

EDF Torness Power Station

Minutes of the fifty-second meeting of the Torness local liaison committee held via Teams on 6 March 2024.

Members in attendance

Russell McLauchlan, City of Edinburgh Council
Dr Charles Veitch, City of Edinburgh Council
Councillor Steve Burgess, City of Edinburgh Council
Councillor Dianne Alexander, Midlothian Council
Jane Young, Midlothian Council
Councillor Sandy Scott, Scottish Borders Council
Councillor Donna Collins, East Lothian Council
Councillor Lyn Jardine, East Lothian Council
Scott Kennedy, East Lothian Council
Lee Wright, East Lothian Council
Lynn Crothers, East Lothian Council
Alasdair Swan, Dunbar Community Council
Kelvin D'Arcy, East Lammermuir Community Council
Isabelle Watson, Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Diane Hamilton, Scottish Government
Ross Smith, Police Scotland
David Hackney, ONR
Anne Cooper, INA (Independent Nuclear Assurance)
Andrew Lanigan, Civil Nuclear Constabulary
Paul Forrest, Torness Station Director
Alastair Brockie, Torness Technical and Safety Support Group
Ashleigh Dickson, Torness Community Liaison Officer
Fiona McCall, EDF External Communications Manager
Calum Bannerman, Torness Site Head of Security

644. Membership

Apologies for absence

Paul Young, City of Edinburgh Council
Councillor Denis Dixon, City of Edinburgh Council
Councillor Hal Osler, City of Edinburgh Council
Councillor Russel Imrie, Midlothian Council
Councillor Norman Hampshire, East Lothian Council
MSP Paul McLennan East Lothian Council
Sharon Saunders, East Lothian Council
Councillor Helen Laing, Scottish Borders Council
Jim Fraser, Scottish Borders Council
Kirsty McCrae, Scottish Ambulance Service
Nicola Page, Police Scotland
Lori Shaw, Police Scotland
Quintin Donald, Scottish Executive Rural Affairs Department
Richard Othieno, Lothian Health
Garry Douglas, Fire Scotland

Members' replacements

Welcome to Jean Fairbairn Cockburnspath & Cove Community Council representative
We will bid farewell to Sharon Saunders at end of April and welcome Caroline Rodgers

645. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting of the committee were approved and accepted as an accurate record.

646. Matters arising

None.

647. Station overview

Mr Paul Forrest welcomed everyone present to the fifty-second meeting of the Torness local liaison committee.

EDF Nuclear Operations, part of EDF's Nuclear family, manages eight nuclear power stations across the UK, five of which are generating zero carbon electricity and three that are now in the defueling phase, the first stage of decommissioning. The three sites in defueling are Hunterston B, Hinkley Point B and Dungeness.

The defueling is going well and once they are complete the assets will be handed over to Nuclear Restoration Services (formally known as Magnox)

More short term. Hartlepool and Heysham 1 are currently offline to replace steam valves which were showing signs of degradation. They are due to return to service in a staged approach in the next fortnight.

a. Zero Harm

Mr Alastair Brockie spoke to the reports in the pack.

Our aim is to have zero harm to our people. 2023 performance was strong but we have had one high potential event worth mentioning. In August one of our operators received a mild acid burn from a leak caused by a component failure in the water treatment plant. The injured party was taken to hospital and after receiving treatment was discharged after a few hours with no lasting injuries.

With our strong focus on safety we have a very tight definition of harm so we report even the very minor injuries, for example a back injury or a cut to the hand. All events are investigated to ensure we learn from them and are treated seriously.

Emergency Preparedness

Torness has a comprehensive emergency plan to cater for situations which present an immediate risk to the public, our staff, the environment or the power station plant. Off-site aspects of the plan are deployed in conjunction with East Lothian Council and the emergency services.

There have been no site events whereby the emergency arrangements were invoked since the last meeting.

We continued with normal programme of emergency exercises, with a range of scenarios including site security issues, fire events, casualty recovery and treatment, and confined space rescues. On 28 February we held a successful demonstration of our arrangements to the ONR during our Level 1 exercise.

Mr Brockie thanked the East Lothian Council, emergency services and partner agencies for their support during exercises and throughout the year.

Mr Scott Kennedy: East Lothian Council continue to work closely with EDF and we are preparing for our Level 2 Exercise in June. We visited Torness to meet some of the new team members.

Mr Steve Burgess: A couple of years ago you identified cracking within the graphite and you were monitoring it and deemed it to be low risk, can you provide an update?

Mr Brockie: We continue to be in monitoring mode. During 2023 we carried out two inspection outages on reactor 1 and one inspection outage on reactor 2 – all planned and what we are expected to do within our Safety Case. No results were a surprise to us. The results showed a very mild progression of some the cracks but all within our predictions and expectations, if anything there was less cracking than what our models expected which shows we are being conservative. The cores are aging at the rate we expect and gives us confidence in our future life predictions.

