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Minutes of the 60th AWE Local Liaison Committee Meeting

Thursday 25 March 2010

Present:

Dr Andrew Jupp	Director Infrastructure Programme, AWE	Chairman LLC
Heather Young	Director Environment, Safety, Health & Quality, AWE	
Christian Morgan-Jones	Head of Information & Communications, AWE	
Alan Price	External Communications & Marketing Manager, AWE	
Lindsey Appleton	Public Affairs Manager, AWE	Secretary LLC
Cllr Michael Bound	Basingstoke & Deane Council	
Cllr Mike Broad	Tadley Town Council	
Cllr Penee Chopping	Ufton Nervet Parish Council	
Cllr Geoff Findlay	West Berkshire Council	
Cllr Valerie Frost	Tadley Town Council	
Cllr John Heggadon	Shinfield Parish Council	
Cllr Dudley Ives	Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council	
Cllr Kay Lacey	Pangbourne Parish Council	
Cllr David Leeks	Tadley Town Council	
Cllr Ian Lindsay	Wasing Parish Council	
Cllr Royce Longton	West Berkshire Council	
Jeff Moss	Swallowfield Parish Council	
Tom Payne	Basingstoke & Deane Council	
Cllr Murray Roberts	Padworth Parish Council	
Cllr John Robertson	Mortimer West End Parish Council	
Cllr Graham Round	Basingstoke & Deane Council	
Cllr David Shirt	Aldermaston Parish Council	
Cllr Clive Vare	Aldermaston Parish Council	
Cllr Richard Willis	Reading Borough Council	
Cllr David Wood	Theale Parish Council	

Regulators:

Stuart Parr	Environment Agency
Graeme Thomas	Nuclear Installations Inspectorate
John Lindsay	Nuclear Installations Inspectorate

Introduction

Dr Jupp welcomed members to the 60th meeting.

Apologies

Apologies had been received from Robin McGill, CEO AWE, Cllr Philip Bassil, Cllr Jonathan Chishick, Cllr Jim Hanley, Julie James, Cllr George McGarvie, Carolyn Murison, Cllr Tim Whitaker, Cllr Jenny Williams.

Actions from the last meeting

Action 59/1: A request for an update following the Food Standards Agency report- this was covered later in the meeting.

Minutes of the 59th Meeting

The Minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting with the following corrections-Cllrs Findlay and Chopping had attended the meeting and Cllr Shirt wished a note of thanks be recorded to Avril Burdett who has since left AWE. Dr Jupp recognised the contribution Avril had made.

Chairman's remarks – Dr Andrew Jupp, Director Infrastructure Programme, AWE.

Restructuring Programme

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AWE's management and operation contract with the Ministry of Defence is to deliver safe, secure and clean service and the pursuit of optimal value for money. In 2009 a restructuring programme was initiated which aims to deliver progressively improved performance and value. Every effort is being made to avoid the need for redundancies by using a combination of retraining, re-skilling and redeployment. Should there be any further redundancies, they will be in very small numbers and managed in line with HR policy.

Pegasus

West Berkshire's eastern area planning committee approved the Pegasus planning application. Pegasus will provide long-term capability for the storage and safe handling of enriched uranium replacing the current facility as it reaches the end of its operational life. The existing buildings will eventually be decommissioned and demolished.

Head of Site Control

A recent appointment is Tony Morris who is now Head of Site Control, an important Infrastructure role. The Infrastructure Programme is key in supporting programme delivery at all times in a cost efficient and effective manner.

Serco Pulse Awards

Three dedicated members of staff received prestigious Pulse Awards from Serco, one of AWE's parent –companies. These awards are designed to recognise and celebrate the achievements of employees. The awards celebrate innovation, commitment, impact, leadership, courage and bravery. Eirwen Ford received a Pulse Award in the Heart category for her tireless work as a foster mother; Ian Preston received a Pulse Award in the Heart category for his dedication to the Thames Valley Police *Safe Drive, Stay Alive* campaign; and Jason Burke received a Pulse Award in the Innovation category for his cost saving solution which changed a working process and added operational value. All three have previously received awards from AWE – with Eirwen and Ian winning Community Ambassador Awards and Jason receiving the Gold Award last year.

AWE Re-kit Programme

The AWE Re-kit programme has been selected as a winner of Jacobs' 2009 President's Health, Safety and Environment Excellence Awards. This is a global award made every year to projects and offices which have achieved world class safety leadership and performance and exemplify the very best safety culture.

