**MEETING BRIEFING**

**Mid Copeland GDF Community Partnership Meeting, Monday 2nd June 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 Community Partnership meeting. The Chair explained that he has been asked to be ‘interim Chair’ for South Copeland GDF Community Partnership when its meetings start back up later this month.

1. **NWS Update**

The Principal Community Engagement Manager explained NWS is reviewing feedback from recent Areas of Focus (AoF) events.

A common question at AoF events, across all CP areas, was around GDF safety. NWS has put together a video and blog from Lucy Bailey, Chief of Disposal Safety for NWS which is available on the CP website [here](https://midcopeland.workinginpartnership.org.uk/blog-from-nuclear-waste-services-designing-for-long-term-safety-of-the-most-hazardous-radioactive-waste/).

Aerial surveys began in October 2023 and take place once a month. These surveys record the presence and numbers of birds and marine wildlife in the area to inform environmental impact assessments and support future applications for major permissions.

Further environmental surveys are planned to commence from September. These surveys will identify the presence of overwintering and passage birds and identify the sensitivities of the environment to ensure that these are taken into account in the planning for future site characterisation works. A pre-survey site visit is scheduled for mid-June 2025 (weather dependent), to scope out the survey areas.

1. **Chair Recruitment**

The Chair previously informed Partnership members that his current term is approaching its end and provided an overview of the role’s responsibilities and associated time commitments. **No other members expressed interest** in standing for Chair. It was originally a 2-year term, but a proposal was made to extend it to a 3-year term. It was explained that a 3-year term aligns with the next phase of the project, likely up to borehole investigations.

Andy Pratt was nominated for Chair by the Partnership’s Business Lead and seconded by the Calderbridge and Ponsonby Partnership member.

All members approved the proposal to extend the Chair’s term from two to three years.

1. **Visioning Subgroup Update**

The Community Engagement Manager (CEM) shared an overview of work completed so far to help create a community vision, with all Partnership members last week.

Workshops were held across all communities with supply chain support, reaching hundreds of people. Key emerging themes include transport, employment, health and wellbeing, tourism, and environmental protection. An online survey was conducted and received 25 responses. Miro boards were developed based on feedback and taken into communities, receiving very positive responses and helping capture further input.

Next steps include:

The Visioning subgroup to look at the priorities & emerging themes and:

* Investigate what could be funded now
* What is statutory
* What could be funded through Significant Additional Investment

A leaflet will be produced to summarise the visioning work to date (an early draft will be shared with Partnership members for feedback).

Partnership members were happy with this work to date.

1. **Youth Subgroup Update**

The Youth Lead recapped that on 4th March 2025, there was an inspiring evening with the Gosforth Scouts, who presented their imaginative ideas for the future of their community and a new scout hut. The event was attended by parents, carers, residents, Gosforth Parish Council representatives and Community Partnership members, and documented by a video, which is on the Partnership website.

The Youth Lead proposed the creation of a Shadow Youth Board—a group of young people who will meet regularly to engage with the GDF project. The board aims to:

* Provide opportunities for youth to learn, question, and contribute
* Ensure youth perspectives inform Community Partnership discussions
* Support personal development
* Foster two-way dialogue within youth peer networks

The subgroup is developing a simple sign-up form and arranging meetings with local schools and youth groups. The aim is to launch the Shadow Board in February 2026, during the half-term break, with an introductory event.

1. **CIF Terms of Reference**

A revised Community Investment Panel Terms of Reference document was shared, with all changes highlighted. Partnership members reviewed and approved all comments and changes to the document.

1. **AOB:**

**Business Update:**

The Business Lead informed the Partnership of an upcoming Cyber Security event, scheduled for 3rd July 2025, aimed at engaging local businesses across the Mid Copeland area. 70 invitation letters were hand-delivered, which facilitated constructive conversations with recipients. In addition, the event has been promoted through social media platforms and the community newsletter. Response rates have been low so far, prompting consideration of a potential follow-up communication to gather feedback—particularly around possible barriers to attendance such as timing or topic relevance. It was noted that while there was some interest from the farming community, the timing of the event may not be suitable due to seasonal work demands.

**Communications Update:**

The Communications Lead recapped activity since the previous Community Partnership meeting. This included work around the Meet the Funders Community Investment Funding event, an annual update on the website plus continued work on the refreshed Partnership website. A printed newsletter is due to go out to homes from the Partnership w/c June 16, as well as an e-bulletin to digital subscribers. Communications continue around the Partnership event for local businesses taking place in July. NWS communications include content around geology and safety.

**Community Engagement Update:**

The Engagement Co-ordinator explained that since the last Partnership meeting the Community Engagement Team (CET) has engaged with approximately 277 people. During this period, a range of community engagement activities were attended, including:

* Beckermet Coffee, Cake and Chat
* Gosforth Coffee Morning
* Gosforth Toddler Group
* Seascale Toddler Group
* Chatty Lunch
* U3A Chair Based Exercises
* Seascale 50+ Group
* Indoor Bowls
* Drigg Warm Hub (Supporting South Copeland)

A further two NWS Areas Of Focus events were delivered at Seascale School.

The Community Engagement Team will continue to inform Community Partnership members of these on a fortnightly basis.

Along with NWS colleagues from South Copeland, the Mid CET will be delivering GDF drop- ins across the nuclear estate in the summer.

**CIF Update:**

The Community Investment Panel (CIP) has approved 8 new awards for Year 4. The panel currently has £706,126 of funding remaining for Year 4. The next CIF panel meeting is 3rd June 2025, where 3 applications will be discussed. The Meet the Funders Event on 27th March 2025 was well attended and valued by community organisations. The CIF team will be attending a West Cumbria Funders event at Solway Hall, Whitehaven on 1st July 2025.

**Mid Residents’ Survey:**

The CEM asked Partnership members if they would be ok with adding some Property Value Protection questions to the Mid Copeland annual survey this year. These are to be circulated for feedback.

1. **Issues for Escalation:**

* No Issues for Escalation.

1. **Public Questions**

* Are we still on track with the timescale for borehole investigations and do we know of any target areas?

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1. **Date of next meeting**

The next Community Partnership meeting will be 3rd September 2025 at Calderbridge and Ponsonby Village Hall.