



## Minutes of the 108th AWE Local Liaison Committee Meeting

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023

AWE, Recreational Society, Aldermaston

### Present:

Janine Mantle	Chair
Cllr Philip Bassil	Brimpton Parish Council
Dominic Boeck	West Berkshire Council
Cllr Mike Bound	Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council
Cllr Graham Bridgman	SMPC
Cllr Avril Burdett	Tadley Town Council
Cllr Jonathan Chishick	Tidmarsh with Sulham Parish
Cllr Colin Cooper	Baughurst Parish
Cllr Sophie Crawford	Aldermaston Parish Council
Cllr Kevin Cross	Mortimer West End
Cllr John Durrant	Silchester Parish
Cllr Robert Jones	Padworth Parish Council
Cllr Mark Keeping	Reading Borough Council
Cllr Jane Langford	Purley on Thames Parish Council
Cllr Clive Littlewood	Holybrook Parish Council
Cllr George McGarvie	Pamber Parish Council
Cllr Ian Montgomery	Shinfield Parish Council
Vicky Poole	West Berkshire Council
Carolyn Richardson	West Berkshire Council
Cllr John Seto	Theale Parish Council
Cllr David Shirt	Aldermaston Parish Council
Cllr Jo Slimin	Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council
Cllr Jim Thompson	Wokefield Parish Council
Cllr Tim Whittaker	Mapledurham Parish
Cllr Paul Woodley	Wasing Parish

Nick Bolton	AWE
Andy Burnett-Dale	AWE
Chris Daniels	AWE
Katie Davidson	AWE
Scott Davies-Hearn	AWE
Douglas Greenway	AWE
Andrew Lowe	AWE
Hannah Marsh	AWE
Andrew McNaughton	AWE
Liz Merrin	AWE
James Platt	AWE
Kavita Thandi	AWE
Martin Wells	AWE

### Regulators:

Ian Rogers	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Gareth Lock	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Rob Green	Environment Agency

## Apologies

Apologies were received from: Stuart Coker, Malcolm Large, David Leeks, Jonah Maddocks, Helen Mclean, Susan Mullan and Jo Walker.

## **Actions from previous meetings**

**Action 106/01:** Meeting to be arranged with Cllr Slimin to discuss AWE's relationship with Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council. (*John Steele*)

**Response:** *John and Cllr Slimin were to get in touch. Ongoing. John has now retired. Action closed.*

**Action 106/09:** A visit to the Educational Collection will be arranged for LLC members in 2023. (Chris Daniels / Claire Lockwood / Suzanne Chenery)

**Response:** *We hope to arrange for LLC members to visit the Educational Collection in October.*

**Response:** *This is not something we can actively offer to the general public, but we will arrange future visits for the LLC to see the Educational Collection. The LLC last saw the collection in 2022. Action closed.*

**Action 106/10:** Discuss arrangements for a visit to the Educational Collection for members of the general public. (Chris Daniels / Claire Lockwood / Suzanne Chenery)

**Response:** *Chris and Claire are looking into whether this will be possible as clearance is required from the MOD regarding visits to the Educational Collection by members of the public.*

**Response:** *A visit to AWE for the Aldermaston Historical Group has been arranged for 6 December. Action closed.*

## **Actions from 107th LLC Meeting – 25th April 2023**

**Action 107/01:** Check that the feedback from the survey was shown and sent separately from the minutes. (Claire Lockwood)

**Response:** *Katie Davidson will send a survey out. Action closed.*

**Action 107/02:** Cllr Keeping asked if sediment is sampled at South Road Sewer? Helen to provide an answer for the next meeting (Helen Maclean)

**Response:** *We only sample water at the South Road Sewer monitoring location and do not collect sediment samples (although we do sample water and solids from Silchester Sewage works which is downstream).*

*We analyse the SRS water samples for gross alpha, beta and tritium (alpha spectrometry if the alpha result is above certain thresholds). The solid and liquid sewage samples are analysed for Plutonium, Uranium and tritium. Chemical analysis of SRS water samples is also undertaken which includes suspended sediment. Action closed.*

**Action 107/03:** Cllr Thompson stated that some parishioners live near the Burghfield Brook and they have expressed concerns to where it enters as the brook is choked with vegetation and immature trees, they are concerned that this will slow the flow which could cause flooding to their properties. They have made representation and were told that it would be looked at in September. It looks like the brook is between two levies and has the capability to rise considerably before it overflows but the impact upstream is unknown. Helen to find a response to the question from the Flood Litigation team. (Helen Maclean)

**Response:** *This was covered in the flood risk webinar- September 2023. Action closed.*

**Action 107/04:** Helen to speak with David Ashworth regarding the working state of ~~Burghfield Brook~~ the flood mitigation system and report back at the next LLC meeting (Helen Maclean)

**Response:** *This was covered in the flood risk webinar- September 2023. Action closed.*

**Action 107/05:** Include Flood Risk as an agenda item at the next LLC Meeting (Suzanne Chenery)

**Response:** *This was covered in the flood risk webinar- September 2023. Action closed.*

**Action 107/06:** Jo to provide Cllr Keeping with more information regarding the rumour of an issue with Green Park disturbing the AWE monitoring system due to vibrations from this source. (Jo Walker)

**Response:** *There is no evidence of this. If anything changes, the LLC will be updated. Action closed.*

**Action 107/07:** Jo to provide details on how much solar energy AWE require to run the selected operations on site. (Jo Walker)

**Response:** *This was covered in the 9<sup>th</sup> November meeting agenda. Action closed.*

**Action 107/08:** At the request of Cllr Shirt, Jo to update LLC members on what external sites AWE are considering using as solar power areas. (Jo Walker)

**Response:** *This was covered in the 9<sup>th</sup> November meeting agenda. Action closed.*

**Action 107/09:** Cllr Slimin and Cllr McGarvie requested an update on solar and how this will affect local residents at the next meeting (Andrew Lowe)

