

## DOUNREAY STAKEHOLDER GROUP

### Minutes of the Dounreay Stakeholder Group meeting held at 1900 hrs by Teams on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

<b>Present:</b>	Cllr Struan Mackie	Highland Council (DSG Chair)
	Davie Alexander	Thurso and Wick Trade Union Council (DSG Vice-chair)
	Gillian Coghill	Independent chair, Buldoo Residents Groups
	David Broughton	Co-opted member of the public
	Tor Justad	Co-opted member of the public
	Cllr Willie Mackay	Highland Council
	Alastair MacDonald	DSG Honorary member
	Roger Saxon	DSG Honorary member
	Bob Earnshaw	DSG Honorary member
	Thelma Mackenzie	Thurso Community Council
	Cllr Stephen Clackson	Orkney Islands Council
	Cllr Matthew Reiss	Highland Council
	Ron Gunn	CHAT
	Sandy Mackie	Scrabster Harbour Trust
	Trudy Morris	Caithness Chamber of Commerce
	Eann Sinclair	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
	Peter Faccenda	CNSRP
	Donna Stewart	Women inn Nuclear (Highland)
	David Craig	Caithness West Community Council
	Debbie Murray	North Highland College, UHI
	Sand Owsnett	Dounreay Union
	June Love	DSG Secretariat, DSRL
<b>In attendance:</b>	Gareth Taylor	NDA
	Mark Rouse	MD, DSRL
	Ian Rogers	ONR (Dounreay)
	Martin MacDonald	Scottish Government Radwaste
	Wendy Newton	MOD, Vulcan
	Stewart Ballantine	SEPA
	Vik Winspear Roberts	ONR (Vulcan)

## MINUTES

### 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Cllr Struan Mackie welcomed everyone to the meeting. Before commencing the meeting, he noted that the DSG AGM had just been held and thanked members for re-electing him as chair with Davie Alexander elected as Vice-chair/Socio Economic sub group chair and Gillian Coghill as Site Restoration sub group chair. Deputies for the sub group would be identified at the first sub group meeting.

Before moving on, Cllr Struan Mackie noted the following:

- The DSG business meeting had been meeting fortnightly since Covid restrictions and he thanked everyone on the business meeting for their continued support and commitment to attending these meetings. He thanked Roger Saxon, past DSG Chair, for remaining on the business meeting to ensure continuity as the new officials had settled down.
- Placed on record thanks to Roy Blackburn, co-opted member of the public who had decided to step down from the role at the AGM noting the input Roy had made over the years.
- Welcomed new member Kirsty Strachan, representing Women in Nuclear (Highland) to the group, noting that unfortunately she had tendered her apologies for this meeting with Donna Stewart acting as deputy.
- Noted that Stewart Ballantine, SEPA was in attendance and thanked him for his attendance given IT connections for SEPA at this time was difficult.

Before moving on, Cllr Struan Mackie noted that there had been a scheduled presentation by MOD regarding the new timelines for decommissioning. Unfortunately, the presentation had been postponed due to some consideration of the options going forward and would prefer to wait until such times that this was clear before coming forward with a presentation. Cllr Mackie noted that he had spoken with Commodore Mark Prince prior to the meeting and the Commodore was keen to provide this update as soon as was reasonably practicable and if required an ad hoc meeting of DSG would take place to accommodate this presentation if the presentation was made available after the Scottish elections. He stated that Wendy Newton was in attendance this evening and would provide an operational update under agenda item 4. He emphasised that DSG would continue to work with MOD to identify a date for the decommissioning presentation and market engagement.

As a matter of protocol, Cllr Mackie reminded members to ensure their microphones were placed on mute when not speaking and to raise the electronic hand for any questions.

[Secretary's note: there was on action arising from the AGM relating to website analytics. This action is replicated here to ensure it is progressed in a timely manner]

**Action: DSG(2021)M01/A001: June Love to explore whether the website analytics can provide further information on the types of documents that are being viewed.**

## 2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

- Brian Mutch, SGRIPD (Scot Gov) Rural inspections and payment department.
- Kirsty Strachan, WiN Highland – Donna Stewart deputising.
- Keith McCarthy, CNC T/Superintendent
- Cdr Mark Cleminson, MOD Vulcan

- James Bryson, DNSR

### 3. PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Cllr Struan Mackie stated that the minutes of the last DSG public meeting had been held in October 2020 and these minutes had been circulated and endorsed by correspondence.

The Socio Economic sub group had been held on 20<sup>th</sup> January – DSG/SESG(2021)M01 refers. These minutes had been circulated to members in advance. No amendments were raised and the minutes were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting. This was proposed by Eann Sinclair seconded by Peter Faccenda..

The Site Restoration sub group had been held on 20<sup>th</sup> January – DSG/SESG(2021)M01 refers. These minutes had been circulated to members in advance. No amendments were raised and the minutes were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting. This was proposed by Thelma Mackenzie and seconded by Tor Justad.

No issues were raised from either set of minutes.

### 4. STATUS OF ACTIONS

Cllr Struan Mackie noted that members had received the updated status of actions. He added that the actions there were two outstanding actions which was very positive considering all business had been conducted within a virtual platform. He asked if anyone wished to raise anything from the actions.

