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Working in Partnership Copeland
Minutes of the 10th meeting of the South Copeland Community GDF Partnership
Held at The Guide Hall, Millom – 12th October 2022
Commencing at 6:30pm

PRESENT:

Cllr Ged McGrath	Chair
Cllr David Moore	Copeland Borough Council, Councillor & Nuclear Portfolio Holder
Cllr Dave Savage	Cumbria District Association of Local Councils (CALC)
Kelly Anderson	NWS Community Engagement Manager
Jonathan Cook	Copeland Borough Council Officer
Cllr Maggie Cummings	Whicham Parish Council
Cllr Bob Kelly	Cumberland Shadow Authority Councillor
Cllr Denise Burness	Millom Town Council
Cllr Carl Carrington	Millom Without Parish Council

SUPPORTING ATTENDEES:

Lucy Clarke	NWS Communications Lead
Anne Broome	NWS Copeland Community Coordinator
Rob Ward	NWS Community Partnership Operations Manager
Bruce Cairns	NWS
Richard Griffin	NWS Senior Policy Adviser
Alison Beard	NWS
Owen Thomas	Yonder
Charlie Rollason	Yonder

APOLOGIES:

Cllr Fee Wilson	Copeland Borough Councillor
Cllr Doug Wilson	Copeland Borough Councillor

AGENDA 1: WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed his delight that members of the public had attended
- Health and safety information and meeting etiquette was shared
- Community Partnership members introduced themselves
- Voting members were recorded
- No Declarations of Interest were received

AGENDA 2: APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND ACTION LOG

Ref 1492022	Meeting Action Log	
Agenda 2 14092022 1	Arrange a subgroup meeting to discuss the engagement scope	Secretariat

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	In progress	
Agenda 3 14092022 1	Letters from the Chair on behalf of the Partnership to be shared with all members before sending. Complete	Ongoing
Agenda 3 14092022 2	Responses to the Chairs letters on behalf of the Partnership to be shared with all members. Complete	Secretariat
Agenda 3 14092022 3	LGR to be added to the next agenda with the relevant experts in attendance. Complete	Secretariat
Agenda 3 14092022 4	Recirculate the previously discussed LGR options slides. Complete	Secretariat
Agenda 4 14092022 1	Briefing note regarding NFLA open letter to be distributed to members. Open	CL
Agenda 4 14092022 2	Communications briefing note to be circulated to Partnership members monthly with the agenda. Complete	CL
Agenda 5 14092022 1	Recirculate the CIF terms of reference to members. Complete	Secretariat
Agenda 5 14092022 2	Yearly review of CIF panel awards to be added to the relevant CP meeting agenda. Open	Secretariat

AGENDA 3: Chairs Update

- Feedback from letter sent to Simon Hughes**
The Community Partnership questioned why there was an absence of senior managers visible within the meetings. Simon Hughes explained that they had been advised in Working Group that this was the preference. They would be delighted to attend meetings should an invitation be extended.

The Community Partnership raised concerns about the Contact Centre. Simon Hughes confirmed that the Contact Centre is in the process of being brought in-house.

The full response to the letter had been shared with members.

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- **Feedback from letter sent to Mark Fryer**

The Community Partnership wrote to Mark Fryer to advise him that they would be offering an invite to the incoming representatives of Cumberland Authority for Millom and Millom Without to attend the meetings as observers. No response was received but invite letters were sent to Cllr Bob Kelly and Cllr Andy Pratt. Cllr Bob Kelly was in attendance and was warmly welcomed by the Chair. He will attend when possible as an observer. Cllr Andy Pratt will attend when able to.

- **Feedback from joint Chairs meeting**

The Chairs had been invited to attend the NDA's Stakeholder Summit and a visit to LLWR with a delegation from ANDRA. The Chairs discussion focused on feedback from these events.

