



Working in Partnership Copeland
Minutes of the 3rd meeting of the South Copeland GDF Community Partnership
Held at Kirksanton Village Hall 23rd March 2022
Commencing at 6.30pm

PRESENT:

Cllr Ged McGrath	Chair
Cllr David Moore	Copeland Borough Council, Councillor & Nuclear Portfolio Holder
David Faulkner	Cumbria District Association of Local Councils (CALC)
Kelly Anderson	NWS Community Engagement Manager (CEM)
Cllr Carl Carrington	Millom Without Parish Council (via Teams)
Cllr Maggie Cummings	Whicham Parish Council
Cllr Dave Billing	Millom Town Council

SUPPORTING ATTENDEES:

Barnaby Hudson	NWS Site Evaluation Manager
Lucy Clarke	NWS Communications Lead
Anne Broome	NWS Community Engagement Coordinator
Dawn Walker	NWS Secretariat (via Teams)
Jonathan Cook	Copeland Borough Council Officer
Serife Gunal	Traverse (via Teams)

APOLOGIES:

Cllr Fee Wilson	Copeland Borough Councillor
Cllr Dave Savage	Cumbria District Association of Local Councils (CALC)
Cllr Doug Wilson	Copeland Borough Councillor
Cllr James Date	Copeland Borough Councillor

AGENDA 1: WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- Voting members were recorded from each organisation.
- Any changes to voting members to be notified at the start of each meeting.
- No Declarations of Interest were received.

AGENDA 2: APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND ACTION LOG

Minutes were approved as a true reflection of the meeting.

ACTION LOG from 03.03.22

The Community Engagement Manager (CEM) took members through the actions from the previous meeting. All actions had been completed or were included on the agenda for the meeting. The main update related to the following actions:

KA to discuss Officer attendance and reimbursement within NWS and set up a follow up meeting.
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CALC representative to clarify the CALC position re attendance of an Officer at Partnership meetings.

The CEM informed the group that a meeting had taken place between CALC and the NWS Siting Director, Simon Hughes, to discuss a reimbursement process for Parish clerks and CALC officers carrying out work related to the GDF programme. NWS agreed to provide CALC with an outline reimbursement process by the end of March 2022.

A Community Partnership Member (CPM) voiced concerns to the group regarding the sharing of South Copeland Community Partnership documentation with other Community Partnerships. Without the correct explanation, these documents could be taken out of context and cause issues for either this or other partnerships. In future, NWS will make it clear when sending out documents who that they can be shared with.

Action:

CEM to speak to the CPM to discuss the appropriate sharing of South Copeland Community Partnership documentation.

The action to look at how other partnerships operate both in the UK and internationally was discussed and the partnership agreed that they would like to explore this opportunity further.

Action:

CEM to look into the possibility of arranging time for members to hear from other Partnerships in the UK and internationally.

The CEM also took the opportunity to update members on the outcome from the Community Investment Panel. Two applications had been considered and been offered funding: Millom Cricket Club and Around the Combe. Members were asked if they would like a monthly update on CIF funding. The members agreed they would like that added to the meeting agenda going forward.

Action:

Secretariat to add a monthly CIF update to the agenda.

AGENDA 3: COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

The Communications Lead took the partnership through some slides which gave members an indication of the tone of social media comments from partnership formation until now and compared them with the social media comments on the recent Facebook advertising. Partnership mentions on social media had steadily increased since formation in December and members were given an idea of the sentiment (positive, neutral, and negative) associated with those comments. Finally, a word cloud gave members an indication of the words used in social media comments. This contrasted with the tone of the social media comments on the recent Facebook advertising. Here, there were a significant number of negative comments ranging from the safety of a GDF to no reason given. All comments on social media are recorded and help to inform our communications activities going forward. This enables us to approach any misconceptions and nonfactual information that is being posted without directly responding to comments.



Members were strongly advised not to respond to social media comments, as comments from an individual partnership member could be seen as the view of the partnership rather than the individual members view and could also make members a target.

A CPM indicated that they were surprised that some of the outrageous comments had not been directly replied to on the latest posts.

The CEM replied that people needed to be allowed to have their say whether it be positive or negative and the purpose of Community Engagement was to get out in the community to provide factual information and enable the community to make an informed view about the GDF programme.

Q – Why do we use social media if we are aware, it produces such controversial comments?

A - It is a useful tool for us to promote our activities and any events that will be taking place out in the community.

It was agreed that this approach could be reviewed going forward but members acknowledged that the comments were useful to inform the comms strategy moving forward.

