

West Cumbria Sites Stakeholder Group Review – moving forward

David Moore, Chairman, WCSSG

David Collier of Golder Associates was commissioned to conduct an independent review of the WCSSG. The resulting report attached summarises David's views and impressions based on comparisons with good practice, observation of full and sub committee meetings and face to face or telephone interviews with members of the WCSSG and other stakeholders.

The report outlines a number of specific key themes that have emerged as a result of the research, although there are no specific recommendations for improvements to move forward.

The proposal of the WCSSG Chairman is to convene a facilitated workshop for those members of the committee who wish to participate, to examine the key themes that have emerged and examine options within those themes in order to agree or come to a compromise in terms of a suitable way forward.

The key themes that have emerged are:

Role and priorities:

Any engagement process exists to enable two way communications between an organisation (in this instance WCSSG) and its stakeholders. The engagement forum has varying objectives; is the forum for information sharing only, is it to monitor performance plans, is it required to provide democratic accountability or is it required for external scrutiny.

The attached *draft* template gives a clearer picture of the engagement processes and forums, which could be utilised to form the basis of debate in terms of what the role and priorities of the WCSSG are.

Meeting format:

Another key theme emerging from the review was the format of meetings and the data produced to support them, ie: reports and minutes of the meeting. A suggestion could be for example to continue to tape the meetings and keep the tape for reference and simply produce a summary of the actions from the meeting.

Sub Committee meetings:

The report suggests that WCSSG should 'improve what it has rather than start with radical cuts' in terms of its sub committees. The Chairman is proposing that the sub committees should be re-examined with emphasis on the frequency and content of

each, what they exist to achieve and whether they are still relevant. Each sub committee could conduct this review through the proceedings of its meetings.

Membership:

Membership of the group was acceptable to most interviewees, perhaps with the exception that a broader range of organisations could be invited to join the group, ie: businesses and voluntary sector and young representatives who offered diversity. However, in considering this the size of the membership needs to be closely monitored as physically accommodating groups of a significant size can in itself be extremely difficult, thereby restricting the venues available to host meetings. It should be mentioned that any group interested in the committee are able to participate whether they are members or not, so it is not excluding any stakeholder from attending and providing a point of view.

Role of Chairman

A case could be made that the chair should be politically independent. Another perspective is that, providing there is no obviously partisan behaviour, the current arrangements are adequate.

However, the review points out that there is scope for confusion in media reports about which “hat” the Chair is wearing when interviews cover both SSG and more overtly political topics.

There should be, as a minimum, clear guidelines setting out the scope of what the Chair may comment on when representing the SSG.

Conclusion

Clearly there is room to improve the WCSSG and moving forward as suggested, with a workshop and discussing the main elements outlined in this brief will provide the starting point for further dialogue with members to gain a consensus of opinion on how the group should be re-modelled (or not) prior to forwarding recommendations to the NDA.

Forum	Information sharing	Monitoring performance plans	Questioning operators	Influencing strategic decisions	Input into consultations	Sharing emerging issues	Resolving issues
Local authority nuclear group meetings							
Local authority task- focus groups							
WCSSG							
Emergency Planning SC							
Environmental Health SC							
LLWR SC							
Decommissioning SC							
Commercial Ops SC							
Socio-economic SC							
Open meetings							

Democratic accountability

External scrutiny

