

**Charles Hendry MP**

**Minister of State**

Department of Energy & Climate Change

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[www.decc.gov.uk](http://www.decc.gov.uk)

Councillor Tim Knowles  
Chair of West Cumbria MRWS Partnership  
Cumbria County Council Headquarters  
The Courts  
Carlisle  
Cumbria  
CA3 8NA

8 March 2012

*Dear Councillor Knowles,*

**Further engagement funding for 2011/12**

Thank you for your letter of 24 January seeking additional engagement funding for 2011/12. Following thorough consideration of this request, I have agreed to make further funding of up to £125,000 available for this financial year.

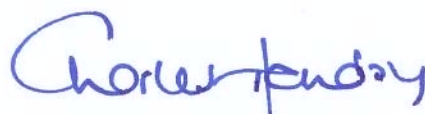
I'm sure you will agree that the process of agreeing a budget for this year was unsatisfactory for all involved. Finding additional funds, particularly this late in the year, is difficult and I have to consider the potential impact on other priority programmes.

However, as you know the department is fully committed to the MRWS process in West Cumbria and so I have been prepared to find these funds in this case.

Nevertheless, we must seek to avoid a repeat of this situation in future years. We need to avoid a situation arising where there are unexpected calls for money, or where any anticipated budgetary overspend is not notified well in advance. I appreciate that this is a challenging time as you approach a decision about participation, but I hope we will be able to achieve an agreement on the engagement funding for 2012/13 that is mutually acceptable and provides greater certainty to all involved.

I am keen that we can move forward in a positive, constructive way. I want to see us strengthen a partnership that is in both Government's and West Cumbria's interests as we continue to make progress in addressing the long term management of higher activity radioactive wastes.

*Yours sincerely,*



**CHARLES HENDRY**