

Equality Impact Assessment: West Cumbria MRWS Partnership, Public and Stakeholder Engagement (PSE) Round 3

Aims of the EqlA

Purpose of the EqlA	To ensure the planned PSE programme meets or exceeds equalities requirements
Summary of findings	This EqlA has refreshed our perspective on designing the activities to deliver as part of the third and final round of consultation by the West Cumbria MRWS Partnership. Due to equality issues already having been considered previously in the first two rounds of consultation, the majority of the actions have already been implemented: they require monitoring to ensure they are delivered properly. A few new actions are identified.
Scope of the EqlA:	The EqlA covers work that is being undertaken by a Partnership comprising of over 15 organisations, advising Cumbria County Council, Allerdale Borough Council and Copeland Borough Councils about participation in the Government's siting process for a nuclear waste repository. The programme of activity that is the focus of this EqlA is being undertaken by the PSE sub-group of the Partnership. See also the Partnership's Accessibility Statement (Appendix A and also published as Document 191 on the Partnership's website).

Phase 1: Gathering information

List examples of background information that you think are **relevant**. If carrying out an assessment of a proposal this section should include the data used to establish whether the proposal has an impact.

Type of information	Findings
General learning from previous consultation and community engagement exercises, as well as legal challenges	Need to be sure that processes are inclusive and do not present unreasonable barriers to participation. Need to be sure that the processes are compliant with the statutory "Duty to Involve"

Phase 2 Impacts

From the evidence above use this section to identify the risks and benefits according to the different characteristics protected by the Equality Act.

All/general: Any issue that cuts across a number of protected characteristics

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Undertaken	Action Required
		Possible exclusion from the PSE process	Compiled and implemented an Accessibility Statement, doc 191.	Continue to review to ensure adequate and implemented properly

Disability and health and wellbeing: All forms of disability recognised under the Disability Discrimination Act including sensory impairment, mental health, learning disabilities, mobility related conditions, conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, asthma. This also covers any impact on health and well-being.

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Undertaken	Action Required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical accessibility of venues 		Possible exclusion from PSE process	- Reviewed all venues used. Stopped using some venues (e.g. Washington Central Hotel) and introduced others with more flexible arrangements (e.g. Egremont Market Hall).	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of hearing loops • Availability of written material in alternative formats 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Move venue location around West Cumbria to vary the ease with which people can attend meetings. - Use microphone system at meetings - Request induction loops, and hire in upon request - Publicised the fact that alternative document formats are available. 	
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Gender, Transgender and Marital Status

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Undertaken	Action Required
Probable under representation of younger males, parents of young children especially teenage parents, and perhaps women in general, all of whom tend to less civically active.		Possible under-representation from PSE process	Main action is to focus significant resource on to blanket awareness raising methods that do not discriminate between gender or marital status e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - advertorials - TV and radio - newsletters 	

			<p>Experience shows efforts during PSE2 achieved reasonable balance.</p> <p>Additionally, we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth programme organised with Connexions, including directly funded discussion sessions - Contacted WI for assistance in publicising the consultation with their members 	<p>Check Connexions programme for adequate reach</p> <p>Check WI willing to publicise the consultation to their members</p>
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Ethnicity: All ethnic groups including Asian, Black, East Asian and white minority ethnic groups, including Eastern Europeans and Gypsy and Travellers.

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Undertaken	Action Required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility of consultation materials • Possible Confidence attending public events 		Possible exclusion from PSE process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offer consultation document in alternative formats and community languages. - Contact AWAZ about publicising consultation to their members 	<p>Check AWAZ able to publicise the consultation, and potentially run a discussion group</p> <p>Liaise with CCC over contacts with gypsy/ traveller communities</p>

			- Secure funding to allow AWAZ to run a specific discussion group potentially with translated materials	Identify Eastern European shops in West Cumbria, if exist
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Sexual Orientation: including heterosexual, gay, lesbian, transgender, and bisexual people

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Undertaken	Action Required
No specific issues.				Make contact with Outreach Cumbria. Possible role as intermediary to publicise the consultation.

Age: Where a person is at risk of unfair treatment because of their age group

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Undertaken/ Comment	Action Required
Possible under representation of younger and older people		Possible exclusion from PSE process	<i>There is already a predominance of older people participating in the programme: the gap if there is one is younger people.</i> - Youth programme organised with	Check that the youth programme has adequate reach

			Connexions, including direct contact with schools	
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Religion/belief: all faiths including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and non religious beliefs such as Humanism

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Undertaken/ Comment	Action Required
			We can see no particular reason (beyond ethnicity which is addressed above) why faith groups would be excluded by the communications and consultation work being undertaken.	Liaise with CTiC to ensure they publicise with their members in addition to the Partnership's own communications

Socio-Economic Status: This can include people on low incomes, as well as issues around rural and urban deprivation

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Undertaken	Action Required
Cost of attending meetings or events		Possible exclusion from PSE process.	- Offered to assist with travel expenses - Freephone and freepost available, as well as email	- Continue to publicise the fact that assistance with travel expenses is available, as well as freephone/freepost

Community Cohesion: This is where a decision or a change to services may risk creating tensions between community groups in a local area.

