# Minutes of the 19th Meeting of the South Copeland GDF Community Partnership

**The Baptist Church, Millom 16th August 2023 at 6.30pm**

### Present:

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| Cllr Ged McGrath | Chair |
| Cllr David Moore | Cumberland Council |
| Kelly Anderson | Nuclear Waste Services (NWS) |
| Maggie Cumming | Whicham Parish Council |
| Kate Willshaw | Friends of the Lake District |
| Bob Kelly | Cumberland Council |
| Chris Gigg  Carl Carrington  David Billing | Drigg & Carleton Parish Council  Millom Without Parish Council  Millom Town Council |
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### Supporting Attendees:

Anne Broome NWS Community Engagement Coordinator

Lucy Clarke NWS Communications Lead

Dawn Walker Secretariat

David Palmer Development Consent Order Manager (NWS)

Steve Pearce Major Permissions – DCO Integration Manager

Danny Young Principal Engineering Manager

**Apologies**

John Sutton Sustainable Duddon

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### Agenda

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| **Meeting Date:** | | 16th August 2023 | | **Time**: | 18.30 – 20.30 | | |
| **Meeting Type:** | | Phone Call | | Virtual/Conference | | In Person | |
| **Location:** | | Baptist Church Hall Millom | | | | | |
| **Additional Material enclosed?**  *If so, list here* | | | | | | | |
| **Agenda** | | | | | | | |
| **Item No.** | **Time** | | **Description** | | | | **Lead** |
| 1 | 18.30 – 18.35 | | Welcome & Introductions. Declaration of Interest. | | | | Chair |
| 2 | 18.35 - 18.40 | | Approval of minutes/Action Log | | | | Chair |
| 3 | 18.40 – 18.55 | | Chairs Update   * Venues and Meeting Occurrence * Deputies/ Chair and Developer | | | | Chair |
| 4 | 18.55 – 19.25 | | Environmental Studies | | | | DP |
| 5 | 19.25– 19.55 | | Major Permissions | | | | DY |
| 6 | 19.55 – 20.10 | | Subgroups | | | | KW/KA |
| 7 | 20.10– 20.25 | | Public forum | | | | Chair |
| 8 | 20.25 - 20.30 | | AOB | | | | Chair |

## Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed members of the public, Partnership members and supporting attendees to the meeting. Apologies were received from John Sutton, Sustainable Duddon.

## Approval of Minutes and Review of Action Log

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

| **Action Reference:** | **Description:** | **Assigned to:** |
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| 120723 1 | Contact CVS to request copy of Development Officers job description. | Community Engagement Coordinator  Complete |
| 120723 2 | Operations subgroup to revisit Mission Statement to add a bullet on commissioning independent research and to look at the neutral stance wording. | Ops subgroup  Complete |
| 120723 3 | Check previous minutes to ensure there was an action to put workshop report and subgroup ToR on the website | Community Engagement Coordinator Comms Lead  Complete |
| 120723 4 | Operations Subgroup to look at member expectations and deputies and come back with a recommendation. | Ops subgroup  Ongoing |

## Chair’s Update

The Chair provided an update on the following items:

**Meeting Frequency:**

The Chair explained that the Partnership needed to start thinking about its 2024 meetings. He asked the members to consider the frequency of of meetings andthree options were suggested to generate discussion:

* Continue meeting monthly
* Continue meeting monthly but have no meetings in August or December
* Start meeting every six weeks

Following discussion members felt that they’d like to carry on meeting monthly and then review after 6 months. The Community Engagement Team were therefore asked to start planning meetings for January – June 2024.

**Action:** NWS to plan the dates and venues for the Community Partnership meetings from January to June 2024.

**Deputies:**

The Chair introduced a discussion about the need for deputies and their ability to contribute to the meetings they do attend. Usually, deputies attend so infrequently that it is difficult for them to be able to contribute as they are not up to speed with what is happening. A proposal was put to the members:

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* The Chair and CEM should have a deputy but no other deputies are required.
* Members can still send someone along if they can’t be there but this wouldn’t need to be a formal deputy.

After discussion it was felt that it was important for the Chair to have a deputy but that if it was just a one off, a chair would be appointed from the members attending the meeting. If the Chair was going to be absent for a longer period, a Chair should be appointed on an interim basis.

