



Ministry of Defence

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
FLOOR 5, ZONE B, MAIN BUILDING
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 020 7218 9000 (Switchboard)

PHILIP DUNNE MP
MINISTER FOR DEFENCE EQUIPMENT, SUPPORT AND TECHNOLOGY

Our ref: D/Min(DEST)/PD MC00779/2014
Your ref: tp/aw

17th March 2014

Dear Mr Page

Thank you for your letter dated 12th February, in which you requested that the Ministry of Defence should ask the Atomic Weapons Establishment's (AWE) Local Liaison Committees (LLC) to view sympathetically a proposal to extend its membership to include local community groups and non-government organisations, similar to the practice of other LLCs around the country.

As you are aware, the AWE LLC provides a link between the work undertaken on the AWE sites and the surrounding community, by bringing together elected representatives from local district and parish councils with AWE's senior management. AWE plc (via the MOD's management and operation contract with AWE Management Limited) has responsibility for running the LLC and the committee meets four times a year, providing a platform to discuss the operation of the site as it affects the local community.

It is recognised that there are LLCs, representing other Nuclear Licensed Sites, which may adopt a wider approach to their meetings, where the public, local community groups and non-government organisations attend. However, as you have mentioned, there is no national guidance on this subject and composition of various LLCs differ, with each individual committee deciding its optimum way of meeting their remit to represent the local community.

Membership of the LLC and operation of the committee are regarded as matters for the LLC itself, in conjunction with AWE plc as operators of the site on behalf of the MOD. An LLC Joint Steering Group (JSG) has recently undertaken a review which looks at the membership composition and will shortly be commenting on the resulting options and recommendations.

AWE plc has assured us that both it and the LLC are supportive of the increased openness that has emerged over the last few years between nuclear operators and the public. LLC members are free to share information (within the bounds of national security) at their respective council meetings and to use information to answer enquiries

Councillor Tony Page
115 Castle Hill
Reading
RG1 7SY

from local residents. Any other matters raised can also be passed back to the LLC for further deliberation or consideration. The LLC meeting minutes are publicly available on the AWE website.

Also referred to in your correspondence is the issue of widening the membership of the steering group set up for decommissioning the Pangbourne Pipeline (PPL). It is planned that the steering group to be established during 2014, will include representatives from parishes along the route of the pipeline, subject matter experts, the Environmental Agency and affected local authorities. These steering group members will determine the scope, approach and timeline for the PPL engagement project, while ensuring that all Government policies and Environmental Agency regulator requirements are met. Again, membership of the steering group is also regarded as a matter for the LLC themselves, in conjunction with AWE plc.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Philip Dunne'.

PHILIP DUNNE MP