

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00 am, Tuesday 19 March 2013

Scottish Water Consultation: Shaping the Future of Water and Waste Water Services in Scotland 2013 - 2040

Item number	8.5
Report number	
Wards	City-wide

Links

Coalition pledges	
Council outcomes	CO10, CO15
Single Outcome Agreement	SO4

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Executive summary

Scottish Water Consultation: Shaping the Future of Water and Waste Water Services in Scotland 2013 - 2040

Summary

Scottish Water has launched a major consultation document, “Your Views Count”, which has been sent to all Scottish Local Authorities seeking their input to inform Scottish Water’s draft plan to shape the future of water and waste water services in Scotland between now and 2040.

The consultation is aimed primarily at obtaining views on future charges and investment in services by Scottish Water.

The Council interacts with Scottish Water in a number of ways, including waste water treatment, water leaks, sewer flooding, choked drains etc. This report recommends a response to the consultation where services provided by the Council can inter-relate with the services provided by Scottish Water.

The proposed response to the consultation makes specific references to the Council’s concerns regarding odour emissions from Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works, the physical condition of Scottish Water’s equipment on roads and footways and the condition of the sewer network and localised flooding.

Recommendations

- 1 It is recommended that the Transport and Environment Committee:
 - a) notes Scottish Water’s draft plans detailed in the consultation document “Your Views Count”, responses to which will help shape their final strategic projections and business plan for 2015-1020 and the future of water and waste water services in Scotland between now and 2040.
 - b) approves the Council’s draft response to the consultation document (included as Appendix 1).

Measures of success

The Council's views are taken into account in helping Scottish Water shape the future of water and waste water services to enhance the environment, improve drinking water quality and support the economy and communities across Scotland.

Financial impact

This report is a direct response to a Scottish Water consultation document and there are no financial implications arising directly from it.

Equalities impact

The consultation document applies to all residents in Scotland and the contents have no relevance to the public sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act 2010.

Sustainability impact

The consultation will help Scottish Water to make the right decisions to shape the future and continue to provide high quality water and waste water services in the City and throughout Scotland.

Consultation and engagement

Scottish Water has sent their consultation to all Scottish Local Authorities and released a questionnaire aimed at householders and commercial customers.

Background reading / external references

- Scottish Water's consultation document "Your Views Count".
- Scottish Water's document "Draft Strategic Projections"

<http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/About-Us/Publications/Your-Views-Count-Publications>

Scottish Water Consultation: Shaping the Future of Water and Waste Water Services in Scotland 2013 – 2040

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council has been invited to comment on Scottish Water's consultation document on its draft plan for the future of water and waste water services in Scotland between now and 2040.

2. Main report

- 2.1 Scottish Water has launched a major consultation encouraging its customers to help shape the future of water and waste water services in Scotland between now and 2040. The consultation document, titled "Your Views Count", outlines possible priorities and future plans for services in Scotland, as well as detailing some of the opportunities and challenges that Scottish Water may face over the next 25 years.
- 2.2 It is stated that the consultation responses will also help shape Scottish Water's final strategic projections and business plan for 2015-2020, due to be published in October 2013.
- 2.3 Some of the services provided by Scottish Water relate to services provided by the Council and in preparing this report, views have been sought from Community Safety, Property Conservation, Flood Prevention and Neighbourhood Roads Services.
- 2.4 The consultation document is divided into 5 main sections with views being sought on how Scottish Water should set out their possible priorities and future plans under the following headings and sub-headings.

What might the future bring:

- The impact of climate change on services, availability of water, impact of increased rainfall on waste water assets.
- The effect of demographics with Scotland's population expected to grow by 10% in the next 25 years.
- The requirement for continued investment to meet new standards set by Scottish and European water legislation.
- Resources and capacities to store water in the future.
- The pressures of the political, economic and regulatory environment.
- Opportunities to improve services and reduce costs through advances in science and technology.

Providing continuous high quality drinking water:

- Monitoring and maintaining the water supply network.
- Protection of water sources from pollution.
- Interruptions of water supply.
- Improving long term resilience by utilising imported water using road tankers and by creating new links between supply systems.
- The reduction of water leaks in the supply network.
- Encouraging customers to use water wisely, recognising that water is a precious resource.

Protecting and enhancing the environment

- Managing rain water from roofs, roads and car parks.
- Preventing flooding from sewers.
- Operating and maintaining waste water treatment works to reduce the likelihood of pollution and protect the natural environment.
- Reducing carbon emissions.
- Encouraging farmers and landowners to play their part in preventing pollution of the water environment.
- Reducing leaks and encourage recycling.
- Looking for ways to operate in greater harmony with the environment.

