

## Minutes of The South Copeland GDF Community Partnership

### Microsoft Teams

**Wednesday 6 August 2025 at 6pm**

#### Present:

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Amy Shelton     | NWS, Principal Community Engagement Manager |
| Andy Pratt      | Chair                                       |
| Carl Carrington | Millom Without Parish Council               |
| John Sutton     | Sustainable Duddon                          |
| Maggie Cumming  | Whicham Parish Council                      |
| Chris Gigg      | Drigg & Carleton Parish Council             |
| Ben Daniels     | Individual                                  |

#### Supporting Attendees:

|                 |                                      |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Jonathan Cook   | Cumberland Council                   |
| Jodie Dougherty | NWS, Community Partnership Assistant |
| Kelly Anderson  | NWS, Community Engagement Manager    |

|                                   |       |                 |   |                |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-----------------|---|----------------|
| Meeting Date:                     |       | 06/08/2025      | Time:   | 18:00 – 19:30  |
| Meeting Type:                     |       | Online          |   |                |
| Location:                         |       | Microsoft Teams |   |                |
| Additional Material enclosed: Yes |       |                 |   |                |
| Agenda                            |       |                 |   |                |
| Item No.                          | Time  | Papers:         | Description:                                      | Lead:          |
| 1                                 | 18:00 |                 | Welcome, Introductions & Declarations of Interest | Chair          |
| 2                                 |       |                 | NWS Update  | Amy Shelton    |
| 3                                 |       | Paper attached  | Away Day  | John Sutton    |
| 4                                 |       | Paper attached  | Visioning Leaflet                                 | Kelly Anderson |
| 5                                 |       | Paper attached  | Website and Branding                              | Lucy Clarke    |
| 6                                 |       | Paper attached  | Approach to engagement                            | Kelly Anderson |
| 7                                 |       |                 | AOB / Date of next meeting                        | Chair          |
| 8                                 | 19:30 |                 | Close   | Chair          |

## 1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed Partnership Members and supporting attendees to the meeting. There were apologies from Kate Willshaw and Bob Kelly. No Declarations of Interest were recorded.

## 2. NWS Update

### **Community Impacts Case Study:**

The Community Impacts Case Study is currently planned to be released for Invitation to Tender in late September 2025. We expect the tender period to be complete by the end of 2025 with work starting in early 2026. Subject to confirmation of project timescales following the tender period, we envisage the work will complete in 6 months. There was a discussion around the need for a public statement to be shared with both the website and Whicham Parish Council. It was agreed that NWS would write to Whicham Parish Council to share the outline timescales as stated above and explain the status and limitations of the work at this early stage of the GDF programme. In addition, the work would be referenced in the wider update of the Community Partnership Delivery Plan.

**New Action: NWS to write to Whicham Parish Council explaining the outline timescale and the status and limitations of the Community Impacts Case Study work.**

The NWS team is seeking a CP member to work with NWS on the procurement and delivery of the Community Impacts Case Study. If members are interested in taking on this role they are asked to contact The Chair.

**Letter from Whicham Parish Council** – Cumberland Council Leader, Mark Fryer, has requested that his letter to Whicham Parish Council regarding the GDF programme in Copeland is published on the South and Mid Copeland GDF Community Partnership websites. Cumberland and NWS' letters are both available on the website in the news section.

**Helpdesk / Social media** - In June and July the main information requests were Community Partnership meeting dates; CP Chair and membership details; as well as Areas of Focus related questions.

### **Meeting Recordings:**

At the previous meeting, it was agreed that meetings would be in private and be recorded/published online. It is clear from Helpdesk and social media enquiries that there is strong public interest in seeing and hearing the discussions. This reinforces the importance of maintaining visibility and transparency of the Partnership, as public engagement and presence are valued by the community. The Community Partnership discussed the balance between public and private meetings and acknowledged the need to maintain administrative efficiency and ensure compliance with GDPR requirements.

A consensus emerged around alternating between meetings in public and closed online workshops (focused on administrative or developmental work). It was agreed that public meetings would be open for observation but not for direct participation or public speaking, aligning with practices seen in Parish Councils. Clear communication around this distinction was seen as crucial for managing expectations. Additionally, the need to provide opportunities for meaningful engagement with the community was acknowledged and there was strong support for scheduling regular opportunities for the community to engage with the Partnership directly (e.g. the idea of the previously well received Community Forum events was discussed). These would provide space for community input through

presentations or structured forums, rather than open Q&A slots, which have proven less effective in the past.