**Theddelthorpe Visit**:

The Chair, Community Engagement Manger and Community Engagement Coordinator had recently visited Theddlethorpe, one of the other communities involved in the process to find a suitable site and willing community for a GDF.. The purpose of the visit was to see how the engagement process in Theddlethorpe was being conducted.

Things are working quite differently to the way they work in South Copeland. The Local Authorities, Lincolnshire County Council and East Lindsey District Council are both playing a leading role in the process. The Community Partnership still has an Interim Chair but there has been a lot of engagement with the community for the last 12 months.

They also attended one of the Theddlethorpe CPs ‘Big Picture Events’, which comprised of a series of short films (approx. 2/3 minutes long) followed by a discussion with a subject matter expert i.e. a geologist, talking about rock formations and taking questions from members of the public. This was a very insightful event and gave and the public very clear information. It is proposed to hold similar events in Millom and Drigg.

**Question:** It is critical that we also hear the alternative view. Could this form part of the event?

**Answer:** Yes, absolutely.

**Question:** What about doing this in the small villages?

**Answer:** As this is a pilot, we are proposing to hold two larger sessions of the event to see how it is received and make it accessible to as many people as possible.

The event would require pre-registration and numbers would be limited to approx. sixty attendees.

**Action:** Communications and engagement subgroup to develop the scope for the Community Forum.

**LLWR Visit:**

Some members of the Partnership had visited the Low Level Waste Repository (LLWR) site near Drigg on 15th August. There had been a very informative presentation and discussion between members and the team from LLWR before the site visit. The Chair asked that his thanks be passed on to the team at LLWR for supporting the visit and it is hoped that another tour can be arranged for those who were unable to attend this time.

**Roadmap:**

The Chair has asked the Comms Lead to draft some introductory information for the road map to help introduce it on the website. Once we are happy with this it will be published.

Agenda items 5 and 6 were swapped round as it was felt that it would be better to have the introductory GDF information before the environmental baseline survey information.

## Geological Disposal Facility

The Chair introduced Danny Young, Principal Engineering Manager at NWS to the Members.

Danny took the members through a detailed presentation covering:

* What is a Geological Disposal Facility?
* Where is the waste today?
* Waste types for the GDF
* Consent-based approach to GDF siting
* Site Evaluation
* Communities
* Types of potential host rock
* Site Characterisation
* GDF surface facilities
* Accessways
* Disposal concepts
* Packaging
* Disposal vaults

The presentation was followed by a Q&A session with members:

**Question:** The inventory is very important to local people. When Copeland Borough Council entered this process, the position was that plutonium had not been designated as a waste and would not be included in the inventory for a GDF. Has this changed as if this is now included in the inventory, this was not the position statement supported by the local council.

**Answer**: The inventory for Geological disposal has a section on the assumptions regarding reuse of plutonium. We are required to plan for the disposal of plutonium, even though it has not been designated as waste. It is a hypothetical question - if we needed to dispose of plutonium in a GDF, how would we do it?

**Question**: You have mentioned in the presentation three types of rock. Which is the preferred rock?

**Answer:** There are a lot of factors to consider, we can make any of these types of rock work.

**Question**: Are the seismic survey results a defining factor in suitability?

**Answe**r: The defining point is the site characterisation phase where you drill the bore holes. There will only be so much information available from the seismic survey results.

**Question**: Did you say the rock type offshore is Mercia Mudstone group and is this in the lower strength sedimentary rock category?

**Answer**: Yes, it is classed as a lower waste sedimentary rock with layers of evaporite within it.

**Question**: You said 8.8 million meters cubed is the approximate amount of spoil – how does this compare to the channel tunnel?

**Answer**: It is very difficult to answer that questions as it is a very different engineering project over 100 years.

**Question**: Is the capacity of the GDF based on the inventory now or does it take account of waste from new nuclear build?

**Answer:** This is based on the 2016 inventory which will change as our understanding of the disposal concept changes.

**Question**: What does good infrastructure to support o GDF look like?

**Answer:** It will take a significant amount of time to determine the best infrastructure, this information will come from the desk top studies.

## Question: The numbers are difficult to understand is there a simpler way to define the amount of waste that needs to be disposed of?

## Answer: The best example is to imagine the inside of Wembley stadium minus all of the chairs. If you filled the inside of the stadium, that is the amount of waste that needs to be disposed of.