**Response:** *This was covered in the 9<sup>th</sup> November meeting agenda. Action closed.*

**Action 107/10:** A3 External Planning to be an agenda item at the next meeting. (Suzanne Chenery)

**Response:** *This was covered in the 9<sup>th</sup> November meeting agenda. Action closed.*

**Action 107/11:** Arrange a date for the LLC flood risk awareness session. (Jonah Maddocks)

**Response:** *This was covered in the flood risk webinar- September 2023. Action closed.*

**Action 107/12:** Check which schools are registered to take part in the Emergency Plan outside of West Berkshire and provide this information at the next LLC meeting. (Carolyn Richardson)

**Response:** *This was covered in the 9<sup>th</sup> November meeting agenda. See information attached. Action closed.*

## **Approval of the 107th meeting minutes**

### **Questions arising from 107th meeting minutes:**

The LLC members would like Councillor Mollie Lock's contribution to the LLC noted in the minutes. Mollie invested an extensive amount of time with the LLC and always particularly took an interest in school engagement. The LLC members and AWE would like to thank Mollie for her time and contribution to the LLC over the years.

Action 107/04 needs amending. 'Burghfield Brook' to be changed to 'flood mitigation system'.

Carolyn Richardson is recorded on the front page as councillor. She is an officer. This needs amending.

### **Introduction**

Janine Mantle, Corporate Affairs Director, chaired the meeting and Chris Daniels, Senior Manager, Responsible Business, welcomed members to the 108th meeting.

Janine introduced Kavita Thandi and Katie Davidson who have joined AWE's Responsible Business team. Katie will be taking over from Suzanne Chenery who has been our Administrator. Janine thanked Suzanne for all her hard work and for being the chief point of contact for the LLC.

### **Chairman's update**

#### **Membership Changes**

Stuart Frost (Basingstoke & Deane) replaced by Mike Bound

John Chapman (Purley on Thames) replaced by Jane Langford

Molly Lock (Stratfield Mortimer) replaced by Graham Bridgman who left West Berkshire Council

Vicky Poole - West Berkshire Council

Matt Shakespeare - West Berkshire Council

John Durrant - Silchester Parish Council

## **Organisation update including site operations.**

### **- July incident**

There was an incident on site over summer.

AWE's thoughts remain with the family, friends and colleagues of the Balfour Beatty worker who died tragically following a construction incident at the AWE Aldermaston site on 6 July 2023.

AWE continues to work with Balfour Beatty, Thames Valley Police, and the Office for Nuclear Regulation to support the ongoing investigation. The incident did not involve any of our nuclear installations or any nuclear materials and there was no risk to the public.

### **- Site exercise 4<sup>th</sup> Oct**

On Wednesday 4 October, AWE carried out the Level 1 Exercise at Aldermaston, demonstrating their emergency response capabilities to the regulators as part of the LC/AC 11 and Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Public Information Regulations (REPPiR) requirements.

The exercise was observed by regulators from the Office for Nuclear Regulation, Defence Nuclear Safety Regulator, Defence Nuclear Security Regulator and overseen by a team of AWE's internal regulators and a representative from the MoD.

The exercise was assessed by the regulators to be an adequate (Green) demonstration of AWE's emergency arrangements.

### **- Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion (enei) Gold Award**

AWE have been awarded the prestigious Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion (enei) Gold Award.

Out of 171 entries this year from organisations across the country, there were only 15 Gold Awards, meaning that AWE is in the top 10% in the country for ED&I, so this is an incredible achievement.

### **Best Companies Survey**

AWE has been voted as the 17<sup>th</sup> Best Company to work for after completing the annual Best Companies colleague engagement survey. AWE is really proud of this result, and it shows we are a really good company to work for.

Our graduate and apprentice programmes are accepting applications now, so if you know anyone who may be interested, please give them a prompt.

### **Proposed Industrial Action**

You may have seen or heard that one of AWE's Unions, Prospect, has rejected a pay offer and after balloting its members is proposing industrial action short of a strike.

Action short of a strike means pausing several voluntary activities and overtime, alongside arranging all their members to arrive at Main Gate at the same time on Monday 13 November.

Thames Valley Police has been informed about potential disruption and we will continue to work with them and relevant authorities to minimise the impact of any action on our local community."

We all want to avoid any industrial action and find an amicable solution. The company will continue to make every effort working with Prospect to find a satisfactory and swift resolution.

**Questions arising:**

**ClIr Jane Langford:** In relation to the Best Company Award, is that AWE or contractors?

**Janine Mantle:** AWE employees as contractors have their own different survey.

**ClIr Jonathan Chiswick:** Is adequate the best grade you can have or are their higher grades?

**Ian Rogers:** Any activity that we assess can only be graded as adequate or inadequate. Legislation only needs a grade of adequacy.

**Dominic Boeck:** In relation to the proposed strike action, which union is it?

**Janine Mantle:** It is Prospect. This union represents mainly office-based workers. The other union, Unite, represent generally the front-line workers.

**Janine Mantle:** There have been 3 questions raised since the last meeting.

1. Do you believe that AWE staff returning to site-based working is partly responsible for the traffic increase?
2. What is your current policy on car sharing and the use of public transport and is it effective?
3. Would AWE firemen still support the local community in the event of a fire off site? There is currently a shortage of recruits of on call firemen in Tadley.

**Janine Mantle:**

Question 1 response: Car sharing is hugely advertised and incentivised.

Question 2 response: local transport is limiting in the area.

Question 3 response: Will be addressed during the presentation.

All of these questions will be included within the presentation and will be checked at the end.

**ClIr George McGarvie:** In the past we have been able to see John Steele's transport plan and the metrics related to it. Is there a possibility of looking at numbers pre-covid vs now?

