

ROW PLAN

EM 9.10.92

nuke C plan

To Kevin O'Shea
from
Chris Sinton
Barrow.

'ISSUE N-PILLS TO ALL' CLAIM

By DAMIEN BROOK

PLANS to deal with a nuclear accident at VSEL by distributing potassium iodate tablets have been described as inadequate by Labour councillors.

And one advised residents near the yard to die in the initial blast rather than face a slow painful death from radiation sickness should there be a nuclear accident.

A report to the council's finance committee recommended the tablets should be issued automatically to residents in the Duke Street, Abbey Road, Hindpool Road and lower Dalton Road area in the event of an accident at the dockyard.

The tablets will also be "pre-distributed" to people living in the Ferry Road triangle on Barrow Island.

SUBMARINES

Potassium iodate tablets are given to people who may come into contact with radioactive iodine released into the atmosphere from an accident.

Iodine from the tablets is absorbed by the body in an attempt to prevent radiation entering the body.

Cllr Steve Smart (Lab, Barrow Island) told this week's full council meeting: "Why all of a sudden, after we have been building nuclear submar-

'Better off dying in blast' advice

ines for the last 30 years, are people being issued with these tablets now, especially in this area?"

FLASH

Former mayor Cllr Rose Hamezeian (Lab, Hindpool) also attacked the plans.

She said: "We dish these tablets out and tell people everything will be all right - but it won't.

"My recommendation is: go with the first flash, because otherwise you are going to have a long and painful death."

Finance chairman Cllr Stan Stevens (Con, Newbarns) said: "I was quite enlightened by the steps which have been taken to cope with an accident.

"Just because we are responding to a possible accident does not mean one is going to happen."

By RICHARD ECCLES

ANTI-radiation pills should be given to everyone in Barrow, Labour councillors have claimed.

The borough's emergency subcommittee met for the first time in two years on Wednesday to hear of a plan to distribute potassium iodate tablets to eight Barrow Island streets in the Ferry Road triangle.

Chief Supt Muir Morton explained it had been decided to improve plans to give out tablets in the event of a nuclear submarine accident by giving those nearest the shipyard a supply of tablets now.

RADIOACTIVE

This would then free distributors from VSEL to give out tablets straight away to those on the Town Hall side of Devonshire Dock within the 550m hazard zone.

But Labour councillors demanded that everyone should have the pills.

Cllr Ann Thomson (Hindpool) said they should be given out to all of Barrow to avoid a "wild panic" if there was an accident.

And Cllr Malcolm

O'Shea (Barrow Island) said the wind could take a radioactive cloud all over Barrow in minutes and distributors would not have enough time.

But Conservative councillors became increasingly impatient with Labour's interventions, and council leader Ted Smith said the meeting was just to receive information on improvements to the existing emergency plans.

Chief Supt Morton had told councillors: "The important thing is there is no new threat or difficulty or problem. It is a slight way of streamlining the actual distribution of tablets."

Cllr Smith said giving tablets to everybody would be "scaremongering" and he reminded Labour that anyone outside the Ferry Road triangle who wanted their own supply of tablets could ask for them.

"If they're worried they've only got to ask," he said.

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