



**Minutes of the 100th AWE Local Liaison Committee Meeting
Wednesday 18th November 2020
AWE, Online Meeting**

Present:

Susie Tucker	Chair
Cllr Graham Bridgman	West Berkshire Council
Cllr Avril Burdett	Tadley Town Council
Cllr Jonathan Chishick	Tidmarsh with Sulham Parish Council
Cllr Sophie Crawford	Aldermaston Parish Council
Cllr Debbie Fisher	Wokefield Parish Council
Cllr Roger Gardiner	Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Cllr David Leeks	Tadley Town Council
Cllr David Livingstone	Silchester Parish Council
Cllr Mollie Lock	Stratfield Mortimer Parish
Cllr Royce Longton	West Berkshire
Cllr Susan Mullan	Tadley Town Council
Cllr David Shirt	Aldermaston Parish Council
Cllr Ayo Sokale	Reading Borough Council
Cllr Nicholas Thurlow	Mortimer West End

Rhian Adams	AWE
Nick Bolton	AWE
Suzanne Chenery	AWE
Stephen Dooley	AWE
Garry George	AWE
Simon Hardaker	AWE
Mark Hedges	AWE
Michele Maidment	AWE
Andrew Randewich	AWE
Sam Seffron	AWE
Graham Simpson	AWE
John Steele	AWE

Regulators:

Gary Cook	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Rob Green	Environment Agency

Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillors:

Philip Bassil, Mark Binns, Dominic Boeck, Michael Bound, John Chapman, Penee Chopping, Stuart Coker, Nicholas Corp, Amy Gower, Graham Hetherington, Max Joseph, Malcolm Large, Clive Littlewood, Helen Manghani, George McGarvie, Ian Montgomery, Barry Patman, Carolyn Richardson, Tim Whitaker

Actions from previous meetings

There were no actions from the previous meeting.

Approval of the 99th Meeting minutes

Chairman's update

Introduction

Susie Tucker welcomed members to the 100th meeting.

COVID 19

A short video was shown detailing how some of the staff at AWE have been dealing with the measures put in place to keep everyone safe during these unique times.

AWE have continued to keep operations going throughout the pandemic. The on-site track and trace system, co-ordinated through the Business Resilience Group has contained cases on each site. Communications have been sent out weekly regarding the numbers which show the level of impact.

AWE continues to apply rigorously all the measures required to sustain a COVID-secure working environment. The business has added over 200 fixed sanitizer stations across the sites, refreshed staff communications and reinforced the 'work from home' message to limit numbers on sites to those who need to be there to maintain operations.

IT capability has been expanded through a remote Ozone access facility that people can use to access communications from home via their personal computers and devices.

AWE's first Responsible Business Report

The AWE Responsible Business Report was published on 10 November. It is an online publication which can be accessed easily from the AWE website linked [here](#).

It was produced by Responsible Business Manager, Julie Lane, and uses infographics and illustrated examples to explain exactly what a 'responsible business' is and why it is so important to AWE.

It has a foreword by Alison Atkinson, in which she talks about AWE's commitment to being carbon neutral by 2030, linking sustainability and development goals to the 2015 Paris agreement and the United Nations; Sustainable Development Goals, our achievements in employee engagement – you'll remember that AWE were named one of the Sunday Times' Top 25 Big Companies to work for in 2019 – and her deep pride in leading AWE as an organisation.

Alison also addresses the areas which require improvement and is clear that her efforts and those of all AWE people, suppliers and contractors, will be unequivocally focused on ensuring that health, safety and quality at AWE is second to none.

Staff Nominations and Achievements Awards

AWE is proud to announce its nationally recognised Skills Academy has been honoured at a recent awards ceremony celebrating outstanding achievements in the apprenticeship market.

At a virtual ceremony, AWE was named as one of the Top 100 employers by 'Rate My Apprenticeship' which is a review-based platform to help those seeking apprenticeships. This online platform is based on student-written reviews and provides genuine apprenticeship experiences from companies such as AWE, to help young people consider their options after school or college.

Also, in recognition of AWE's improved Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) activity through benchmarking with the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (enei), AWE is proud to announce that this year it's reached the Silver Award Standard.

AWE has been a member of enei since early 2018. Having access to enei's resources and following best practice has helped AWE demonstrate that it's creating an inclusive environment for today and for tomorrow.

The benchmarking process highlighted that AWE has made progress in recruitment and attraction, communication and engagement and finally procurement.