This year we will inspect reactor 1 twice and reactor 2 once. That is three inspections for 2024.

Mr Burgess: Does the rate of aging impact on lifetime?

Mr Forrest: We are holding our current accounting life of 2028 plus or minus 2 years. If anything our results are underpinning towards the plus 2 years. In line with predictions.

b. Strong Finance and Ethics

Mr Paul Forrest spoke to the reports in the pack.

In the UK, EBITDA was £3.4billion and net investment was £3.6billion, meaning investment was greater than EBITDA for the sixth year running.

For every £1 in profit during 2023, EDF invested £1.10 back into British low carbon energy infrastructure and jobs, running existing and building future nuclear and renewables infrastructure and in helping its customers save cash and carbon.

Hinkley Point C has moved its commencement date to start generation from 2027 to 2029. This is due to a number of factors. The first one being resources and effects of the Covid period and secondly shortages of labour in UK. There were shortages of shuttering joiners and steel fixers and this year the site is moving from a civil engineering site to mechanical, electrical and HVAC site and the resource pinch points become different. We are expecting that to be pipe fitters, electricians and welders. We have predicted this and put strategies on place – building up our supply chain and training.

Sizewell C – The final investment decision (FID) will take place in this year. It is a carbon copy of HPC.

Mr Burgess: Does the future of the other stations in the company affect Torness?

Mr Forrest: We operate as a fleet, even though some aren't generating we still work together. Our standards and expectations, conduct of operations and maintenance, engineering programmes. Work very closely with sister stations, Torness is twinned with Heysham 2 – share operating experience.

Mr Burgess: What is the state of HY2?

Mr Forrest: Identical as reactors are of similar age.

Mr Burgess: are they seeing the same cracks as you, do they have the same predicted life?

Mr Forrest: Yes all four reactors have similar life expectations and aging.

c. Torness Performance

Operationally we had an excellent year; we generated an impressive 8.28TWh, exceeding our initial output target of 7.95TWh. We were the highest in fleet and the first station to meet its business plan.

Our nuclear safety record continues to stand in comparison with the best operators around the world and we are very proud of this. It is now over 12 years since the last nuclear or environmental event. Industrial safety practices remain strong and zero harm is absolutely within our reach. We did have one accident which Alastair covered.

This year is an outage year. We will take Reactor 1 offline on 5 April for around 10 weeks to carry out a major maintenance programme worth over £35 million. We will carry out inspections in our reactor and carry out major overhaul on our turbine and all rotating plant. We also take time to go into vessels and carrying out large maintenance programme. Once again, Torness will turn to a number of local firms, with whom we have a tried and trusted relationship, to provide essential services during this outage as well as good neighbours in the local community.

Mr Burgess: When was the last non-planned outage?

Mr Forrest: Spring 2023, there was a grid disturbance and our protection equipment on turbine acted as

designed. Grid disturbance lasted for 0.4 of a second and the protection equipment kicked in and we returned the unit to service with a day and a half later.

Mr Burgess: Why do you have to shut the reactor for a grid disturbance?

Mr Forrest: Our asset (turbine) is worth millions of pounds and it has automatic protection on it. We need to protect our asset. The cause was a new windfarm off the coast of Montrose and as they were connecting they were revealing faults

Mr Brockie: This shows our turbines are an integral part of the grid, we don't just supply electricity we also stabilise the grid and have spent time talking to National Grid about this.

Radioactive waste and discharges

Mr Brockie spoke to the information contained in the pack.

We held the LLC Technical subgroup meeting on 2 November where this information was covered in detail. We have the detailed reports if anyone wishes to have a copy. If you would like more information, please contact Ashleigh Dickson.

We have a relatively small amount of waste stored on site; only about 13.1% of our onsite storage capacity is used and we have a process of periodically sending waste away for incineration or other disposal routes.

We have a preference for recycling; we separate out waste and send things like metal away for cleaning and recycling. As a result, we keep our solid waste and arisings to landfill minimal.

The radiation dose of each worker is assessed individually by an electronic personal dose meter. A computer database keeps records for each worker. The average annual dose per worker is 0.019 mSv, which is less than what you would receive on a transatlantic flight.

Torness monitors and records all of the discharges and best practicable means are applied to minimise them. All our discharges are within allowable limits. A report which is a useful reference is the Radiation in Food and the Environment (RIFE) report which is available on the SEPA website and shows all the information for Torness as well as other sites it shows that the dose to a member of the public is almost below the limit of what is measurable.

Cllr Donna Collins: I live close to Torness and have the white sock samplers on our land. Is there anywhere I can see what the results of the samples are?

Mr Brockie: We can provide it. They are called clothe collectors. (ACTION) one of the best ways of getting the data is the RIFE report from SEPA.