Charities of the Year

Following a ballot by AWE employees, the charities AWE will be supporting this year are **Help for Heroes**, a national charity supporting injured service personnel and their families and **The Pelican Trust**, a local charity based at the North Hampshire Hospital which aims to improve outcomes for patients with cancers in the pelvic region.

Health, Safety & Environmental Report – Heather Young, Director Environment, Health, Safety and Quality
Slides attached

Perfect Days

The LLC was updated on the Perfect Day scheme which is used to give staff on AWE sites visibility of how a collective focus on improved safety performance can deliver benefits.

Environment Agency Warning Letter

During routine testing in December 2009, the Environment Agency discovered that the alkalinity level of liquid discharged from the AWE Burghfield site into the Burghfield Brook was slightly higher than AWE's consented level. AWE took immediate steps to seal off the discharges pending an investigation. The alkalinity was linked to construction activities resulting in run-off entering a natural waterway via a drain. The Environment Agency described the environmental impact of the incident as 'insignificant', however a Warning Letter was issued to AWE as it constituted a breach of the Company's discharge consent under the Water Resources Act 1991.

Environment Agency Audit

In February inspectors from the Environment Agency carried out a three day audit as part of their routine programme of the inspection of waste, environmental planning, and construction activities in the Thames Valley. No areas of non-compliance were discovered.

Radioactivity in Food and the Environment (RIFE)

The last annual RIFE report given by the Food standards Agency, stated that *'A slight increase in dose rates recorded on the riverbanks at Pangbourne and Mapledurham was observed, although there is no evidence to link this to the operations or discharges from [AWE] Aldermaston'*. AWE can confirm that this was not attributable to AWE as direct discharges to the River Thames via the Pangbourne Pipeline ceased when the pipeline was closed in 2005. The website where the full report can be read is www.food.gov.uk

Infrastructure Report - Dr Andrew Jupp, Director Infrastructure

Slides attached

Weather conditions

The significant snowfall during December and January presented various challenges for staff at AWE. On one night in December, a significant number of employees had to remain on site overnight and were provided with food and sleeping bags. Throughout the cold snap, most staff came to work safely and Dr Jupp recognised both their dedication and the level of comradeship that was displayed.

Protestor activity

A total of 400 protestors surrounded the Aldermaston site on 15 February but the Company worked with Thames Valley Police to ensure minimum disruption.

Site Exercise

The Aldermaston Sitex is due to take place on 12 May 2010. The site under cover alarm may be heard. A report on the exercise will be given at the next LLC meeting.

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs)

Kieran Agnew gave a presentation on KTPs which are Technology Strategy Board programmes designed to promote innovation in business.

Planning

John Steele reported that the planning application for Hydrus, the replacement hydrodynamics Research and Development facility, is due to be submitted to West Berkshire Planning Authority at the end of May. Hydrus has good environmental credentials and will have external lightning protection to comply with new regulations.

Ask the Regulators

Cllr Shirt asked for clarification of the status of mobile homes or caravans within the emergency sheltering plan for AWE. In response, Graeme Thomas of the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII) stated that these types of dwellings were considered suitable as long as they were accommodated within site emergency response plans. Dr Jupp undertook an action to work with West Berkshire Council and the NII to ensure all the local community are protected. **Action 60/1:** Dr Jupp

Any Other Business

Cllr Leeks asked the NII if a date had been fixed for the Boundary Hall planning enquiry. Graeme Thomas said Queen's Council had been appointed and it is anticipated that the enquiry is scheduled to begin during the third week of November 2010.

Cllr Broad asked for an update on the issue of the MoD search of all sites to store waste from dismantled submarines. Richard Hedley said MoD is still considering various sites across the Country to assess which would be the most suitable. Dr Jupp said AWE will keep members of the LLC informed when there is further news.

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Cllr Shirt asked for an update on the investigations of potential solvent contamination at the banger racing track on land off Paices Hill. Mr Hedley reported that investigations are continuing but current indications suggested that there is no environmental hazard.

Cllr Wood asked for an update on the options for the Pangbourne Pipeline. In response, Dr Jupp said there will need to be a final internal business evaluation by the Executive Board.

Dates of future meetings

Thursday 3 June 2010, Thursday 2 September 2010, Thursday 16 December 2010.

Lindsey Appleton
Secretary to the AWE LLC