

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 1 March 2018

Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works – Council Odour Monitoring and Assessment Programme Update

Item number	8.2
Report number	
Executive/routine	Executive
Wards	Citywide
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Executive summary

At a meeting on [5 October 2017](#), the Committee requested a report setting out the feasibility and costs of allowing residents to report odour incidents online and to bring forward proposals to make it easier for residents to report odour incidents to the Council.

This report provides an update on the development and distribution of an information leaflet designed to encourage making complaints to the Council and providing specific Council contact details for easier reporting.

The report also provides an update on the findings of the Council's continuing odour monitoring and assessment programme from 1 September 2017 to 31 December 2017.

Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works – Council Odour Monitoring and Assessment Programme Update

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1.1 Notes that the systems are being improved to allow residents to report odour release from Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) to the Council by completing an online reporting form on the Council's website. An updated Seafield web page has been designed and published on the corporate Council website.
- 1.2 Notes that an information leaflet containing revised and updated Council contact details is being designed which will be distributed to approximately 3600 households in the Leith Links area of the City.
- 1.3 Notes the findings of the Council's continuing odour monitoring and assessment programme from 1 September 2017 to 31 December 2017.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Water Services etc. (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to monitor compliance with the Sewerage Nuisance (Code of Practice) (Scotland) Order 2006 ('the CoP') and to investigate complaints of sewerage nuisance.
- 2.2 Following the implementation of Scottish Water's Odour Improvement Plan in May 2011, the Council's monitoring programme commenced on 1 June 2011 in line with the CoP. Progress reports on the programme were made to the Transport and Environment Committee on [29 November 2011](#), [18 June 2012](#), [13 September 2012](#), [23 November 2012](#), [26 August 2014](#), [2 June 2015](#), [1 November 2016](#) and [5 October 2017](#).
- 2.3 As a result of high levels of odour complaints in April and May 2017, the Scottish Government commissioned a full strategic review of Seafield WWTW designed to look at the operation, design and maintenance of the WWTW, the sewerage network feeding the WWTW, the effectiveness and implementation of the CoP, and to include consultation with all stakeholders including the Council and local residents. The final report on the review was due to be published on 9 February. However, as there are now a number of stakeholders who will be unavailable this has been postponed until 23 March 2018.

- 2.4 At the Seafield Stakeholder meeting on 19 May 2017, local resident representatives expressed dissatisfaction about the process of reporting complaints to the Council, requesting that an easier method should be introduced and that a leaflet containing specific contact details should be produced and distributed to households in the area affected by odour from the WWTW.

3. Main report

2017 complaint data

- 3.1 As previously reported to the Transport and Environment Committee, between 1 March and 31 October 2017 there were 182 complaints. During the period from 1 November to 31 December 2017, as would be expected, the Council recorded a significantly reduced number of complaints regarding Seafield. A full breakdown of these is provided in appendix 2. The total number of complaints in 2017 is 190.

Complaints process

- 3.2 At a meeting on [5 October 2017](#), the Transport and Environment Committee agreed to receive a further report setting out the costs and feasibility of allowing residents to report odour incidents via an online reporting form. Initial discussions have taken place with the Council's ITC Systems Development Team on the development of an online form, and further meetings are due to be convened to discuss what information should be recorded to assist the Council in its regulatory duties. This work is ongoing, and needs to be developed to be consistent with the Council's ICT strategy.
- 3.3 In the interim, in order to make it easier for the public to make complaints, and following consultation with the Council's ICT Systems Development Team, an updated Seafield web page was designed and published on the Council website. The page contains information on the Council's regulatory role in relation to Seafield WWTW and on the Council's odour monitoring assessment team, including updated and revised Council contact details to allow easier reporting of complaints via email pending the availability of an online form. A screenshot of the webpage is provided (appendix 1).
- 3.4 The department is working with the corporate Communications Team to discuss the text and design of a leaflet for distribution in the Leith Links area, re-emphasising the importance of registering complaints with the Council. The leaflet will contain email, web and telephone contact details to facilitate easier reporting of Seafield Odour complaints.