**Question:** Can the spoil be reused in the building process?

**Answer:** This would need to be investigated once we start excavating a site.

## Environmental Baseline Surveys

The Chair introduced Steve Pearce (Major Permissions – Development Consent Order Integration Manager) and David Palmer(Development Consent Order Manager) of NWS to the members.

They took members through a presentation outlining the environmental baseline surveys which are due to start in the Autumn as preparation for the Development Consent Order process.

They gave some background information on:

* What are Major Permissions?
* Working towards a DCO Application
* Environmental Permitting

They then moved on to talk about the planned environmental surveys.

**Why are we doing environmental surveys?**

We are doing some environmental surveys to provide data to support a robust environmental baseline of information so we can assess any impacts of any proposed works in the inshore region.

Data will allow us to consider and understand the environmental conditions, seasonal changes, and environmental variability such as disasters, disease, or annual differences in animal populations.

This data will feed into the EIA and HRA assessments to be submitted to support the Development Consent Order (DCO) applications for boreholes.

Some site characterisation works will take place over the winter months, so we need data to account for this.

The surveys will take the form of an aerial survey which will look for data regarding:

* Birds
* Marine mammals
* Other marine animals (turtles, basking sharks)

**Survey Approach**

* Plane to be flown above 1800ft taking photos at 2cm resolution.
* Monthly during October 2023 – March 2024
* Each survey will be completed in less than a day.
* Exact days will be dependent upon weather and firing days at Eskmeals.
* Target is to fly over the entire target area, with up to 20% analysed for species counts (note – 10% is standard expectation for offshore windfarms)

These studies will take a long time to build up a picture of migratory species and the complete picture of studies will be taken over a few years. We may need to undertake further studies to get the full picture.

The presentation was followed by a Q&A session with members:

**Question:** DCO’s are notoriously difficult for the public to understand, therefore it is very important that we as a partnership understand the process and how a DCO process sits within a consent-based process.

**Question:** How do we make the public aware that these surveys are taking place?

**Answer**: We will advertise in all the usual ways, newspaper advertising, social media etc. We will also include an article in the next newsletter.

## Subgroups

**Operations Subgroup**

The operations subgroup met on the 3rd August 2023 and had the following discussions:

**Member expectations**

* Discussion around what is expected of members.
* CEM to draft document for discussion at next Ops subgroup.

**Member role profile**

* Discussion around whether a role profile was required.
* CEM to draft document for discussion at next Ops subgroup.

**Deputies**

* Discussion about the need for deputies and their ability to contribute.
* Detail discussed in Chairs Update above.

**Member recruitment**

* Ops group agreed that we still need to recruit new members.
* Maximum of fifteen members
* The membership categories that we are looking to fill are (Business, Tourism, Agriculture, Seldom Heard, Youth)
* A new category of nuclear expert was added.

The members were to be asked how we should go about recruiting new members but there was no time for a detailed discussion.

**Mid-year review of Delivery Plan**

* Most milestones on track
* Community Impacts Report - still awaiting a first draft of the scope from CP members.
* Review of newsletter will take account of Community Forum inputs.
* Add formal review of Delivery Plan to September CP meeting agenda.

**End of year report**

* Look at format of other CP EOY reports.
* Operations subgroup to manage on behalf of CP.

**Communications and Engagement Subgroup**

The Communications and Engagement subgroup met on the 10th August.

**Community Forum Update**

We did not receive any quotes from the independent facilitators we approached. Given the short timescales involved there are now two options available to CP members.

* Proceed with the Community Forum on 20th September using NWS staff not linked with South Copeland to take the notes from the roundtable discussions. (The notes would be taken on flip charts so that contributors can check they are happy with what is written. They would also be photographed and included in the report and the CP would have the final say on the report)
* Postpone the Community Forum until we can get independent support.

After discussion, the Partnership members decided to go ahead with the Community Forum as planned. This is a pilot forum, and we will try to ensure that our next forum is planned, designed, implemented and facilitated by an independent organisation.

**Action:** The Comms and Engagement group to develop the scope for the Community Forum.

**Community Impacts Report**

* Still awaiting scope from CP members before we can progress.

**Communications Plan**

* Final draft circulated to CP members 28th June.
* No comments received by deadline of 10th July.
* Final follow up email sent to subgroup members 14th July.
* Subgroup therefore signed off comms plan.