- Tor Justad noted the action regarding Hazel Blears providing an update on social value and asked if there was any output from that discussion. June Love noted that Hazel Blears had attended the DSG business meeting on the 23 March and the minutes would reflect the discussion. These would be circulated to members shortly. Cllr Struan Mackie added that the discussion had been well received and had resonated well amongst those present. He believed there would be more opportunities to have further discussion with Hazel Blears in the future. Tor Justad thanked Struan for his update noting that he had been involved in social auditing and would be interesting to know a bit more and that perhaps DSG could be part of a social audit in the future.

### 5. HIGH LEVEL UPDATES

Cllr Struan Mackie noted there would be a number of updates and asked those providing these to keep this to topics that had not been covered at the January sub groups. The following updates were provided:

**NDA:** Gareth Taylor reported:

- Maintaining safety and security of the sites, and the health and well-being of those people associated had remained a priority. Across all the NDA sites the response to Covid-19 has been a real team effort with community support a key aspect of this.

- The NDA strategy and business plan had now been published and thanked DSG for their contribution to the consultation.
- The OneNDA continued to progress the transition of DSRL as a subsidiary company and was on schedule to transfer on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. The Low Level Waste Repository would also become a subsidiary company later this year resulting in all operating companies being subsidiaries of the NDA.
- As part of the OneNDA a new leadership team had been announced recently and Mark Rouse, as MD for DSRL, would become part of that team. As part of the NDA Executive a number of posts had been filled across the business. Now that all sites were transitioned to NDA it would allow for more sharing and connectivity across the NDA group.
- Lawrie Haynes had recently been appointed as the new DSRL chair and would take up this post on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.
- Mark Rouse had the full support of NDA to lead DSRL moving forward and NDA will continue to provide support.

Cllr Struan Mackie thanked Gareth for his update and then invited questions from DSG members. Of note:

- Tor Justad noted there was a number of changes in personnel and leadership it would take some time for those new people to settle in to their new posts. He asked what NDA would do to support people into these new jobs. Gareth Taylor responded that it is something that the NDA does take a lot of interest in and that this is managed in a staged approach. These changes are assessed through a Management of Change process that demonstrates that these changes are managed in an appropriate manner. A number of existing personnel had remained working on site to allow handovers to the new incumbents and this has allowed continuity.

No further questions were raised from DSG members or members of the public.

**DSRL:** Mark Rouse, DSRL Managing Director  
This update can be found under agenda item 6.

**Scottish Government Radwaste:** Martin MacDonald reported:

- A number of staffing changes had taken place within the Radwaste team. Pat MacAulay, team leader, had been promoted within the Scottish Government and had moved on to a different team. It was expected that the team leader role would be filled shortly. In addition, Diane Hamilton had joined the team recently and she was looking forward to meeting with stakeholders in the near future. Tony McFadden, nuclear graduate, had completed his six month secondment and consideration was being given to identifying a new graduate to take over the role as it provided some technical background to support

the development of the policy documents.

- In terms of policy development, a review of the nuclear decommissioning policy paper (Cmd 2919) which had been written prior to the NDA being established will be undertaken shortly. This would be the subject of consultation and this was expected to be in the summer of 2021.
- The HAW (Higher Activity Waste) policy paper, published in 2011, identified a near site, near surface facility which was different from the policies of England and Wales. The Scottish Government policy paper was now ten years old and a review would be undertaken shortly with consultation taking place in summer 2021. It was not expected that fundamental changes would be made to the policy, with 'near surface, near site' continuing as the existing policy aim. However, there would be opportunities to enhance the policy and provide more clarity in certain areas and improve stakeholder engagement.
- Scottish Government has considered the recent updates to NDA strategy and business plan. Both the Strategy and Business Plan were approved by Scottish Ministers in conjunction with UK Ministers in relation to Scotland.
- Scottish Government were working with ONR with regards to international reporting obligations.

Cllr Struan Mackie thanked Martin for his update and invited questions from DSG members.

- Tor Justad noted the recent publicity around the UKAEA announcement on the fusion (STEP) project noting that there were 3 sites in the UK looking at this. There had been some press on Scottish Government's appetite for Fusion and he understood that Scottish Government remained sceptical about fusion having a viable future. He asked if there were any policy documents available in relation to Fusion.

Martin MacDonald responded that Scottish Government were aware of the interest in the fusion (STEP) project. In terms of the Government's position, the aspiration was to be net zero by 2045 and significant growth had been already seen in renewables and other energy sources. Fusion had the potential to contribute to net zero. Further information would be required in terms of cost, safety, environment and technology. He agreed to provide the link to the Scottish Government Energy Strategy that sets out the policy position on new nuclear.

**Action: DSG(2021)M01/A002: Martin MacDonald to provide DSG Secretariat with link for policy position on new nuclear.**

- David Broughton commented that UKAEA had followed Cmd 2919 to set out the decommissioning of the site and a lot of that strategy had not fundamentally changed. If this was changed now it could impinge significantly on decommissioning plans going forward.

Martin MacDonald noted this comment.

- David Broughton said he found it rather strange comment to say that the HAW policy was being reviewed but not expected to change fundamentally. Given there was a review and then consultation it was wrong to assume no fundamental changes would be the outcome.

Martin MacDonald responded by saying that perhaps this had been the wrong choice of words and was sorry for any misunderstanding or confusion caused. To clarify, it is not expected that the overall policy of near site, near surface facility would change. This is because there does not appear to be any significant stakeholder appetite for such change. However, the consultation would be an open and transparent process. The Scottish Government will give further consideration as to how best to engage with members of the Dounreay Stakeholder Group and site restoration group and consider options such as hosting a workshop with focused on challenges associated with Dounreay.

