

## **Community Representation Working Group (CRWG)**

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2015 – 13:30-16:30

### **Attendees:**

Tom Wintle, Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) Chair  
DECC officials

Natalyn Ala  
Judith Armit  
Kirsty Gogan  
Lisa Levy  
Phil Matthews  
Prof Nick Pidgeon  
Phil Richardson  
Phil Stride  
Cherry Tweed  
Julian Wain

Jenny Coombs - Local Partnerships  
Simon Bandy - Local Partnerships

### **Apologies:**

Prof Andrew Blowers  
Holmfridur Bjarnadottir  
Paul Rowsell (Department for Communities and Local Government)  
HM Treasury

### **Committee on Radioactive Waste Management Observers:**

Brian Clark  
John Rennilson

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### **Item 1: Introductions and house-keeping**

The Chair thanked members for giving their time and expertise to the project, and passed on apologies from those unable to attend. He introduced Julian Wain to the CRWG, who brings with him experience of working at a senior level in local authorities. The Chair reiterated that the purpose of the group is to help design a set of practical recommendations on how to work with communities in the future siting of a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF).

## **Item 2: GDF Initial Actions Update**

DECC and Radioactive Waste Management Limited (RWM) updated the group on the other initial actions set out in the White Paper:

- National land-use planning. The draft Order, to bring GDF(s) within the definition of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP), was debated in committee in both Houses of Parliament, with a final vote taken in the Commons on 25 March. The Order was signed on 26 March and came into effect on 27 March. DECC are currently contracting for provision of an Appraisal of Sustainability for the GDF National Policy Statement, with a view to scoping consultation in summer 2015.
- National Geological Screening. Draft guidance has been produced and is subject to Independent Review Panel (IRP) approval. There is a public meeting of the IRP planned after the General Election. A consultation is planned for summer 2015.

## **Item 3: Scoping**

The proposed scope of the work was presented by Local Partnerships (LP) and agreed by the group. The focus of the CRWG is on creating policy recommendations for the process and mechanisms to be used for local decision making and funding disbursement. This includes the protocol for joining or leaving the process and the final test of public support. The work of the CRWG, on designing representation processes, and RWM, on engaging prospective communities in due course, was differentiated for clarity on the role of CRWG.

A common glossary would be useful to ensure common understanding of terminology.

Developing trust between those involved in the process will be central to the GDF siting process. It was recognised that in reality, it is not possible to reach a position of total trust. It is about reaching trust in the process so that there can be meaningful engagement.

Trust is a two way process with government and communities, and there was a discussion about whether a formal agreement would be necessary, as in other countries e.g. Canada.

## **Item 4: Emerging thinking on options**

The emerging thinking regarding delivery of options for each of the three work areas that the CRWG has been asked to address – defining communities in a practical sense for GDF siting purposes, community investment and recommending a practical approach to the final test of public support – was set out by Local Partnerships. This discussion was to ensure that the scope of all available options

had been identified before any future appraisal is undertaken against the evidence base and stakeholder engagement.

In terms of defining communities, it was discussed that some aspect of categorisation is required. It was agreed that the definition of 'community' or 'communities' may need to accommodate different possibilities in different parts of the country and will need to reflect changes over time, and across generations, particularly given the length of the project. Many generations will need to be engaged and it was noted that a community will mature and change over time.

It was noted that it will be important to distinguish between practical definitions of local community representative bodies who can speak on behalf of a potential host area, and other broader definitions of 'community' which may not be location-specific. The focus of this group's work must be to develop practical recommendations for representation of a local community affected by GDF development. It will be important to investigate which bodies are important in a community, e.g. schools have become the heart of some rural communities.

The potential multiple levels of community representation were discussed. There was an initial suggestion that it might be helpful to distinguish, for example, three groups of stakeholders in the process and their needs and roles for representation; Firstly, interested parties or stakeholders; secondly, those who represent a particular geographical constituency e.g. local authorities or a special representative group and finally, those who participate in the final test of public support. All will need to be considered in the work going forward.

There was a discussion about the structures within which community investment could be disbursed. The discussion covered both potential formal and informal structures, with a particular focus on the need to ensure best practice in the management of public money.

#### **Item 5: Call for Evidence**

The proposed approach to a Call for Evidence was set out by Local Partnerships. Discussion highlighted the importance of it being open and accessible to a wide audience. This Call for Evidence needs to ask specific questions and seek evidence to inform the group's deliberations rather than only ask open questions that tend to generate conflicting personal views without evidence to aid assessment of options. Different ways of promoting the call for evidence were discussed.

#### **Item 6: Communications and stakeholder engagement update**

DECC updated the group about CRWG communications. The web page has gone live, and includes the Terms of Reference, pen portraits and minutes from the March meeting. The web page cannot be updated during the Purdah period.

Local Partnerships updated the group on stakeholder engagement to date, which has focussed on the academic community so far, with further engagement planned across other sectors during the rest of the year.

**Item 7: Update on development of the literature review**

Local Partnerships updated the group on the progress of the Literature Review. They will report back formally to the group in due course.

**Item 8: AOB**

The date of the next CRWG meeting is 11 June.