

Transport and Environment Committee

3.00pm, Wednesday, 20 June 2018

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

Item number	
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	Citywide
Council Commitments	N/A

Executive summary

At its meeting on [9 March 2018](#) the Transport and Environment Committee was advised that a Scottish Government-commissioned Seafeld Waste Water Treatment Works Strategic Review compiled jointly by consultants Amec Foster Wheeler Environment & Infrastructure UK Limited and Cranfield University was due to be published.

On 23 March 2018, at a Seafeld Stakeholder meeting attended by local resident representatives, elected members and officials from the Council, SEPA, Scottish Water and Veolia Water, the final review document was presented.

This report provides a summary of the main recommendations made in the review.

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

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- 1.1.1 notes the recommendations contained in the Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works Strategic Odour Review designed to minimise odour release in the short, medium and long term;
 - 1.1.2 notes that engagement with the local community will inform the Council's response to the consultant's report; and
 - 1.1.3 notes that officers will engage with Scottish Water and Veolia Water to determine how the recommendations made in the review will be assessed, selected and implemented.

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 Committee ([links are contained within the background reading section of this report](#)) on:
- 29 November 2011;
 - 18 June 2012;
 - 13 September 2012;
 - 23 November 2012;
 - 26 August 2014;
 - 2 June 2015;
 - 1 November 2016;
 - 5 October 2017; and

- 9 March 2018.
- 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 Seafeld Waste Water Treatment Works ('WWTW'). This review was developed 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 included consultation with all stakeholders including the Council and local residents. The final review was published and presented to stakeholders at a meeting on 23 March 2018.

3. Main report

- 3.1 The Seafeld Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) Strategic Odour Review final report (Appendix 1) was presented to stakeholders at a meeting on 23 March 2018.
- 3.2 The scope of the review encompassed two distinct related themes. Firstly, an evidence based evaluation of the performance and operation of both the sewerage network and Seafeld WWTW in relation to odour generation and minimisation. Secondly, an engagement exercise with all stakeholders to gather information on how odour from Seafeld WWTW affects the local community and how the regulators respond.
- 3.3 The review process commenced in June 2017 and concluded in October 2017. Appendix A of the final report (Appendix 1) contains the terms of reference, which include the undertaking of an evidence based review of the operation, design and maintenance of the WWTW and the effectiveness of the relevant Code of Practice (CoP), the operators' Odour Management Plan and WWTW site controls.
- 3.4 The report commences with a summary which includes an overview of the way that Scottish Water operates within a regulatory framework established by the Scottish Parliament. It further identifies the Water Industry Commission for Scotland as the economic regulator.
- 3.5 Also included in the summary are three sets of recommendations designed to improve the odour climate around Seafeld WWTW presented as short, medium and long-term measures.
- 3.6 The short-term measures are focused on the next two years, primarily consisting of feasible engineering and technical studies and evaluations, which include improvements to both the storm tanks and the primary settlement tanks (PSTs), described by local residents as significant sources of odour. Also recommended is the development of a contingency plan for dosing the sewerage network at key locations during periods of low or no rainfall, to alleviate septicity - the cause of high levels of complaints recorded in spring 2017.
- 3.7 The medium-term measures (two to seven years) are dependent on the outcomes of the studies carried out in the short-term. They include consideration

of covering the storm tanks and identifying a phased approach to redeveloping the PSTs with alternative covered or enclosed processes.

- 3.8 The long-term measures (seven to 20 years) include identifying options for intermediate WWTWs in the vicinity of Wallyford and the coastal towns, and the development of a long-term vision and strategy for the Seafield site with the possibility of complete redevelopment and replacement with state of the art assets and processes.
- 3.9 The report summarises that the CoP provides an adequate basis for the regulation of odour release from WWTWs across Scotland whilst accepting that enforcement process can be reactive, resulting in the community being exposed to odour before a Local Authority can act. The report provides a close approximation of the procedures followed by the Council. However, it does not fully explain that a notice can only be served where there is a likely or actual breach of the CoP. Some residents have expressed concerns about the enforcement approach adopted by the Council. The review, however, acknowledges that the Council's responsibility to monitor and enforce the CoP is being undertaken with significant resource commitments and expertise.
- 3.10 Although the covering of the main tanks in the WWTW is the stated aspiration of some local residents, there are no short-term measures identified that include covering both the Storm Tanks and the PSTs. The report accepts that the risk of odour arising from these and other uncovered sources still remains. It is therefore highly likely that the Council will continue to receive and investigate complaints of odour affecting the local community for the foreseeable future.
- 3.11 As the implementation of any of the recommendations contained in the report may affect the regulatory duties that the Council fulfils under the Water Services etc. (Scotland) Act 2005, Council officers will commence dialogue relating to the implementation of the measures outlined in the report with both Scottish Water and Veolia Water at regular Seafield Liaison Group Meetings.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 A decrease in the number of major odour emission events from Seafield WWTW and a reduction in complaints from the local community.
- 4.2 That Scottish Water continues to minimise odour release from Seafield 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 Directorate provides at least 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 Seafeld 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 Seafeld 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

- 10.1 [Seafeld Waste Water Treatment Works - Council Odour Monitoring and Assessment Programme Update Report March 2018](#)
- 10.2 [Seafeld Waste Water Treatment Works - Council Odour Monitoring and Assessment Programme Update Report](#)
- 10.3 [Seafeld Waste Water Treatment Works - Council Odour Monitoring and assessment Programme Update 2017](#)
- 10.4 [Seafeld Waste Water Treatment Works – November 2016](#)
- 10.5 [Seafeld Waste Water Treatment Works- Monitoring of Scottish Water Odour Improvement Plan- June 2015](#)

- 10.6 [Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works-Monitoring of Scottish Water Odour Improvement Plan- August 2014](#)
- 10.7 [Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works - Monitoring of Scottish Water Odour Improvement Plan - November 2012](#)
- 10.8 [Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works - Monitoring of Scottish Water Odour Improvement Plan - September 2012](#)
- 10.9 [Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works - Odour Improvement Plan Update - June 2012](#)
- 10.10 [Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works - Odour Improvement Plan Update - November 2011](#)
- 10.11 [Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works - Odour Improvement Plan Update November 2010](#)
- 10.12 [Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works - Odour Improvement Plan Update - November 2009](#)
- 10.13 [Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works - Odour Improvement Plan Update May 2008](#)

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11. Appendices

Appendix 1 <http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/-/media/domestic/files/investment-and-communities/seafieldstrategicodourreviewfinalreport1812211.pdf?la=en>