David Broughton responded that Scottish Government were out on a limb with this policy noting that England, Wales and most European countries were in alignment with Geological Deep Facilities for the disposal of higher activity waste. .

Martin MacDonald stated that the Euratom Directive makes mention of near surface as being an acceptable solution for long live higher activity waste. However, the Scottish Government recognises that not all waste may be suitable and therefore further analysis and consideration of alternative solutions will continue to be explored . However, the waste inventory data suggests that the vast majority of Scotland's higher activity waste would be suitable for management in near surface, near site facilities.

No further questions were raised from DSG members or members of the public.

**ONR (Dounreay):**

Ian Rogers, ONR inspector for Dounreay noted that he had nothing to add from the report provided at the DSG site restoration sub group on 20 January 2021.

Cllr Struan Mackie invited questions.

- Tor Justad noted that in the last minutes there was mention of the Licence Instrument to implement the revised emergency arrangements and wondered what progress was being made for implementation.

Ian Rogers responded that the new arrangements had been implemented. ONR had issued the Licence Instrument which stated the date on which DSRL were to implement the new arrangements.

**SEPA (Dounreay):** Stewart Ballantine reported:

- SEPA had been the subject of a significant cyber-attack during the Christmas period and encouraged members to go the SEPA's website which outline SEPA's capabilities at this

time.

- There was no major updates from SEPA with regards Dounreay but placed on record his thanks to Mark Rouse and his team for the accommodating and understanding way they have dealt with SEPA's challenges and assured members that ongoing dialogue had continued on various site projects. Regulatory scrutiny and engagement had continued during this period.

Cllr Struan Mackie invited questions.

- Gillian Coghill thanked Stewart Ballantine for the response (ref: DSG(2020)M03/A048) he had provided to the question raised on the LLW Pits. She asked how long it would take for SEPA to issue something else if the breach continued.

Stewart Ballantine responded that he could not provide a definitive timeline. This was a legacy issue with the site regarding the pit's regulatory acceptance and operation. He expected to see continued progress to resolving this issue. He added that optioneering on the LLW pits had been undertaken early this year and DSG representative had been involved in the workshop. Once the outcome of the optioneering was available DSRL would evidence and underpin an optimised option for the facility. At it stood, it did breach the permit but the impacts were very small with only very low ground water impacts with no impacts to the public. It was a breach, however, and DSRL were making appropriate progress towards addressing this issue.

Gillian Coghill responded that the response provided would go back to the Buldoo residents who had raised this as an issue to ensure they were aware of the low impact to the environment. She added that she had been one for the DSG representatives at the LLW Pits optioneering workshop and had found the three days very interesting.

Cllr Struan Mackie thanked Gillian for representing Buldoo residents' concerns and for attending the workshop along with David Broughton. He felt it was good to see DSG members getting involved in workshops such as this. He believed he was very privileged to chair a group that had the necessary expertise to be able to take part in some of these more technical workshops.

### **CNC**

Cllr Struan Mackie noted there was no one in attendance from CNC but stated that if any questions arose these would be actioned through the minutes to ensure a response was forthcoming. He invited members to raise any questions.

- Tor Justad asked if he could get clarification of what was meant by DECP. [Secretary's note: DECP stands for Dounreay Exotics Consolidation Project].

**MOD:** Wendy Newton reported:

- With reference to health, safety and Covid-19, Vulcan had introduced lateral flow testing for all staff up to twice per week dependent on how long staff were on site for (e.g.: 1

test undertaken for 2 days working with 2 tests if working more than 3 days). Testing applies to all those on site and extends to any site visitors. While testing is not mandatory and not conditional for entry to the site everyone is strongly encouraged to take a test and so far there was near 100% compliance with testing. The testing had been rolled out only a few weeks ago and so far there had been no positive testing.

- On the environmental issues, there continued to be routine interactions with SEPA and Melanie Hayes would soon become the SEPA inspector for the site.
- Fuel management continues to make progress with the emphasis of completion on training, assessment and qualifications.
- All infrastructure (cranes etc) had been tested to ensure they were fit for purpose and ensuring the maintenance regime was kept updated.
- Following further operational requirements required post 2022 the PIN for market engagement for the decommissioning phase had been withdrawn. Work continues to develop the scope of work and once approved would be the subject of a presentation to DSG. Once all approved the market engagement would recommence. MOD remained committed to promote the decommissioning of the site and could confirm that the programme remained coherent with DSRL's programme.

Cllr Struan Mackie stated that thanks were due to MOD and Rolls Royce who had also provided supported to the community through the Covid restrictions and while he felt this sometimes flew under the radar the support provided was very much appreciated. He then opened up to questions from members.

- Roger Saxon noted that the PIN for decommissioning had been withdrawn. He asked if the assumption should be made that the PIN would be advertised after the Scottish Government elections and did it mean that the decommissioning period would be extended?

Wendy Newton responded that no market engagement activity would be undertaken during the pre-election period and therefore it was likely this would happen following the elections in May. Roger Saxon asked whether there was an understanding of when it would happen following the elections. Wendy Newton responded that MOD expected to get a way ahead very soon and anticipated having this information before the next DSG public meeting. If the information was available before the next meeting they would look to meet with DSG earlier.