**Action 108/01:** AWE to report car sharing figures at the next meeting.

**ClIr Avril Burdett:** We would like to see the bus service from Basingstoke to Tadley more widely advertised as there are concerns over children's safety with the increase in traffic.

**Action 108/02:** AWE to advertise the use of public transport across the company.

**Liz Merrin:** We can ensure that the train and bus services are more widely advertised to staff.

**ClIr George McGarvie:** Is public transport incentivised?

**Chris Daniels:** It is something we will look into.

**CLlr Jo Slimin:** There has been a noticeable increase in traffic. It would be cheaper to catch a bus than to drive? A bus ticket from Basingstoke to Tadley costs only £2. There needs to be a promotion of the benefits of using public transport. People must be able to save money this way and keep money in their pocket.

**Janine Mantle:** This is very powerful. Janine suggested that the LLC create something to share with staff. An appeal from the community to use public transport more often. Perhaps create a video or a blog message to get the message across to staff.

**Action 108/03:** LLC members to put together a 'voice of the community' video to be shared with employees about the impact of using public transport. Team Responsible to lead on this in partnership with the Transport team.

**CLlr David Shirt:** There was a meeting with Andy Burnett- Dale (AWE) where it was discussed that there could be a possibility of sponsoring a bus from Baughurst to Aldermaston station. As it is not safe for cycling or walking.

**CLlr Mike Bound:** Are there any metrics on how many people come from Basingstoke on to site?

**Chris Daniels:** We do have access to that data but not to hand.

**CLlr Jane Langford:** Back in the day we had a bullseye diagram given to us that was very useful. It had AWE in the middle and then where people came from.

**CLlr Sophie Crawford:** Nick Roberts is updating the transport plan and it would be useful he if could come and talk to us at the next meeting.

**Action 108/04:** Nick Roberts to attend the next meeting to discuss the new transport strategy.

### **Environment, Safety and Health Update**

Nick Bolton

ESH&Q Service Delivery Lead

Nick gave an overview of performance in personal and process safety during the period, advising members that the OSHA TRI rate to the end of August 2023 was 0.324 per 200,000 hours worked. 15 injured parties required one or more days away from work to recover resulting in 435 working days lost. There was a total of 26 Recordable Injury Events that occurred in the 12 months to the end of August 2023. However, personal safety is overshadowed by the incident on 6<sup>th</sup> July.

Nick also explained that temporary lighting had been installed before the clocks went back to combat poor lighting in areas around site.

They are working with contractor companies to help reduce contractor worker injuries.

Nick discussed that the process safety performance remains at an acceptable risk level. There have been no process safety events raised during the period. Process safety training for supervisors remains an ongoing focus, increasing process safety knowledge across the organisation supporting supervisors who supervise in high hazard

environments. The Leadership Process Safety training in partnership with Cogent Skills continues to be delivered to leaders at AWE. The intention remains for this course to become a key course for all senior leaders at AWE.

The Process Safety Team is also continuing to develop virtual reality training that can be used to raise hazard awareness amongst staff at all levels of the organisation.

With regards to Waste Management, the controlled waste disposal for the financial year to end August 2023 target from the Environmental management System (EMS) is 99% for the financial year 22/23. The total waste diverted from landfill is 99.9%.

The Atmosphere & Trade Effluent Public Dose Assessment for Aldermaston Stream for the period for the period July 22 – June 23 calculated doses represent minute fractions of the dose constraint set by the Environment Agency of 500  $\mu$ Sv (0.5 mSv) per year for a nuclear site. The model concludes that there is no hazard to members of the public.

#### **Questions arising:**

**CLlr Mark Keeping:** How temporary is the lighting?

**Nick Bolton:** It is generator ran lighting. The staff report defective lighting in any areas around site. Some of the lighting is not cost effective to replace.

**CLlr George McGarvie:** If someone is removed from the workforce, how do you calculate this how many lost days?

**Nick Bolton:** This would need checking on how this is calculated when someone is removed from work or off for long periods of time. The count stops when an employee leaves the business.

**CLlr Rob Jones:** Why is there a general trend towards more incidents?

**Nick Bolton:** From 2020 there was a step up in events because we reported more. The criteria changed. AWE encouraged more reporting. So, this is down to more mere stringent reporting.

**CLlr George McGarvie:** Why are the number of reported accidents significantly lower? (Reference to slide 7)

**Nick Bolton:** There is not a drop off of reporting. There is a healthy reporting culture. All incidents are triaged and investigated. All incidents are reported. Due to reinforced AWE reporting processes on site. 34 is the updated figure of the number of Events Notified to the ONR by Calendar Year 2023 (end of August).

**CLlr Dave Shirt:** There has been an otter spotted on the Aldermaston stream last week.



## **Regulators Update**

Ian Rogers, Lead Site Inspector

Office for Nuclear Regulation

The ONR report was circulated prior to the meeting for the period 1 February to 30 September 2023.

### **Reporting period**

The period covered by this report 1 February to 30 September 2023 is in response to an agreement at the last AWE Local Liaison Committee to move to a six-monthly schedule starting November 2023. Future reports will cover the period 1 April to 30 September and 1 October to 31 March to accommodate this revised schedule.

### **Inspections**

During this period, ONR site, project and specialist inspectors made 12 separate visits to site for the purposes of conducting a broad range of inspection activities. As discussed at the last meeting, we have been working with AWE to encourage a more consolidated approach utilising the scheduled monthly site inspection weeks more effectively to reduce the burden to the ONR inspection teams. Consequently, except for March, July and September, these correspond to the monthly schedule of site inspection weeks.

The additional two visits March were to accommodate specific meetings with the AWE Executive team and Senior Leadership team that could not be accommodated during the site inspection week.