Strategic Review

- 3.5 The Scottish Government commissioned Seafield Strategic Review Report is now due to be published on 23 March 2018 following consultation with stakeholders, including local residents, elected members and Council officials.

The report, aimed at addressing continuing and increasing numbers of odour complaints from Seafeld WWTW, will include comments on the regulation of Seafeld, stakeholder observations and opinions and the operation of the WWTW. The report will also provide an analysis of odour control, describe the network and outline short, medium and long- term recommendations. This strategic review will be the subject of a future report to the Transport and Environment Committee.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 A decrease in the number of major odour emission events from Seafeld WWTW and a reduction in complaints from the local community.
- 4.2 That Scottish Water continues to minimise odour release from Seafeld WWTW in accordance with the Sewerage Nuisance (Code of Practice) (Scotland) Order 2006.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 The cost of continuing to operate the current odour assessment and monitoring programme can be met from existing budgets.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 Compliance with the Water Services etc. (Scotland) Act 2005 and the associated Sewerage Nuisance (Code of Practice) (Scotland) Order 2006. The Department provides, at a minimum, annual reports on the monitoring of the waste water treatment facility. The Council also participates in the Stakeholders meeting which includes the operators, relevant partners, elected members and the community.
- 6.2 Any enforcement action the Council takes including serving a notice may be subject to judicial review or an appeal to the Sheriff against the notice.

7. Equalities impact

- 7.1 This report proposes no changes to current policies or procedures, and as such a full impact assessment is not required. The contents have no relevance to the public sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act 2010.

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 The Council is required to investigate complaints of odour from Seafield WWTW and to monitor Scottish Water's compliance with the Water Services etc. (Scotland) Act 2005 and the associated Sewerage Nuisance (Code of Practice) (Scotland) Order 2006, designed to minimise odour release from WWTWs into the local community.

9. Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Community representatives, local MSPs and the Council are members of the Seafield Stakeholder Liaison Group, which meets periodically with Scottish Water and Veolia Water to discuss the Council's role as regulator, actions proposed by Scottish Water and Veolia Water to minimise odour emissions, and any other issues relating to the impact of the works on the local community.

10. Background reading/external references

[Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works - Council Odour Monitoring and assessment Programme Update 2017](#)

[Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works – November 2016](#)

[Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works- Monitoring of Scottish Water Odour Improvement Plan- June 2015](#)

[Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works-Monitoring of Scottish Water Odour Improvement Plan- August 2014](#)

[Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works - Monitoring of Scottish Water Odour Improvement Plan - November 2012](#)

[Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works - Monitoring of Scottish Water Odour Improvement Plan - September 2012](#)

[Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works - Odour Improvement Plan Update - June 2012](#)

[Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works - Odour Improvement Plan Update - November 2011](#)

[Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works - Odour Improvement Plan Update November 2010](#)

[Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works - Odour Improvement Plan Update - November 2009](#)

[Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works - Odour Improvement Plan Update May 2008](#)