Wendy Newton added that in lieu of meeting it was important to note the strategic pillars that had not changed. Decommissioning would still be aligned to DSRL and would be considering the social value aspect of a contract as it evolved. Using Social Value I the tender evaluable was a new concept for MOD but it was believed this was a positive development within the Government procurement process and welcomed that.



- Tor Justad stated he was not clear what progress had been happening on the site at present and it did not appear to be covered by the update.

Wendy Newton responded that while they continued with site operations there was little she could go into detail about.

**ONR:**

Vik Winspear Roberts noted she had just recently taken up the post from Al Hillary and was looking forward to working with the Vulcan site. She also welcomed meeting with DSG and looked forward to further interaction over the coming months.

Cllr Struan Mackie welcomed Vik Winspear Roberts to the meeting and also looked forward to further interaction.

No questions or issues were raised.

**6. DOUNREAY PRESENTATION**

Before handing over for the DSRL presentation, Cllr Struan Mackie thanked Mark Rouse for his continued updates to himself and the business meeting on how the site was progressing with Covid restrictions in place. He added that a request had been made for Mark Rouse to provide an update on the site transition and what progress had been made on the Near Term Work Plan (NTWP). He then handed over to Mark Rouse.

Mark Rouse provided a presentation (DSG(2021)C015 refers). He commenced his update with the sad news that Bob Kury, past Deputy Director at Dounreay, had died last month and the thoughts of those of knew him were with his family at this very sad time.

Following the presentation, Cllr Struan Mackie invited DSG members to raise questions.

- David Broughton noted the slide on the management structure, stating he did not quite understand it. He added NDA was a large organisation and he did not quite understand why DSRL would have a Board between DSRL and the NDA. He also queried why within the NDA Leadership structure other SLC personnel were Chief Executives while Mark Rouse was Managing Director.

Mark Rouse responded that DSRL would be a legal entity (as the site licence holder) and that in itself required a Board to run the company. NDA had streamlined their structure and had slimmed their structure down to 5 Boards because there was a requirement to have Boards for all NDA business units which were legal entities in their own right. The DSRL Board structure was separate from the NDA structure and the DSRL board must deliver on their legal obligations.

As to the question on Chief Executives/Managing Directors – the Chief Executives identified managed much larger organisations and the job title did not make any difference to his place on the NDA Leadership team.

- Tor Justad welcomed Mark Rouse back to Dounreay and his role as MD noting he would be well used to responding to his questions. At the last Site Restoration sub group Sam Usher had highlighted the site was undergoing a constrained review of the site end state and asked for comment.

Mark Rouse responded that regular reviews of the site end state were common practice to ensure that use of any new technology and best practice continued to be considered. By taking an unconstrained review of the site allowed all options to be put on the table (with no barriers) to ensure that everything was considered thoroughly.

Through the PBO years, there had been a number of changes to reprioritise the site programme including the acceleration of the Exotics programme and therefore moving back under the OneNDA allowed a further review to take place to ensure the Life Time Plan was robust. By transitioning back into the NDA it also allowed DSRL to be part of the knowledge sharing with other sites.

- Tor Justad also noted the earlier discussion on social value and had found that interesting. He asked what Mark's views were on social value.

Mark Rouse responded that he had had a fascinating discussion with Hazel Blears and alongside sustainability the site was being challenged to think about things in a different way. The site management were looking at the site in terms of a sustainable economy and thoughts were being developed as to how to support the community with a sustainable future.

- Eann Sinclair noted that the staff chart (as shown in the presentation) did not identify a Human Resource focus.

Mark Rouse responded that the Human Resource function sat within the Organisational Excellence Directorate. Steve Young was the current Director and would soon be replaced by Josh George. Josh George had come from a HR background having worked in that area for the oil and gas sector over a number of years. Graham Cameron continued to be Head of Human Resources and would report directly to Josh George.

- Donna Stewart noted the comment on the gender pay gap and asked when this would be published.

Mark Rouse said he expected that the report would be published shortly [Secretary's note: The report was published on the website on 24 March 2021 – link is here: [Dounreay: Gender pay gap report and data 2020 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/92424/dounreay_gender_pay_gap_report_and_data_2020_-_gov.uk.pdf)]. He further explained that site management was currently refining the people plan and developing plans to ensure they were robust and it provided internal development opportunities for existing staff. DSRL had a statutory duty to report on gender. There was also a piece of work to ensure that school age pupils were aware of the opportunities that could provide them with a good career. He added that he had attended some of the WiN events and had enjoyed the challenges raised by the group on various opportunities within the nuclear sector.

Mark Rouse also noted that DSRL had been shortlisted for the NSAN (Nuclear Skills Academy Nuclear) award for Covid support within the local community. [Secretary's note: DSRL won the award]. He added that there was a large percentage of women winning a number of nuclear related awards in the past years and this was part of the 're-imagining' that the site was continuing to develop. A mix of diversity was one of the topics that would be included in the People Plan.

There being no further questions from DSG members, Cllr Struan Mackie invited questions from members of the public.

- A member of the public, representing himself as a member of the local community, stated that in April 2012 when the Parent Body Organisation had taken over the management of the site they had intimated that the site would reach its interim end state on 14 September 2022 with a saving of around £1bn to the taxpayer. More recently, a series of photo montages in 2020/21 continued to show the FCA, DFR, PFR alongside the shaft and other facilities. Even taking Covid restrictions into account for some delays he felt there was no chance that the stated interim end stage could be delivered within the next few years and in reality the site was probably looking at a further 20 years to complete to end state.

