



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

OFFICIAL

GDF Consultation on Working with Communities



March 2018

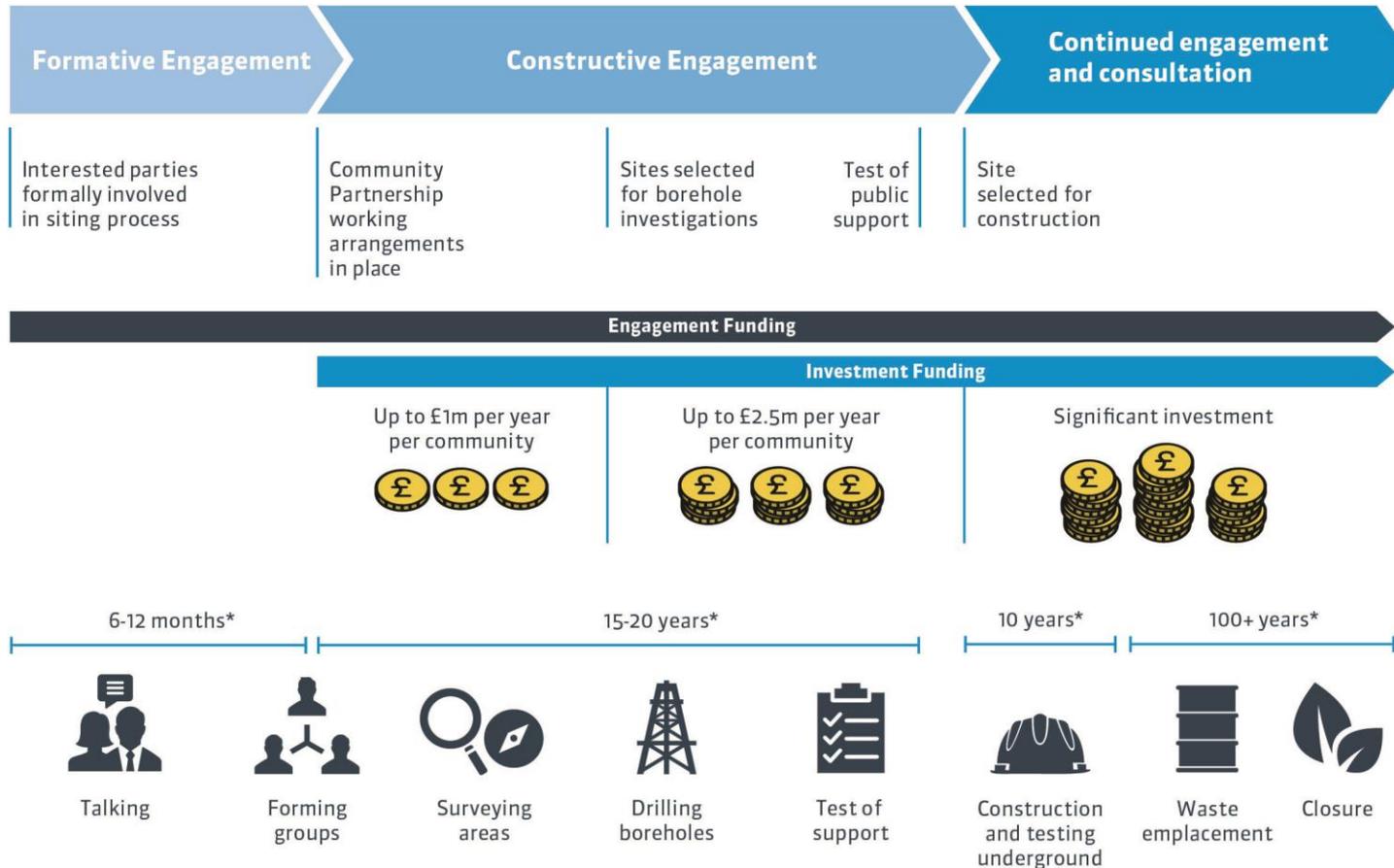


Background

- 2014 White Paper ‘Implementing Geological Disposal’ committed to a **consent-based** approach of **working in partnership** with willing communities, in an **open and transparent way** through evidence gathering and consultation, to find a suitable site for a geological disposal facility
- It set out a commitment to develop a policy on how the delivery body will work with communities in the siting process for a Geological Disposal Facility
- To further underpin the policy proposals, BEIS gathered and analysed evidence from a range of sources:
 - Input from Community Representation Working Group: 2015-2016
 - Call for evidence – working with communities: 2015
 - Literature review – identifying communities, community decision-making, international evidence: 2016
 - Public dialogue events in Manchester and Swindon: 2016



Community engagement framework



*Based on estimated timeframe



Identifying communities

- Purpose:
 - To ensure fair and effective community engagement, who is eligible for community funding and who has a say in whether they wish to host a GDF in their area
- What happens
 - Interested party comes forward with a potential area in mind
 - RWM work with interested party to identify an initial 'community'
 - Search Area is identified using existing local authority boundaries (based on electoral wards). The people in this area will be eligible for community investment funding.
 - This area is narrowed down over time in discussion with people in the community as more is known about where the site investigations and assessments will take place.
 - The area where the potential site will be is known as the Host Community (based on impacts and electoral wards).



Formative engagement

- Purpose:
 - RWM to work in partnership with the community to gain a better understanding of the community
 - Identify potential members of a community partnership
 - Determine if there are reasonable prospects of finding a suitable site
- What happens
 - Interested party comes forward
 - Interest is made public in the local area
 - Engagement funding available
 - Formative Engagement Team set up
 - Local Authorities invited to join, no obligation to join, but should signal they are content for engagement to continue without their involvement



Constructive engagement

- Purpose:
 - To establish structures and processes to enable more extensive engagement to take place
- What happens:
 - Members of Community Partnership in place
 - Local Authorities invited to join, no obligation to join, but should signal they are content for engagement to continue without their involvement
 - Community Agreement in place
 - Community investment of up to £1M/community/year is made available
 - Right of withdrawal approach agreed
 - Test of public support approach agreed
 - Later in constructive engagement, sites are selected for further investigation (deep boreholes)
 - Up to £2.5M/community/year is made available
 - Host community is identified later in constructive engagement



Community investment funding

- A community body will be put in place to administer community investment funds
- Anyone in the Search Area can apply
- Access to funding will be granted on a business case basis, and a community investment panel will be put in place to assess applications
- Criteria for funding:
 - Provide economic development opportunities
 - Enhance the natural and built environment
 - Improve community well-being
- Communities must be engaged in the siting process to be eligible for investment funding



Right of Withdrawal

- To ensure community has a say in the siting process, a community that is in discussions with RWM may withdraw at any point up until a test of public support is carried out
- RWM may also withdraw if they think the process is unlikely to be successful.
- The Community Partnership should make all attempts to address concerns before Right of Withdrawal is enacted
- The Partnership can use independent facilitator to help mediate
- The Community Partnership will decide when/if/how to invoke the right of withdrawal
- If the Community Partnership decides to put the decision to the community, there are three main mechanisms: local referendum, formal consultation or statistically representative polling survey



Test of Public Support

- A single test that can only be carried out when the potential Host Community has been identified from the search area and people have received sufficient information to address their concerns on safety and long term benefits
- The Community Partnership will decide when the Test of Public Support should take place
- The test will be taken by people within the potential Host Community
- Three main mechanisms: local referendum, formal consultation or statistically representative polling survey
- Unlikely a test of public support will proceed unless supported by principal local authorities.
- Following the Test:
 - There will be no right of withdrawal
 - RWM will proceed to statutory and regulatory applications
 - Additional significant investment becomes available