

Community Representation Working Group (CRWG)

Thursday 24th September – 12:30-15:30

Attendees:

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

Natalyn Ala - RWM
Judith Armit - Local Partnerships
Prof Andrew Blowers
Kirsty Gogan
Lisa Levy
Phil Matthews
Prof Nick Pidgeon
Phil Richardson
Phil Stride
David Toman - RWM
Julian Wain

Simon Bandy - Local Partnerships
Jenny Coombs - Local Partnerships
Liz Waugh – Local Partnerships

Apologies:

Holmfridur Bjarnadottir
Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)
HM Treasury

Observers:

Brian Clark - Committee on Radioactive Waste Management
John Rennilson - Committee on Radioactive Waste Management
Welsh Government

Item 1: Introductions and house-keeping

The Chair thanked members for attending the meeting, and passed on apologies from those unable to attend. He summarised the purpose of the meeting – to review the range of options that have been developed on each of the key work areas of the CRWG (community representation, community investment and the test of public support) and assess whether there are any omissions, or gaps. He stressed that there is further evidence to be examined, as well as the responses from the Call for

Evidence and further stakeholder engagement, which will be fed into the options as they are developed further.

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 Geological Screening** – The consultation on the draft national geological screening guidance was launched on the 8th September and will be open until the 4th December. The guidance was revised to address comments from the Independent Review Panel (IRP). RWM are running national stakeholder events in autumn 2015, designed to help stakeholders and the public in responding to the consultation, which are advertised on their website¹. RWM confirmed that CRWG members are welcome to attend any of the stakeholder events. There is also a glossary² to support the consultation and explain the technical detail.
- **National land-use planning** – The technical consultation on the Appraisal of Sustainability (AoS) scoping report and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Methodology report associated with the draft National Policy Statement (NPS) launched on 4 August and closed on 25 September. Development of the draft National Policy Statement (NPS) is underway.
- **Preparations for Siting** - A new RWM interim Head of Community Engagement (now a member of the CRWG) is developing a Siting Process Implementation Plan which will incorporate all preparatory activities that RWM needs to undertake in advance of formal engagement. More information will be provided to the CRWG in due course.

Item 3: Update on Call for Evidence

The Call for Evidence closed on 4th September and 52 responses were received from a wide range of organisations including local councils, charities, members of the public and academia. The responses to the call for evidence will be published in due course.

Item 4: Update on Stakeholder Engagement

Local Partnerships gave an update on progress with stakeholder engagement to date, which is being carried out in four phases. Phase 1 involved building the evidence base through a literature review, interviews with CRWG members and

¹ <http://www.nda.gov.uk/rwm/national-geological-screening/consultation/#register-to-attend-a-workshop>

² <http://www.nda.gov.uk/publication/a-glossary-to-support-the-public-consultation-on-national-geological-screening-guidance/>

other stakeholders. Phase 2 consisted of further stakeholder interviews, and workshops with the DECC NGO Forum and the Defra/DECC Social Science Expert Panel. Phase 3 was the Call for Evidence, which closed on 4th September. Analysis and evaluation of responses is taking place through the autumn. Phase 4 will consist of testing ideas and developing emerging recommendations. A programme of stakeholder workshops is currently being developed covering three main stakeholder groups – Local Authorities, the Business Community and Civil Society.

Item 5: The range of options for Community Representation, Community Investment and the Test of Public Support

The range of options that have developed from CRWG discussions to date and the possible options for consideration were discussed. Topics for discussion included initial contact, initial engagement, constructive engagement, community representation – governance, community investment, the right of withdrawal and the final test of community support.

Topics that were then discussed included:

- Legitimacy of initial contact, i.e. who should be able to raise the issue.
- The need to build trust with a community whilst reducing uncertainty.
- Representation of interests within the wider community.
- The role of Local Authorities in the process.
- The introduction of a 'review' stage or 'gate', to ensure that interested parties are legitimate, accountable and constructively engaged.
- Checklists – to allow potential communities to demonstrate legitimacy and identify 'constructive engagement'.
- The importance of having a glossary to ensure clarity of language and terminology.
- Availability of mentoring/support – to allow smaller groups to take part in the process.
- Accountability of the representative body.
- Financial responsibility – ensuring probity, achieving value for money and capability and capacity.
- Access to independent sources of technical advice.
- Structure and role of community representation being flexible to accommodate a variety of community structures.
- Division of roles between different groups within the representative body, e.g. representation and decision making, community investment and planning/technical.
- Reflecting the national nature of the siting process. Possibility of the creation of a 'menu' of options for community representation – to allow communities to choose the more suitable approach for them.
- Legal constraints including State Aid rules.

- Potential use of business plans, to justify use of the community investment.
- Investment needs to be trans-electoral cycles and provide long-term benefits.
- Long-term approach needs to consider well-being of communities for years to come.
- Ongoing measurement of public support – to test opinion throughout the process.
- Mechanisms for right of withdrawal and the test of public support including defining who should be tested.

Further sources of evidence were suggested to include in the evidence base:

- BSE enquiry
- GM Nation Project

Item 6: Actions and next steps

The range of options will be revised for the next CRWG meeting, to incorporate members' comments.

Item 7: AOB

The next CRWG meeting will be held on 19 November.