Mark Rouse responded that a lot of learning had been developed over these years and had been applied to the new Near Term Work Plan currently under development. Some of the earlier dates intimated at the start of the PBO contract had changed because of the re-prioritisation of the programme to accelerate the Exotics programme and other changes to the baseline assumptions of the PBO plan.

- Cllr Struan Mackie noted what had been raised was something that was coming to DSG through different vehicles and would be discussed appropriately within the sub groups. He added that when David Peattie had announced that Dounreay would come back in house which had clearly signalled the end of the commercial PBO model, he had not pulled his punches in his thoughts of the PBO model. The fact that there had been an enquiry around the Magnox competition he stated that DSG were keen to scrutinise how successful these new changes would be. He stated that he did not wish to see a cliff edge or knee jerk reaction and there was a requirement for the community to understand what the end of the decommissioning programme would look like in terms of dates and staffing profiles. He emphasised that DSG had asked for straight answers and even if these answers were not what anyone wanted to hear, the DSG expected honesty. Cllr Mackie went on to agree with Mark Rouse on lessons that have been learnt and hoped that these would be acted upon. He also agreed with the member of the public in that scrutiny on the public purse was something that required attention.

There being no further questions, Cllr Struan Mackie thanked Mark Rouse for his presentation and looked forward to working with him in the future.

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Cllr Struan Mackie invited members to raise any other business. Of note:

- Tor Justad raised the topic of the fusion (STEP) project being pursued by the CNSRP. He noted that DSG had been asked to provide a letter of support for the project and he could not provide support as he felt there was a lot of scepticism as to whether Fusion would be a viable project. He did not see the jobs and opportunities that had been highlighted for this project and would like to discuss this topic in more detail.

Cllr Struan Mackie responded that it was important to him that DSG was a broad range of groups representing local groups, agencies and community groups and it was important to him to ensure that everyone had an opportunity to voice their opinion. He added that it was noteworthy that all, but one, of the DSG representation had voiced their support for this project.

Cllr Matthew Reiss stated that the Fusion project would be debated at the full Highland Council meeting tomorrow and this would be on the webcast if anyone was interested in listening to the discussions. He went on to explain he had talked to a young member of the Dounreay workforce who had voiced the view that if this project was to be developed from Caithness it would give him the opportunity to remain in the area and retain highly skilled employment beyond Dounreay. Fusion was an opportunity to bring this to the area especially at a time when the area is confronted by depopulation issues. If you took the example of how Dounreay had transformed the area there was also an opportunity for the Fusion plant to provide real opportunities for the area. While recognising that there was questions to be asked around the safety and regulatory culture he stated that this was at a very early stage and it was not a given that the project would come to Caithness with many other sites also registering an interest.

Cllr Reiss went on to say that as a local Councillor he was aware there was a vast community support to pursue this project. While not a completely precise poll, the local paper (John O’Groat Journal) had recently run a poll with 89% of responders in support of the project. He added that while recognising there were positive opportunities within the renewables sector he believed that the fusion plant would be a positive inclusion for a diversified economy for the area.

Tor Justad responded that he was interested in hearing Councillor Reiss’ comments and suggested that he encourage the young man to look for a job in the renewable sector where there were hue opportunities.

Cllr Struan Mackie stated there were strong parallels with UKAEA looking for a legacy site. He recollected receiving a book from the then Dounreay Establishment dated 1961 and within that book was a picture of his grandfather who had moved up to Caithness to work at the site which had resulted in three generations of his family now living and working in the county. While agreeing with Tor Justad’s comments on opportunities within the renewable sector he stated he would like to see other opportunities being pursued especially as these projects would also provide a continuation of the skills capability within the local supply chain. By looking into this project now did not prejudice the fact that it would have to pass muster with Scottish Government, regulations and the planning process.

- Cllr Struan Mackie noted that DSG meetings would continue on a virtual platform for the foreseeable future and consideration would be given to whether holding the sub groups in April (inside the pre-election period) would be worthwhile holding. A decision would be made shortly.

As there was no further business, he thanked members for their attendance and also thanked those members of the public who had also registered to attend the meeting. He added he was looking forward to continuing the work for DSG over the year ahead and was looking forward to seeing Mark Rouse personally changing the signage at the entrance of the Dounreay site.

Cllr Struan Mackie formally closed the meeting.

**Cllr Struan Mackie**  
**DSG Chair**  
7 April 2021

## **ACTIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING**

### **ACTIONS ARISING (CURRENT)**

DSG(2021)M01/A001: June Love to explore whether the website analytics can provide further information on the types of documents that are being viewed.

### **ACTIONS ONGOING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

DSG(2020)M03/A003: June Love to put on the agenda (at the appropriate time) a review of the membership of DSG. (from the AGM it was agreed that this review would also consider the responsibilities of the co-opted members and a review of the ToRs). **Action ongoing:** will be done once Covid-19 restrictions allow meetings to take place.