**The Community Partnership agreed to alternate monthly meetings in public and online working groups, with opportunities for engagement events to invite meaningful community input.**

**CIF Update:**

A CIF workshop is planned to review and agree on priorities. Following discussions with the NWS CIF team, it was suggested that the workshop should be scheduled for autumn, aligning with the start of the new CIF year in December. The aim is to hold the workshop in September or October, potentially incorporating it into the October Partnership meeting, which is already scheduled as an online workshop session.

Two Community Partnership members expressed interest in joining the CIF Panel. Although one member was unable to attend and observe the last panel, one member has indicated they would like to be considered.

**The Community Partnership were supportive of the appointment of the additional CP member to the existing CIF Panel.**

**New Action: NWS to arrange training for the CP member joining the CIF Panel.**

**Community Engagement Update:**

The engagement team have been delivering drop-in sessions across the NDA estate, including Sellafeld. These sessions have been particularly valuable and well received in reaching residents within the Search Area, especially those identified as "time-poor" in the Yonder surveys.

Engagement has been strong, with most conversations focusing on Areas of Focus and next steps, as well as ongoing discussions around CIF.

The team have also been at Trackside and attended the opening of Haverigg Play Park which received CIF funding.

The team are now preparing for Millom & Broughton show on Saturday 30 August and would be delighted if members of the CP want to be part of it as they have been in previous years.

They are also hosting a drop-in session for HMP Haverigg staff in September (date TBC) and exhibiting at National Green Futures Day on Tuesday 23 September at HMP Haverigg.

### **3. Away Day**

A proposal was put forward to arrange an in-person session to improve partnership working during Community Partnership meetings. It was noted that effective teamwork relies on good communication, and it may be helpful to explore if there are any areas requiring improvement in this regard.

There was recognition that previous 'get to know me days' had been successful and contributed to progress, particularly through improved meeting structures. However, some concerns were raised about the timing, with one view being that the recent Community Partnership Review period had just been completed, and a reassessment in six months would be more appropriate. While there was no strong opposition to the idea of a facilitated session, it was suggested that clear objectives would be needed for the session to be effective.

There was general agreement on the importance of understanding each other's strengths, weaknesses and backgrounds. Given that facilitators can be difficult to secure without a substantial commitment, it was recommended that the December meeting (already planned as an end-of-year

review) could include time to identify any specific themes or issues and get to know each other better. It was proposed that this kind of team building activity could be planned into the December workshop.

**The Community Partnership agreed that planning some team building into the December workshop would be the best way forward.**

#### 4. Visioning Leaflet

A paper was circulated to the Community Partnership on 25 May 2025 outlining all the work that has been done so far on visioning and the next steps. The document highlighted low attendance at Yonder's Focus Groups and the resulting change in approach. Members of the Visioning Subgroup agreed to send out another postal questionnaire to build on the three emerging themes that came out of the first survey (Transport, Health and Wellbeing, Economy). This second questionnaire saw another good response rate with more than 150 respondents.

A summary of all the information collected during the Visioning work was circulated to Community Partnership members on 1 July 2025. (South Copeland Community Partnership Vision Development – Source Material). This included information collected from Community Forums, Community Engagement and the two surveys.

The next stage in the process was to develop a public facing document with the culmination and outcomes of the work to date.

NWS have now designed a leaflet which features the work to date and highlights the three level themes which have been most common in the feedback across all Visioning engagement methods. It was suggested that the Visioning leaflet could be mailed directly to all households, or an alternative proposal was to include the leaflet in the upcoming newsletter, followed by publishing it on the Partnership website and social media channels to save cost of posting several things when it could be all included together. The next newsletter is scheduled for release in mid-September.

**The Community Partnership agreed that (subject to review of selected photographs for the leaflet) the Vision leaflet material would be included in the upcoming newsletter and published on the Partnership website and social media channels.**

#### 5. Website and Branding

The current website and branding have supported the Community Partnership since it formed. However, feedback from both members and the wider community has highlighted the need for redevelopment to better meet user needs and expectations.

In March 2024, developer DXW conducted user research with Community Partnership member volunteers. This research included exploring participants past experiences using the website, task-based usability testing, reviewing other organisations' websites for comparative insights, card sorting exercises to improve navigation and menu structure.

DXW's full report is provided to members separately. To summarise, this research revealed the following feedback from members:

- **Information overload and inaccessibility:** Some users found the content too technical and difficult to read; others felt it lacked depth on key topics.

Response: Prioritise accessible language with optional links to more detailed information.

