

# **Cross Party Group on Civil Nuclear Industry**

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025 – 1:30pm – 3:30pm,

Annan Football Club and on Teams

Minute – Site end states

Present

## **MSPs**

- Oliver Mundell Co-Convenor
- Colin Smyth – Co-Convenor

## **Non-MSP Group Members**

- David Wallace - NDA (secretariat)
- Eve Pearson – NDA (secretariat)
- Phil Carson – NRS
- Richard Murray – NRS
- Kathryn Whalley – Jacobs
- Dr Frank Wigley – NDA
- Pete Longley – NRS
- Ian Park – NRS
- Councillor Archie Dryburgh – CPX SSG Chair
- Steve Rogers – Dumfries and Galloway Council
- Helen Emberson – CPX Project
- David Thompson – Green Cat Hydrogen
- Sam Long – Decom Mission
- Claire Aitken – NRS
- Malcolm Stone – University of Aberdeen/ National Decommissioning Centre
- Neil Feguson – South of Scotland Enterprise
- Leona Seaton – Dumfries and Galloway College
- Bethany Sherry – NDA
- Andrew Clarke – NDA

## **On Teams**

- Andrew Balchin
- Bill Hamilton – NRS
- Colin Baxter – NRS
- Dave Wilson – NRS Dounreay
- Diane Hamilton – Scottish Government
- Gail Ross – NRS Dounreay
- Ian Blake

- James Craig - NRS
- Sean Marshall – Dumfries and Galloway Council
- Micheal Ward – University of Strathclyde
- Simon Napper - NWS
- Niall Watson – NRS Dounreay
- Oliver R Smith -NRS
- Pete Roche – NGO Forum
- Emily Kearl - SEPA
- Benjamin Lawler
- Struan Mackie – DSG
- Louise Martin - SCCORS

## Apologies

- Emma Harper MSP – Deputy Convener
- Kenneth Gibson MSP
- Councillor George Jamieson

## Agenda item 1 – Welcome and introduction

### Key points:

- **Oliver Mundell MSP-** It's great to be in Annan and visit the Chapelcross site earlier today. Thanks for the turnout and I'm pleased to have been able to visit such a significant site.
- **Colin Smyth MSP:** Chapelcross is a great example of a microcosm of the challenges that all legacy sites face, and it was exciting to see how the vision for site end states is being brought to life. Thanks to the NDA group for organising an excellent visit earlier this morning.
- **Oliver Mundell MSP-** Since the last meeting Colin and I have sent a letter from the Cross Party group to the Cabinet Secretary for Energy, following up on the wide ranging discussion we had at Holyrood. We plan to publish that letter and the response to our Cross Party Group website and circulate it with the minutes from this meeting. It was a constructive reply and there was an interest in revisiting some of the issues that were raised and a recognition that people wanted to revisit those issues too.
- We've taken forward within the 'Scottish Parliament's festival of politics' an event that will focus on 70 years of Dounreay. Details of the event will be shared once confirmed but we wanted to let members of the Cross Party Group know we are planning on taking that forward.
- Some visitors from North Wales joined the site visit earlier today. It was interesting for Colin and I to meet with them and that's another connection that has been made through this group.

## Agenda item 2 – Minutes of the previous meeting

### Speaker Oliver Mundell MSP

- Is everyone happy with the minutes from the previous meeting? There were no objections, so minutes are agreed.

## Agenda item 3 – Determining site end states

### Speaker Dr Frank Wigley (NDA Strategy Manager Remediation)

Key points:

- **Frank Wigley** – Introduces himself and explains what remediation strategy is. The term ‘site end states’ is used within the NDA group to describe the condition to which the NDA’s mission is completed, and the land is ready for reuse. There are three key principles when thinking about the condition of land, it needs to be safe, sustainable and publicly acceptable.
- The NDA group’s aim is to enable beneficial reuse as soon as possible. It might be that the beneficial reuse is before the NDA group have finished its work.
- He explains the process of determining site end state options.
- **Oliver Mundell MSP**- Are there any questions about Frank’s presentation?
- **Councillor Archie Dryburgh**- What is an end state? Chapelcross is certainly not there with four reactors.
- He states the similarities between Chapelcross and Calder Hall and asks what the learning is.
- **Frank Wigley**- The decommissioning strategy of reactors is slightly different, and I will ask my colleague, Simon Boniface, and follow up.