DSG(2020)M03/A014: Jacq Longrigg to provide further information on the Leadership Academy when further developed (expected to be end February 2021)

### **ACTIONS COMPLETED**

**DSG(2019)M003/A004:** June Love to speak to Phil Cartwright re progress with the Community Sports Hub project and whether additional support was required. **Action closed:** An EGM was held on 15<sup>th</sup> Jan. The meeting was attended by a range of sports club representatives, the chair of the Caithness Sports Council, Councillors and Highland Highlife Active Sports Co-ordinator. Those present confirmed the clear need for new facilities in Thurso, but also recognised that the sports club representatives do not have the time to provide the support necessary to move the new facility provision forward or to provide nominations for the Sportshub committee. It was agreed that there was a clear need for the facility and our need for help to make it happen should be publicised through various means to reinvigorate the project and heighten public awareness. A further meeting is scheduled for the 29th January. This action has been superseded DSG(2020)M003/A029.

DSG(2020)M01/A003: June Love to co-ordinate meeting with Chapelcross and Hunterston SSGs in April to coincide with the Scottish Government meeting. **Action completed:** See action DSG(2020)M03/A024

DSG(2020)M01/A005: June Love to identify suitable date for a visit to the JOG Mill project and extent invitation to all DSG members. **Action closed:** Agreed to close out this action and if need arises will pick up again once Covid restrictions are lifted.

**DSG(2020)M01/A016:** Roger Saxon to provide a short presentation on DSG to the Thurso Community Council. **Action closed:** Agreed this would be closed out until such times meetings start up again and backlog of workload has been completed.

DSG(2020)M03/A005: Jamie Stone, MP to invite Junior Minister to visit area to discuss Vulcan decommissioning. **Action closed:** As Covid restrictions continue and unlikely to be held anytime soon it was agreed to closet his action out at present and re-introduce it at a more suitable time (ie closer to market engagement for Vulcan).

DSG(2020)M03/A006: DSG to keep watching brief and provide letters of support for PSO scheme for airport at appropriate time. **Action complete:** The Caithness Councillors called a meeting of all key stakeholders to discuss the way forward. A number of actions were identified. DSG will take lead from Caithness Transport Forum on way forward. Action has been closed until request for support letter is received (once received new action will be identified).

DSG(2020)M03/A010: DSG Chairman to write to all DSG members requesting comments and consideration of DSG procuring an independent report on the suitability of the Georgemas for commercial freight. **Action complete:** DSG members (those who responded) were supportive of this.

DSG(2020)M03/A012: Debbie Murray and Jacq Longrigg to explore training requirements for Cyber security.

**Action complete:** meeting held on 12 November. Discussion on a number of fronts and connection made with NHC and Energus. A follow up meeting will be organised for after Christmas.

DSG(2020)M03/A015: Jacq Longrigg to visit North Highland College, UHI as soon as Covid-19 restrictions allowed. **Action complete:** a link re nuclear bursaries was provided by J Longrigg and provided to NHC for information: <https://www.nsan.co.uk/view.aspx?messageId=2efef17bbf2a4a2da96ecc8451961cbb> **Action closed as a visit to Caithness is likely to be a number of months away – discussions ongoing via virtual platforms for now.**

DSG(2020)M03/A016: Struan Mackie to contact Gordon Calder re ongoing DSG engagement. **Action complete:** scheduled for Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

DSG(2020)M03/A017: June Love to ensure a public meeting (held on a digital platform) takes place in October and request that NDA/PBO/DSRL provide a presentation on the socio economic programme. **Action complete:** Meeting confirmed for 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

DSG(2020)M03/A018: June Love to request an organisation chart from NDA (with photos) of all NDA personnel with Dounreay involvement. **Action complete:** organisation chart for NDA site facing team provided.

DSG(2020)M03/A019: Cllr Struan Mackie, DSG Chair to write to NDA asking for written explanation between roles and responsibilities of NDA and DSRL. **Action complete:** As Sellafield and Magnox transitioned to Wholly Owned Subsidiaries of the NDA, David Peattie as NDA CEO, initiated a work stream to collaboratively develop an Interface Agreement that would define the relationship and behaviours that should characterise the new arrangements. Over a period of ten months a small team, which included the CEO's of Magnox and Sellafield, worked to develop and agree the principles that would characterise the relationship and contribute to an enabling environment focussed on mission delivery. The Interface Agreement details the accountabilities and obligations of each party, using the appendices to refer to Policies, Procedures and Protocols that provide a framework in which NDA and their subsidiary will operate. In the fullness of time, and working with the DSRL Business Facing Team, the same arrangement/engagement will take place with the incoming management team for DSRL as a subsidiary.

DSG(2020)M03/A020: Cllr Struan Mackie to write to Mark Rouse, DSRL MD to ask for update and timeline for getting short-term accommodation in place. **Action complete:** discussed on 14<sup>th</sup> October at virtual meeting.

DSG(2020)M03/A021: June Love to speak to Dave Wallace to explore a Teams meeting with Hazel Blears to discuss social value. **Action complete:** meeting now scheduled for 23 March 2021.

DSG(2020)M03/A022: June Love to ask Gillian Coghill and Dave Broughton if they would be available for a potential (virtual) stakeholder event on integrated waste strategy to be held in November (20<sup>th</sup> – to be confirmed). **Action complete:** both DSG members have confirmed availability – workshop has been confirmed for 20<sup>th</sup> and invitations received.