The visits conducted in June were in response to the preliminary enquires undertaken following the fatality in the Hub Construction Enclave. The significant majority of activities undertaken as part of the subsequent investigation have taken place on Thames Valley Police premises.

### **Routine Inspections**

You will note that our inspection activities continue to cover a broad range of topics that represent the focus of our regulatory oversight throughout ONR's 2023/24 inspection programme for the AWE sites:

examination, maintenance, inspection and testing

management of operations including control and supervision

staff training, qualifications and experience

radioactive waste management

decommissioning

organisational capability, culture and organisational changes

conventional (non-nuclear) health and safety

assurance and governance

management of modifications to existing plant.

construction safety.

It is worth noting that construction safety will have a specific focus going forward with an ONR Site Inspector appointed to oversee construction activities across both sites.

### **In addition to the above**

From the report you can also see that:

ONR attended the AWE Annual Review of Environment and Safety [AROEES]. This provided the opportunity to discuss AWE's safety and environmental performance over the previous year, the identification and implementation of learning from operational experience, and the strategic focus for the coming years. Overall, ONR was content that AWE's assessment of their performance and their strategic focus aligned with ONR's assessment and expectations.

ONR and AWE have commenced a joint review into the circumstances that led to the Prohibition Notice served following shortfalls identified in AWE's confined space arrangements. The intent of this review is to understand the communications that took place between ONR and AWE and, the information available providing the basis of decisions made within the various governance forums.

ONR has also undertaken further activities to assess AWE's progress in delivering safety improvements. The outcomes from those activities continue to be encouraging with the site having made significant improvements over the last 12 months. There remain several areas that will continue to be subject to regulatory focus over the next 12 months, including organisational learning, internal assurance and conventional health and safety, particularly construction safety.

In addition, ONR has held a further 'Holding to Account' meeting with the Managing Director and key members of his executive team to reinforce the regulatory expectations regarding the start of high hazard decommissioning activities.

In addition, ONR continues to undertake a series of activities in support of the oversight and commissioning of significant programmes of work. The focus this reporting period includes decommissioning and construction activities.

In addition, ONR continues to be engaged in the assessment of proposals for organisational change. These include assuring nuclear safety and operational effectiveness.

ONR site inspectors continue to hold periodic meetings with the safety representatives within their operational areas, to support their function of representing employees and receiving information on matters affecting their health, safety, and welfare at work. Recent discussions have been very useful and demonstrate the clear commitment of the safety representatives to support safe working practices within their areas.

### **Update on Non-Routine Matters and Events**

There were two events of note during the period:

On the 6 July, AWE notified ONR that an incident had occurred on the Hub Construction Enclave resulting in significant injuries to two workers. One of these workers was airlifted to hospital where he subsequently died from his injuries. In accordance with the 'death at work protocol' Thames Valley Police (TVP) are currently the lead agency for the ongoing investigation with ONR providing technical support and advice. ONR is not able to provide any further information at this stage.

On 30 August, AWE notified ONR of an attempt to conduct movement of fissile material by an operator whose training had expired. The discrepancy was identified before any material movement took place and the operator's

access to the system has been restricted pending recertification. All fissile movements were placed into abeyance until a full audit of operator training and certification had been conducted. ONR consider that the safety arrangements were sufficiently robust to identify the shortfall and prevent the material movement from taking place. ONR is satisfied that the checks conducted in response by AWE provide the assurance required for the continued safe movement of fissile material. ONR will not be taking any further formal action.

### **Formal Regulatory Activity**

Two notices were served this period; both Legal Forms LP12: Notice to Leave Undisturbed. These were served to safeguard the integrity of the plant and equipment identified as integral to the investigation currently ongoing into the fatality on site.

These notices have now been lifted and ONR is overseeing the arrangements and activities to commence construction activities within the Hub Enclave. ONR's oversight of restart activities remains separate from the activities being undertaken as part of our ongoing investigation.

Ian explained discussions with trade unions have been extremely valuable.

### **Questions arising:**

**ClIr Rob Jones:** Do you just do scheduled visits?

**Ian Rogers:** No, we do spot visits to site as well although we aren't there to catch people out.

**Liz Merrin:** As the incident was a construction accident is the ONR the best regulator to assess this?

**Ian Rogers:** ONR is the Office for Nuclear Regulation. It is the HSE equivalent on nuclear sites. We are the nuclear regulator. Although we do work alongside HSE for specific advice. AWE is on enhanced regulatory attention.

**ClIr John Durrant:** What was the timeline between the holding to account meetings?

**Ian Rogers:** Holding to account meetings gives sites options to improve before an improvement notice is served. First one was this time last year then the last one was April 2023.

**ClIr George McGarvie:** With regards to the movement of fissile materials, their competency was out of date. How was it assessed?

**Ian Rogers:** Regardless of what it is it needed addressing, he shouldn't have been moving fissile material. It was an administrative lapse. He shouldn't have been making the move. He was trained but hadn't been certified.

**ClIr George McGarvie-** 4/5 years ago there was a fire in an explosives building. One set of materials was done correctly. Another set done on the side to 'catch up on work'. There needs to be a level on context. How dangerous could this have been?

**Ian Rogers:** He was trained and fully competent. Aware of what he was doing. The authorisation was needed to sign him off. It would have been an authorised move had he been certified/authorised to make the move.

The explosives incident was that there was an issue with one of the chemicals, not that there were 2 processes happening alongside each other.

**ClIr Jane Langford:** Was it an employee or contractor? It must be difficult to manage/control all the contractors/sub-contractors.

**Ian Rogers:** It was an AWE employee. However, contractors must work to AWE standards, policies and must be trained and supervised at the same level as AWE employees. Everyone should be the same. It shouldn't matter if they are a contractor.

**Cllr Mark Keeping:** A failure of management procedures. How many layers are there?

**Ian Rogers:** The move didn't happen. The 2<sup>nd</sup> layer arrangements picked it up. No further action was needed.