**Action: FW to follow-up with Simon Boniface.**

- **Councillor Archie Dryburgh** – There are 8 types of reactors, with the same technology so the learning in terms of waste is going to be huge.
- **Frank Wigley** – I completely agree, and how we move all that concrete in a sustainable way will be really important. There’s a lot of asset value for Scotland and the UK in those materials. Some of the technology and science coming through is really exciting for those beneficial reuse of materials as well as land.
- **Niall Watson**– I have an observation rather than a question. When we talk about end states, technical issues and matters of safety are key and critical but I also believe it’s as much of a policy and political decision as well. This is where this group has a really important role.

- **Frank Wigley-** I agree and its more 70-30 towards a political aspect.
- FW says he's changed his opinion completely since starting in a technical role. FW states the importance of government, local government, Nuleaf and SCCORS.
- Having these conversations now will save us time and money as we get further down the line.
- **Oliver Mundell MSP**– I don't see it as an either or. The idea that this is different from other areas of economic development would be a mistake. That's the point of this group to talk up the potential of these sites and decommissioning employs lots of people across Scotland. Hopefully this group signals to you that there are MSPs from across the main parties who are listening.
- **Ian Park-** States that public acceptance will come when you have sustainable local jobs.
- **Frank Wigley** – Agrees and states that's the approach of the NDA group.
- **Oliver Mundell** – It was great to be on site and see things are happening. It's great to see these new jobs arriving and they won't replace all the jobs but it's a start.
- **Colin Smyth MSP** – Once these good high-quality jobs come, they will bring public acceptance and the importance of that can't be highlighted enough.
- **Bill Hamilton** – Highlights some of the work NRS have been doing in Chapelcross to raise awareness of what's happening on site and what will happen in the future. This includes a mobile exhibition in Annan Tesco car park and focus groups. Starting that dialogue and site-specific strategy is key to public acceptability and NRS are making a start on that.
- **Oliver Mundell MSP**– States how important it is that decisions are shared decisions within the community.
- **Frank Wigley** – It's so important and the NDA reflect on their decisions if they don't get that public buy in.
- **Sam Long** – How do you weigh national vs local voices?
- **Frank Wigley**– It's a very good question and there are some guidelines from IAEA. FW says he doesn't know and it's going to be something they will work out.
- **Oliver Mundell MSP**– I think local is arguably more important, unless you get it right for the site community, it will never happen.
- **Pete Longley** - What we find in practice is that there is an alignment between local, regional and national policies in these areas. That challenge won't necessarily arise in Chapelcross.
- **Frank Wigley**– It's a question we've not really had to think about to that extent and that's one of the values of me coming here today.
- **David Wallace** – Highlights the work of the NGOs, Nuleaf and SCCORS, which gives us the wider perspective.

- **Oliver Mundell MSP** – Keen to mention it's not the same for every site and it's not all the same solutions for every site.