DSG(2020)M03/A023: Peter Faccenda to explore who provided depopulation figures and how the decommissioning stats feed into this. **Action complete:** The measurement of population is not an exact science, mainly because people can move freely into and out of the area. It is also a bit misleading to concentrate on the absolute numbers, as the demographic changes can be much more important. The % of the population that are economically active, for example can be an important measure. The most accurate population measurement only happens when there is a national census - the last of which was in 2011 and the next full UK census is planned for 21st March 2021. Between these points only estimates are possible, and as with all estimates it depends on the assumptions made, and how you take into account significant events. The attached document is an explanation of the statistics that may be the basis of some of the reporting, as previously researched by Simon Middlemas on behalf of CNSRP/DSG in researching previous queries.

The basic approach for population estimates between censuses is to take the take previous census number (2011 in this case), add births, subtract deaths, and make an estimate on net migration. This net migration figure is notoriously difficult to estimate, so Local authorities use a standard model – based on rules that are

fairly universal. It might be argued that what works well for Glasgow or Edinburgh might not apply in areas with smaller populations, where small changes in absolute numbers can have a massive effect, so statistically based models will have a higher degree of uncertainty. The predictions can't and don't take into account significant events: - Reduction or loss of flights at the Airport; Decommissioning progress at Vulcan or DSRL; Oil and Gas industry ups and downs; Health care provision; Spaceport, New wind farms, or other significant developments; Covid-19; BREXIT...etc etc...or even what the real population is at any point except at censuses...

For example prior to the release of the 2011 census figures, mid-year estimates (prepared in the way described) predicted that the population for Caithness and Sutherland would have fallen by 0.9% over the period 2001-2011, however, the 2011 census figures showed that the area's population actually rose by 3.3%, rising from 38,462 in 2001 to 39,732 in 2011. The 2011 mid-year estimate was 38,089, the census population was 39,732 – a difference of 1,643 people or 4.3%. Note that the mid-year estimates were then revised (corrected) based on the census figures.

Whilst the estimates might make interesting news the numbers they are based on will be increasingly inaccurate as the distance from the last census increases – better (or worse) than actual. Particularly in light of the current highly unusual, massively disruptive (to the 'normal' flow of things) situation. I'd suggest the following pragmatic approach: - We should use the published numbers to maximum effect to raise awareness of potential concerns when it suits us to support our initiatives. A much more positive view of the situation is probably better when talking to potential inward investors? (after all the last accurate number showed a growth in population). I don't see how reinforcing negative (potentially inaccurate) coverage of the region is to our benefit? I believe that we should concentrate our efforts to continue develop opportunities for new employment and broaden the economy. Even if predictions were for a massive growth in population would we want to stop trying to improve job prospects?

We are collectively more aware of the true issues and pressures locally 'in real time' than the statistics will tell us. If there is a need/desire to get more detailed current information we could commission some work to do this from a relevant consultancy. This would cost money, and more importantly in my opinion, would divert some of our resources – time and effort – away from working on projects to improve the prospects in the area. It is also true that any figures produced would be subject uncertainty and some element of interpretation and would rapidly go 'out of date'. The population numbers will be measured every 10 years, but in the interim I suggest that we need to continue to act on our own knowledge, intelligence and our collaborative predictions to devise and implement plans to improve the local economy.

DSG(2020)M03/A024: June Love to contact Chapelcross and Hunterston SSGs to arrange virtual meeting.

**Action complete:** Meeting organised via Zoom on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

DSG(2020)M03/A025: June Love to liaise with David Swanson of Caithness Transport forum regarding a potential study on usefulness of Georgemas for commercial freight. **Action complete:** At last CTF this was discussed. The presentation on freight is now being presented to CNSRP Delivery Group to explore scope of work for the overall project. Following the CNSRP meeting there is no requirement at this time however options will be left open if required.

DSG(2020)M03/A026: Marie Mackay to facilitate a DSRL response into Buldoo residents' concerns and on whether smart sensors being used at Sellafield could also be used at Dounreay. **Action complete:** see DSG(2020)C055.

DSG(2020)M003/A027: NDA/DSRL to provide a socio economic programme to DSG by end of December 2020. **Action complete:** high level programme issued to business meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> December. Full programme will be discussed at January sub group meeting.

DSG(2020)M003/A028: All DSG members to consider topics for future virtual DSG meetings and provide to June Love by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020. **Action closed:** suggestions coming forward, Site End States, CNSRP socio economic presentation, Meet the new management Team (after April) – see DSG(2020)M003/38.

DSG(2020)M003/A029: June Love to speak with Phil Cartwright with reference to the Community Sports Hub to see if there is an appetite to take this forward. **Action complete:** superseded by



DSG(2021)M03/A54. no progress has been made since Covid lockdown in March 2020 however there is still an appetite to take this forward and early into the new year it is the intention to relook at what funding streams are available to support such developments and then will report back to as potential funding available and shortfall of funding. They will also at this time explore whether they have the capacity to take this forward or whether they feel they require support.

DSG(2020)M003/A030: DSG Chair to draft a letter of response to Scottish Government response on HIE budget cuts and distribute to Business Meeting member for comment (including an invite to host a virtual meeting with Kate Forbes (Finance Minister). **Action complete:** see DSG(2020)C054

DSG(2020)M003/A031 June Love to invite the Roxanna O'Hara and Dave Wallace to a business meeting to discuss the Scottish Strategy. **Action complete:** David Wallace invited to Business meeting to be held on 26<sup>th</sup> Jan to discuss early development of Scottish Strategy. Following that future meetings will be arranged to allow update on progress.

