



**Working in Partnership Copeland  
Minutes of the 13th meeting of the South Copeland Community GDF Partnership  
Held at Kirksanton Village Hall – 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023  
Commencing at 6:30pm**

**PRESENT:**

Cllr Ged McGrath	Chair
Cllr David Moore	Copeland Borough Council, Councillor & Nuclear Portfolio Holder
Cllr David Savage	Cumbria District Association of Local Councils (CALC)
Kelly Anderson	NWS Community Engagement Manager
Cllr Maggie Cumming	Whicham Parish Council
Cllr David Billing	Millom Town Council
Kate Willshaw	Friends of the Lake District
Cllr Carl Carrington	Millom Without Parish Council
John Sutton	Sustainable Duddon

**SUPPORTING ATTENDEES:**

Lucy Clarke	NWS Communications Lead
Rob Ward	NWS Community Partnership Operations Manager
Dawn Walker	NWS Secretariat
Jonathan Cook	Copeland Borough Council Officer

**APOLOGIES:**

Cllr Bob Kelly	Cumberland Shadow Authority Councillor
Anne Broome	NWS Community Coordinator

**AGENDA 1: WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

- The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed Inspira would not be attending the meeting this evening but would be on the agenda for the March 8<sup>th</sup> meeting
- Health and safety information and meeting etiquette was shared
- Voting members were recorded
- No Declarations of Interest were received

**AGENDA 2: APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND ACTION LOG**

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

Ref 11012023	Meeting Action Log	
<b>Agenda 3 11012023 1</b>	Reshare NFLA letter and response with members.	Secretariat <b>COMPLETE</b>
<b>Agenda 3 11012023 2</b>	Upload the NFLA letter and response to the SCCP website.	Secretariat <b>COMPLETE</b>
<b>Agenda 3 11012023 3</b>	Letter to be sent to Drigg and Carleton Parish Council inviting them to join the South Copeland Community Partnership from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2023.	CEM/Chair/Secretariat <b>COMPLETE</b>



<b>Agenda 6 11012023 1</b>	Work with the CIF panel to detail how progress and efficiency of CIF awards are reported to Partnership members.	GM/Secretariat <b>ONGOING next CIF Meeting 09.02.23</b>
<b>Agenda 7 11012023 1</b>	Confirm whether the local authority is letting prospective buyers know about the GDF process in local searches	Clr Moore – Jonathan Cook <b>COMPLETE</b>
<b>Agenda 7 11012023 2</b>	Presentation slides to be attached to the minutes	Secretariat <b>COMPLETE</b>

**Agenda 7 11.012023 1:** Jonathan Cook (Copeland Borough Council Officer) confirmed that currently the local authority is not informing prospective buyers about the possibility of a GDF being built in the area. This would change once any planning activity related to GDF was initiated.

A member of the Partnership raised the issue that there is still some uncertainty as to whether solicitors with local knowledge are informing clients buying houses in the local area about the possibility of a GDF being built in South Copeland.

**Action:** DS to email the CEM with details of his property related query for further clarity from NWS Head of Property and Land.

### **AGENDA 3: CHAIR'S UPDATE**

#### **Workshop feedback and approach to subgroups:**

The Chair gave a brief update on the workshop that the Community Partnership held in January to review the first year of the Partnership and look ahead to year two. The output from the workshop had been captured in a workshop report and hard copies were available in the room for members of the public to view. The Chair then invited feedback from those who attended the workshop.

Following the workshop, three subgroups will be formed to look at Partnership Operations, Community Engagement and Communications. Partnership members have all been allocated a place on at least one of the subgroups – members are invited to join up to three subgroups. Terms of Reference have been drafted for each group and will be discussed at the first subgroup meetings. Membership of the groups will be reviewed as required.

#### **Meeting Frequency:**

The Chair asked members if they were still happy with the frequency of meetings given the extra time commitment that the subgroups would require. After discussion, the members decided that as the programme of meetings for the year had been published, it would remain monthly and could be reviewed at the end of the year. They could however consider cancelling the August and December meetings.



Next Workshop: The Chair confirmed that a second workshop was planned for later in February to look further into the future, to consider how we might need to prepare for different scenarios of how the GDF siting process could play out in South Copeland.

**Letter to Drigg and Carleton Parish Council:**

A letter of invitation has been sent to Drigg and Carleton Parish Council to formally invite a Parish representative to take a voting seat on the South Copeland GDF Community Partnership from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 when the Cumberland electoral ward boundary changes come into effect. They have agreed to join and Chris Gigg will be their representative. Drigg and Carleton Parish Council will still hold a seat on the Mid Copeland GDF Community Partnership as a non-voting member.

**AGENDA 4: PUBLIC FORUM**

The first question of the public forum was a question submitted to the contact centre in advance of the meeting. The detail is included below for completeness:

Q - As I will be in the south Copeland Search Area as of April, I would like the clarification on statements made in your recent newsletter. Reading these statements, I take it to mean that for example if the site chosen is in Drigg and Carleton parish it would be that "community" and those "residents" "directly effected" that get the final test of support. I.e., Drigg and Carleton parish. And like wise for Kirksanton/ Millom area should that site be chosen by the developer.