Supporting Scotland's economy and community

- Finding new ways of working to improve efficiency.
- The development of renewable energy.
- Investing to ensure treatment works and networks can meet the demand of new developments.
- Sharing knowledge and providing education to help communities
- Improving communications with customers and better understand their priorities

Investing in future water services

- Looking for ways of being more efficient.
- Predicting and planning maintenance costs for refurbishment of existing treatment works.
- Expecting that capital investment requirements will be between £450-£500m per annum.
- Increasing investment for service improvement to around 4% of income through rates.

2.5 The consultation document refers to a more detailed document; "Draft Strategic Projections" which provides more comprehensive information on what Scottish Water believe their long term strategy should be. This document should be considered in conjunction with the consultation document.

2.6 Although the consultation document indicates that Scottish Water are particularly interested in views relating to charges and investment, it is also seeking views

on how it can enhance the environment and support communities across Scotland.

2.7 The Council interacts with Scottish Water in a number of ways, including:

- Acting as regulator for odour release from Waste Water Treatment Works operated by Scottish Water and enforcing the Sewerage Nuisance provisions of the Water Services etc. (Scotland) Act 2005.
- Water leaks from property served by a common rising main with a street connection through a Scottish Water owned toby.
- Protecting Public Health from the results of sewer flooding and resultant release of sewage into properties.
- Drainage systems serving domestic and commercial property.
- Drinking water quality
- Bathing water quality in relation to discharges from Waste Water Treatment Works
- The statutory responsibilities placed on Scottish Water as a Utility Company when working with the Council in its role as a Roads Authority.
- Flood risk management: the Council's Flood Prevention Team interacts with Scottish Water on two levels, operationally and strategically. The operational aspects most relevant to the consultation document include improvements to Scottish Water assets, under capacity of the network and flood events due to under capacity and blockage.
- Choking of common drains due to deposition of fats and oils from commercial food businesses and inappropriate deposition of household waste.
- Major waterborne incident management and incident management plans.
- In addition, Scottish Water anticipates that as a consequence of adopting Integrated Development Planning and the identification of surplus capacity in existing assets, there will be a requirement to work with both Planning Authorities and developers to ensure sustainable development, such as encouraging new development in areas where there is surplus capacity in Scottish Water's existing assets. Scottish Water also foresee a need to work with local authorities on their development plans to understand where there could be future constraints on development and identify the most efficient way to resolve these.

2.8 Although the consultation response questionnaire is not aimed specifically at local authorities, the draft response provides views on how the existing working relationship between councils and Scottish Water could be developed further with a view to improving joint working practices.

- 2.9 The Council has particular concerns regarding odour emissions from Seafeld Waste Water Treatment Works, the physical condition of Scottish Water's equipment on roads and footways and the condition of the sewer network and localised flooding. These concerns are addressed in the proposed response to the consultation.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Transport and Environment Committee is recommended to:
- a) note Scottish Water's draft plans detailed in the consultation document "Your Views Count", responses to which will help shape their final strategic projections and business plan for 2015-1020 and the future of water and waste water services in Scotland between now and 2040.
 - b) approves the Council's draft response to the consultation document (included as Appendix 1)

Mark Turley

Director of Services for Communities

Links

Coalition pledges

Council outcomes

CO10 – Improved health and reduced inequalities

CO15 – The public is protected

Single Outcome Agreement

SO4 - Edinburgh's communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric

Appendix 1

Draft response by The City of Edinburgh Council to the Scottish Water Consultation “Your Views Count”.

What might the future bring?

In the consultation document “Your Views Count”, Scottish Water acknowledge that climate change could impact on water and wastewater services in Scotland in a variety of ways and that they must be able to adapt to these potential changes.

The Council’s experiences at Seafeld Waste Water Treatment Works in the Spring of 2012, where a weather related serious overloading of sludge caused a major odour release into the community, provides an example of how climate change could have an adverse effect on the environment. Although difficult to predict, it is important that Scottish Water and its contractors have plans and procedures in place for such eventualities.

Scotland’s weather is predicted to become wetter due to the affects of climate change and more rainfall equates to more surface water entering into the sewerage system. At present the new sewerage systems are designed to accommodate a 1 in 30 year return period storm. With the increase in frequency of such storms, the system must be able to work at full capacity. Scottish Water must allocate adequate Investment to ensure that this occurs.

