



## MEETING BRIEFING

### Mid Copeland GDF Community Partnership Meeting, Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025

The Chair welcomed the Community Partnership Members and NWS representatives. One member of the public was in attendance.

#### 1. Chair's Report

The Chair attended one of the regular Joint Chairs' sessions since the last CP meeting.

The Chair attended the Research Support Office Conference in Bristol in January 2025, which was attended by over 100 graduates, and academics from across the country, all working on research relevant to the GDF siting process. The quality of the work and the enthusiasm demonstrated by the graduates was exceptional. The Chair expressed an interest in inviting some of these graduates to present their work at a future Partnership meeting.

The Chair explained that several events, delivered by NWS, have been held in Mid Copeland in relation to the recent announcement of Areas of Focus. While many local attendees initially expressed concerns, initial feedback suggested that they left feeling more informed.

#### 2. NWS Areas of Focus Update

**CEM, PCEM and Head of Site Evaluation provided an update with feedback from Community Partnership members:**

##### **CEM**

Events and webinars held in early 2025 gave NWS the chance to talk with the Mid Copeland community about what the identification of Areas of Focus means for them and for the GDF siting process.

- 191 people attended 4 events in Mid Copeland
- 46 people attended a joint Mid and South Copeland event
- 73 people attended 2 joint Mid and South Copeland webinars.

NWS has had some good conversations about the Areas of Focus during the events. Although this is not a consultation process, NWS has been listening, and views will be taken into consideration as the siting process continues.

##### **Common questions/themes from AoF events:**

- Transport – how will you access each Area of Focus?
- Environmental Impacts
- Timeline and Test of Public Support (ToPS) - when will the community get a say? Who will get a say and how?
- Geology and site suitability – What is the geology like? What geology is required?
- Coastal erosion/climate change

##### **Example feedback:**

- I've learned a lot – informative event
- Needs to be as close to Sellafeld Site as possible
- Get a move on!
- Jobs/apprenticeships need to go to local people
- Investment in the roads/rail/buses is essential.

##### **Going Forward**

2 further Areas of Focus drop-in sessions are in the process of being arranged for 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> March at Seascale School, 3:30pm – 7:30pm and 10:00am – 3:00pm

##### **Community Partnership members gave feedback including:**



- Seascale Parish Council is to oppose both Areas of Focus in a letter to NWS, local MP and the Community Partnership Chair. Seascale PC also plans to put forward an alternative Area of Focus.
- A lot of people in Seascale were shocked at the Areas of Focus and were surprised by the proposed use of greenfield sites.
- NWS needs to be clear as to how the Areas of Focus would be accessed
- A CP member suggested Eskmeals as an alternative Area of Focus. NWS responded to thank the member for the suggestion but to confirm that Eskmeals is not currently an Area of Focus and to state that it sits within the South Copeland Search Area and within the National Park, which is currently excluded from consideration.
- Community Partnership members felt NWS had sent the Areas of Focus landowner letters too late.

Some Parish Councils haven't met since the Areas of Focus announcement and will feed back after their meetings have taken place.

**NWS' Head of Site Evaluation provided a re-cap of the Area of Focus methodology and the identified Areas of Focus in Mid Copeland.**

**NWS, PCEM then provided some context to the AoF**

The Areas of Focus launch enabled NWS to learn a lot about questions that are important in the community. We have taken those back and are now working with them on how to go about addressing those questions. Some of the topics, we know we won't have answers to for a long time, 10-15 or more years. However, we will focus on explaining what work we are doing and why in the nearer term and we would like to work with the other members of the CP to determine the best way to share that with the community.

**3. Communications Update**

The Communications Lead recapped activity since the previous Community Partnership meeting. This included a printed newsletter sent to homes in the Search Area, plus a digital e-bulletin. Website updates included an article on how excavated material would be managed in a GDF; £3million Community Investment Funding (CIF) awarded in Mid Copeland across 3 years and an update on Nuclear Waste Services' Areas of Focus work. Communications publicising a Partnership CIF 'Meet the Funders' public drop-in event on March 27 in Gosforth will go out shortly; the website refresh/update work is ongoing and early work for the next Partnership newsletter is under way.

**4. Community Engagement Update**

The Engagement Co-ordinator explained that since the last CP meeting the Community Engagement team has engaged with approximately 360 people. The Community Engagement team will continue to inform Community Partnership members of these on a fortnightly basis.

**5. Community Investment Funding Update**

The Community Investment Panel (CIP) has approved 5 new awards for Year 4. There is currently £772,626 of funding remaining for year four with 5 more CIF Panels scheduled.

The CIF team continue to reach out to and work with organisations in the pipeline. The CIF team has continued their meetings with Cumberland Council to seek leads for potential applicants, they will promote CIF in their Community Panels, Cumbria Social Enterprise Partnership and via the Community Development Officers – this will continue going forward too.

**6. Issues for Escalation**

- No Issues for Escalation.

**7. Public Questions**

- No Questions.



**8. Date of next meeting**

The Community Partnership agreed to future meetings being quarterly and to bring forward the start time to 13:00

The next Community Partnership meeting will be 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025.

**9. Additional meeting dates in 2025**

- Wednesday 3rd September
- Monday 1st December