IoP Awards 2020: two awards for AWE

- Kirk Duroe, who works in Radiation Protection Group (Physics), was awarded the Institute of Physics Clifford Paterson Medal and Prize for 'exceptional early career contributions to the application of physics in an industrial or commercial context'
- AWE has also been awarded the IoP Apprentice Employer of the year in the category of large companies.

We also have two finalists in the **Women in Defence UK Awards**.

Paula Rosend for the most Collaborative Award and Alanna Downing for the Emerging Talent Award.

The winners will be announced in March 2021.

National Apprenticeship Awards 2020

The Employer of the Year category is open to employers from all sectors and celebrates employers who can showcase their commitment, contribution and the success that apprenticeships have brought to their organisation.

The judges look for proactive employers who can demonstrate how they have delivered an exemplary apprenticeship programme that has benefited their organisation and individual apprentices. The judges recognised AWE for its outstanding apprenticeship programme, and AWE have been awarded South East Region Macro (5000+) Employer of the Year 2020.

This achievement will be published across all social media channels which will support the apprentice recruitment campaign which is now live until mid- January.

New Starters

AWE welcomed 133 new graduates on September 21. They will have a virtual welcome week and then a home-based programme, hopefully joining on site in January 2021.

There will be 81 new apprentices joining AWE in late August, starting on site in October. The apprentices rotate between onsite and home working to ensure that social distancing is adhered to in the training facilities and to give the apprentices a balance of class based and practical learning.

49 new colleagues joined on the 'Year in Industry' scheme. Again, it will be a virtual welcome and hopefully they will join in person this month.

Plans are underway for an all-virtual recruitment campaign for 2021 and the current campaign for entry next year is well underway for 104 graduate and 89 apprentice places.

The campaign is going well with a high uptake for both.

MoD's Announced the Termination of the AWE ML Contract Effective June 30 2021.

It was announced on 2nd November that the commercial arrangements for AWE are changing. At present, there are three organisations involved: AWE ML, AWE plc (which employs the most staff) and the MoD.

AWE operates as a 'GoCo' – a government-owned, contractor-operated organisation. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) owns all the physical infrastructure, but there is a contract in place between the MoD and AWE Management Limited (AWE ML), the 'contractor', for the management and operation of AWE plc on behalf of the government. This is known as the 'M&O contract'.

AWE ML is formed of our shareholders – Lockheed Martin, Serco and Jacobs. The ministerial statement announced that these commercial arrangements will come to an end.

AWE plc will revert to a direct government ownership model as of 1st July 2021 and AWE ML will no longer be involved.

Between now and then, a new AWE plc Board will be appointed, comprising executive and non-executive directors, together with MoD representation.

AWE ML will continue to run AWE plc until the termination date of 30th June 2021. The AWE plc executive team at AWE will remain, and AWE plc will remain the holder of the Nuclear Site Licence.

All employees will remain employees of AWE plc after 1st July 2021 and no TUPE process is required and no change in terms and conditions will arise as a consequence of the transition.

The government has already signalled its commitment to the two-year pay deal that was recently agreed. Terms and conditions may be reviewed in the longer term, as is normal with any organisation.

AWE plc will continue to be the employer and we expect that our pension arrangements will be unchanged.

AWE have no current plans for a redundancy programme and there is a challenging programme to deliver.

Questions arising:

Q: Susan Mullen: Have you actively started your new recruitment of apprentices right now?

A: Yes, we take them annually. Our new apprentices started in August on a phased approach, first online then on-site from October. Our new graduates started in September, with a plan for them to be onsite in January 2021. For those interested in our apprenticeships, details of any active recruitment campaigns can be found on the AWE website.

Q: Graham Bridgman: Why has the decision been taken to terminate the AWE ML contract, and is there a financial penalty for terminating the contract early? What is the difference in the financial position of the management company [AWE ML] now as opposed to if the contract had run its course?

A: The contract was due to run to 2025 and the government routinely reviews all major projects a few years before the end of contract date. That review started in 2019 with the decision being taken to terminate the contract; the MOD has stated this was not due to performance. There are some programme-related reasons as to when is the best time to make this commercial change without causing disruption. We anticipate that the MOD and AWE will work more closely together, which will strengthen the relationship. It's early days but the commercial team is currently working through what has to happen to terminate the contract – there is a provision in the current contract for early termination. The difference financially is that the companies in the joint venture [AWE ML] will not

earn their fee for the last 3-4 years of that contract. Any compensation to the companies is a matter for the MOD; the MOD has stated that the contract can be terminated with no financial penalty (to the MOD).

Q: Mollie Lock: Will employees of, say, Jacobs still remain employees of Jacobs or will they have to transfer to MOD?