**Cllr Dave Shirt:** Would ONR have detected it? Or do you rely on AWE informing you? How many times haven't they told you?

**Ian Rogers:** We rely on AWE to report all incidents to ONR. AWE is very good at reporting incidents directly to ONR. There is a positive relationship between ONR and AWE. There are whistleblowing policies in place and any concerns raised would be investigated.

**Cllr Avril Burdett:** Avril explained that she knew someone who had recently joined AWE and they had mentioned all the training and safety briefings that they had been asked to do. This was a positive.

**Dominic Boeck:** As the ONR, are you regulating enough?

**Ian Rogers:** ONR can only make judgements on what they have seen/heard and been told about. We regulate appropriately for this site and with their business operational needs. After the fatality we need to focus on construction safety as a regulator. We will get a grip on this as the construction projects progress.

**Janine Mantle:** Thanked Ian for sharing ONR's best practice for community engagement.

Rob Green

Environment Agency (EA)

The Environment Agency report was circulated prior to the meeting for the period 14 April to 11 October 2023.

Rob explained that the EA is a nuclear regulation function. They look at nuclear discharges on nuclear sites and water discharges on nuclear sites. EA and ONR work with each other.

Rob refers to the report and explains there were no non compliances raised and recommendations will have been made. AWE must report data to the EA under their environmental permits. Rob discussed the compliance assessments the EA had carried out over the period.

*Ventilation Management Arrangements:*

We inspected AWE's ventilation management corporate arrangements as part of our ongoing assessment of evidence to inform future closure of a joint regulatory intervention between ONR and EA, raised in response to shortfalls in AWE's HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filter and ventilation management arrangements. We did not identify any non-compliances with the permit during the inspection. AWE had made significant progress in improving its ventilation management across its nuclear sites.

*Failure to report radioactive waste discharges data:*

AWE reported to us that it had failed to report discharges of relatively small amounts of gaseous radioactive waste from the processing of samples of radioactive material, associated with nuclear forensics work undertaken at Aldermaston Site, between 2013 and 2023. We are in the process of investigating the circumstances surrounding this event and to establish whether compliance with the environmental permit has been challenged.

*Radioactive Waste Discharges and Environmental Monitoring*

We completed routine reviews of technical data provided by AWE in relation to its discharges of radioactive waste from its Aldermaston and Burghfield Sites, as well as data and information from its environmental monitoring programme.

While we noted that the data were broadly consistent with previous data submissions, AWE failed to provide some of its monitoring data to us within the timescales required by the environmental permits. We recorded 4 minor non-compliances as a result of this issue and sought improvements in AWE's management arrangements covering the reporting of monitoring data required by the environmental permits.

**Questions arising:**

**Cllr John Durrant:** How many visits are there?

**Rob Green:** One inspection a month

**Cllr John Durrant:** What is the process for a serious issue?

**Rob Green:** Any risk of something happening needs to be reported. If a non-compliance is found, then it is given a rating score of 1 to 4 (1= high risk and 4= no impact).

**Cllr George McGarvie:** In AWE's internal process they normally give a maximum discharge number. Were these discharges part of that or excluded?

**Rob Green:** AWE give figures 6 monthly. 6 monthly reports from Aldermaston and Burghfield are submitted. AWE failed to report discharges between 2013-2023 from a certain building. Nothing challenged permit limits.

**George McGarvie:** AWE didn't have a proper procedure regarding HEPA filters, is that cleared or ongoing? As this was lost during Covid.

**Rob Green:** EA worked with the ONR, and the item is closed. Some issues were raised. 2 inspections took place. AWE have now made changes with regards to HEPA filters and the regulators are satisfied.

**George McGarvie:** We need to make sure questions and actions in this Committee are properly recorded and followed up. They cannot be left unaddressed, which is why I think HEPA needs to be raised again as it was an issue at a previous meeting.

### Estate Services Update

Martin Wells

Group Leader Site Services

Protestor activity continues with the 'Women's Peace Camp' on the second weekend of each month. There is no other planned activity scheduled at this time.

There have been 2 community concerns raised.

Summary of concern	Outcome
<b>1. Local resident heard the Site Under Cover alarm and were concerned that they might be at risk.</b>	The resident was assured that it wasn't an incident that could present them with a hazard. They were satisfied with the response.
<b>2. Local resident said their house was being fired upon</b>	This coincided with an approved/authorised rabbit cull taking place on site in the evening. MDP investigated and found that safety protocols were being followed i.e., all shots were being fired from the direction of our fence line inwards. The resident was satisfied with the action and response.

Martin reinforced what the site undercover alarm means. It means it puts the whole site under control.

### **Questions arising:**

**Cllr Avril Burdett:** Can a message be put on the front page of the Connect magazine to remind residents that there is no action needed with the site under cover alarm?

**Janine Mantle:** Yes, we will take that as an action.

**Action 108/05:** AWE to put a message about the site cover alarm on the front cover of Connect magazine to let residents know there is no action needed when they hear this alarm.

Andrew McNaughton

Executive Director Infrastructure, Fissile Programme

### **Infrastructure Investment Update**

**Andrew McNaughton:** Andrew shared updates on infrastructure investment. In the year 2020, the Prime Minister decided that we needed a replacement warhead. Part of the reason AWE became an arm's length body in 2021 was in preparation for the investment to come. In the years since the end of the Cold War investments had been scaled back. Our existing facilities have been operating successfully and safely for decades, what we must do is prepare ourselves for decades to come.

The facilities that we have for manufacturing products need to be updated so we can achieve our programmes of work. We have to get to the position where we can continue to support the existing fleet and existing product whilst we develop and produce the product for the future, so we end up running in parallel.