**Newsletter**

* Subgroup to take forward after reviewing input from Community Forum

**Community Engagement Update**

The following engagement had taken place since the last Community Partnership meeting:

* 18th July 10am – 2pm Make New & Mend
* 27th Jul 10am – 2pm Make New & Mend
* 27th July 3pm – 7pm The Lighthouse Centre, Haverigg
* 1st August 10am – 1.30pm Make New & Mend
* 1st August 2pm – 6pm The Tin Chapel, Millom
* 15th August – 4.30 – 7pm Drigg and Carleton Village Hall, Drigg
* 16th August – 1pm – 4.30pm Millom Library, Library

**Community Engagement – Look Forward**

The following engagement is planned:

* 22nd August 10am – 2pm Make New & Mend
* 26th August Millom & Broughton Show
* 4th September 11am – 2pm Kirksanton Village Hall
* 4th September 3pm – 6pm Silecroft Village Hall
* 6th September 3pm – 6pm Thwaites Village Hall
* 13th September 1pm – 16.30pm Millom Library
* 13th September 6.30pm – 8.30pm Community Partnership Meeting, Lighthouse Centre, Haverigg
* 20th September 6pm – 8pm Community Forum

## Public Forum

15 minutes is allocated on each Partnership meeting agenda for a Public Forum, to enable members of the public to ask questions directly of Community Partnership members.

Responses to any questions submitted in advance of the meeting via the website/contact centre are addressed before opening to the floor.

### Responses to questions submitted in advance:

**Question**

In the working group stage of the discussions, there was mention of the need for a rock laboratory to study the samples taken from underground. Given that this would be a national centre to examine samples from two favoured geologies, have there been any Studies/ Decisions as to its location? When would construction expect to start so that it is ready for the sample drilling operations which may start in 2025?

**Answer**

At present, we have a number of ongoing projects in our partner laboratories, and we work closely with International Nuclear Waste Management organisations abroad to ensure we have the capability to use state-of-the-art techniques when the drilling programme commences. We aim to provide further information on any future drilling programmes as we get further through the siting process.

**Questions asked at the meeting:**

**Question**

East Lindsey District Council and Lincolnshire County Council have called for a public vote by 2027 re plans to build a GDF. The leader has said that indecision and uncertainty about the future of the site that goes on too long will not benefit residents and another four years gives ample time for people to have formed an opinion. Can the South Copeland Partnership and Millom Town Council give our residents the same assurance please?

**Answer**

Principal local authorities on the Community Partnership have the final say on if or when to take a Test of Public Support. In our case that is Cumberland Council.

A Test of Public Support can only be taken after extensive community engagement and once the community has had time to ask questions, raise any concerns and learn about a GDF.

The Test of Public Support takes place in the Potential Host Community, so cannot take place until that has been identified.

**Question**

At a recent drop-in, (1/8/23) it became apparent that a community representative on the partnership was not aware that following a freedom of information request to the developer ninety-two questions submitted to the partnership did not reach them and is still unaware that they were subsequently sent to him. Therefore, he is unaware of concerns and issues that members of the public have and thus cannot comment to the council these concerns for discussion and then feedback to the community. He has asked for the questions and answers to be resubmitted. Can the ninety-two questions withheld be resubmitted to councillors to ensure they can feedback to their councils for discussion concerns etc. so they are then able to address parishioners’ concerns, questions etc at Parish meetings when responding to GDF matters.

**Answer**

These questions have been submitted and re submitted and all members of the Partnership have had copies of the ninety-two questions. It is the expectations of the members to read the communications that are sent to them.

**Question**

Where are aerial surveys taking place?

**Answer**

They are taking place from Braystones to the south of Millom.

**Question**

The community Forum - is that an opportunity for us to voice our opinions to Community Partnership members?

**Answer**

Yes, that is exactly how the community Forum will operate.

## AOB

No further business was discussed.

## New Actions

| **Action Reference:** | **Description:** | **Assigned to:** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 16.8.23 1 | NWS to plan the dates and venues for the Community Partnership meetings from January to June 2024. | Secretariat |
| 16.8.23 2 | Comms and Engagement subgroup to develop the scope for the Community Forum. | Secretariat  Meeting arranged 30.08.23 |
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## Next Meeting

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| --- | --- |
| **Date** | 13th September 2023 |
| **Time** | 6.30 -8.30 pm |
| **Venue** | Lighthouse Centre Haverigg |