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1 Introduction

This discussion paper seeks to identify what the Partnership needs to do to be able to reach a judgement about: *“whether the Partnership’s recommendations are credible given public and stakeholder views”* (criterion 6a).

In doing so, the paper addresses work programme task 6a(ix), which is to “consider the pros and cons of using different engagement methods to inform a decision about participation, as well any ultimate decision to proceed (to include referenda)”.

The discussion paper covers the following ground:

- Framing assumptions
- What the White Paper says
- What the Partnership work programme says about ‘credible support’
- The findings from PSE1
- Developing and using the ‘indicators of credibility’
- Is there a role for referendums?
- Overview and suggestions

2 Framing assumptions

For the purposes of the discussion paper, the following assumptions are made about the programme leading up to any decision about participation:

- the only screening out of areas will be done for geological reasons using the results of the BGS survey;
- the views of local communities are (a) heard through Public and Stakeholder Engagement (PSE) and (b) represented in the Partnership by CALC and the Principal Authorities;
- the distinction between PSE, the Partnership and Decision-Making Bodies¹ (DMBs) is that: PSE is undertaken to identify and understand views and levels of support; the Partnership’s role is to assess the findings of PSE and other information and provide advice and recommendations to the DMBs; and the DMBs take decisions about participation or withdrawal taking into account Partnership advice and recommendations².

It is also assumed that if a decision to participate is taken:

¹ It is assumed that the DMBs are as defined in the MRWS White Paper, June 2008, para 6.8.

² A Memorandum of Understanding to enable and inform joint working and inform decision making by the Principal Authorities participating in the MRWS process was agreed in October 2009.

- the next stage will consist of two main steps, first, identifying potential sites and, second, undertaking desk-based studies of those potential sites; and
- when potential host communities are identified, their views will be (a) actively sought through PSE and (b) represented directly within a Community Siting Partnership³.

Key issues associated with the stage after any decision to participate are addressed in a companion discussion paper, 'The Siting Process and Principles for Local Community Involvement' (Document 75).

3 What the White Paper says

The MRWS White Paper (WP), 'A Framework for Implementing Geological Disposal', sets out the Government's expectations on reaching a Decision to Participate (DtP).

In particular, the WP explains that:

Government will want to be satisfied that a Decision to Participate is credible. Credibility might be demonstrated on the basis of a local consultation process applying established local good practice. Credible local support would be expected amongst organisations likely to form a Community Siting Partnership ..., should a decision to participate be taken, as well as among the local community. (para 6.22)

On the purpose of PSE, the WP states that:

Engagement should seek to identify the extent of local support for participation, any issues of concern about participation, and the reasons for any opposition to participation. (para 6.24)

On methods of engagement, the WP says that:

Engagement methods might include citizens' panels, workshops, discussion in local groups or organisations, information provision to local communities, groups or individuals and quantitative feedback from opinion polls. (para 6.24)

Finally, on thresholds of support, the WP makes it clear that:

Government is not expecting, or seeking, a particular threshold of support but is keen to see evidence of appropriate community engagement and meaningful feedback on any concerns of those affected. (para 6.26)

4 What the Partnership work programme says about 'credible support'

In formulating its work programme, the Partnership has already given explicit consideration to the Government's expectations as set out above. In relation to the credibility of its recommendations (criterion 6(a)), under 'what we are looking for', the work programme states that:

"This is a subjective judgement but any recommendation might require at least the following to indicate credibility:

- broad support from the stakeholder organisations in the area, including those that are likely to form a Community Siting Partnership if a DtP was taken

³ In principle, there could be more than one CSP if decisions to participate are taken. For example, one might cover remaining areas in Copeland and another might cover remaining areas in Allerdale.

- an increasing level of confidence in the Partnership held over time by stakeholders engaged and a surveyed sample of the general public
- evidence that concerns raised have been, or will be, addressed where appropriate, including explanations as to why not where relevant.”

In section 6 below, the discussion paper considers how these ‘indicators of credibility’ might be developed and addressed as the work programme moves forward. To inform that discussion, the next section outlines the relevant findings from PSE1.

5 The findings from PSE1

There are a wide range of findings from PSE1 that are relevant to this discussion note. These are set out in the PSE1 report and include:

- views on the PSE plan and engagement methods (see PSE1 report sections 3.4.6 and 3.5);
- the findings of quantitative research on public opinion (see PSE1 report section 4 on the results of the first two awareness tracking surveys); and
- issues of concern (see, for example, PSE1 report section 3.4.6).