Is this correct?

The electoral ward is not a community it is a given area with a minimum number of people living in that given area to meet a criteria to warrant an elected councillor. Made up of multiple communities in this example.

Please clarify your statement.

A – Policy states The Siting Process for a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) is set out in the Government's Policy for the long-term management of higher activity radioactive waste - "Implementing Geological Disposal - Working with Communities". Paragraph 6.95 of the Policy explains that before the developer (Nuclear Waste Services) can seek regulatory approval and development consent to begin the construction of a GDF in a particular community, there must be a Test of Public Support of residents in the Potential Host Community to determine whether the community is willing to host a GDF. Paragraphs 6.83-6.87 of the Policy explain what the Government means by "Potential Host Community" and these paragraphs are repeated below for ease of reference:

"6.83 The Potential Host Community is the community within a geographical area that could potentially host a GDF. It will be identified over time from within the Search Area. The boundaries of the Potential Host Community need to be defined to determine who will get a say in the Test of Public Support.

6.84 The Potential Host Community will be defined using district, or unitary council electoral ward boundaries, depending on the administrative arrangements in place in the area. The Potential Host Community would include all of the wards in which the following would be located:

- proposed surface and underground elements of a GDF.
- any associated development (as defined under the Planning Act 2008 in England) and any land required to mitigate impacts.



- transport links/routes from the GDF site to the nearest port, railhead, or primary road network (i.e., out to where minor roads meet the nearest A roads); -direct physical impacts associated with underground investigations, construction, and operation of the GDF (identified through environmental impact assessment work conducted to support NWS' engagement with communities and its development consent applications).

6.85 The Potential Host Community will be made up of several wards. Furthermore, all the wards could be contained within one district, county, or unitary authority or could cross local authority boundaries. The geographical boundaries of the Potential Host Community will be agreed by the Community Partnership based on information gathered through the siting process and the criteria set out above. The boundary of the Potential Host Community will reflect any future changes to electoral ward boundaries that may occur.

6.86 The Government's view is that only residents in the area that will be directly impacted by the development should have a final say in whether they wish to host a GDF. It will be the people living in the Potential Host Community, through a Test of Public Support, which will decide whether they want to continue with the process for siting a GDF in the area. The Test of Public Support is considered further in paragraph 6.95-6.101.

6.87 If the Potential Host Community boundary is near other local authority boundaries, the Community Partnership will need to consider engaging within neighbouring local authorities. They would not, however, have a say in the Test of Public Support."

Q- Thanks for your reply. I strongly suggest you put the information you supplied to me on your website and newsletter instead of the misleading, wording of the information that is currently shown.

Will you do that?

I would like the issue raised at your next meeting and then a formal reply to me afterwards. If necessary, it can carry to the next meeting after that as fits your agenda. But please let me know.

A - After discussion it was decided that a link to the policy should be added to the website and that perhaps a link to the relevant section of policy be included in the newsletter when referring to the host community rather than the full 7 paragraphs. Further discussion on the matter will be taken forward by the Communications subgroup.

The member of the public will be replied to, to confirm this action.

**Action:** Link to policy document to be added to website

**Action:** Communications subgroup to discuss how to deal with references to the host community and related policy wording

Q- What is the host community? what are the electoral ward boundaries? These keep changing and it causes confusion for the public.

A- Currently the ward boundaries are the Copeland Borough Council wards of Millom and Black Combe and Scafell. Local Government Reform means the introduction of new wards which will follow the same boundaries as the current County Council divisions. This means the South Copeland Search Area will cover the electoral division of Millom and Millom Without. Drigg and Carleton, and Irton with Santon, which were previously a part of the Mid Copeland Search Area, now sit in the Millom Without ward and will instead be in the South Copeland Search Area.



A- A leaflet will be sent to all households later this month explaining the changes to the Search Area and the Communications subgroup will consider ongoing communication about the changes.

Q -If there is not a willing community which the member of the public stated there was not, can the Test of Public support be taken now?

A- To have a test of public support we need to have a site so that we know who the host community is. It also needs to be an informed decision so that the community is making a decision with all the information available to them to help them make that decision. It is currently unknown if the Geology in the South Copeland area is suitable or not.

There was then a debate between a member of the Public Forum and the Partnership about information which the member of the public believed the Partnership members were in possession of and were not sharing with the community.

The member of the public was asked to share the information he had with the Partnership to review.

**Action:** Member of the public to share information on siting with members of the Partnership.

Q: A comment from a member of the public that negative information which is in the public domain be shared with people in the current area for consideration. On the website there is lots of positive information about the benefits of having a GDF but not the negatives - Where will the spoil go? How may lorries will go through villages per week, environmental impact. None of this information has been shared publicly by the Partnership.

A: The Partnership has not to date publicly communicated about the benefits of hosting a GDF. The Community Engagement events that have taken place have been used to share information about what a GDF is, the GDF siting process, and the role of the Community Partnership.

**Action:** NWS to upload a link to the Department for BEIS National Policy Statement on Geological Disposal Infrastructure to website. Section 5 of the document identifies the potential impacts of a GDF and the mitigation expected from the project developer.