The Communications Lead then talked about the Community Partnership membership page on the website, it currently gives information on who the core members are without any detail. Mid Copeland Partnership also has this information but has a link through to a separate page which gives the name of the member, a picture, and a short blog about the member. Members were asked how they would like their membership information displayed on the website and the consensus was that members would be happy to list the member organisations with the organisation's logo rather than individual's photos.

Action:

Communications Lead to mockup an example of the membership page focusing on the organisation and share with members for comment.

The proposal of a newsletter was put to the membership. This would consist of a printed version to be sent to all households plus a PDF Version on the website and would be supported by regular e-bulletins with destination URL's allowing timely updates regarding events and links through to the website. The newsletter will be sent 2-4 times per year dependent on available content. This ensures that a regular flow of information is delivered to all households in the search area, plus additional leaflets promoting events and CIF can be added as and when required. 600+people are currently signed up to receive the e-bulletin.

The Partnership agreed that the newsletter and e-bulletin were a good idea and that the information needs to be in print format as well as online.

Action:

Communications Lead to create a content plan for a newsletter, as part of a wider Communications and Engagement Plan, up until the end of 2022.

Finally, there was a short update on the Marine Geophysical Survey. Members had been asked to comment on a Q&A for the website. One CPM commented that a one day turn around was not acceptable for members to provide input. The Communications Lead agreed and apologised. The questions and answers will be added to the website in due course.



AGENDA 4: SITE EVALUATION

The Site Evaluation Manager took members through a prepared presentation outlining the approach to conducting non-intrusive investigations as part of 'local studies' element of the Siting Process. In summary these investigations are designed to determine the feasibility of hosting a GDF within the Search Area, which will support the Community Partnership and GDF Developer with later considerations with regards to advancing in the Siting Process. It was outlined that the duration of feasibility studies is dependent on a number of factors and is considered to take between 3 to 5 years. There will be a number of opportunities for the Community Partnership and community to provide feedback to be considered within the feasibility studies. The messaging around the required feasibility work should be carefully managed to ensure there is no confusion with any later Site Selection process, which may cause community concern. It is however, appreciated that that the geography of the Search Area and recognising the areas excluded from consideration (National Park and submitted extension) will naturally reduce the areas in which to focus feasibility studies.

A number of questions were raised throughout the presentation and a summary is provided below:

Q - When we get to the end of our site evaluation process, will we have to wait, while other Partnerships catch up before we move to the next stage? We were told that this would not happen.

A - What will be important at that stage will be maintaining momentum. If the process stalls for any period of time, this may jeopardise the siting process and the likelihood of successfully advancing to Site Characterisation. To support the development of a business case, the GDF Developer has made a series of high-level planning assumptions. One assumption is that up to two Community Partnerships at a time will progress in the Siting Process to Site Characterisation. These are planning assumptions may be subject to change.

Q – Why only take two Partnerships through? Why not take through all the feasible sites?

A - It needs to be recognised that Site Characterisation is extremely expensive, and activities are likely to have increased effect on the communities in which intrusive works are conducted. What cannot be guaranteed is that every Community Partnership will be able demonstrate it could feasibly host a GDF.

Q – If only two are taken through, what happens when we come to the Test of Public support?

A – Test of Public support comes prior to construction. The GDF developer and Community Partnership will be monitoring community feedback throughout the Siting Process. Understanding the willingness of a community to be involved in the Siting Process will be a key consideration during and following the completed feasibility studies. It is part of the remit of this Partnership to identify the information needed to support the Community which will enable them to make an informed decision.

A - The key elements are suitable geology and a willing host community. These are very difficult to predict at this stage and it will be a very complicated, challenging process.



Q - We have never been told that only two Partnerships will be taken through to site characterisation. If most of them are showing potential, what happens?

A - If there are five Community Partnerships involved in the Siting Process and each has proven feasibility, then the decision on which Communities to progress will be submitted to the Security of State (Government) and will consider a number of factors including community willingness. It's likely that there will still be levels of uncertainty associated with each Community Partnership.

Q - Is it sites that will be considered or Community Partnerships?

A - It's Community Partnerships.

Q - You mentioned earlier, on the local studies slide that there are technical and community challenges. What are the technical and community challenges?

A – The GDF developer wants to ensure its initial studies are focussed and prioritised, to achieve this we propose to use the information gathered so far to assist in identifying any technical challenges and community issues. Technical challenges will initially be identified from the Search Area evaluations and community issues will be identified from the initial community engagements. Examples of these may include the following.