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Undertaken/ Comment	Action Required
			No particular issue identified here, although they may emerge at a later stage if the site selection process starts to narrow down to specific sites.	

Documents appended to the Equality Impact Assessment:

Of direct relevance to this EqIA is the PSE3 Plan, document 15.3 (available from www.westcumbriamrws.org.uk under Documents section) and the Accessibility Statement, document 191.

Quality Assurance and EqIA completion

Date completed/last updated	25 th July 2011
Lead officer	Rhuari Bennett, 3KQ
Have community organisations been involved?	Yes, via members of the PSE sub-group of the Partnership

Appendix A

West Cumbria MRWS Partnership Ensuring Accessibility

Access is about providing people with equal opportunity to participate fully in whatever is being offered, and meeting the access needs of disabled people and those who have specific access requirements means that accessibility is improved for everybody.

Meeting people's access needs should be done in a positive and affirmative way, which should be reflected in the language the Partnership uses when discussing access requirements. All disabled people are individual and will therefore have different needs at different times. People with the same impairment/condition may manage it very differently and also have different access needs.

With respect to the accessibility of Partnership meetings and other aspects of engagement in the MRWS process, the Partnership has therefore considered the following range of flexible measures which aim to maximise accessibility:

Communication

- All Partnership documents can be offered in different formats – electronic and printed. Word documents are often easier for people who use screen readers so these are offered as an option, as are large print, audio, braille and community language translations of documents.
- The services of a palantypist or British Sign Language interpreter can be made available for any of the Partnership's meetings or events if requested in advance.
- A microphone and speaker system is used at Partnership meetings (and other events where appropriate) to aid hearing of presentations and discussions.

- Venues are asked to make an induction loop available, either a built in or portable system. Where this is not possible we will make every effort to hire a system on request.
- Invitations to meetings will make it clear that people can request assistance to ensure their access requirements are met, whether in relation to communication, physical access or dietary requirements.

Meeting locations and venues

Location can be a barrier to participation, especially in areas with a geographically dispersed population such as West Cumbria. This is one of the reasons that the Partnership aims to hold its meetings and events in a range of places around Allerdale and Copeland. Mindful of this aim, the Partnership also seeks to use venues that meet *as many as possible* of the following criteria:

- All venues are checked for suitability for people with mobility impairments including wheelchair users. Wheelchair access is a requirement, as are accessible toilet facilities.
- Accessibility by public transport.
- Suitable/convenient parking, including parking close to the entrance for disabled people.
- As indicated above, venues are asked to make an induction loop available, either built in or portable. Where this is not possible we will make every effort to hire a system on request.
- Natural lighting is preferred as this is beneficial to many people with visual impairments.
- Signage should be clear, with evacuation procedures explained at the start of meetings, including, where applicable, the procedures for people with mobility impairments including wheelchair users.
- Where catering and refreshments are provided, a range of food is provided to meet the majority of dietary requirements. Any specific requirements will be catered for on request.

We are conscious that it is not possible for us to always use venues that meet all of these criteria. If you would like any specific information about physical access or other factors in relation to a specific venue please do contact us.

The Partnership also offers assistance with transport where this will enable people to attend its meetings and events, either financial assistance e.g. payment to cover train/bus fare, mileage and/or taxi fares if notified and agreed in advance, or practical assistance where possible e.g. arranging a lift.

Conduct of meetings and events

- Attitude is an important factor in ensuring access. Staff supporting Partnership meetings and events aim to make sure that all participants, whether Partnership members or members of the public and stakeholders, are welcomed and feel comfortable at meetings. This approach means that people feel more able to make requests to ensure their access requirements are met so that they can therefore participate fully.
- Timing can be a critical factor for some groups of people such as those who need to take medication at a certain time e.g. after food. The Partnership makes every effort to publish the agenda for meetings ahead of time to enable people to plan ahead, and makes every effort to adhere to timings for meetings e.g. lunch, other breaks and the end of the meeting.

The Partnership is keen to work in an accessible way in all of its work. If there is anything further we can do to meet your access requirements, or you would like further information, please contact us by email at contact@westcumbriamrws.org.uk or call us on our free phone number 0800 498 8912.

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