**Action:** Communications subgroup to look at how we can publicise the implications of a GDF.

Q - How do we stop this process now?

A –The RPLA will change to Cumberland in April so members of the public could lobby Cumberland to exit the process.

The overall public view is that a lack of clarity around Search Area boundaries, caused by changes as a result of LGR – and the information from IERs and historic information has not been communicated to the public.

## **AGENDA 5: COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE**

The Communications Lead said she had found the Public Forum discussions really useful and that she would take forward the points raised with the Communications subgroup. She updated that an information leaflet which is due for distribution later in February has been finalised and as previously mentioned, it will cover information about the new Search Area. She also explained that the Mid Copeland Community Partnership will continue to communicate with the people of Drigg and



Carleton until 1<sup>st</sup> April, after which South Copeland Community Partnership will pick up communication with them.

The website is currently under review and hopefully will be completed by the end of March. Blog features are being published on the website weekly and an initial news article has been published on the website. A Newsletter will be published in April. An article marking the fact that the South Copeland Community Partnership has awarded £1m of CIF funding will be published once all recipients have responded to a request for publicity.

Q- Can we get some clarity around number of visitors to the website and Facebook pages?

**Action:** Comms Lead to produce a monthly communication/engagement reach report for social media and website.

It was pointed out that Parish Councils could help to share information of interest to the community and the Communications Lead agreed to send information through to Parish Clerks.

**Action:** Share relevant information with Parish council clerks for publication on local Parish websites and social media accounts.

There was then a discussion about how different opinions could be given a voice/space in the newsletter.

**Action:** Communications subgroup to consider creating a space within the newsletter for those who have a different point of view to the developer.

The members discussed Partnership responses to questions received via social media and the way in which they were responded to. It was decided that the Communications subgroup needed to develop a process for replying to social media comments/questions.

**Action:** Communications subgroup to consider a process for replying to social media comments/questions.

#### **AGENDA 6: CHAIR RECRUITMENT**

The current Chair was appointed on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022 for a term of one year. Therefore, there is a need to select a new chair before the next CP meeting.

The Community Partnership is required to have a Chair, and section 6.7 of the Community Partnership Agreement states that, "the chair will be appointed for a specific term, which may be extended by agreement of the members"

Prior to the meeting, members had been invited to make nominations for a new Chair from 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023.

One nomination was received, for Ged McGrath, who had agreed to stand for a term of 24 months.

David Billing formally made a motion that Ged McGrath's term as Chair be extended by 24 months, which was seconded by Maggie Cumming. The Partnership was quorate, with greater than two thirds of voting membership present.

The vote was unanimously in agreement.

**DECISION:** Ged McGrath's term as Chair shall be extended by 24 months from 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023.



**AGENDA 7: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT – INSPIRA**

This agenda item has been moved to a future meeting.

**AGENDA 8: AOB**

Whicham Parish Council recently conducted a survey of the Parishioners, and the Parish Council would like to know if there is funding available to cover the costs of the survey. The survey was undertaken at the request of the Parishioners and asked people’s views on a GDF being located in or adjacent to their Parish.

An agreement exists to cover eligible costs incurred by Parish Councils directly as a result of the GDF process in South Copeland. This agreement requires that any such activities are agreed in advance between the Parish Council and the Community Engagement Manager. This had not happened on this occasion, but Partnership members felt that Whicham Parish Council could write to NWS to ask if an exception could be made.

**Next Meeting:** 08/03/2023

**Venue:** Millom Baptist Church

**Time:** 6.30pm – 8.30pm

**ACTIONS**

Ref 08022023	Meeting Action Log	
<b>Agenda 2 08022023 1</b>	DS to email the CEM with details of his property related query for further clarity from NWS Head of Property and Land.	DS
<b>Agenda 4 08022023 1</b>	Link to policy document to be added to website	Communications Lead
<b>Agenda 4 08022023 2</b>	Communications subgroup to discuss how to deal with references to the host community and related policy wording	Communications Subgroup
<b>Agenda 4 08022023 3</b>	Member of the public to share information on siting with members of the Partnership.	COMPLETE MC to report back to CP members
<b>Agenda 4 08022023 4</b>	Communications subgroup to look at how we can publicise the implications of a GDF.	Communications Lead –
<b>Agenda 5 08022023 1</b>	Communications Lead to produce a monthly communication/engagement reach report for social media and website.	Communications Lead
<b>Agenda 5 08022023 2</b>	Share relevant information with Parish Council Clerks for publication on local Parish websites and social media accounts.	Communications Lead
<b>Agenda 5 08022023 3</b>	Communications subgroup to consider creating a space within the newsletter for those who have a different point of view to the developer.	Communications Lead
<b>Agenda 5 08022023 4</b>	Communications subgroup to consider a process for replying to social media comments/questions.	Communications Subgroup



**DECISIONS LOG**

<b>080202023</b>		
<b>Agenda 6 Chair recruitment</b>	Ged McGrath's term as Chair shall be extended by 24 months from 3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2023.	