We have a population of some of the most talented scientists and we must go about the science in a completely different way. Computational science and trials and tests are fundamental in how we can come up with a design for a replacement product. AWE needs to provide infrastructure to support this. New facilities that allow our scientists to carry out the research and development and validate the design characteristics of the new product. That is a significant investment that wouldn't be needed in previous times but is absolutely needed now.

Over the years in Aldermaston, development of facilities has been commissioned on a building-by-building process, like Orion, Gemini and the infrastructure in Burghfield. They have been managed separately from a construction point of view. Moving forward and for this significant investment, there is a need to view it all together. The government agrees and will ring-fence a solid amount to allow us to deliver the constructions needed across the whole site. A site construction plan has been developed for decades to come.

This will mean that, over time, a number of old buildings will be removed, along with the steam pipes as AWE looks to power the site in a completely different way. The Hub building is a good example of an enabling project. The Hub provides the opportunity to free up some existing buildings which are in a deteriorating state and be able to take those away and replace them with better use of space and of the site. The Hub is a facility we are building right now which will be a new home of science and engineering and where we can train apprentices.

Unlike other infrastructure programmes, where we are asked to give a single cost and single timeframe for when it is going to be delivered, we have applied for an envelope for funding. The Ministry of Defence has agreed a range we are going to spend and set out a schedule of how we are going to work with them to maintain that funding.

Images were shared of how the site may look in the future, along with how Burghfield has developed. The costs of the buildings are so significant because many of them will be unique, carrying out activities which means they must be very safe and secure and therefore they are complex. They are

different to science labs which you would think would have more similarities, but they are different because of our commitments and our requirements. Our intent is to deliver a science pathway for the future which supports our scientists and using technology which is more modern to deliver our product in a more efficient way.

We already have a secure cell in Sheffield (part of Sheffield University) where we have some of the equipment we have been using here (in MMF) where we are going to be trialling the processes and training some of our employees.

The government is investing billions of pounds, which will provide opportunities for economic growth around the whole community, for education and for long term employment. New skills will be required because we will be using new processes and new techniques. Our apprentice programmes will be looking at completely different ways of working in the future. Our graduates who join the science community will be looking at completely new methodology for how we access the capability and the ongoing ability of our product. It's a huge opportunity for AWE.

**Questions arising:**

**Cllr John Durrant:** The 20-year infrastructure plan implies you will have capacity for a lot more employment. What does that look like in terms of the community? As well as the site rebuild, you will need the infrastructure that supports that site and transport.

**Andrew McNaughton:** We can only give the view of the investment received inside the wire, and a sense of employment opportunities. There are career opportunities for every single trade used in construction and professional expertise involved in the delivery of those infrastructure.

**Cllr George McGarvie:** Very interested in the point made about unique goals and functions. Is there best practice in USA or France that we could look at and learn from?

**Andrew McNaughton:** The Americans are at the same stage as us and are going through a similar programme as we are. The relationship we have across the pond is very strong, so we have constant interaction with them. We also have joint programme with France, working together and sharing knowledge we have from building that facility. We are also learning from lots of other infrastructure programmes and taking best practice.

**Cllr Dave Shirt:** Clarified if MoD had agreed the funding, how much and over what period?

**Andrew McNaughton:** Not only MoD but Treasury have agreed as well.

**Cllr Vicky Poole:** Where does the education comes in in addition to apprenticeships and the work, we're doing with Sheffield University? Would AWE consider working with closer universities, like Reading and Oxford?

**Andrew McNaughton:** We referenced Sheffield as they have a particular facility for advanced manufacturing and the relationship there is looking at how we can take advanced manufacturing principals. We have already started engaging with Reading University and in conversations with their CEO.



**Cllr John Durrant:** Have we started working with artificial intelligence?

**Andrew McNaughton:** The use of AI and the use of virtual reality is being used in how we train people and how we bring people up to speed in their technique.

**Cllr Avril Burdett:** Is AWE meeting with Hampshire, alongside West Berkshire Council. A meeting with Hampshire was confirmed.

**Cllr Mark Keeping:** Suggested the oversight coming from the government in terms of value for money.

**Andrew McNaughton:** A governance process is in place, so the government has the right oversight as to how the infrastructure project is evolving. AWE will go back to the government regularly to confirm we are still operating within the boundaries, and we are providing value for money through competitive tendering.

**Cllr Kevin Cross:** What is the envelope boundary?

**Andrew McNaughton:** Is not at liberty to divulge.

**Cllr Robert Jones:** Does this come from the defence budget? Andrew McNaughton confirmed it does.

**Cllr Mike Bound:** Does this mean there is a big increase in personnel onsite?

**Andrew McNaughton:** There will be an increase when we go through the construction process. We already have an increase onsite now with delivering the Hub so what we can expect is a constant level of employees.

**Cllr Mike Bound:** Would additional personnel be required within the facilities to operate them?

**Andrew McNaughton:** In the future, we will need to bring in parallel sets of operations and an increase within our manufacturing capabilities.

**Cllr Mike Bound:** There is limited ability to accommodate new residents in the local area.

**Andrew McNaughton:** We are hopeful that we will engage with the broader community you all represent. It is not only about new people coming into the area but also to encourage those who don't currently work here to apply.

Andy's role is to look at what Andrew McNaughton has just been eliciting and what our master plan for the estate looks like internally. Not just the infrastructure but our people and heritage. He also has a secondary role to look at the planning externally. Our estate master plan has had the biggest review in 10 years to understand how that massive investment plan. I.e., how our people, our agenda for carbon, our agenda for energy, our agenda for biodiversity, translates into what our estate looks like. That manifests itself more publicly into a site development context plan. Andy explained he also has accountability of AWE's travel and transport plan which covers everything from how we encourage people to use public transport, or how we encourage car share. We have three key activities on now. One, a feasibility study to look at options to improve the cycleway from the Heathway roundabout down to the Aldermaston village. Second feasibility study is associated with how we improve foot traffic and cycleways between the Aldermaston site and Tadley. The third study we're conducting is how can we better utilise public transport including to Aldermaston train station, Newbury, Basingstoke, and Reading. This is all in place on the back of the Hub development.

