
From:
Sent: 04 June 2013 20:46
To: radioactivewaste (DECC)
Subject: Re MRWS experience

I was involved as a member of the public in the consultation process in Cumbria from January 2011 until the final vote in 2013.

As a member of the public, it was clear to me from the very first meeting that the whole process was flawed and that this directly resulted in the lack of trust in the consultation which became its chief characteristic.

It seems to me that the following issues need to be addressed if the consultation process is going to stand any chance of success.

1. The process must start by identifying those areas of the country which are most likely to be geographically suitable. The geological survey conducted by Nirex in the 1990s could be an appropriate starting point. Unless this is done first, no member of the public will ever trust the process.

2. Only when those areas likely to be geologically suitable have been identified should the "voluntarism" process begin and it should only involve these identified areas. Any other approach is illogical and the patent stupidity of allowing any area, however unsuitable, to put itself forward in the hope of jobs was a fundamental error. This lesson is the most important one to learn from the Cumbria experience.

3. The financial and other benefits to the chosen area should be clearly identified in advance and be made legally binding. The construction of a depository will have a major environmental impact and the chosen area must be properly compensated for this. It was never clear to those of us who live in Cumbria what the advantages were going to be. No sensible Cumbrian trusts that the government (of whatever colour) will deliver on any of its promises if they were not backed up in law.

4. All National Parks MUST be excluded from any such development. National and international opinion and law will be against you if you try to go down this route. Ignoring this will waste money and time and cost you dearly in terms of trust.

I hope you find these comments helpful.