

Date: 24th November 2006

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Rt Hon David Miliband MP
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
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Dear Mr Miliband

Managing Radioactive Waste Safely – Institutional Arrangements

Following your presentation of the Government's response to the CoRWM recommendations, this Council is concerned that events do not move too rapidly and establish responsibilities in respect of the implementation process with limited consultation. It was disappointing that the decision to make the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority the implementing body was made without prior consultation with local authorities.

We feel it is very important to the success of the implementation process that there is public confidence from the outset in the implementing body model you have chosen. Accordingly, the structure set up within the NDA to carry out this function needs to secure public and stakeholder confidence and trust. To achieve this, we would suggest that the implementing body should have a clear identity within the NDA and be able to work in partnership with necessary contractors and communities. To do this, it will need to have adequate funding and staff in terms of numbers, experience and expertise. Therefore, the NDA should retain and utilise existing resources and expertise transferred in from Nirex for this function and enhance this as necessary. It will also need to be seen to operate independent of the commercial imperatives of the NDA.

We would also welcome your assurance that there will be consultation with local authorities on the arrangements for establishing the implementing body within the NDA to help arrive at a structure that will engender confidence. We hope you will facilitate ongoing consultation between Defra, DTI, DCLG, NDA and Cumbria. We would be happy for this to be facilitated through the Nuclear Legacy Advisory Forum.

Yours sincerely

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Leader
Conservative Group
Cumbria County Council

Joan Stocker
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C.c Dr Ian Roxburgh, Chief Executive NDA
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