## Agenda item 4 – CX project building a future legacy

### Speaker: Helen Emberson CX Project

- **Helen Emberson** – Introduces Chapelcross Site Transformation Programme, giving an overview of the site history, land and Chapelcross Energy Hub.
- **Neil Ferguson** – Describes some of the enabling work South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) has done to make it development ready, such as diligence and constraints analysis, so we can get people working quicker.
- **David Thompson** – Introduces Green Cat Hydrogen. Will create 15 permanent jobs and 150 during the construction phase. The hydrogen will stay in the region, all customers will be, as it stands, within a 20 mile radius of the site.
- **Oliver Mundell MSP** – Is there capacity to expand if it goes ahead?
- **David Thompson** – We see this as a phased development. We try and make sure we have demand for the facility first.
- **Colin Smyth MSP** - Where is your hydrogen going?
- **David Thompson** – They are local high energy users, but they are all under non-disclosure agreements.
- **Colin Smyth** – What are we going to do differently to make sure that those manufacturing jobs will come to Chapelcross?
- **Helen Emberson** - Working with SOSE we've been putting ourselves out there and have attended several Scotland-Germany trade missions focused on hydrogen, and lots of presentations raising the profile of Chapelcross. With Green Cat coming along, we see this as the acorn from which we can start to grow.

## Agenda item 5 - Questions

### Speaker: Oliver Mundell MSP

- **Oliver Mundell** - Asks if there are any questions?
- **Councillor Archie Dryburgh** – Skills are key, and a lot of educational vocational qualifications are down in Bridgwater. So, I've been looking at a training facility on site that will cover both renewables and decommissioning.
- **Helen Emberson** - That's something they have been discussing with NDA and NRS, and Dumfries and Galloway College. The college has the skills to deliver but may be constrained space wise. We've reached out to Nicola Bacon recently and the aim would be a Scottish hub.

- **Councillor Archie Dryburgh-** It's not just about graduates, we also need people to drive forklifts etc.
- **Leona Seaton** -We are in active conversations with NRS and the council. We have active borderlands bid in and we do have a keen eye on this. But Helen and I have said it's about keeping these conversations active so we are in the right place at the right time and equally you can't pivot overnight. The worst thing that could happen is that you have these high-quality jobs in the region that don't go to people in the region because we aren't ready for it. We are actively aware, and we would welcome any conversations about how we can do this.
- **Oliver Mundell MSP–** That's really important and it's about making sure the qualifications and training are actually useful for the workplace. That's positive to hear and I agree with what you are saying about having people here to work that's the absolute preference, but on the flip side if people do decide to come here for a high skilled job, they may decide to stay in the area.
- **Ian Park –** Two weeks ago I was in Bristol, and NRS's CEO committed to carrying on skills training because he's listened to the trade unions. The commitment is there because we won't be able to operate in 5 years if we don't. The point being we see this gap now and we're trying to do something about it. We need it local.
- **Leona Seaton-** We would be very happy to have this conversation with you and if the qualifications don't exist, we can work with industry to write that qualification.

**Action: LS to liaise further with CPX SSG and Site Trade Unions moving forward.**

- **Ian Park-** It exists we just don't have the facility for it.
- **Leona Seaton-** It could be a partnership, if you have the knowledge, skills and expertise and we have the qualifications. That's a conversation we can have with borderlands and work with industry.
- **Ian Park-** We've tried several times to kick it off.
- **Oliver Mundell MSP-** Colin and I can write more formally on behalf of the Cross-Party Group and ask within NRS and NDA what's happening in terms of partnerships.

**Action: CPG to write to NDA/NRS and request information on wider partnership working.**

## Agenda item 6 – AOB

- **Oliver Mundell MSP**- We could ask for a map across the Scottish sites about what training partnerships there are across the sites. There were some commitments from skills development Scotland to map some of this work.
- **David Wallace** – We've written two reminders with no response as yet.
- **Oliver Mundell MSP**- I have some frustrations with that, as it's very much in favour of the environmental restoration of sites. It might be something we take back to the skills minister and say they have been slow in progress.

**Action: CPG to write to SDS reminding them of actions from September CPG.**

- Well I think that's a good place to wrap up. Thanks to everyone online and for those who have made the journey to Annan. It was great to visit Chapelcross and it has been a really good meeting.
- Is there any other business? No further items raised.

## Agenda item 7 – Date of next meeting

**Speaker: Oliver Mundell MSP**

- We will be back in touch through David (secretariat) about the next meeting and topic. We are interested to secure new ideas. Hopefully we've found a new format, but it is the trade-off. It's nice to get out into the community and to support the football club. Thank you.
- The meeting closed.