



**Liaison Group Forum**  
**Minutes of meeting: 18 July 2025, 14.00**  
**Littlebeck Village Hall**

**Present:**

Matt Parsons (MP) – Anglo American (Meeting Chair)  
 Phillipa Starmer (PS) – Anglo American  
 Heather King (HK) – Anglo American  
 Briony Fox (BF) – North York Moors National Park Authority  
 Rob Smith (RS) – North York Moors National Park Authority  
 Cllr Neil Swannick (NS) – North Yorkshire Council  
 Cllr Clive Pearson (CP) – North Yorkshire Council  
 Cllr Linda Wild (LW) – Whitby Town Council

Seven members of the public were in attendance.

**1. Introduction**

MP welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Apologies**

Cllr. Kay and Cllr. Chance.

**3. Minutes of previous meeting**

Members were satisfied that the minutes were an accurate record of the previous meeting.

**4. Matters Arising from previous meeting**

- MP provided an update on the Woodsmith site related signage on the B1416 and reported that NYC Highways had agreed to remove it.
- MP reported that a number of improvements to the lighting at the Lockwood Beck site had been made in response to the issue being raised at the last meeting.
- RS also provided an update on tree planting at the Woodsmith site following a query from a member of the public at the last meeting. He reported that he was satisfied that the planting was progressing well following a recent site visit.

**5. Project Update**

MP provided a corporate update which covered the progress towards the implementation of Anglo American's new strategy to simplify its portfolio, and in identifying and securing a syndication partner for the Woodsmith Project. The update also covered the outlook for 2026, including the potential for a further slowdown.

- A member of the public asked the extent to which the sale of Anglo American's platinum business could contribute towards the capital needed for Woodsmith.
  - MP responded that there were not specific amounts earmarked for Woodsmith resulting from each Anglo American business that was sold or de-merged. It was rather that the transformation of Anglo American would help to strengthen its balance sheet, putting the company in a better position to re-accelerate Woodsmith.
- A member of the public asked whether Europe was a key market for polyhalite.

- MP confirmed that it was. He further explained that significant sales and supply agreements were in place and that the company was confident that there was a market for the full production capacity of 13 Mtpa.

PS gave a presentation, including images of the different sites, covering construction progress since the last meeting. PS reported that the tunnel was now at 29.6km, and that the targeted advance rate had reduced as a result of the slowdown. The production shaft was under care and maintenance, whilst the focus at the service shaft had been on water management including grouting and installing the steel lining, with shaft sinking due to re-start imminently. MP added that the temporary winder house at Lockwood Beck was due to be dismantled and would take approximately two months to complete.

- A member of the public asked when the tunnel would get to Woodsmith?
  - PS and MP explained that the tunnel was currently at a reduced rate and that shaft sinking was the key critical path activity. Discussion about the tunnelling strategy followed.
- A member of the public asked whether money was being saved by slowing down.
  - PS confirmed that savings were being made as a result of slowing down the tunnel.
- A member of the public asked if investment for Woodsmith was not secured 2025, how likely was it that it would happen next year?
  - MP clarified that the aim wasn't to secure investment this year, but to be fully funded and in a position re-accelerate from 2027.
- A member of the public suggested that the business should finish one aspect of the project, making reference to the tunnel, and that some stakeholders may have lost confidence that the project would be developed.
  - MP explained the rationale for the slowdown strategy including the decisions made about which elements of the project to pause or continue.
- A member of the public asked whether it was correct that Anglo American's copper mine in Peru was doubling in size and suggested the additional revenue generated would be beneficial for the company.
  - PS and MP responded that they were not aware of the plans to increase production at Anglo American's Quellaveco Mine.

## 6. Planning update

### Conditions

RS stated that the planning application to undertake resource drilling at Woodsmith had been approved. PS added that drilling activities were likely to start in September.

MP added that in addition, there were plans to undertake resource drilling offsite to help further understand the polyhalite ore body in order to support the design of the mine plan. He explained that four potential locations had been identified, although drilling would not commence until 2026.

- Two members of the public questioned the necessity of further offsite drilling and why horizontal drilling was not being considered.
  - PS agreed with the advantage of using the horizontal drilling method, but stressed that it was not possible due to the shafts not yet being sunk to depth of the polyhalite ore body.

## Section 106

BF gave a presentation covering the wide range of activities supported by S106 funding, including landscape and ecology projects, tree planting and tourism promotion. It was agreed that the presentation would be circulated with the minutes.

### 7. Complaints

MP reported that four complaints had been received since the last meeting. One involved noise at Lockwood Beck, three were traffic related, and all had been resolved.

### 8. Community

MP provided an update regarding social programmes, covering work in schools and the company's project to support emotional resilience of young people in the project area. He added that he was aware that a request had been received from a member of the public in attendance to paint the gates at Red Gates corner.

**ACTION 1.** HK to take forward the Red Gates project.

### 9. A.O.B

- NS highlighted the issue of Whitby Cliff Lift, which had been closed for a number of years and could potentially be permanently closed due to the cost of restoration. He asked whether Anglo American, in light of its relevant expertise, could help.

**ACTION 2.** MP agreed to take this away and consider how Anglo American could support.

- A member of the public asked about whether there were plans for Anglo American to return to its Scarborough office?
  - MP responded that there was not an imminent plan to return to the Scarborough office. He added that it was currently working well with the team being together on site.
- A member of the public asked whether Anglo American was concerned about the application for proppant squeezing in the Cloughton area, and specifically its potential to interfere with the Woodsmith Project?
  - MP responded that the application to undertake gas exploration near to Cloughton would not interact with the Woodsmith Project, but that it was keeping aware of how it developed.
  - NS asked for it to be minuted that he did not participate in the discussion about the upcoming application.

MP thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.