A. There are no plans for anyone (from AWE or Jacobs) to transfer to the MOD. There are some secondees from our shareholder companies currently, whose time at AWE will come to an end unless they transfer into AWE plc employment. Obviously, those are individual arrangements so I can't comment further.

Site Update

**Mark Hedges,
Director of Site Operations**

Mark gave an overview of protestor activity during the period of July through to October. There is no planned protestor activity on the horizon currently, but we will continue to monitor and work closely with the authorities.

There were also documented community concerns during the months of August and September consisting of minor traffic, noise and water issues. With regards to the noise issues that occurred in August, we are aware that a complaint was raised due to the response time taken. Please note if you do not receive a response in a timely manner, then you can call our switchboard directly.

Environment, Safety and Health Update

**Nick Bolton,
ESH Service Delivery Lead (SET)**

Nick gave an overview of performance in personal and process safety during the period advising members that the OSHA TRI (Occupational Safety and Health Administration; Total Recordable Incidents) Injury rate for the 12 months to the end of September 2020 was 0.227 per 200,000 hours worked. The TRI Rate is the best ever achieved.

A total of 16 OSHA Recordable Events have occurred in the 12 months to the end of September 2020. 50% of injuries were sustained in areas from the toe to hip.

Process Safety performance is at an acceptable risk level. Process Safety training for supervisors is being rolled out across the company and has been adapted for online delivery. Process safety metrics have been reviewed, refreshed and presented to the exec for approval, strengthening the already robust metrics.

With regards to our impact on the environment. All of our discharges are kept extremely low and we continue to meet our targets of diversion from waste to landfill.

We can confirm that we continue to comply with the government's guidance on managing the risk of COVID-19.

Ask the Regulators

**Gary Cook Lead Site Inspector
Office for Nuclear Regulation**

I am joined today by Graham Simpson who is another site inspector. Graham actually constructed the LLC report on my behalf for the last period.

The report covers the period June to September which contains dates and types of regulatory activities carried out during that time. It's worth noting that most of the inspections were rated adequate during that time. There was one 'amber' inspection (LC7) upon which one regulatory issue has been raised and will be dealt with as part of normal regulatory business.

Due to Covid-19, our focus has been on those inspections that can't be done remotely. Having said that there has been no drop off in the amount of engagement that we have had with the sites as we have been holding lots of remote meetings and engagements using platforms such as TEAMS.

The report also mentions a review that took place relating to the Holistic Strategic approach. Whilst AWE is not currently in a position to move to normal regulatory attention the progress seen at this stage is consistent with our expectations.

Questions arising from the ONR Report

Q: Roger Gardiner: In the report it states that the Holistic Strategic approach is designed to facilitate AWE's withdrawal from enhanced regulatory attention by ONR. What hoops must AWE jump through to achieve this?

A: Gary Cook: *The review was very much a progress update. It wasn't a final inspection to make a final decision as to whether AWE was ready or not. What we did see as part of that review was that AWE are where they need to be at this time on the journey to exiting, so we are content with things in most areas. There are still areas that need attention, there is further work that needs to be done at the back end of 2020 through to 2021 across a variety of areas, however the progress that has been made, particularly at the Burghfield site, strongly indicates that AWE will be able to exit depending on meeting several criteria.*

Q: Avril Burdett: Will the ONR and EA continue to regulate in light of the new contractual arrangements that are being put in place?

A: Graham Simpson: *The answer to that is 'yes' we will continue to regulate in the normal way. We will also assess the organisational changes that will accompany the contractual changes. This will be undertaken via our standard LC36 process.*

Rob Green
Environment Agency

Rob stated that he would like to spend this time dedicated to answering any questions arising from the Environment Agency's update report that was circulated prior to the meeting. Rob added that due to timing, one of the notable items that was not included in the report was the recent publication of the Radioactivity in Food and the Environment (RIFE) report, which covers the 2019 period. These reports have now been published and are available on the gov.uk website.

Rob provided a brief background to RIFE: The EA undertakes an independent environmental monitoring programme around civil and defence nuclear sites, along with the Food Standards Agency and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency. The monitoring programmes include both the civil and defence nuclear sectors. The results of the regulatory monitoring programmes are summarised in RIFE. Rob confirmed that, as indicated in the previous update from Nick Bolton, the recent RIFE report confirms that radiation doses as a

result of operations at the AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield nuclear sites remain very low and well below legal dose limits.

Estate Development Update

John Steele
Head of Estate, Development & Planning

John provided an overview on future potential developments and forthcoming planning applications at the Aldermaston and Burghfield sites.

