

Charles Hendry MP

Minister of State

Department of Energy & Climate Change
3 Whitehall Place

London
SW1A 2AW

www.decc.gov.uk

Councillor Alan Smith
Leader
Allerdale Borough Council
Allerdale House
Workington
Cumbria
CA14 3YJ

7 November 2011

Dear Mr, Smith

MANAGING RADIOACTIVE WASTE SAFELY (MRWS) DECISION MAKING PROCESS

I am writing to set out what I believe to be a mutually agreed position between the three Councils and the Government over taking forward the managing Radioactive Waste Safely decision making process. I would like to stress my and the Government's firm support for the process and to the principle of voluntarism and my determination to drive forward the process effectively. This includes my desire to accelerate the timetable, as we have discussed, if this can be done without compromising the principles of voluntarism and the need to ensure the facility can be built and operated securely and safely.

In the light of concerns which have been raised, I am keen to find the most satisfactory way of working with local authorities, and I believe the note attached to this letter represents a good way forward to which we can all agree. This note makes it clear that, to proceed with the process, there needs to be three "green lights" reflecting consent at the three levels of Borough Council, County Council, and national Government. I would be grateful if you could confirm your agreement to the arrangements, as set out in the attached note.

I am writing in equivalent terms to the leaders of Cumbria County Council and Copeland Borough Council. I am copying this letter to Harry Dyke, Chief Executive of Allerdale Borough Council.

With my personal thanks - for the constructive approach being taken by the Council,



CHARLES HENDRY

MANAGING RADIOACTIVE WASTE SAFELY (MRWS) DECISION MAKING PROCESS

The Government understands and welcomes the fact that the three local authorities have agreed to work together constructively to ensure that their decisions are fully considered, take account of the views of the local communities they represent and resolve any concerns which are identified. The Government fully supports the intention to attain a common understanding of the key issues and thus a common view on the key decisions.

For its part, the Government is committed to the principle of voluntarism in the implementation of geological disposal for higher activity radioactive waste, as envisaged in the MRWS White Paper, and specifically to working in partnership with the local authorities. As the process continues, should it become clear, in advance of key decisions, that different local authorities take differing views on key issues or are minded to take different decisions, the Government would expect the local authorities to work together constructively to understand the reasons for this and seek to address these differences so as to achieve a consensus.

If, despite the best endeavours of the local authorities, they are unable to adequately reconcile their differences, and it becomes clear that they take different positions, the Government would expect the process to be paused. In the event of such a pause, the Government will work constructively with the local authorities to explore what can be done to address any concerns raised and to enable a consensus to be reached. However, if it were to become clear that agreement between the local authorities could not be achieved, and no practical changes could be made to the process to enable such an agreement to be reached, the Government would need to consider how or whether the MRWS process could proceed.

The Government accepts that if we reach that point, and where either a Borough Council (in respect of its area) or the County Council in a Cabinet decision, or the Government, after considering the issues, continues to have genuine concerns and no longer wishes to participate, then the principles of partnership to which we have all been committed cannot be met. Accordingly, we would not proceed with the Managing Radioactive Waste Safely process in west Cumbria.

In the event a Decision to Participate is taken, the Government and Local Authorities will need to review and agree an appropriate decision making process and timetable going forward from that point.

Charles Hendry MP

Minister of State

Department of Energy & Climate Change

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Councillor Elaine Woodburn
Leader
Copeland Borough Council
The Copeland Centre
Catherine Street
Whitehaven
Cumbria
CA28 7SJ

7 November 2011

Dear Cllr. Woodburn

MANAGING RADIOACTIVE WASTE SAFELY (MRWS) DECISION MAKING PROCESS

I am writing to set out what I believe to be a mutually agreed position between the three Councils and the Government over taking forward the managing Radioactive Waste Safely decision making process. I would like to stress my and the Government's firm support for the process and to the principle of voluntarism and my determination to drive forward the process effectively. This includes my desire to accelerate the timetable, as we have discussed, if this can be done without compromising the principles of voluntarism and the need to ensure the facility can be built and operated securely and safely.

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I am writing in equivalent terms to the leaders of Cumbria County Council and Allerdale Borough Council. I am copying this letter to Paul Walker, Chief Executive of Copeland Borough Council.

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London

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Councillor Eddie Martin
Leader
Cumbria County Council
The Courts
Carlisle
Cumbria CA3 8NA

7 November 2011

Dear Cllr. Martin,

MANAGING RADIOACTIVE WASTE SAFELY (MRWS) DECISION MAKING PROCESS

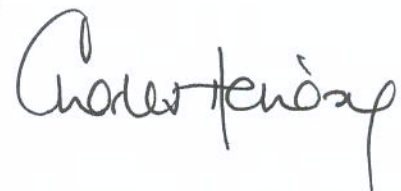
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I am writing in equivalent terms to the leaders of Allerdale and Copeland Borough Councils. I am copying this letter to Jill Stannard, Chief Executive of Cumbria County Council.

With my personal thanks for the constructive approach being taken by the Council,

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