

SEFTON COUNCIL

SHALE GAS (Fracking) WORKING GROUP

SCOPING EXERCISE

MEMBERSHIP

RESOLVED:

That Councillors Hartill, Lappin, McGuire and Weavers be nominated to serve on the Fracking Working Group.

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND OBJECTIVES

Suggested Draft Terms of Reference

- 1 – Clarify the licensing and regulatory framework for Shale Gas development.
- 2 - Clarify the extent of control that Sefton Council has over shale gas extraction within its boundaries.
- 3 – Identify the issues that should be addressed through the planning process, including assessments and information requirements, to enable Sefton Council to determine applications for Shale Gas development.
- 4 - Compile an evidence base of licensed areas and proposed / consented sites within Sefton and the stage of development.
- 5 – Clarify the position and law of “Trespass” in terms of land under home owners and businesses where fracking could be undertaken.
- 6 – Review the studies or policy position of other authorities within the Liverpool City Region, the Combined Authority and the LEP.
- 7 – Identify potential community impacts, benefits and opportunities for Carbon off set.
- 8 – Report to Cabinet on its findings.

Objectives

To enable Sefton Council, as local planning and minerals planning authority to develop a robust response to planning applications for shale gas.

For the Working Group to only address those matters which Sefton has a regulatory role and statutory responsibility, principally through Local Plan policy and regulatory compliance including the National Planning Framework and Habitats Regulations.

To review the Regulatory Framework for shale gas and identify any improvements to local co-ordination of regulatory response and oversight and where applicable reference to Government.

METHODS OF ENQUIRY

Investigative techniques/site visits

- Background reading
- Presentation:- Member shale gas presentation

- Topic based discussion:- thematic meetings, drawing on key witnesses, primarily from regulatory organisations such as the Environment Agency.

TIMESCALES

See Planning Chart

OFFICER SUPPORT

Lead Officer – Alan Lunt, Director of Built Environment

Support and Management of Process – Ruth Harrison, Senior Democratic Services Officer

OTHERS WHO WILL BE INVOLVED (Key Witnesses)

Supporting Officers

Councillor Hardy, Cabinet Member Communities and Environment.

David Packard – Environmental Health and Protection

Mark Long – Economy

Alan Jemmett – Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service

Emer Coffey – Public Health

Stephen Birch – Highways

Jane Gowing/Mandy Biagetti – Planning

Peter Cowley - Legal

Representatives of Environment Agency

ARRANGEMENTS FOR REPORTING TO CABINET

Timetable of committees, link into the planning chart, type of report/minute

PLANNING CHART

Activity	Nov 14	Dec 14	Jan 15	Feb 15	March15	April 15
Scoping						
Evidence review						
Witnesses						
Initial Findings						
O&S Cttee						
Submit to Cabinet						

