

PR 4213

For Immediate Release

11 November 2010

Council says let's work together to map Sellafield's future and encourage new nuclear business at the site

Cumbria County Council's Cabinet is encouraging the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority to work in closer partnership with the county council and local people to ensure continued public confidence in the Sellafield site over the next decade, particularly as reprocessing operations wind down.

In its response to the NDA's consultation on its business strategy for the next five years, Cumbria County Council stresses that investment in the local community, as required by the Energy Act 2004, will continue to be essential.

The council's response underlines that the NDA has made significant progress in defining the decommissioning and site restoration tasks across its estate, but the Sellafield site continues to face significant challenges in the future. The reduction and stabilisation of the most hazardous wastes at Sellafield must continue to be the first site restoration priority. Sufficient funding will need to follow to ensure that risks can be reduced in an acceptable and safe timescale.

The council's response says opportunities for new missions on the Sellafield site should be explored, and the NDA should be proactive in this, particularly to identify new revenue raising opportunities that can contribute to funding priority site restoration work. The centralised storage of spent nuclear fuel from any new nuclear build programme is an obvious opportunity - given the assets and skills available to Sellafield.

Cllr Tim Knowles, Cumbria County Council's Cabinet member responsible for environment and nuclear issues, said:

"The nuclear industry plays a major role in the economy, infrastructure and life of West Cumbria. It is therefore quite right that it consults local people and key stakeholders such as the county council on what its priorities should be, how it manages its risks, and how it intends to continue with the nuclear decommissioning programme so that Sellafield can be restored for future use.

"We are keen to work more closely with the NDA, regulators and site licence companies to develop a road map for the future of the site so we're all clear what the major milestones are, what the infrastructure needs are, and when the site should be restored by.

"There will be a great deal of change at Sellafield over the next decade. As things stand now, the anticipated wind down of reprocessing operations will have a significant

- 1 -

impact both economically and socially in West Cumbria. It is therefore essential that the nuclear industry engages early and openly with local authorities in a true spirit of partnership."

ENDS

Media enquiries to Gareth Cosslett, News Manager on 01228 226332 or 07973 811206