trend and benchmark data so that the cause of the events could be determined. K Cearns and H Kemp suggested that their contacts at DfT Operator Limited could be leveraged to provide additional support to NTS. [REDACTED]	
	[REDACTED] left the meeting	
3.	Administration	
3.1	Minutes of previous meeting	
3.1.1	The Board RESOLVED TO APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2026 subject to one minor amendment.	
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) Agreed that being complete Actions 2157, 2164 and 2165 be closed. (ii) M Shaw provided an update on GExCo's consideration of the Board's suggestion that alternate wording be considered for paragraph 3.4 of its Terms of Reference (ToR) (Action 2166). The Board noted that all the ToR created pursuant to Cambridge provided scope for an OpCo to request a review of a decision if they considered it would impact their operational autonomy. The OpCo CEOs were satisfied that as drafted paragraph 3.4 provided that ability. The Board was content to close Action 2166 provided the point would be revisited if recommended by the Cambridge Management of Change (MoC) assessments or the provision did work in practice.	
4.	Executive Updates	
4.1	Group CEO Report	
4.1.1	The Board noted the Report from the Group CEO & AO.	
4.1.2	D Peattie reported that further industrial action was anticipated at Sellafield and that this remained amongst his top concerns for the impact it had not only on the site, but also the local community. The impact on operations was being monitored, and the Board would	



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	be kept up to date on this. The current geopolitical state of the world, which continued to evolve and could have implications for the group's work was also amongst the Group CEO & AO's top concerns. The Executive team were actively considering the potential impacts and reviewing areas where a more cautious or agile approach may be required. D Peattie referred to the update circulated to the Board on 20 March 2026 on the initiation of a group-wide US/Israel-Iran war risk assessment, underpinned by OpCo and SME analysis, which was now embedded within routine risk monitoring. D Peattie noted that Cyber threats also remained amongst his top concerns with cyber-attacks being a constant and evolving threat across the civil nuclear sector. The Board noted the corresponding actions being taken by the group and emphasised the need for continued vigilance by all parties.	
4.1.3	D Peattie briefed the Board on the status of the Independent Review of the NDA, the latest position on the GDF programme, and preparedness for the transfer of Hunterston B to the NDA which was on track for 1 April 2026. The Board explored the plans for surfacing issues that had the potential to arise post transfer and encouraged this activity to take place as soon as possible so that any matters that could inform the transfer of Hinkley B were surfaced and addressed in time.	
4.2	Group CFO Report	
4.2.1	The Board noted the Report from the Group CFO and received a detailed overview of the P11 full year net income and expenditure forecasts against budget, and the P11 GKT status. K Bowyer highlighted that the 2026-29 NDA Business Plan had been laid in Parliament and published on gov.uk on 16 March. The Board noted that the 2025/26-year end process had commenced, with a target date of 3 July 2026 for National Audit Office (NAO) certification of the NDA Annual Report and Accounts (ARA). K Bowyer explained that this date could be challenging and noted that DESNZ were dependent on it being met to lay their annual report and accounts before parliamentary recess.	
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 and A Cumming provided more detail on the key points for the Board to be aware of.	
4.3.2	A Cumming reported that this was his last report to the Board before his accountabilities passed to other members of the NDA Executive and into the OpCos. A Cumming recorded his thanks to the Group CEO & AO for his support since he had joined the NDA in 2017 and to the Board. A Cumming shared his thoughts on how the NDA could be best positioned to address future challenges. The Board expressed its sincere thanks for A Cumming's contribution to the NDA Mission and looked forward to further recognising this at the Board dinner in May.	
	s40 joined the meeting	
5.	Main Board Topics	
5.1	Risk Appetite Workshop	
5.1.1	s40 thanked the Board for its participation in the NDA Board and OpCo CEO risk appetite workshop held on 17 March 2026 and recapped on the principal messages from the discussion: • There had been broad consensus that the group often behaves more conservatively than intended by its stated risk appetite. • It was not concluded that the answer was simply to increase appetite levels across the board. A clearer distinction was needed between nuclear and non-nuclear contexts, together with clearer definitions and interpretation, including nuclear safety and As Low As Reasonably Practical (ALARP), and a more proportionate application of the framework.	