The PSE1 report also sets out the initiatives that the Partnership will take in response to these findings.

For the purposes of this discussion paper, specific points to note are:

- People found it very hard to put a level on what would constitute ‘credible support or opposition’, or to describe how different geographic views should be weighted, although most agreed that West Cumbria residents should have the most say, and people outside Cumbria should get very little say.
- A number of people felt a referendum or public vote should take place. This was discussed at the Residents’ Panel, where the group was somewhat divided as to how representative or inclusive such an approach would be. Overall, the Panel felt a combination of consultation and a vote or survey would be an appropriate mix in order to inform decision making, but that the vote or survey should come later in the process, once a potential site is identified and residents have a better understanding of the issues. (PSE1 report section 3.6 and Residents’ Panel report section 4.4)

A response to these findings in the PSE1 report is that the Partnership will:

Develop our thinking on appropriate processes for making decisions both before and after DtP, including developing a position on the pros and cons of using referenda.

A suggested position on the pros and cons of using referendums is developed in Section 7 below. Before that, the next section sets out thinking on how to develop and use the ‘indicators of credibility’ referred to in the Partnership’s work programme, taking into account the findings of PSE1.

6 Developing and using the ‘indicators of credibility’

To develop thinking on the development and use of the indicators, this section takes each indicator in turn and asks:

- What does it mean in practice?

- Is it sufficient or does it require amendment or addition?
- How can it be demonstrated?

Current indicator: broad support from the stakeholder organisations in the area, including those that are likely to form a Community Siting Partnership if a DtP was taken

In terms of what this indicator might mean in practice, there are three key questions: what constitutes 'broad support', support for what and support from which stakeholder organisations? In the discussion that follows, the second two questions are addressed first, before returning to the question about the meaning of 'broad support'?

There are important issues of emphasis in potential responses to the 'support for what' question. More specifically, the current work programme statement on 'what we are looking for' could be read to imply a focus on whether there is 'support for a minded to recommendation for or against participation', whereas it is arguably more important to encourage stakeholder organisations to focus on whether there is 'support for the Partnership's preliminary judgements against the criteria for participation'⁴. Indeed, a focus on the former could encourage yes/no responses based on pre-dispositions to participate or oppose participation which, it is suggested, should not be encouraged. In contrast, a focus on the latter should encourage a more deliberative approach, based on the weighing of evidence and arguments about whether the criteria can be judged to be met. As far as is practicable, it is suggested that the latter be encouraged, at the very least as a substantive lead-in to considering any 'minded to' advice or recommendation.

It is also important to develop a clear perspective on the 'which stakeholder organisations' question. Taking its cue from the White Paper, the Partnership's current indicator refers specifically to those organisations that are likely to form a Community Siting Partnership after any DtP is taken. For the purposes of this discussion, it is assumed that this will include members of the current Partnership and, as potential site areas are identified, representatives of the affected communities, including Parish Councillors⁵. This suggests that, as a minimum, the Partnership should consult formally to identify the extent of support for the Partnership's preliminary judgements against the criteria for participation amongst (a) its member organisations and (b) and Parish Councils within West Cumbria.

In addition, it is suggested that the indicator should apply to stakeholders and members of the public who are engaged through the Partnership's other PSE activities. This would certainly seem to be practicable for the Residents Panel, Stakeholder Organisation Workshop and, to various degrees, in use of a PSE3 Discussion Pack and in bilateral meetings with stakeholder groups.

With the proposed focus on the need for consultation and deliberation on the Partnership's preliminary judgements against criteria, it is suggested that the answer to the question of what constitutes 'broad support' should be seen in qualitative rather than quantitative terms. In other words, what is important is the quality of evidence and argument about the robustness of preliminary Partnership judgements,

⁴ The criteria for participation are set out in the Partnership's work programme and relate to: safety, security, environment and planning; geology; community benefit; design and engineering; process; and public and stakeholder views.

⁵ The question of local community representation in a Community Siting Partnership is discussed in more detail in the companion paper, 'The Siting Process and Principles for Local Community Involvement'.

and any conditions that might accompany expressions of support, rather than the numbers involved.