It is recognised that much of Edinburgh’s water supply and waste water infrastructures are old and prone to breakdown and failure. It is considered desirable that Scottish Water makes a significant shift in emphasis to a planned replacement programme to reduce the level of failures and the consequences of dealing with those failures. The consultation document indicates that by 2035 Scotland’s population is expected to grow by 10% overall, with an accompanying shift of population from the West to the East. An increase in population will increase water demand. There will also be an additional demand for surface water and wastewater discharges into the sewerage network from the resultant new developments. Scottish Water must ensure that there is sufficient capacity within the network to accommodate this increase in volume.

Population growth in Edinburgh will also have an impact on Seafeld Waste Water Treatment Works and it is important to be aware of any effect an increase in influent may have on the delicate balances that require to be maintained between the capacities and flows within assets at treatment works to prevent the release of odour.

Although European legislation, such as the Urban Waste Water Directive places certain responsibilities on Scottish Water in relation to discharges, the required utilisation of storm tanks at Seafeld WWTW is recognised as a potential odour source, affecting the environment and community in another way. Scottish Water should address these potentially conflicting interests to identify solutions that meet the requirements of all interested parties.

Providing continuous high quality drinking water

Scottish Water indicate that, although their customers are now receiving the highest ever level of drinking water quality, there is still a desire to improve water quality even further to ensure safety and reliability of supply. This objective is supported by the Council.

The existing arrangement of statutory notification by Scottish Water to the Council of failures in water quality is considered to be good practice, as complaints relating to ill health, and the bacteriological and chemical content of drinking water can be assessed by Council's Public Health Team. In general, the Council will direct complaints relating to water quality to Scottish Water in the first instance, although samples for analysis may be taken in the event that ill health relating to water supply is indicated. This provides an independent assessment of water quality for citizens in Edinburgh and an additional level of protection.

The Council notes the benefits that the new water treatment works sited at Glencorse will bring to the citizens of Edinburgh.

Protecting and enhancing the environment

Scottish Water acknowledge that, although their environmental performance nationally has been transformed over the last decade, there is further work needed to protect and enhance the environment, meet legislative requirements and achieve further reductions in flooding and pollution from sewers.

The Council's Flood Prevention Team have commented that construction of larger sewerage systems to accommodate the potential increased rainfall and increase in population is not wholly sustainable and that Scottish Water must promote the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SUDs) for new developments and ensure that they are adopted and maintained to an acceptable standard.

Reducing the risk of flooding to properties (residential and commercial) due to either under capacity or blockages requires investment in the sewerage network. Scottish Water must ensure that there is sufficient investment to:

- ensure continual maintenance of the infrastructure,
- improve the infrastructure to ensure maximum capacity is achieved,
- improve knowledge of assets, including CCTV surveys and identification of pipeline locations,
- ensure early detection and remedial works on pipeline leakages,
- provide early emergency response times to flood inundation events,
- encourage their customers to prevent disposal of inappropriate waste.

Scottish Water indicate that it is their aim to work with customers and promote the best ways of disposing of household and business waste such as nappies, wipes, fats and oils. Incorrect disposal of such items gives rise to problems that can require a Council or Scottish Water response to clear choked drains and the consequential contamination of gardens and other areas by raw sewage.

Recent discussions between the Council's Public Health Team, Property Conservation Team and Scottish Water Area Managers has formalised a better and more constructive method of joint working that will help reduce the release of fats and oils into the sewerage network from food businesses. The Council's Public Health Team has served a number of Statutory Notices requiring installation of grease traps, where it is indicated that a restaurant is causing problems of this nature. Scottish Water have indicated a willingness to provide the Council with the necessary information and evidence required to identify those responsible and to raise awareness of the the

problems that arise due to drain chokeage arising from congealed fats and oils. It is considered that discussions of this nature should take place on a more frequent basis where issues impacting on both the local authority and Scottish Water can be discussed and joint working solutions identified.

Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works continues to give rise to unpleasant odour emissions that affect the local community. The Council notes Scottish Water's intention to operate and maintain waste water treatment works in greater harmony with the environment, but nationally Scottish Water categorise odour as low in their understanding of customer priorities. From the Council's experiences of odour release from Seafield WWTW, odour emissions can represent a significant nuisance for those communities enduring such odours, and it is the Council's view that Scottish Water must treat minimisation of odour emissions as a high priority. The Council considers that Scottish Water must allocate funding specifically to achieve resolution of odour emissions from Seafield WWTW.