- **Workforce and Skills report**

The Community Partnership had been asked to review the report prior to publication. The Community Partnership provided feedback to NWS but felt that their comments hadn't been reflected in the final report. Members questioned the relevance and value of a national report and expressed their disappointment. It was confirmed that local reports would be commissioned at a later date. Members requested that feedback only be sought from members if it was able to be actioned. NWS confirmed that they would seek members' views on potential briefings in advance.

- **NWAA/GDF Watch**

The Community Partnership was thankful for the support that has been offered by NWAA and GDF Watch. The consensus of members was that it was too early in the process to take NWAA up on their offer, but they would review again at a later date. Members would decide individually if they would benefit from attending the free session on Community Engagement from GDF Watch but be mindful that future support may not be free of charge.

The Community Partnership received a letter from Nuclear Free Local Authorities which praised them for starting to hold their meetings in public. They outlined a number of points to consider to further strengthen this good practice:

1. Declarations of interest to be published on the website. Members agreed that they are happy for their Declarations of Interest to be featured on the Community Partnership Website.

Action: Declarations of Interest to be published on the Community Partnership Website.

2. Accessibility of venues. This has already been considered and is factored in to venue risk assessments. A mobile hearing loop has been requested as the venues are rotated
3. Agendas and Minutes published on the website. This is already adhered to.

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4. Easier access to meeting documents on the website. Members agreed that these could be more visible and would like to see a separate section on the website for meetings and associated papers rather than them being under the resources section.

Action: Review of the Community Partnership website to be carried out.

Action: Members to feedback any additional comments regarding the accessibility and functionality of the website.

5. Livestreaming meetings. Members questioned the capability of the venues to be able to do this but agreed to revisit this at a later date.
6. Invitations to press to attend meetings. Press are already able to attend the meetings alongside members of the public.

Action: Formal response to be sent to NFLA.

- **Waberthwaite Parish Council update**

The CALC rep attended the Waberthwaite Parish Council meeting to give them an update on the work of the CP. Eskdale, Bootle, Muncaster and Ulpha have also been contacted and either have updates scheduled within their meetings, are in the process of arranging or have declined a meeting at this time. Following the update to Waberthwaite Parish Council, a drop-in session has been arranged for Saturday 5th November 10-1 in the Village Hall.

AGENDA 4: PUBLIC FORUM

The Chair then invited questions from members of the public. The following questions were asked:

Q. Who is classified as 'local people' when it comes to a test of public support?

A. If a test of public support was held tomorrow, the local people would be the residents of the Search Area. As we don't know where the boundaries will fall at the time of a test of public support which will be many years away, we cannot confirm exactly who will have a say when it happens.

This answer led on to further discussion about the Lake District National Park (LDNP) and the proposed extension. An NWS representative confirmed that although parts of the LDNP and proposed extension were included in the Search Area, a GDF would not be constructed within the National Park or the proposed extension.

Q. Will the Community Partnership take on board the strong local opposition and consider withdrawing Millom, Haverigg and Kirksanton from the process?

A. The Community Partnership cannot withdraw from the process, only the developer (NWS) and the RPLA (Copeland Borough Council) can withdraw the community from the process.

There was also a discussion about the Parish Council representatives removing themselves from the Community Partnership. It was confirmed that even if the Parishes decided not to sit on the Community Partnership, the Community Partnership would still continue.

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Parish reps shared that it had been a hard decision whether to join or not but that it was better to be around the table and part of the discussion than not having a say.

Q. Why take up the offer of support from GDF Watch and not NWAA?

A. The support being offered by GDF watch was an engagement workshop for members which was being offered free of charge as opposed to a service that the CP would be expected to pay for.

The Chair also added that it was too early in the process to be asking anyone for support but when the time was right, the CP would decide what support was required and would procure appropriately.

A member also added a note of caution that GDF watch was a one man band run by an ex RWM employee.

Q. Are you saying that the Parish Councils do not have a voice and Copeland Borough Council will decide?

A. Parish councils do have a voice and are important members of the Community Partnership, but when it comes to withdrawing from the process, only Copeland Borough Council or NWS can do that.