This perspective is entirely consistent with the Government Code of Practice on Consultation (July 2008), which contains the following advice:

“All responses ... should be analysed carefully, using the expertise, experiences and views of respondents to develop a more effective and efficient policy. The focus should be on the evidence given by consultees to back up their arguments. Analysing consultation responses is primarily a qualitative rather than a quantitative exercise.” (Criterion 6, p12)

If these suggestions are accepted, the first indicator could be amended so that it is about whether in the Partnership's view there is:

broad support for the Partnership's preliminary judgements against the criteria for participation from its current member organisations and those engaged through its programme of public and stakeholder engagement.

If the Partnership develops a 'minded to' recommendation on the basis of its preliminary judgements against criteria for participation, a follow-on or supplementary indicator could be along the lines of whether in the Partnership's view there is:

broad support for the Partnership's 'minded to' recommendation about participation in the siting process from its current member organisations and those engaged through its programme of public and stakeholder engagement.

On the question of how the revised indicators might be demonstrated, an important starting point is for them to be explicitly addressed in the objectives for PSE3 ie 'to identify whether there is broad support ... etc'. As suggested above, to meet such objectives, PSE3 should include an element of formal consultation. This could include publication of a formal Consultation Document, which seeks views on:

- a) The Partnership's preliminary judgements against criteria, encouraging deliberation around key questions along the lines of: are the preliminary judgements robust? If not, why not? What would be needed to demonstrate robustness?
- b) If developed, the Partnership's 'minded to' recommendation about participation, encouraging deliberation around such questions as: on the basis of the preliminary judgements against criteria would you support the 'minded to' recommendation? If not, under what conditions would you support the 'minded to' recommendation?

To help ensure conformity with what the MRWS White Paper describes as "established local good practice", the element of formal consultation with Parish Councils in PSE3 could pay regard to the 'Participation and Consultation' sections of the Parish Charters for Copeland and Allerdale. Although specific to consultations by Principal Authorities, some of the commitments in these sections may be considered relevant to the approach taken to the proposed consultation in PSE3.

Current indicator: an increasing level of confidence in the Partnership held over time by stakeholders engaged and a surveyed sample of the general public

There are two key components to the current indicator:

- first, it is about trends in levels of confidence in the Partnership over time
- second, it is about two groups – stakeholders engaged in the process, and a surveyed sample of the public.

On the first component, it could be argued that although important, a focus on ‘an increasing level of confidence in the Partnership’ is not the key question and should be revised. For example, the Partnership could revise the indicator to explicitly address ‘levels of support for participation in the siting process’. Options for ways this might be formulated include:

- an increasing level of support for participation in the siting process over time;
- net support for participation in the siting process; or
- a minimum level of support for a decision to participate to be taken.

In line with the expectations of Government (see section 3 above), the first option does not seek a particular threshold of support: it just implies that an upward trend should be an indicator of credible support. However, it could be argued that an upward trend alone is insufficient, as that trend could start from a very low base and increase only modestly.

The second and third options go beyond the expectation of Government in that they suggest that there should be some form of threshold of support.

The issue of thresholds has been addressed recently by the House of Lords Select Committee on the Constitution in its report on referendums⁶. Although focussing on the issue of referendums, the Committee’s findings on thresholds are also relevant to the discussion in this section. The Committee notes that in some circumstances a clear majority can be seen as more legitimate and decisive than a narrow majority. Accordingly, some referendums in some jurisdictions have required “supermajorities”. However, the Committee reports that the evidence it received was broadly opposed to supermajorities on the grounds that UK practice has traditionally involved the use of simple majority decision-making, particularly in parliamentary votes, and does not usually impose any special majority requirements. The committee therefore recommended that there should be a general presumption against supermajorities.

Although the evidence is very limited, the issue of thresholds has also been addressed in some other countries with GDF siting programmes that have sought quantitative measures of support at particular stages within a programme. In particular, in the South Korean volunteer process minimum standards were set for public votes in four volunteer communities. These were that one third of residents should vote and that over 50% of voters should be in favour of continued participation⁷.

A potential alternative to an indicator specifying an ‘over 50%’ threshold is the option that specifies that there should be *net support*: in other words that the percentage of

⁶ ‘Referendums in the UK’, 12th Report, 2009-2010, paras 180-189.