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	Practical examples had shown that pace and value for money were being affected by over-complex governance, procurement constraints, safety and security case practice, and reluctance to challenge disproportionate requirements. Visible NDA and Board backing for well-evidenced, defensible decisions was therefore critical.	
5.1.2	s40 reported that the next steps were to refresh the overarching group risk appetite statement, identify a small number of priority levers, and ask OpCo CEOs to propose where different decisions, clearer delegations or stronger support would materially improve pace, proportionality and mission delivery.	
5.1.3	The Board provided positive feedback on the workshop, including the active participation of the OpCo CEOs. The Board agreed that further opportunities for such interaction should be pursued. A detailed note summarising the reason for the workshop, the principal messages from the discussion, the main outputs, and the next steps would be circulated to the Board via its weekly update email. s40 invited the Board to provide feedback on the note.	
	s40 joined the meeting	
5.2	Group Key Targets 2026/27	
5.2.1	The Board noted the Group Key Targets for 2026/27 that were presented for approval subject to the resolution of some outstanding matters.	
5.2.2	K Bowyer reported that the assurance position on GKT 7 (Sellafield Projects) had been resolved. The red assurance position on GKT 8 (NRS Projects) had been escalated to F Rainford, as the NDA-Appointed NED on the NRS Board, to help resolve the disagreement over the appropriate percentages for the different attainment levels within the target. The assurance position on GKT 9 (GDF) remained amber with late changes to dates proposed and amendments suggested by DESNZ still to be considered. In addition, a request had been made at the Group Remuneration Committee meeting on 23 March 2026 to include a GKT on the response to the Nuclear Regulatory Task Force (NRTF) Report and Recommendations, which would become GKT 15	
5.2.3	The Board noted that the GKT change control process developed and implemented for the first time in 2025/26 would again be available in 2026/27, albeit for use only in exceptional circumstances. The Board agreed that the process should be stringent but also able to recognise that unforeseen circumstances can arise. It also emphasised that the target setting process should be sufficiently rigorous to minimise the requirement to apply the change control process.	
5.2.4	The Board RESOLVED TO APPROVE the 2026/27 GKTs subject to the: (i) completion of assurance on GKT 8; (ii) finalisation of GKT 9; (iii) completion of the creation 'GKT 15'; and (iv) the resolution of queries raised by the Board on GKT 14, specifically the role of the People Strategy Board in the satisfaction of 14.2 such that there was clarity on exactly what was to be incentivised and confirmation that this was the correctly constituted governance forum for this purpose.	
	s40 joined the meeting part way through item 5.3.	
5.3	Response to Nuclear Regulatory Task Force Report	
5.3.1	The Board noted the update on how the group was responding to the recommendations of the NRTF Report, specifically the in-flight or imminent improvements, that were within the group's gift and colloquially referred to as 'Bucket #1'.	
5.3.2	C Nixon outlined the progress made since the last update to the Board in January 2026 and discussed several matters raised by Board members, including: The extent to which the OpCo CEOs and Boards were supportive of the planned response.	



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	- Ensuring the OpCos were empowered to innovate at pace and the engagement that would be required with the Department to enable this. - Ensuring that risks, and interconnected issues and dependencies, were fully explored and identified. - Support for the 'bucket' approach but also corresponding concern that there would be sufficiently early engagement on those areas it was considered would take longer to progress. - The need to strike an appropriate balance between benefit realisation and tracking progress. - The approach to engaging with government, the level of detail required, and potential to include tangible actions and examples that were illustrative of what could be achieved in line with the recommendations. - Themes from the recent Nuclear Chairs Forum, which had focused on the NRTF Report and Recommendations. - The degree of change management programmes ongoing at present, including the response to the NRTF Report and Recommendations, and organisational capacity for this. It was agreed that a risk analysis of the change management programmes ongoing at present would be carried out.	D Peattie
	s40 the meeting	
5.4	Report from the NDA Programmes & Project Committee (P&PCo)	
5.4.1	N Bruce provided an update on the key matters discussed at the P&PCo meeting on 25 March 2026 and highlighted the discussion of the Dounreay Shaft and Silos Programme Business Case (PBC), which had been approved. A video on the programme had been shared and positively received by the P&PCo, clearly articulating the background, key concepts and need for the work. The video would be shared with the Board. The Board noted that the P&PCo had also considered the lessons learnt report from the recent Civilian Guard Force procurement.	H Webb
	s40 joined the meeting	
5.5	Report from the NDA Sanction Group Advisory Committee (SGAC)	
5.5.1	N Bruce provided an update on the pilot meeting of the SGAC which he had chaired. There had been widespread support for the pilot meeting from the attendees and the combined group-wide perspectives had been beneficial to the scrutiny provided by the meeting.	
5.5.2	N Bruce reported on the SGAC's consideration of the NRS Dungeness Boilers Project FBC and Sellafield Lightly Shielded Store 1 (LSS1) Project OBC. Both business cases had been endorsed for onwards submission to the Board at this meeting. The LSS1 Project OBC was initially proposed to be considered by the Board offline, to test the written resolution process as part of the pilot. The NDA Chair, SGAC Chair and Group CEO & AO had subsequently decided that it should be added to the Board agenda as a late submission. N Bruce responded to queries raised by the Board on both business cases.	
5.5.3	The Board noted that the SGAC had also received an update on the NWS Vault Optimisation and Capping Delivery (VOCD) Project OBC. This had been intended to be considered by the SGAC but had not progressed beyond the NDA Group Investment Committee (GIC). Work to revise the ask in the business case was now underway. The intention was for the updated business case to be recirculated to GIC and presented to the NDA Board in April.	
	R Fletcher joined the meeting	
5.6	Dungeness Boilers Project FBC	
5.6.1	The Board considered the NRS Dungeness Boilers Project FBC, which proposed the removal of boilers and other severely degraded plant and structures that posed an	