The public gallery was informed that if they wanted to challenge this they would need to take it up with their MP or the relevant government department as the developer was only following policy and couldn't change this.

There were then some comments from the public gallery.

Comment. Thank you for opening up the meetings to the public. Please take time to reflect on the information that you are giving to the public and the impact that it could have. We need clear information to make an informed decision and feel reports such as the Workforce and Skills are leading us up the garden path.

Comment: Concerned that the area would be blighted by the process as the process is so long.

Questions submitted in advance:

Q. Will the transport of the at least 145,000 highly active nuclear waste packages from various sources around the UK into the GDF need a fully armed police presence?

A. The overarching principle is that nuclear material and associated packages are categorised for security and safeguarding requirements whilst in transport, the categories are 1 to 4, with 1 being the highest level. Depending upon the actual inventory that will be disposed of, there may be transport at all of these levels. The levels of security for each transport will be different, some may have armed police support.

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Q. As solicitors are now stating that property / land should now include the potential of a GDF in searches. Do the Partnership have info on when RWM'S compensation scheme comes into effect? Should we be getting independent property valuations?

A. We fully appreciate the concerns that homeowners may have concerning the GDF. We are currently looking at a solution to address these concerns and we are hoping to discuss this with the Community Partnership and the wider community later in the year.

There are no requirements to get independent valuations at this point. In the meantime, if homeowners have concerns regarding their property we would be happy to arrange confidential conversations with our property team.

A member of the public said they would like to take up that offer.

Q. The Partnership has representatives from Whicham Parish who are stated as having a neutral stance but the Parish has a negative stance as demonstrated in its community plan. Is this democratic, open and transparent?

A. Whicham Parish Council was invited to join the South Copeland GDF Community Partnership as were all of the Parishes within the Area for Consideration. It was a decision for Whicham Parish Council as to whether they join or not.

B.

Members do not need to have a positive or neutral stance about a GDF to join the CP.

Q. Is compulsory purchase of property in the area a possibility?

A. Should the GDF process progress in South Copeland and land is identified to be required for the development of the project our approach will be to work collaboratively with landowners to acquire necessary land rights. Nuclear Waste Services are happy to have meetings with landowners who may have concerns and we can arrange confidential sessions with our property team.

Q. Cumbria County Council believe that thousands of Sellafield jobs will be lost as a result of a GDF. Do the job figures in RWM/Partnership literature include job losses e.g. Tourism, Prison etc

A. A GDF is needed to complete the UK's nuclear decommissioning by cleaning-up and disposing of our higher activity waste. It will also enable new nuclear projects, including the possible reuse of the Sellafield site, creating opportunities for more jobs in the county in the future. This is likely whether a GDF is located in West Cumbria or elsewhere.

At the moment our workforce and skills projections are based on generic information. As NWS proceeds through site evaluation over the next few years we will generate locally specific information that will allow us to estimate the contribution and impact a GDF could make on the local job market. This will include any potential impacts on locally sensitive sectors and approaches we can take to mitigate any negative impacts.

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Q. Why was this meeting not properly publicised - I can see no mention on your Facebook page, yet I regularly get posts about 'do I know a project that needs money' etc

A. There is always more that can be done and we appreciate any advice on how and where to publicise meetings. The meeting has been advertised on Facebook and an E-bulletin was sent out to our 600 + subscribers. We want to ensure that meetings are publicised as widely as possible and therefore all of the meeting dates for 2023 will be included in the next newsletter which will go through the door of every household in the Search Area.

Q. I understand from Whicham council's representative that you will be telling us the results of the survey of public opinion you undertook recently. Please could you also tell us the results of the similar survey undertaken last year(?) by the working group? I don't know if there was a face to face element to that, but I went through a quite long phone survey.

A. 2 surveys were carried out in Copeland in 2021. A full survey was carried out in May 2021 which surveyed 401 adults by telephone and was supported by a number of focus groups. The results of that survey were that net support was 32% for a 'GDF within 20 miles of my home.