⁷ ‘Partnering for Long-Term Management of Radioactive Wastes’, OECD Nuclear Energy Agency, 2010, p72.

people supporting participating should be greater than the percentage that oppose it. Such an indicator could be considered appropriate to informing a decision about participation (noting that there would be subsequent opportunities to exercise a right of withdrawal should a decision to participate be taken).

The most relevant question in the Partnership's current awareness tracking surveys seeks to identify the level of support for "continuing discussions with the Government about the possibility of locating a GDF in West Cumbria"⁸. Although the reference to "continuing discussions" could be argued to encompass the process that would take place after any DtP, the question does not explicitly ask about 'support for a decision to participate in the siting process'. A specific question about this could be asked in a survey at the end of PSE3.

The issue also arises of whether amending the indicator to explicitly address 'levels of support for participation in the siting process' should apply to just West Cumbria or the whole of Cumbria. If amended, it is arguable that the indicator should just apply to West Cumbria, as it is only within this area that participation may result in the actual siting of the GDF. Reliance would then be placed on the qualitative indicators to ensure that the issues and concerns of the public and stakeholders in the rest of Cumbria were taken properly into account.

In summary then, there may be a case for adding a new indicator that:

the percentage of the surveyed public in Copeland and/or Allerdale that support participation in the siting process should be greater than the percentage that oppose it (ie there should be net support).

This form of wording distinguishes between the two boroughs and would help indicate whether any recommendation to participate is credible in either or both areas⁹.

Current indicator: evidence that concerns raised have been, or will be, addressed where appropriate, including explanations as to why not where relevant.

The Partnership has started to address this indicator through the form of reporting for PSE1. This includes agreed responses to each of the issues captured in the PSE1 report, in many cases explaining what action the Partnership will take in response to specific concerns. It is envisaged that a similar form of reporting will be used for PSE2, thereby providing further evidence of how concerns have been or will be addressed.

An overview of evidence could also be provided in a Consultation Document for PSE3, setting out the Partnership's preliminary judgements against criteria for participation and any 'minded to' recommendation.

⁸ In the first Awareness Tracking Survey, half of respondents were in favour of the Partnership discussing the possibility of locating a GDF with the Government, one quarter (25%) were opposed to the discussions, one quarter (23%) were neither in favour nor opposed to the discussions and 2% did not know. The percentage in favour of discussions was higher in Copeland (59%) and Allerdale (52%) than in the rest of Cumbria (47%). In the second Awareness Tracking Survey, 43% of respondents were in favour of the Partnership discussing the possibility of locating a GDF with the Government, 30% were opposed to the discussions, 22% were neither in favour nor opposed to the discussions and 5% did not know. The percentage in favour of discussions was higher in Copeland (62%) and Allerdale (47%) than in the rest of Cumbria (39%).

⁹ Advice would need to be taken on the minimum number of people that should be surveyed in each borough to provide statistically legitimate results.

The Partnership's final report, setting out its judgements against criteria for participation and any advice or recommendations, would also take full account of the findings of PSE3. It is anticipated that part of the logic for reaching particular judgements will include explicit consideration of how concerns raised through PSE have been addressed, or could be addressed following a DtP.

In terms of whether the current indicator is sufficient or requires development, it is notable that the MRWS White Paper refers to the Government's expectation that engagement should also seek to identify "the reasons for any opposition to participation". This suggests that it would be appropriate to add an indicator along the lines of:

Evidence that reasons for opposition have been identified, understood and taken into account in reaching judgements against criteria for participation

It follows that this indicator could be explicitly addressed in the objectives for PSE3 ie 'to identify and understand any reasons for opposition to participation'. This could help the Partnership identify whether there are any 'showstopper' arguments, and enable it to publish an explanation of its views on any such arguments.

A consolidated version of the indicators proposed above is presented in the overview in Section 8.

7 Is there a role for referendums?

The focus for discussion in this section is, given the Partnership's approach to PSE, including the use of awareness tracking surveys, is there a role for referendums in informing a decision about participation? The potential role of referendums in subsequent stages of the siting process - after any DtP - is referred to in the companion discussion paper, 'The Siting Process and Principles for Local Community Involvement'.

Two sources of information are helpful in discussing how to answer the question: the first is the recent report on 'Referendums in the UK' from the House of Lords Select Committee on the Constitution; and the second is international experience. Each is considered in turn.