- Technical challenges may be transport related – considering the geography within the peninsular (area of consideration it is about 18 km²) the road transport network has identified limitations. Within the feasibility studies, these limitations will need to be understood and potential mitigations options identified. From initial engagements,*
- Community issue raised relates to the visual impact from any development. The area of consideration is relatively small and close proximity to areas of local and national environmental sensitivity, minimising visual impact to communities will be a key issue that will need to be considered from the start.*

Q- What about safety of the population

A – All these issues will need to be considered as part of the feasibility studies.

Q - Can you explain what you mean by the supply chain?

A – We have in-house experts to support the GDF programme, but we will need to utilise expertise from external companies. These companies will provide support across a range of subjects which include environmental, engineering, geology, transport and safety.

Q – Can we ask for independent review of the supply chain work?

A – Yes, this is within the scope of the Community Partnership.

Q- What benefit do you get from having vertical shafts as illustrated in the image?

A – It is dependent on a number of factors not limited to geology and best suited mining methodology. You could descend at an angle, or you could descend vertically and then tunnel out horizontally, there may be construction and operational advantages with both. From the coast to the identified target geology, it is approx. 12km and the appropriate design and mining methodology



needs to be proven; at the moment we don't know which one or combination is appropriate. The image is only an illustration.

Q - Would the Shaft be visible?

A – There are a number of examples where the traditional “Headworks” have been sunken into the ground to reduce the visible impact. All these options need to be considered.

Q – Under the six siting factors, value for money should not be listed. It should be something at the end. Money should not be guiding this process.

A – I agree that the other siting factors may be of higher importance to the local community. However, value for money is written into the Site Evaluation guidance and with any project there has to be an explanation of budget requirements.

AGENDA 5: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Community Engagement Coordinator (CEC) took the Partnership through a presentation on a proposal for Community Engagement. The presentation explained what the policy says about Community Engagement and why it was timely to start thinking about engagement now:

- Enable us to respond to recent Facebook comments
- South Copeland residents have been accessing the drop in events in Mid Copeland
- Marine geophysical surveys are happening in the summer, and we need to inform residents
- There is now a defined Search Area which there wasn't last time Community Engagement events took place

The CEC then explained some of the approaches the Partnership could take to Community Engagement:

- Large exhibitions with Subject Matter Experts (SME). Can happen over several days and include evenings and weekends to give people the maximum opportunity to access the information and ask the questions they need answers too.
- Pop up events can be held in smaller venues giving everyone the opportunity to access the information they require in a location close to them
- Attendance at agricultural shows, cricket, rugby and football matches, foodbank etc
- We can also take the information to groups and organisations, Woman's Institutes, Round Table, Rotary, Coffee Mornings etc.

The CEC also mentioned the option of a Community Stakeholder Forum as a way of engaging with the community. All these forms of Community Engagement are open to the Partnership, it is up to you to decide how we move forward.

CPM: It should be a mix of all the things you described. Clearly there is a lack of understanding in the community, which is apparent from the comments on Facebook, so getting the correct message across to the involved communities is crucial to eliminate the myths surrounding a GDF facility.

The CEM advised the Partnership that one member felt it was too soon to carry out Community Engagement and didn't want to repeat the engagement that had taken place during working group stage.



All Partnership members in attendance felt that Community Engagement was crucial and should take as many forms as possible. They agreed to the outline proposal put forward by the CEC and asked that the proposal was taken forward with more detail added for the next meeting.

Member: We still need to discuss Community Stakeholder Forum and I would like this brought to the next meeting.

Action:

Community Stakeholder Forum to be added to next agenda.

As time had run out, the Chair requested that Agenda Item 6 be moved to the next Agenda.

AGENDA 7: AOB/MEETING DATE

Next Meeting: Wednesday 20th April

Venue TBC

Ref 230322	Meeting Action Log	
Agenda 2 230322 1	CEM to speak to the Community Partnership Member to discuss the appropriate sharing of South Copeland Community Partnership documentation.	KA
Agenda 2 230322 2	CEM to look into the possibility of arranging time for members to hear from other Partnerships in the UK and internationally.	KA
Agenda 2 230322 3	Secretariat to add a monthly CIF update to the agenda.	Secretariat
Agenda 3 230322 1	Comms Lead to mock up an example of the membership page focusing on the organisation and share with members for comment.	LC
Agenda 4 230322 2	Comms Lead to create a content plan for a newsletter, as part of a wider Communications and Engagement Plan, up until the end of 2022.	LC
Agenda 5 230322 1	Community Stakeholder Forum to be added to next agenda.	Secretariat