Development applications from the local area are reviewed by AWE on the basis of whether they would impact AWE and our ability to deliver our mission. An update was provided on one development application which AWE and MOD have objected to in Burghfield Common. The planning inspector granted permission for the development after a public inquiry in June 2023. AWE is challenging this decision in the High Court and the hearing is scheduled for 23 to 25 January 2024.

**Questions arising:**

**Cllr Jo Slimin:** We have been working with Aldermaston, but they don't recall us coming to Tadley Town Council. The footpath goes through the traffic lights at the moment, and we are on one side of the road and West Berkshire is on the other.

**Andy Burnett-Dale:** We have recently employed Nick Roberts who we have brought in to permanently manage travel and transport and understand the impact this has.

**Cllr Jo Slimin:** There was a proposal put forward by some of the members of Tadley cycling group asking for a cycle route between Tadley and Basingstoke so people could be encouraged to cycle.

**Andy Burnett-Dale:** There is a plan to produce that on the river line which is the first item on the wish list from what they are going to be doing for the Thames Link.

**Liz Merrin:** Not sure how we change people's behaviour and get them to take a bus which seems highly unlikely.

**Andy Burnett-Dale:** This is my task as I don't want to make it too easy for people to drive but it is a behavioural change the business is approaching through their wider environmental agenda.

**Cllr John Seto:** I have ridden a lot and shared one must be a very confident rider to take some of the ways

around Theale. As part of your feasibility study, what things are being considered as there doesn't seem to be much scope with such narrow roads?

**Andy Burnett-Dale:** This is one of the harder options, but we have a duty to explore the possibilities as part of the feasibility study. Professional support and guidance is being provided, so options cannot be judged until we have their insights.

**Cllr John Seto:** Have there been discussions around running shuttle busses from train stations that meet the arrival and departure times of trains?

**Andy Burnett-Dale:** It may be considered as an option but can't give a definite answer yet. We should get the first output of the study in the new year.

**Cllr Graham Bridgman:** Flagged the possibility of a cycleway/footway between Burghfield and Mortimer as it may fit in with our plans which was noted.

**Cllr Avril Burdett:** Are you looking at the long-term closure of the bridge at Aldermaston Wharf?

**Andy Burnett-Dale:** There are detailed diversions being consulted on at the moment.

**Cllr Vicky Poole:** Love the development buildings and what is proposed for the site but conscious about green spaces, what's been proposed and how this fits into the plan?

**Andy Burnett-Dale:** As part of the 10-year review and the plan, there are dedicated, protected areas for tree planting, shrub land we are looking to protect. We are also protecting our runways and are excited that Aldermaston will be a greener site and have a consultee in conversation who has influenced the wider plan.

Carolyn Richardson

West Berkshire Council

Since the last meeting they issued the booklet which is required under REPIR every three years updating the public with certain information. The data has come back and been analysed from the audit and has been submitted to the ONR as the regulator and are now reviewing and taking learnings forward. They have been meeting with the schools as, after a gap during COVID, they have been trying to re-engage head teachers and provide support. Focussing on ALDEX and some of the learnings that came from it, including people want more training, and some people didn't necessarily know what their roles are. There has been a decrease in training through COVID which will now be ramped up. A public version of the offsite emergency plan will be available. AWE is part of the tactical coordinating group to provide information on a radiation incident, so the process was in place, but we are going to formalise it. We are also reviewing the plan of communications. The scientific and technical advisory cell (STAC) plan is about any type of emergency we deal with and tends to focus on infectious diseases and was used a lot during COVID.

Whilst we have experts within the scientific and technical advisors within radiation, the chair is not normally a radiation expert, so we are wanting to put some information in that to steer them. There is a large project and so seven subgroups have been setup to target some of the actions and take them forward.

**Questions arising:**

**Boeck:** Shared that he was involved in Aldex 16 as a board member but not invited this time round.

**Carolyn Richardson:** This was in Burghfield site, and everyone received an invite to come.

**Slimin:** Asked about relationships with schools and how we have been engaging with schools. Can I ask if you work with schools in West Berkshire or all over?

**Carolyn Richardson:** Confirmed we have been working with schools from all over.

**Slimin:** How do we keep the numbers to contact people up to date?

**Carolyn Richardson:** There is a piece of work going on as landlines go through an automatic system to be updated, but we are working with the cabinet office about the emergency alert system.

**Cllr Vicky Poole:** I moved to Burghfield and received a pack through the door explaining what would happen in the event of a radiation incident but had been living there for several years prior to receiving this pack. Could new residents receive the pack as soon as they have moved in?

**Carolyn Richardson:** This could have been due to a change in the size of the detailed emergency planning zone (DEPZ). The number of estate agents makes this tricky, but it is available on our website.

**Cllr Robert Jones:** Has been to a few of these meetings and thinks there is a fundamental disconnection between the safety concerns felt by communities and those felt by AWE.

**Ian Rogers:** Confirmed the reason for the regulator to attend these meetings is to provide that level of reassurance.

**Janine Mantle:** As we have some new members, at the next meeting we should do a general overview of how the big risks are managed.

**Action 108/06:** AWE to discuss the more general practical activities that go on around site. For example, what we do/ what we don't do. A lift the lid on AWE and eliminate the myths.

**Carolyn Richardson:** Added that one of the actions on her was to facilitate a training session on the plan and the site and are looking for a date in January to run this.

**Cllr Dave Shirt:** Shared that the biggest concern is with the convoys that go offsite, so can I ask that this is included in the update?