The House of Lords Select Committee report

This contains a useful discussion of the pros and cons of using referendums. The claimed positive features are that referendums:

- enhance the democratic process (eg overcoming powerlessness and demonstrating that a policy has public support)
- can be a "weapon of entrenchment" (ie making it difficult to reverse a policy without a further referendum)
- can settle an issue
- can be a "protective device" (ie a safeguard against controversial decisions taken without public support)
- enhance citizen engagement
- promote voter education

- encourage distillation of issues to key principles and choices enabling reasoned judgements
- are popular with voters
- complement representative democracy

The claimed negative features are that referendums:

- are usually only used as a tactical device when politicians think they can win
- are dominated by elite groups (ie are used as a weapon by organised interests)
- can have a damaging effect on minority groups (ie minority rights can be overridden by populist sentiment)
- are a conservative device (ie provide a block to progress because the status quo can seem more re-assuring)
- do not settle an issue (ie referendums can be repeated until they deliver the answer that politicians want)
- fail to deal with complex issues (eg that they oversimplify the issues without due regard to the bigger picture)
- tend not to be about the issue in question (ie other issues get projected on to the question)
- are unpopular with voters who have little desire to participate (based on evidence of the numbers voting in referendums)
- are costly
- undermine representative democracy.

After reviewing the pros and cons, the Select Committee concludes that there are “significant drawbacks” to referendums (para 62) and that, at a national level, they should only be used on fundamental constitutional issues (para 94) eg to abolish the monarchy or the House of Lords, or to leave the EU.

The Select Committee also gives explicit consideration to ‘citizens initiatives’ and local referendums, highlighting concerns about openness to manipulation by well-organised lobbies and the media, and the tendency for them to become fraught and expensive kinds of opinion poll. Overall, the Select Committee states that it is not convinced by the arguments in favour (para 130) and that there are better ways of increasing citizen engagement (para 140).

For the purposes of this discussion note it is pertinent to ask whether the Partnership’s approach to PSE and awareness tracking surveys provide alternative ways of delivering the claimed positive benefits of referendums and, in the process, avoid the claimed negative features. Certainly, the argument can be made that the approach proposed in Section 6 would enhance and complement representative democracy, enhance citizen engagement and education on the issue, safeguard against a controversial decision being taken without public support, and encourage reasoned judgement. The approach should also help avoid manipulation by organised interests, decision-making based on populist sentiment, over-simplification of the issues, and other issues coming to dominate the matter in hand.

International experience

A recent NEA review¹⁰, based on experience in 13 countries, reported that quantitative surveys or referendums have been used as follows:

¹⁰ ‘Partnering for Long-Term Management of Radioactive Wastes’, OECD NEA No 6823, 2010.

- Canada – once a potential site had been identified for a Low and Intermediate Level Waste repository, a telephone poll of all residents in the potential host community (Kincardine) was undertaken.
- Czech Republic – in the period 2003-5, referenda were used as a local campaigning tool to reject participation in a traditional (non-volunteer) siting process. In the current revised process, which relies on the consent of local authorities for repository siting, local referenda are seen by national authorities as inappropriate for siting a facility of national importance.
- Hungary – once a potential site area had been identified using a volunteer process, an unofficial local referendum was held in the potential host community (Bataapati with 450 residents, in 2005).
- South Korea – once potential site areas for a LLW disposal facility had been identified using a volunteer process, local public votes took place in four potential host communities (2005). The site area with the most support was then chosen (Gyeongju with a population of 20,000).
- Sweden – in the early 1990s, two municipalities allowed feasibility studies to be undertaken, but on completion of the studies local residents voted against further participation. In the subsequent volunteer process, the Mayor of Oskarsham gave a commitment that if a majority of citizens in Oskarsham said no then the siting process would stop. Opinion polls subsequently found that around 70% of local residents supported the undertaking of feasibility studies.
- Switzerland – prior to 2003 a referendum at the cantonal level was used to block a siting process that had local support (at Wellenberg). Post-2003, a non-voluntary process has been adopted which depends on cooperation and hearing processes to secure participation.

In the limited number of cases where local referendums have been used in a volunteer process (Hungary and South Korea), it appears that this has only been done at the stage when potential sites and well-defined potential host communities have been identified. As such, it appears that international experience does not provide support for any suggestion that referendums should be used in the current stage of the siting process in England and Wales.

