

Anti-Fracking Political Strategy

Introduction:

- Aims:
 1. To influence the decision makers;
 2. To bring about a change in Energy Policy – to stop fossil fuel production and to promote Renewables;
 3. To empower people and ensure the voice of grass roots democracy is heard and heeded;
- Produce a Political Strategy Plan of important actions with short (ST), medium (MT) and long term (LT) goals. * See attached Action Plan Spreadsheet.
- Provide Resources (e.g. Share models of good practice, templates for people to use in campaigning locally, as well as data base of Political Bodies and Government Agencies to be lobbied).
- Create a comprehensive centralised email contact list of activists to carry out Political Actions.
- Implement a Political Strategy through the Coordinating Community Strategy Group responsible for its overall Vision, which is part of the Frack Free Lancashire Forum.
- Promote this Strategy nationally through existing Networks, such as the Anti-Fracking Network, Drill or Drop, Frack Free United, in order to widen the campaign, involve more people, share good practice and receive feedback on the Political Campaign nationally from other Anti-Fracking Groups.

POLITICAL ACTIONS

Listed below are Political Actions Groups and individuals should be encouraged to take:

NATIONAL:

1. **Parliamentary Select Committee:** to consider whether applications for fracking be dealt with as national infrastructure under the 2008 Planning Act. (to be decided by Government centrally rather than by Councils locally) – Submissions **by 14th March 2018**; go to Drill or Drop to access Inquiry and Submission Form: <https://drillordrop.com/2018/02/01/mps-to-investigate-whether-to-take-decisions-on-fracking-plans-out-of-local-control/>. Deadline for submissions now passed.
2. **Consultation on Draft Revised National Planning Policy Framework Proposals** issued by The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government – deadline for **Submissions by 10th May 2018** – for details and response forms go to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/draft-revised-national-planning-policy-framework>. This is important as proposals would tend to centralise planning decisions which would be based primarily on economic grounds while diminishing the social & environmental impacts and make it easier to impose fracking on communities. For reference, Alan Tootill has an excellent analysis and comments on these Proposals on Frack Free Lancashire Website and Facebook.
3. **Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Greg Clark** • Petition Greg Clark directly [letter, senders] • Apply pressure in his constituency (Tunbridge Wells). Letters from constituents, appointments at constituency surgeries, letters in local press etc • Arrange a public meeting in constituency – perhaps a visit from Lancashire campaigners? **SHORT TERM**

4. **Copy above to Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Sajid Javid.** **SHORT TERM**
5. **Parliament** • Get Petition signed by 100,000 to trigger a parliamentary debate- this Petition has been going for sometime and has only attracted 20,000 + signatures so far, so may not be worth doing unless there is an immediate rise in signatures. **SHORT TERM** • A drop-in session in Parliament.
 - A public meeting in Parliament. **SHORT – MEDIUM TERM**
6. **Parliament** • Prime Minister's Question Time (PMQ) • Early Day Motion (EDM) • A Private Member's Bill • A delegation to visit Parliament • Rally/Demonstration outside Parliament (FoE is planning National Demo in Spring 2018). **SHORT - MEDIUM TERM**

LOCAL:

7. **Lancashire County Council:** i) Continue to submit Objections to any Applications from Cuadrilla and other Fracking Companies; ii) Encourage anti-fracking Candidates to stand in County Elections including By Elections; iii) Arrange formal meetings with Councillors. **SHORT - MEDIUM TERM**
8. **Government Agencies:** Campaign should also raise objections with the Regulators (e.g. The **Environment Agency** on the issuing of permits or variations and **Health & Safety Executive** on breaches of Regulations). **ONGOING (ST-MT-LT) as issues arise**
9. **Local MPs and Councillors:**
 - i) Provide template letters to be sent to Lancashire MPs, County, Borough, Town, Parish Councillors and Chief Executives of Councils where Licences have been issued for Fracking and are due to be implemented with copies to MPs – to be issued by local anti-fracking groups and individuals;
 - ii) Offer to give Presentations on Dangers of Fracking to MPs and Councils;
 - iii) Ask MPs to raise the issue in Parliament;
 - iv) Councillors to propose Motions opposing Fracking at their respective Full Council Meetings;
 - v) Constituents to attend surgery sessions with MPs and Councillors;
 - vi) Lobby individual County Councillors on Development Control Committee over Fracking Planning Applications;
 - vii) Keep a Record of the above actions to share and expose the position of MPs and Councillors. **ONGOING (ST – MT – LT) as issues arise**
10. **Political Parties:**
 - i) Engage with Conservatives – identify those who have doubts or are against Fracking and urge them to raise their views with their Party in Government, Parliament and Councils;
 - ii) Encourage Constituency Labour Parties against Fracking (e.g. Pendle) to persuade their neighbouring Constituency Labour Parties (e.g. Burnley, Hyndburn and Blackburn) to follow suit and put pressure on their Labour MPs to come out against Fracking;
 - iii) Encourage other Minority Parties (Lib Dems, Green Party) who have declared their opposition to Fracking to campaign within their Councils and in Parliament as well as cooperate with Labour in bringing forward a Bill to ban Fracking;
 - iv) As Scotland has banned Fracking and Northern Ireland and Wales have imposed Moratoriums, their MPs in the English Parliament (e.g. NI DUP MPs) should be encouraged to vote for a Ban. **SHORT-MEDIUM TERM**
10. **Trade Unions & TUC/Trades Councils:** as most Trade Unions, apart from the GMB, are against Fracking and for 1 million Climate Change jobs,

they should encourage Labour to bring a Bill before Parliament to ban Fracking.

SHORT –MEDIUM TERM

11. **Economic Campaign** - As one cannot separate Politics from Economics, the Strategy should involve Actions to change Energy Policy and Usage:
 - i) Expose the lack of **Financial Resilience** of Fracking Firms, such as 3rd Energy (already exposed and stopped from fracking), Cuadrilla, Osprey, Aurora, etc. Under **Oil and Gas Authority Regulations** they have to prove they have the resources to carry out the job. You can find out from **Companies House** whether fracking firms have sufficient funds.
 - ii) Campaign against Banks and Financial Agencies backing Fracking (e.g. Barclays, HSBC, AJ Lucas);
 - iii) Campaign for Disinvestment in Fossil Fuels & Investment in Renewables;
 - iv) Encourage energy users to switch from suppliers of fossil fuel energy to suppliers of renewable sources of energy (e.g. Centrica (British Gas) has 25% stake in Cuadrilla)
12. **Media Publicity**: Political Actions should be reported in traditional Media and in Social Media, such as Facebook and Twitter - to increase public awareness and support. These should include Letters to the Press. This Media should be issued by the Communications Working Party of the Community Strategy Group and shared with other Anti-Fracking Networks to maximise publicity.

SHORT-MEDIUM TERM

ONGOING (ST-MT-LT) as issues arise

* Attached: **Action Plan**, listing Actions, those taking responsibility for progressing them and dates for them to be completed.

This revised Anti-Fracking Strategy has been developed after consultation with other members of Political Strategy Working Party of the Community Strategy Group and submitted to the Frack Free Lancashire Forum on Wednesday 21st February.

David Penney, Media Officer, Keep East Lancashire Frack Free

Revised and Updated: 29th March 2018