A summary was provided of the planning application for a replacement Material Handling Store (MHS) at AWE Aldermaston and a replacement Material Manufacturing Facility [MMF] located at AWE Burghfield. A few questions were asked which are considered below.

Also discussed were the Aldermaston Manor planning application to convert the manor into apartments, Wokingham Local Plan Representation for a proposal to build 15,000 houses on that land, of which the MoD has formally objected, West Berkshire Local Plan which the MoD will be making representations seeking to strengthen policy position on AWE sites and finally Blacks Lake Planning Permission for a new business park to be constructed from which MoD need to assess the impact that this will have on our capability.

Questions arising:

Q: Dave Shirt: I wanted to advise the committee that Aldermaston Parish Council are very concerned about traffic levels on the A340 and we have recently adopted a policy that we would reject any planning applications that would increase the number of HGVs on the A340 and that will certainly affect the Blacks Lake planning application and it could well affect your plans for the South East corner of your site at Aldermaston.

A: John Steele: *I appreciate that comment and I think we are very aware of that concern locally. It is an issue we take seriously and discuss at length with WBC Highways who are very rigorous in terms of supporting your issue.*

Q: Debbie Fisher: Regarding the proposed new building at Burghfield site [MMF]. Assuming that AWE takes that, forward and that it does get planning approval, do you have any idea as to how long the building work will take to complete? There is also concern about the level of noise during this time for the local residents.

A: John Steele: *Construction is scheduled to take between 2-3 years. The planning application is supported by a noise assessment which isn't too complicated to review. It considers a baseline noise which then enables us to predict the likely impact during construction. The assessment indicates there is unlikely to be a significant impact from noise during construction or operation. I'm interested to hear more about your issues on noise during construction because we generally regard these activities as being quite quiet. So, if you do get issues with noise then please email me directly straight away and then I can look at that particular incident. It's difficult to assess the situation a few days/weeks after the incident as it's difficult to pinpoint where the noise was arising from.*

Q: Debbie Fisher: In recent months we have had to have James Lane repaired due to various works to do with flood alleviation and then some of the utilities. Are we envisaging more damage from heavy vehicles transporting materials?

A: John Steele: *We have an HGV routing policy which follows the WBC routing policy and that is not to use James Lane. So, any construction HGV movements from our site go via the Pingewood Gate and will turn left to go up to the Reading Road and then up to the A4 and they are also banned from going through Burghfield Common, Burghfield Village and from using Pingewood Lane itself, which is also limited as there is a height restriction at the railway bridge. The problem locally is that the number of 8 and 12 wheelers that are working out of other local sites. There should be no traffic using Palmers Lane also.*

Action 100/01: Sophie Crawford: Regarding the Aldermaston slide, point two about the Reading Road/Red Lane corner site development. You mentioned needing planning permission and access being an issue and, in that context, mentioned that Welshman Lane was a site of importance already to WBC. Please could you elaborate on that comment? - **JS**

AWE At 70

Garry George
Distinguished Member of Staff

Garry provided the LLC members with a very informative and entertaining story of AWE through the years with insights into politics, physics, products and partnership.

Questions arising:

Q: David Shirt: We have recently formed Aldermaston Local History Group and was wondering if once the restrictions due to Covid-19 have been lifted, would it be possible for you to come along to one of our meetings to do a talk please?

A: Garry George: *Richard Moore, our corporate historian, would, I'm sure, be able to speak at your local history group, once permission has been granted by AWE and MoD.*

Action 100/02: Discuss with Richard Moore the opportunity to present a talk at the Aldermaston Local History Group. - **GG**

Engineering & Science

Andrew Randewich
Director of Engineering & Science

Andrew presented the members with an introduction to the Engineering and Science in AWE's role explaining why providing material to the Royal Navy in support of the UK's nuclear deterrent requires access to significant high performance computing, and also non-nuclear testing capabilities including engineering tests, material science labs, shock-

generation facilities and the Orion laser amongst others. The talk was originally delivered to the Royal Society in February 2000 and published in Philosophical Transactions A as "Inertial Confinement Fusion: a Defence Context".

Q: Avril Burdett: Do you also collaborate with Harwell?

A: Andrew Randewich: *Yes, the central laser facility is based there and the short pulse beams on Orion are modelled on their Vulcan laser. They really do have cutting edge high repetition world leading laser systems.*

AOB

<p>Action 100/03: Dave Shirt requested that an agenda item be added to the next meeting in relation to about the role of the LLC – SC/PK</p>
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Proposed 2021 Meeting Dates

17th March

7th July (tbc)

10th November (tbc)

Close