Ms Isabelle Watson: The dry clothes belong to Torness but SEPA do go around sampling and are publicised annually in the RIFE report available on our website. Results are generally low and stable.

d. New Nuclear

We covered Hinkley Point C and Sizewell C earlier on. HPC is moving away from civil engineering site to mechanical, electrical and HVAC site. It is a transition year and is a great video available on you tube. ([click here](#))

Sizewell is awaiting its final investment decision.

There is new government body called Great British Nuclear who are responsible for driving delivery of new nuclear projects, backed with the funding it needs. They have written a document called Roadmap to new nuclear in UK and identified 8 sites of interest and the government are looking at technologies ranging from Small Modular Reactors, Advanced Modular Reactors to large EPR reactors. You can view it all on their website. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/great-british-nuclear>)

Mr Kelvin D'Arcy: Can you confirm there be no new nuclear at a decommissioned Torness site?

Mr Forrest: Currently no plans for any new nuclear at Torness

Mr Sandy Scott: Rolls Royce are producing SMRs, do you have any more info?

Mr Forrest: They have submitted staged submissions into ONR for a licence to build, they have done it in stages due to the high costs and time. I can't predict what the government will choose but they stand a good chance. The ONR have a good website where you can find out more (<https://www.onr.org.uk/publications/regulatory-reports/generic-design-assessment/rolls-royce-smr-reports/>)

Mr Burgess: Comparison to Torness what is the output of SMR?

Mr Forrest: Torness has 2 reactors with 650MWh from each. HPC will have 2 reactors at 1600MWhs each, Rolls Royce will be 450MWhs.

e. Customers

We're proud to power over 3.7 million homes and services like the NHS, Royal Mail and government. In Customers, EDF Business Solutions (EBS) increased the meter points it supplied and Wholesale Market Services remained the leading UK provider of battery optimisation services, signing 961MW of contracts in 2023.

In Retail, EDF's service was rated the best of the large suppliers by Citizens Advice.

If you refer to the pack there was an interesting study on carbon footprints. New analysis shows that people's carbon footprint of everyday activities has reduced significantly compared to 1990s equivalents. These comparisons come as research shows over half (58%) of Brits mistakenly think the UK's carbon footprint is worse today than it was 25 years ago;

EDF is marking 25 years of operation in the UK by highlighting just how much progress the nation has made in reducing its carbon footprint over the past quarter of a century

f. Renewables

EDF Renewables UK and Ireland, a joint venture between EDF UK and EDF Renouvelables, develops, builds, operates and maintains wind farms and other renewable technologies such as battery and solar throughout their lifetime.

EDF Renewables has continued its growth across all renewables technologies in 2023. During the year, it completed construction and achieved first output on its three grid-scale solar projects. As well as its West Benhar onshore wind project and Bustleholme and Coventry battery projects all entering operational phase. With partner ESB, construction continued of the 450MW Neart na Gaoithe (NNG) offshore wind project, 15km off the coast of Scotland, which is expected to enter operations in 2024.

g. First reactor declared fuel free

A key milestone has been successfully met in the first phase of decommissioning the UK's fleet of seven Advanced Gas-cooled Reactor (AGR) nuclear power stations.

The defueling of the first reactor at Hunterston B has been completed, on time and on budget. Reactor 3, as it is known, was defueled in 16 months with work due to start shortly on the station's second reactor.

The aim is to have the second reactor defueled and all spent fuel sent to Sellafield by mid-2025, prior to transfer of site ownership to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) in 2026. The NDA's subsidiary, Magnox, is accountable for the long-term decommissioning of the AGRs and EDF is working closely with them on plans for the seamless transfer of Hunterston B in a timely manner.

Mr D'Arcy: Renewables – can you confirm if there will be any renewables on a decommissioned Torness site?

Mr Forrest: At the moment we have no plans but are willing to talk to interested parties. We are talking to Scottish Government and EL Council about potential uses for the site. Very, very early discussions but no concrete plans but if that was to change we would share it with LLC

Mr D'Arcy: Would you speak to commercial bodies like SPEN and like?

Mr Forrest: Yes, we had enquiries from SSE, they choosing not to look at our land, don't recall anything from SPEN?

Mr D'Arcy: This was mentioned at the public meeting, is that in relation to Berwick Bank?

Mr Forrest: Yes

Mr A Swan: If we look at uses for the site is there a date on when construction cannot start until?

Mr Forrest: There isn't any interdependency

Mr Brockie: To do work on the licenced site we would need to develop a Safety Case and get ONR to sign off, it isn't straightforward but not impossible.

h. People and Communities

We aim to inspire and enable our people to perform as a force for good, driving progress at work and across the communities we serve.

The EDF partnership with Alzheimer's Society UK began in January 2024. In Scotland we will raise funds for Alzheimer Scotland.