- **Design and visuals:** While generally positive, some participants felt the design lacked warmth. Concerns were raised about excessive use of large images, which appeared to filler. Response: Introduce revised branding with meaningful, community-focused visuals.

- **Interactive visuals:** Interactive tools were difficult to use and inaccessible. Maps were confusing, though visualising location was valued.

Response: Remove interactive tools. Use accessible written, image, and video formats for key content.

- **FAQ usability:** The FAQ section was seen as hard to navigate, duplicative, and lacking detail. Response: Phase out the FAQs page and embed relevant information throughout the site.

- **Access to meeting documents:** Users struggled to locate key documents, with poor layout and unclear naming conventions.

Response: Make meeting minutes easily accessible via the main menu. Improve structure, naming, and archive dated materials.

- **Perception of independence:** Members want to show that the Partnership is impartial and able to share more.

Response: Feature clear statements which highlight that the Community Partnership is not part of NWS. Highlight the makeup of the Partnership, represent a range of community voices, and adopt neutral, balanced language. Develop a process for members to suggest content updates.

- **Recruitment experience:** The current site does little to support those interested in joining the Partnership.

Response: Improve the user journey for potential new members, including reviewing recruitment materials when appropriate.

In response to member input, the branding has been refreshed to reflect a more personable identity, distinct from NWS but identifiable as part of a programme with other Community Partnerships. The updated branding includes:

- Retaining the recognisable South Copeland purple.
- An updated visual identity including logo and typography that aligns with the Partnership's mission and values.
- Professional brand guidelines.
- Templates and a suite of GDF images.

The Communications Lead explained that the Community Partnership members will receive a link to a staging website in the coming week to explore in greater detail and provide further input and feedback.

**New Action: Communications Lead to circulate website link for members to provide any further input.**

## 6. Approach to Engagement

It was acknowledged that NWS will continue to lead their own engagement activities, prompting a discussion on how the Community Partnership wishes to align or differentiate its approach. A key question raised was how best to reach those identified as 'harder to reach' through the Yonder surveys, in particular, working-age women. One member highlighted the importance of ongoing communication on NWS' engagement, suggesting an agenda item at each Community Partnership

meeting to provide updates on recent and upcoming engagement activities, and to invite input on potential collaboration opportunities. Making use of local knowledge within the Community Partnership and local communities was seen as a vital in working alongside NWS.

The idea of “opening doors” was emphasised, focusing on building relationships through informal conversations to avoid overwhelming the community. It was noted that attendees at events and Helpdesk interactions often express interest in engaging directly with Community Partnership members as well as the NWS team.

To improve coordination, it was proposed for the Community Partnership Assistant to send fortnightly email updates outlining current engagement activities. Members were encouraged to share engagement ideas and suggest venues and events where outreach could effectively engage all parts of the community.

**New Action: Community Partnership Assistant to circulate fortnightly emails to highlight upcoming engagement events. This will be incorporated within the Communications Leads’ communications update sent by email.**

**New Action: Members encouraged to share engagement ideas or suggest venues and events where outreach could effectively target working-age women.**

#### 4. AOB/Date of next meeting

**Question:** Are subgroups still ongoing?

**Answer:** Following the Review, the Community Partnership agreed that subgroups will no longer continue. Should the need arise for specific tasks, a call will be made to all Partnership members to invite volunteers, or the task will be addressed collectively by the full group.

Millom Without Parish Council representative explained that going forward, representation of the Parish on the Partnership will be managed with a rotating attendance system with other members of the Parish Council.

The next Community Partnership meeting will be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025, at Thwaites Village Hall (*note: venue under review regarding ability to enable public attendance*).

#### **New Actions**

| Action Reference: | Description:   | Assigned to:                    |
|-------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| 06082025 01       | NWS to write to Whicham Parish Council explaining the outline timescale and the status and limitations of the Community Impacts Case Study work. | NWS                             |
| 06082025 02       | Community Partnership Assistant to circulate fortnightly emails to highlight upcoming engagement events.   | Community Partnership Assistant |
| 06082025 03       | NWS to arrange training for the CP member joining the CIF Panel.   | NWS                             |
| 06082025 04       | Communications Lead to circulate website link for members to provide any further input.  | NWS                             |

| Action Reference: | Description:   | Assigned to: |
|-------------------|--|--------------|
|                   |  |              |
| 06082025 05       | Members encouraged to share engagement ideas or suggest venues and events where outreach could effectively target all sections of the community. | CP           |