

April 09

Report from the Socio Economic Sub Committee to the West Cumbria Sites Stakeholder Group

As WCSSG members know, the role of the socio-economic sub committee is to provide a forum for the members of the committee to scrutinise and input into the socio implications of the site licensing companies the WCSSG represents and the NDA.

The committee has met twice since the last WCSSG meeting, primarily to discuss the Sellafield Sites Ltd draft socio-economic report and to receive reports from the NDA and others.

The committee also agreed to appoint Joe Clarke as the Vice- Chair, a welcome support for the Chair.

Sellafield Ltd Draft Socio –economic plan.

Sellafield Sites Ltd presented their draft socio economic report, which was generally welcomed by members who appreciated the strategic approach taken. The three organisations of NDA, Sellafield Sites Ltd and NMP are bound by a common goal to deliver a sustained programme of safe and cost-effective clean-up which recognises the opportunities to achieve this in such a way that fits with the vision and priorities of both the NDA's socio-economic policy and Britain's Energy Coast Masterplan. The report goes on to say that all three organisations are committed to working closely and to align their socio-economic activities to support the West Cumbria Vision Board in their aim to deliver the Energy Coast Masterplan in partnership. As such, they ultimately aim to develop a fully integrated tri-partite socio-economic strategy.

With regard to the actual funding itself, it is stated that the over-riding need to support the Masterplan necessitates that Sellafield Ltd uses 09/10 to continue delivering internal socio-economic activities, while transitioning the remaining funds to support Masterplan projects that closely fit with the NDA's socio-economic policy. An impact assessment will be carried out in April 2009 to ensure that current beneficiaries of Sellafield Ltd socio-economic support are not exposed to undue risk by the reassignment of funds to the West Cumbria Vision Board. This assessment will allow a phased approach to the transition and will be agreed with stakeholders.

It is anticipated that at least 80 per cent of Sellafield's annualised funds (£2.4 million) will be made available to support the Masterplan from 2010/2011.

The intention is to continue to support the Education and Skills policy which is designed to encourage interest in science, engineering and technology in 5-11 years through to supporting undergraduate placements.

Sellafield's socio-economic responsibility is not just financial and just as important is the ability to use the talents of the Sellafield workforce to benefit the local community. Employees will be encouraged to engage with the local community, through activities ranging from voluntary work to secondments of selected personnel to posts in key delivery teams.

The Sellafield supply chain has a socio-economic role to play and they will be supported by Sellafield Ltd. This support will continue to centre around attracting and concentrating specialist small/medium enterprises into technology clusters. This collaborative environment will maximise the likelihood of effective supplier networking, formations of local and international partnerships and the emergence of innovative solutions to complex technical challenges.

As already stated the report in general was welcomed, but there were still a few concerns with regards to accessing funding. The committee has asked for a route map to show what funds are available from the nuclear industry and how they are accessed, as this is far from clear at present. A monitoring process needs to be devised which allows stakeholders to monitor the spend and ensure outputs are achieved.

The plan has now gone to the NDA and the final report is due to be signed off by the NDA by the 31st March.

Copeland Community Fund

As we know the fund was secured through a section 106 agreement attached to the LLWR Vault 9 Planning Application.

The financial sum agreed was £10 million to be paid in two £5 million instalments and £1.5 million per year as long as waste is emplaced in Vault 9.

The Board has been set up with representatives from Copeland Borough Council, Cumbria County Council and the NDA. An advert has gone out advertising for two independent members.

The Fund's objectives are to:

- (i) make grants, loans or other payments; and
- (ii) carry out such activities as all the parties think fit

This will be achieved in accordance with NDA socio economic policy, but otherwise at the discretion of the Project Board to assist in the provision of benefits, to promote the wellbeing of the inhabitants and the area of the Borough of Copeland.

The funding is public money, therefore appropriate governance structures have to be in place, options have to be considered on how the fund will be managed and



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invested, and importantly a strategy is needed for the use of the fund and allocation of monies.

Social Investment Strategy for West Cumbria.

Reports have been received to give members an update on the Social Investment Strategy for West Cumbria. This strategy will guide what actions and priorities are required to guide what is broadly termed “social investment”. A full consultation was carried out on this at the “Communities that work” conference. The final report will shortly be presented to Local Authorities and the West Cumbria Vision Board for adoption.

Nuclear New build

The committee received a presentation on nuclear new build which updated members on the Strategic Siting process. The committee welcomed the presentation and considered the socio economic impact of new build; this resulted in the committee agreeing to write a letter of support for the Sellafield nomination. The nuclear new build project group were also commended for the work they have been carrying out on this project which has resulted in Sellafield becoming one of the front runners for new reactors.