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	immediate safety risk at the Dungeness site. It was noted that the FBC was subject to final approval by HMT.	
5.6.2	The Board asked how much the project would cost if it were carried out a non-nuclear site. It was agreed that estimates of the cost of the Dungeness A Boilers & Ancillary Plan Removal Project, and Lightly Shielded Store 1 Project, if carried out on a non-nuclear site would be calculated and the comparison shared with the Board. It was suggested that it could also be explored whether the next boilers on the estate to be removed could be undertaken on the basis they do not require decommissioning under nuclear regulations and that if viable, this example could be quoted in the response to the NRTF Report and Recommendations.	F Rainford
5.6.3	The Board RESOLVED TO APPROVE for onwards submission to DESNZ: s43 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	
5.7	Lightly Shielded Store 1 (LSS1) Project OBC	
5.7.1	The Board considered the Lightly Shielded Store 1 (LSS1) OBC, the key objective of which was to provide a fit for purpose, cost-effective Contact Handleable Intermediate Level Waste (CHILW) store with capacity for at least 5,500 packages within the ILW network by 2038.	
5.7.2	The Board noted that in line with the recommendation from the April 2025 Programme assurance, Sellafield had confirmed that it could "make and hold an investment of £400-750m for >10 years in support of LSS" to support efficient delivery. The Board highlighted that the 'Base Cost Reconciliation from SL Baseline (2020) OBC' diagram did not reflect the finding of the subsequent OBC NISTA-style review that SR25 challenges had led to the Enterprise restricting funding, resulting in schedule extension and a significant increase in the project cost. The Board noted that the project team had been asked to review the diagram. N Bruce assured the Board that this should not impact the approvals requested.	
5.7.3	s43 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	
	s40 R Fletcher left s40 joined the meeting	
5.8	GSR006 Deep Dive – Inefficient structures and relationships	
5.8.1	The Board noted the presentation on GSR006 (Ineffective group structures and relationships) and that the risk was currently rated as 'Very High' and out of risk appetite. The Board reflected that the current headline threat scenarios covering the SR25 period were particularly stark but commended the transparency of the Executive.	
5.8.2	P Vallance briefed the Board on the plan to return GSR006 to the target rating of Moderate. This involved revising the Group Operating Model, driving this to completion, being clear on responsibilities, who should execute them, and where they sat across the group. s40 would assist with this work and had produced a plan that was due for sign off the following day. Following consideration by the Cambridge and Unity SteerCo, the plan would be presented to Group ExCo. The Board were supportive of the proposed way forward.	



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	s40 left the meeting	
5.9	Project Cambridge	
5.9.1	The Board noted the update on progress against the Project Cambridge Implementation Plan. P Vallance supplemented the paper with observations on the pace of progress, s36 The Chair explored the source of the challenge and cautioned that the team and Board would shortly need to reflect on how to proceed to the keep the MoC process on track.	
5.9.2	The Board discussed the potential impact of the Independent Review of the NDA on Cambridge. Initial feedback was expected on Cambridge in April and then in more detail in May. P Vallance advised that it would be a matter for the Board to decide whether to submit the MoC assessments as currently planned or to wait until more on the outcome of the Independent Review was known. The Department would need to be kept up to date on any consequent impact on implementation.	
5.9.3	The Board discussed the work that it considered key to informing the MoC process, specifically defining the activities which would be undertaken by the OpCo Boards, the NDA Board and the group committees. Only then could skills matrices be developed to ensure the right skills and experience on each Board. This should also assist in dealing with the OpCos current views on their individual requirements.	
5.10	Unity	
5.10.1	P Vallance provided an update on Unity and thanked the Board for its support to undertake an 8-week sprint with Berkeley to define a group Target Operating Model (ToM). s40 were working towards a high-level delivery roadmap that would be considered by the Group ExCo and thereafter the Cambridge and Unity SteerCo. A view was also being taken on the work OpCos had been undertaking independently on their own ToMs, and which elements of this could continue in contrast to those where a central view was preferred. P Vallance shared his positive observations on Berkeley, and their observations of the group. The Board noted that Cambridge was essential to delivering Unity and discussed with P Vallance the steps being taken to ensure the OpCos had similarly made this connection.	
	C Schmolke, s40 left the meeting	
5.11	Committee Reports	
5.11.1	The Board noted updates provided by the respective Committee Chairs of meetings of the following Committees: (i) Remuneration Committee on 18 March 2026, (ii) Group Remuneration Committee on 23 March 2026 and (iii) Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee (ARAC) on 25 March 2026.	
5.12	NDA Board Effectiveness Review 2024/25: Response to Action Plan	
5.12.1	The Board noted the update on progress against the actions taken in response to the recommendations of the 2024/25 Board Effectiveness Review. M Shaw summarised that most of the actions were either complete or to be progressed through Cambridge and Unity. The Board RESOLVED TO APPROVE the recommendations made on each of the actions. In respect of the next steps to be taken on refreshing the presentation of performance data to the Board (Action 1.f), the Board was content for K Bowyer and F Rainford to consider this further with N Bruce.	
6.	Other	
6.1	Reading pack items	
6.1.1	The Board noted the Reading Pack items. The Board considered the Senior Information Risk Owner, Cyber & IT Update and discussed with s24	