DSG(2020)M003/A032: June Love to invite Vulcan MOD to the virtual DSG meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December. **Action complete:** A response was received indicating MOD would be in a position to do this in March 2021.

DSG(2020)M003/A033: June Love to ask Mark Rouse to provide update presentation to virtual DSG meeting in March alongside an update from the IES Delivery Team on site end states. **Action complete** presentation agreed for March 2021 meeting.

DSG(2020)M003/A034: June Love to write to WiN representative asking for a written response to why they want to join the DSG. **Action complete:** response received – discuss at BM on 26<sup>th</sup> Jan.

DSG(2020)M003/A035: June Love to ask David Broughton to be the DSG representative for the Radioactive Waste Management roundtable. **Action complete:** D Broughton attended alongside Gillian Coghill – a note for the record was written (DSG(2020)C052).

DSG(2020)M003/A036: June Love to progress action DSG(2020)M03/A019 (roles/ responsibilities of NDA and DSRL) with NDA for a response. **Action complete:** NDA reminded of action on 2 December.

DSG(2020)M003/A037: June Love to write out to all DSG members and observers to confirm January sub group meetings would be held via Teams. **Action complete:** emailed out to DSG members on 1 December 2020.

DSG(2020)M003/A038: June Love to draw up a programme of focussed topics and timelines for agreement at the business meeting. **Action complete:** discussed at DSG Business meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

DSG(2020)M003/A039: June Love to contact Caithness Transport Forum to align responses into UK Government connectivity review. **Action complete:** See DSG(2020)C056

DSG(2020)M003/A040: Cllr Struan Mackie to send letter to David Wallace asking for further information on the transition roles of NDA personnel. **Action complete:** Email written and response received suggesting that Gareth Taylor join Business meeting in January to discuss.

DSG(2020)M03/A041: June Love to notify the representatives of the programme of topics for the year and add these to the DSG diary. **Action complete:** email sent to all those to be involved on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

DSG(2020)M03/A042: June Love to provide figures of COVID incidents on site. **Action complete:** sent Friday 15<sup>th</sup> to DSG business meeting.

DSG(2020)M03/A043: Davie Alexander to raise with Caithness and Sutherland Councillors the issues of IT connectivity for school pupils accessing online learning to ensure this is brought to the attention of the council leader. **Action complete:** See DSG(2021)C009.

DSG(2020)M03/A044: June Love to investigate how to make the Public meeting accessible to the public. **Action complete** – Public meeting on 24 March 2021 will extend to public attendance.

DSG(2020)M03/A044a: June Love to issue WiN Highland membership request to DSG member and ask for comment before the AGM. **Action complete:** members confirmation received.

DSG(2020)M03/A045: June Love to distribute the link to the NSAN Awards for member to cascade through their own organisations. **Action complete:** link distributed on 27 January 2021.

DSG(2020)M03/A045a: June Love to write to WiN Highland asking for a list of organisations associated. **Action complete:** Information received end of January 2021.

DSG(2020)M03/A046: June Love to issue links for health petition for members to cascade to their own organisations. **Action complete:** link sent out on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

DSG(2020)M03/A047: Stuart Pyper to provide an explanation of any impact to Dounreay with the announcement of the NDA waste division. **Action complete:** The NDA does not believe this change will have any impact on Dounreay.

DSG(2020)M03/A048: June Love to speak with Stewart Ballantine, SEPA to get a response to question on LLW Pits. **Action complete:** SEPA undertook a review of the impacts on groundwater from the LLW Pits and concluded that during periods of low groundwater small amounts of radionuclides could be detected in the groundwater which are believed to have originated from the LLW Pits therefore SEPA requested DSRL review its BPM position for the Pits in light of this information. Discharge of radionuclides to groundwater from the LLW Pits represents a breach of the site's EASR permit. DSRL's stated position to SEPA remains that retrieval of the waste from the LLW Pits is its default position. DSRL has also advised SEPA that it is undertaking a programme of work to review closure options for this facility, part of which was the recent optioneering workshop attended by members of the DSG. SEPA has advised DSRL it expects this work to be progressed as a priority and will review and consider the work undertaken by DSRL along with its conclusions when it becomes available.

DSG(2020)M03/A049: DSG to write to Rolls Royce asking if the apprentices were able to work on site. **Action complete:** Discussed at business meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

DSG(2020)M03/A050: June Love to circulate the link and list of participants in attendance for Aarhus roundtable discussions. **Action complete:** Information sent on 28 January 2021.

DSG(2020)M03/A050: June Love to send the link to Marketing Derby website to member. **Action complete:** Website link here: <https://www.marketingderby.co.uk/>

DSG(2020)M03/A051: June Love to set up logistics for advertising public attendance at next DSG public meeting (24 March 2021). **Action complete:** this information has been firmed up and DSG members received an update on the arrangements on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021.,

DSG(2020)M03/A052: June Love to issue WiN Highland membership request to DSG members and ask for comment before the AGM. **Action complete.**

DSG(2020)M03/A053: Cllr Struan Mackie, DSG Chair to write to Scottish Government asking for a meeting in Autumn. **Action complete:** see DSG(2021)C010

DSG(2020)M03/A054: DSG Chair to write to Community Sports Hub Chair to ask for progress update and appetite to continue to take this forward. **Action complete:** see DSG(2021)C011.