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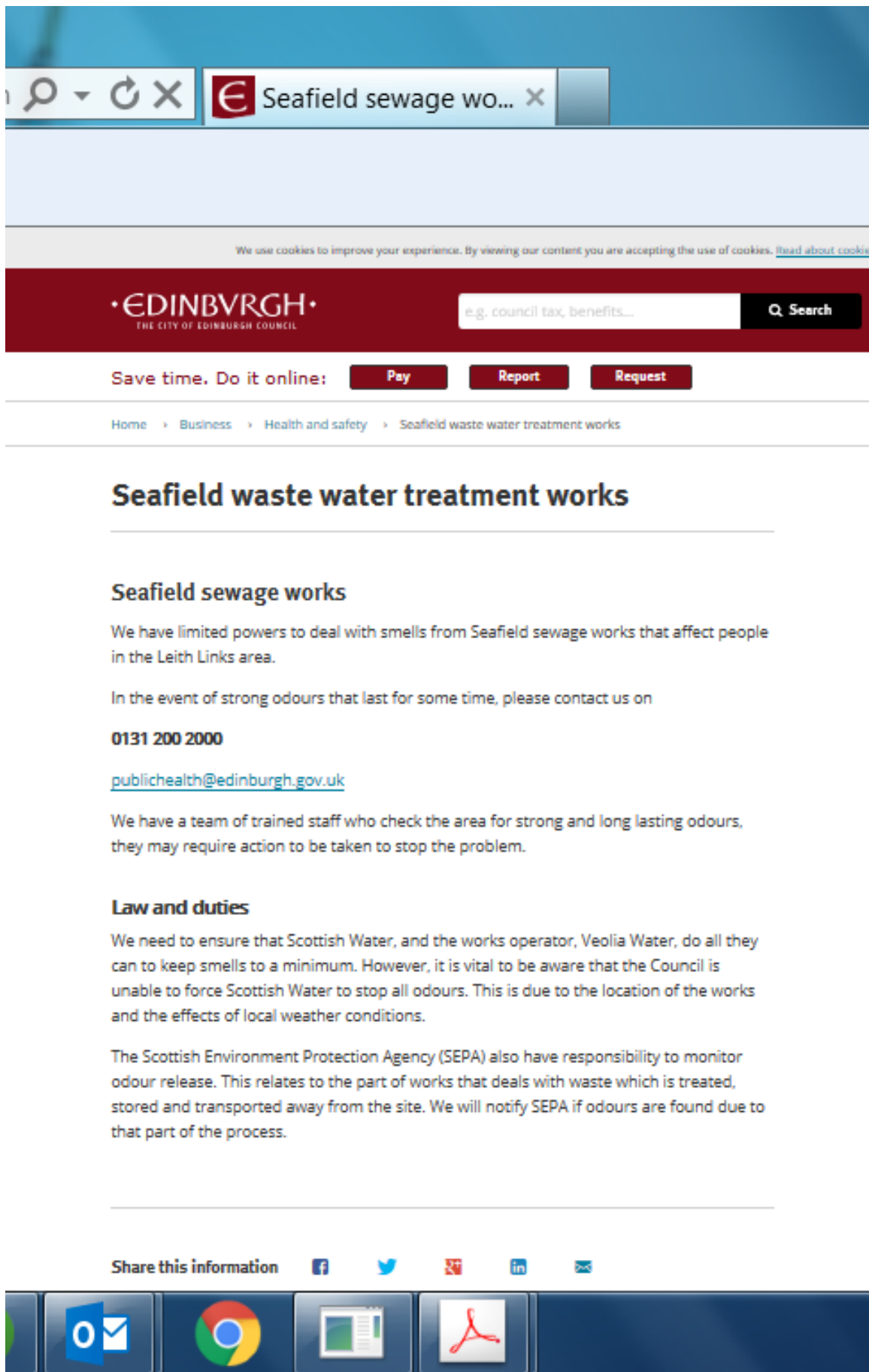
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11. Appendices

Appendix 1: Screenshot of Council Seafield web page.

Appendix 2: Complaints received by the Council between September and December 2017.



Appendix 2

Monitoring Period	September	October	November	December
Complaints received	4	1	2	1
No. days where complaints were received	3	1	1	1
Complaint visits where Council staff detected moderate or strong odour	0	0	0	0
Days where 3+ complaints were received	0	0	0	0
No. individual households complaining	3	1	2	1
Major odour Incidents	0	0	0	0
Surveillance visits by Council staff to assess odours	8	7	0	0
Surveillance visits where Council staff detected moderate or strong odour	0	0	0	0