**Janine Mantle:** Confirmed this will be included.

**Cllr Dave Shirt:** Does the ONR's responsibility end when the truck leaves the site?

**Ian Rogers:** The ONR is the nuclear regulator for a nuclear licenced site with exception to a defence site or sites which come under direct Crown control. The Defence regulator Defence Nuclear Safety Regulator (DNSR) look after those activities which are exempt from civil legislation as ONR cannot enforce against it.

**Janine Mantle:** We will be inviting DNSR to the next meeting as part of this learning piece. **Cllr Vicky Poole:** When was the last time there was for a drill with the community to check the processes are followed and monitored?

**Carolyn Richardson:** We have spoken about this but the problem with setting of an alert, is making sure that it is a test. With the new text alert system, we have the opportunity to do a test, but would need to do it in a low population area to start with and will need to be appropriately managed.

**Action 108/07:** DNSR to be invited to the next meeting.

**Action 108/08:** Carolyn Richardson and Scott Hearn-Davies to feedback about a potential community DEPZ practice and share the information about the upcoming workshop in January 2024.

### **Community update**

Our Time to Give policy as all employees receive two days to go into the community and give their time to support the community as well as one day for a team volunteering session. We have a partnership with 65 local secondary schools within a 20-mile radius that doesn't include our primary schools and colleges.

We attend career fairs, workshops, run talks and primary STEM days. We have a good relationship with Queen Mary's College and are currently in talks to extend our sponsorship of their primary science centre where thousands of children can go for free science lessons.

Our Connect magazines are delivered to around 38,000 residents sent according to post codes. This year, we are taking around 266 apprentices which has increased from 80 in the year prior.

We also have our annual Give a Gift collection which employees from around the company donate and goes to several local charities including Trussell Trust Foundation, Cowshed and Barnardo's.

### **Questions arising:**

**Dominic Boeck:** What is the retention rate for apprentices to which J. Mantle responded 100%.

**Katie Davidson:** Continued to talk about our primary science challenge and the prize of a Royal Institution show. Our Team Challenge had 25 teams take part from across AWE and raised over £14,000 for motor neuron disease.

**Cllr Dave Shirt:** Put on record his thanks for a litter pick in their area.

**Action 108/09:** AWE to consider their content with our external communications to the community.

**Action 108/10:** LLC to feedback the usefulness of the Connect magazine.

**Action 108/11:** AWE to send an electronic version of Connect magazine to the LLC members.

### **Solar Farm project**

Andrew is responsible for AWE's energy management. Part of his role is to look at the changes to AWE's internal and external energy infrastructure. We are looking to develop two solar farms, one to the Aldermaston site and one to the Burghfield site in the next few years. We have started market engagement and cast the net out for opportunities in a five-mile radius. Sizes for Aldermaston is 20 mega-watts plus and Burghfield is 10 mega-watts plus. We have had around 30 landowners respond to our expression of interest, and we are now about to go through the tender development and tender process. We are looking to offset some of the impact from our infrastructure programmes by developing large scale solar assets to support our estate.

### **Questions arising:**

**Cllr Kevin Cross:** Why we are looking for five miles?

**Andrew Lowe:** The intention isn't for it to be a reliable source as we know solar is intermittent so we will still rely on operator connections. This is to augment our current source of supply which is from the grid to accelerate our decarbonisation and mitigate the operational daily impacts of the new infrastructure. We are looking for 100 acres. AWE wants to be a net zero emissions (for scopes 1 & 2) organisation by 2040 for our electricity and during this time. We are about to use a lot more energy so if we don't make active decisions now to press down on our emissions then what we will see in the short term is an increase. All new facilities will be using electric or air source, ground source, water source for heating – not using steam or doing any combustion.

**Cllr Jo Slimin:** Have we had the go ahead from the national grid?

**Andrew Lowe:** We are working through our grid applications at the moment because the extent of our energy demands is such that we might need to reinforce our supply, regardless.

**Cllr Kevin Cross:** What about the potential ban on turning farmland into solar farms and how that may impact the project?

**Andrew Lowe:** Not all interest has been from farm owner and there are other landowners interested.

**Cllr Ian Montgomery:** Are you looking for one site or multiple?

**Andrew Lowe:** We would be open to multiple but are definitely looking at one for Aldermaston and one for Burghfield.

Any other business (AOB)

**Cllr Graham Bridgman:** Mentioned an email sent into the LLC mailbox regarding footway/cycleway which he would like chased up. Katie Davidson will follow this up.

**Cllr Avril Burdett:** Would AWE firemen still support the local community in the event of a fire offsite? As there is shortage of firemen in Tadley.

**Cllr Paul Woodley:** Shared that they have done so in the past.

**Martin Wells:** We have in the past and if asked, we would again if possible. We have requirements onsite to be able to operate so if we were to get a request to support a response, we would but this mean that we would need to stop our operations onsite to help. In the past 12 months we have supported in Burghfield with a traffic incident.

**Cllr Avril Burdett:** Do you support volunteers onsite to be on call firemen?

**Martin Wells:** We have asked them already.

**Cllr Dave Shirt:** asked about the police too, **Janine Mantle** explained police are constantly active and we need a certain level to maintain security, firefighters although always training, have more capacity to support.

**Thompson:** Mentioned the Burghfield Brook and said David Ashford gave a good brief on risk management and mentioned we are restricted on when we can do maintenance. As of October, they have done some maintenance and cut the grass but didn't attempt to remove any trees or other plants growing and we can't see the water level.

**Janine Mantle:** Action to ask if it will be cleared.

**Action 108/12:** AWE to provide a timeline for the Burghfield Brook.

**Cllr Avril Burdett:** Added an AOB asking with so many new members, are we able to arrange a windshield tour of site?

**Action 108/13:** AWE to organise a windshield for the LLC members.

**Meeting closed.**

**Date of Next Meeting:**

29<sup>th</sup> April 2024