People management is as important to the success of the station as engineering and science. We place strong emphasis on managing the succession of roles and ensure suitably qualified and experienced personnel are available to fill vacancies - guaranteeing continuity of the business.

The station continues to recruit to plan and currently has 500 full time employees. Our training programmes are in excellent shape and are working with our leaders at all levels to strengthen leadership and accountability.

Torness currently has 12 recruits in our four-year Advanced Nuclear Apprenticeship Scheme and one chemistry apprentice. We have recently completed interviews for our latest intake of apprentices, which will start in September 2024.

Our people are a corner stone of EDF. At Torness, we have a great record of regularly seeking feedback from our employees and responding to it. Every year MyEDF, our annual employee engagement survey, is an opportunity to listen to our employees' views and act on what they say. In 2023, 84% of our employees took the opportunity to tell us what they think and help shape the direction of our business. Our overall engagement score had increased and 96% of staff told us that safety is a priority for everyone.

We carried out a Visitor Centre refurb at the back end of last year to bring it in line with company branding and Net Zero messaging.

At the end of last year we held the Christmas cracker event. The 'Christmas Cracker' event had been a regular favourite with youngsters but was side lined by the Covid-19 pandemic. The event gives schoolchildren an insight into life at the power station.

As well as enjoying a tour, they have the chance to get up close to one of the on-site fire engines and take part in fire extinguisher training.

The children heard from staff about their jobs, and tested their own communication skills by helping each other complete a maze while wearing 'misty eye' goggles, which simulate being in a smoke-filled room.

They are also given the chance to meet officers from the Civil Nuclear Constabulary and practice first aid techniques with occupational health nurses.

Mr Swan: Have you mentioned support for local groups, do you still do this?

Ms Dickson: We still have Helping Hands and if you have a need for hands on support please get in touch with me directly.

Ms Dianne Alexander: Where are your engagement activities advertised?

Ms Dickson: On our website and by contacting the visitor centre directly, we are the only nuclear station and visitor centre in Scotland so we happy to welcome any school, educational group or individuals for free tour

Ms Alexander: Do you advertise the apprentice programme in Midlothian and do you offer onsite opportunities?

Ms Dickson: It is a maintenance apprentice and the first 2 years are in Bristol and then the final last 2 years are back on site. We advertise through radio (Forth One), open days, directly to schools.

Ms Alexander: Is it a degree

Mr Forrest: It is a HND minimum

Action: Forward Ms Alexander direct info

649. Regulatory updates

Isabelle Watson, SEPA – continue with compliance inspections. Every year we carry out environmental sampling programme. The RIFE report is available on the SEPA website. We look at in depth results at the LLC technical subgroup meeting.

RIFE report available <https://www.sepa.org.uk/media/rjobbb1h/rife-28.pdf>

Mr David Hackney: ONR have a new director of operating facilities. I'm covering for Shaun so I am familiar with Torness. We carried out inspections and had the Annual Review of Safety and the Level 1 exercise.

There was an enforcement notice given on personal fire safety within the admin building and the station are well underway in making the improvements.

Ms Donna Collins: Do you have plans for emergency exercises to involve the whole community?

Mr Forrest: We do a range of exercises over the year which involve station staff and emergency services

Ms Donna Collins: What about an evacuation (simulated) of the immediate community

Mr Hackney: There will Level 2 later on in the year but don't know the scope

Mr Kennedy: Every 3 years we carry out Level 2, it doesn't go that extent but it we do get partner agencies up to the TSSC, am happy to take you through it and a visit.

Ms Alexander: Would like a councillor day. I have also heard uranium is becoming scarce and in France they produced less last year

Ms Fiona: The issues in France had nothing to do with uranium. We do have diverse and assured supply chain and contracts for supply of uranium and we get it from a mix of places – Kazakhstan, Canada etc

Mr Burgess: Are there any exercises that involve Edinburgh?

Mr Forrest: The exercises are more hierarchal than geographical, can run up to level Cobra.

Mr Kennedy: For the Level 2 exercise we liaise with partners in Edinburgh City Council and they have a seat at Penston.

650. Any other business

Mr D'Arcy: The issue of the location of the substation at Branxton (between Thorntonloch and Innerwick) is off concern to the local people Lammermuir Community Council. There are no plans for new nuclear or renewables at a decommissioned Torness site. Would EDF be open to discussions about the substation instead of Branxton

Mr Forrest: Yes and this was a topical debate at our public meeting. I cannot talk for other vendors but EDF are willing to speak to anyone but cannot speak on their behalf. I am a member of the East Lothian Energy Forum which is chaired by MSP Paul McLennan.

651. Date of next meeting

During 2023 we held a public meeting at Halhil and propose to do so again in October.

Action – Ashleigh to send out possible dates for a public meeting and next LLC meeting