Summary on the role of referendums

The question of whether there is a role for referendums in informing a decision about participation needs to be considered in the context of the proposed approaches to “indicators of credibility”, PSE and awareness tracking surveys. It is the contention of this paper that these approaches offer good prospect for providing a credible decision about whether to participate. It is also the case that neither the House of Lords Select Committee report, nor international experience, provides convincing arguments for using referendums to inform a decision about participation. A further advantage of the proposed approaches is that they avoid many of the “significant drawbacks” of referendums.

8 Overview and suggestions

This discussion paper has sought to identify what the Partnership needs to do to be able to reach a judgement about: *“whether the Partnership’s recommendations are credible given public and stakeholder views”* (criterion 6a).

In doing so, it has reviewed what the Partnership work programme states it is looking for in terms of 'indicators of credibility', and considered the implications for PSE3 objectives and methods, including the potential use of referendums.

'Indicators of Credibility'

The paper suggests that the Partnership consider adopting a revised set of 'indicators of credibility'. These can be thought of in terms of qualitative and quantitative indicators.

A consolidated set of qualitative indicators could be whether in the Partnership's view there is:

I Broad support¹¹ for the Partnership's preliminary judgements against the criteria for participation [and any 'minded to' recommendation] from its current member organisations and those engaged through its programme of public and stakeholder engagement.

II Evidence that (a) concerns raised have been, or will be, addressed where appropriate, including explanations as to why not where relevant, and (b) reasons for opposition have been identified, understood and taken into account in reaching judgements against criteria for participation.

The quantitative indicator could be that:

III The percentage of the surveyed public in Copeland and/or Allerdale that are in favour of participating without commitment in the process for identifying a potential site should be greater than the percentage that oppose it (ie there should be net support).

The first two indicators are described as qualitative because the emphasis is on the quality of evidence and argument about the robustness of preliminary Partnership judgements, and any conditions that might accompany expressions of support, rather than the numbers involved. This is consistent with the Government Code of Practice on Consultation.

The use of a 'net support' indicator would go beyond Government expectations, but could be considered appropriate to informing a decision about participation. Identifying whether there is 'net support' may require the use of a specific additional question in a survey at the end of PSE3.

Something to take into account or a requirement?

The Partnership's work programme refers to the current indicators as minimum requirements. In other words, that *all* have to be 'ticked' for a recommendation to participate to be made. It would be consistent to treat the proposed indicators in the same way. The Partnership should be explicit about this point.

Implications for PSE

¹¹ 'Broad support' should be seen in qualitative rather than quantitative terms. In other words, what is important is the quality of evidence and argument about the robustness of preliminary Partnership judgements, and any conditions that might accompany expressions of support, rather than the numbers involved.

This paper suggests that:

- The objectives for PSE3 be reviewed so that they specifically address the indicators of credibility adopted by the Partnership (eg for indicator I 'to identify whether there is broad support ... etc')
- As a minimum, three major strands of activity be undertaken in PSE3:
 - formal consultation on the Partnership's preliminary judgements against the criteria for participation and, if developed, any 'minded to' recommendation about participation;
 - deliberative activities to encourage a weighing of evidence and arguments (for example in the Residents Panel, Stakeholder Organisation Workshop and use of a PSE3 Discussion Guide);
 - the awareness tracking survey (covering indicator III)
- The formal consultation and deliberative activities in PSE3 focus on key questions along the lines of: Are the preliminary judgements against criteria robust? If not, why not? What would be needed to demonstrate robustness? On the basis of the preliminary judgements against criteria, would you support a 'minded to' recommendation? If not, why not. Under what conditions would you support a 'minded to' recommendation?
- Formal consultation in PSE3 include publication of a Consultation Document, which provides an overview of evidence about how concerns identified in PSE1 and PSE2 have or will be addressed, and sets out the Partnership's preliminary judgements against criteria for participation and any 'minded to' recommendation.
- Neither the House of Lords Select Committee inquiry on the use of referendums, nor international experience, provides convincing arguments for using referendums to inform a decision about participation.

Preliminary conclusion

The suggestions in this paper take into account the Government's expectations as set out in the MRWS White Paper and the findings from PSE1. The preliminary conclusion is that the suggested approaches to 'indicators of credibility' and PSE3 offer good prospect for ensuring that the Partnership's advice or recommendations are credible given public and stakeholder views. The suggested approaches and preliminary conclusion could be tested through discussion in PSE2.