A pulse survey was carried out in October 2021 which surveyed 181 adults by telephone. The results of this survey were that net support was 41% for a 'GDF within 20 miles of my home.

Both of these surveys covered the whole of Copeland.

Q. What is your view on the proposal to transfer Drigg and Carleton to the South Copeland Community Partnership after the boundary changes to electoral wards from 1 April 2023? Do you think it is an appropriate or desirable outcome?

A. There is no proposal to transfer Drigg and Carleton to the South Copeland CP, only a number of different scenarios that the Partnership will be discussing as part of the agenda item on LGR.

AGENDA 5: Local Government Reorganisation

The Partnership discussed 4 different potential scenarios which could be implemented following Local Government Reorganisation.

The members agreed that their preferred option was to work to the new boundary lines. This would mean that Drigg and Carleton parish would be included within the South Copeland Partnership Search Area rather than Mid Copeland.

The Copeland Borough Council rep explained their preferred option is for 2 Community Partnerships to be maintained.

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A consensus is needed between South and Mid Copeland Community Partnerships and so the members agreed that the Chairs of each partnership should meet to confirm the way forward.

Action: Chairs of South and Mid Copeland to arrange a meeting to discuss their preferred options

AGENDA 6: BASELINE SURVEY

Yonder joined the meeting virtually via Microsoft Teams and presented the findings of the baseline survey. This showed that most respondents had heard of a GDF and the Community Partnership and some had an understanding of how waste was currently being stored. There were however a number of areas where people wanted more information and this needs to be taken forward by the partnership. Of the 150 people surveyed, 61% were opposed and 27% supportive. Net score -34.

Community Partnership members felt strongly that they would like to communicate the full findings of the survey through all communication channels.

There was also a discussion about who owned the survey results and an action was placed on NWS to find out.

Action: Findings of the survey to be communicated through all channels

Action: Confirm who owns the survey results

AGENDA 7: MEMBER RECRUITMENT UPDATE

The recent member recruitment campaign attracted 3 applications. The applicants will be shortlisted and those successful will progress to an informal chat with members of the CP. Depending on the outcome, members may wish to reopen the recruitment process and consider how best to attract new members.

AGENDA 8: COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

The next newsletter is due to be sent to every household in the Search Area in November. The Comms Lead presented a number of options for content of the newsletter but members felt strongly that the survey results should feature heavily.

There was also a discussion about hearing alternative perspectives on GDF which led to questions about the Third-Party independent experts that the CP can call on when needed. NWS were asked to clarify who these experts were.

Action: NWS to clarify the sources of information available to the Partnership and how the third-party review mechanism described in the Working with Communities Policy will work.

AGENDA 9: AOB

Action: The name of the Community Partnership to be added to the agenda for the next meeting

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Action: Venues for future meetings to be circulated to members

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 9th November 2022 Venue to be confirmed

Action Log

Ref 12102022	Meeting Action Log	
Agenda 3 12102022 1	Declarations of Interest to be published on the Community Partnership Website.	Secretariat
Agenda 3 12102022 2	Action: Review of the Community Partnership website to be carried out	CL/CET
Agenda 3 12102022 3	Action: Members to feedback any additional comments regarding the accessibility and functionality of the website	CP Members
Agenda 3 12102022 4	Formal response to be sent to NFLA	Secretariat
Agenda 5 12102022 1	Chairs of South and Mid Copeland to arrange a meeting to discuss their preferred options	Secretariat
Agenda 6 12102022 1	Findings of the survey to be communicated through all channels	CL
Agenda 6 12102022 2	Confirm who owns the survey results	CEM
Agenda 8 12102022 1	NWS to clarify the sources of information available to the Partnership and how the third-party review mechanism described in the Working with Communities Policy will work.	CEM /OM
Agenda 9 12102022 1	The name of the Community Partnership to be added to the agenda for the next meeting	Secretariat
Agenda 9 12102022 2	Venues for future meetings to be circulated to members	Secretariat



South Copeland
GDF Community Partnership

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