The Council has a statutory responsibility to investigate water leaks from private supply pipes and in general, where assistance has been sought from Scottish Water operatives to deal with leaks from rising mains, joint working has resolved the majority of problems. It is considered that a discussion on supply pipe responsibilities in relation to tenemental properties may be of benefit in order that similar information on those responsibilities can be provided for customers on both the Council's and Scottish Water's websites.

The Council's Property Conservation Service and Scottish Water have historically had an agreed working relationship whereby this service, in response to customer demand, would treat mains drainage issues and subsequently charge Scottish Water for the work done. This relationship is to be reviewed in terms of Scottish Water/Individual Owner liability, following a request for a meeting of both parties from the Deputy First Minister.

Scottish Water's response times to drainage issues relating to their assets should be improved, particularly when Property Conservation have been contacted by an occupier of private property affected by the problem.

Supporting Scotland's economy and communities

Scottish Water's aspirations are to transform Scotland's water infrastructure and to invest in the economy to support jobs and growth while reducing charges to customers. It is hoped that this will be achieved by the use of new technology, improving the efficiency of their activities and pursuing opportunities to develop renewable energy from their land and assets.

Part of Scottish Water's plans to maximise available water resources relate to encouraging customers to use water more efficiently and to reduce leaks from pipes. The Council receives around 300 complaints per annum regarding running overflow pipes in the city. Although the Council does not have any statutory powers to take enforcement action, local neighbourhood teams endeavour to contact the owners and occupiers responsible in an effort to encourage them to take the necessary remedial action. Scottish Water does have the necessary powers to take enforcement action for loss of water, but it is the Council's experience that this is not a power that Scottish Water is generally willing to utilise. The Council considers that more joint working between councils and Scottish Water would resolve these matters.

Roads Authorities expect Scottish Water to comply with all requirements of the relevant Legislation, Codes of Practices and Advice notes currently in place relating to work carried out on the road network.

The Roads Authorities have the responsibility to co-ordinate all proposed road works and Scottish Water is expected to co-operate with all reasonable requests made by the Roads Authority to aid them in this regard. This involves submitting traffic management and accurate start and finish dates, durations and accurate descriptions for all road works made by Scottish Water. This should be provided prior to any work being carried out and in accordance with the relevant Code of Practice.

The Council as Roads Authority expects to be notified of any delay in the completion of the work carried out by Scottish Water, as soon as possible, to enable the co-ordination of other work on the road network. It is also expected that Scottish Water co-operates with providing as much notice as possible and as much detail as possible to the City Wide Traffic Management Group (CWTMG) to allow all road works in the City to be assessed and co-ordinated.

Defective apparatus owned by Scottish Water has been a significant problem in Edinburgh in recent years. The Council has made repeated representations to Scottish Water to tackle this widespread problem. Recently, some progress has been made and there has been some improvement. A meeting has been set up that takes place bi-monthly, between the Roads Authority and Scottish Water to specifically discuss defective apparatus, local Neighbourhood issues and the way forward to rectify any problems.

As at the end of December 2012 Scottish Water had 149 outstanding defective reinstatements. The Roads Authority expects Scottish Water to carry out remedial works to rectify these defects and bring these totals down.

For the first three quarters of 2012 – 2013 (April to December), Scottish Water carried out 1,458 reinstatements and had a disappointing statutory inspection pass rate of 82.3%. The expected target pass rate is 90% or better. The Roads Authority requires Scottish Water to address this issue to reach and maintain a pass rate equal to or better than the expected target.

It appears that the will to improve matters indicated at local liaison meetings does not always translate into demonstrable action and the Council considers that significant investment will be required to address and solve this problem across the City, in order for Scottish Water to meet the aspirations of those who live, work and travel in Edinburgh.

Investing in future water services

The Council recognises that new European and Scottish legislation will require Scottish Water to continue investment to meet new standards for drinking water quality and waste water discharges. The Council supports investment to improve standards for drinking water and reduce the environmental impact of waste water discharges. In particular, the Council expects Scottish Water to prioritise adequate investment to resolve odour emissions from Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works and other treatment works, where odour emissions have caused significant adverse impacts on

the local community. The Council considers that Scottish Water must allocate funding specifically to achieve resolution of odour emissions from Seafield WWTW.

Under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 (Section 16), Scottish Water must undertake assessment of the risk and volumes of flooding within its network. Subsequently, adequate investment must be made to prevent flooding from sewage of homes and public open spaces.