

Scottish Water Gairloch Stakeholder Group

Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: Monday 10 December 2018

Location: Celt Room, Gairloch Community Centre

Present:

Gairloch Community Representatives	Dr Karen Buchanan (KB) Alex Gray (AG) Ian McWhinney (IM)
Highland Council	Cllr Derek Macleod (DM)
Scottish Water	Kevin Clifton (KC) Iain Jones (IJ) Gavin Steel (GS) James Wiseman (JW)
Ross-shire Engineering	Keith MacRae (KM)

Apologies:

Gail Ross MSP, John Port, Alan Thomson, Paul Griffiths

Minutes

1. Welcome

Gavin Steel welcomed everyone to the meeting, noting particularly that there were some new attendees from Scottish Water and Ross-shire Engineering, who would be involved in the delivery of the project.

2. Introductions and apologies

Attendees introduced themselves. GS noted the apologies that had been received (see above).

3. Minutes of meeting held on 30th August 2018

GS noted that the minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated by email and asked if there were any further comments or amendments. The members present indicated they were content with the minutes.

4. Review of actions / matters arising

The actions from the previous meeting were reviewed, as follows:

Action 1: *Scottish Water to confirm if there is any reason for a gap in reported salinity data around September 2017.*

Scottish Water has not been able to locate data for September 2017. It had located site records for October and November 2017, during which 25 recordings were taken, reflecting the range of performance shown on the m² chart.

Action 2: *Scottish Water to confirm volume of proposed septic tanks.*

Scottish Water confirmed that the proposal was for three septic tanks, each with a volume of 100 cubic metres (so 300 cubic metres in total).

Action 3: *m² to confirm expected performance of proposed new process with UV switched off, compared with other scenarios.*

m² had supplied a revised chart reflecting the expected range of performance and this was circulated to the group.

Action 4: *Scottish Water to confirm energy requirements of proposed disc filter and UV process.*

Ross-shire Engineering indicated that the power required by the new process was just approximately 10kW. This compared with just under

70kW for the existing WWTW. (The power requirement for pumping would remain unchanged.)

Action 5: *Scottish Water to investigate options and develop a proposed basis for additional sampling to be carried out in line with SEPA methodology; and confirm whether winter sampling can begin this year.*

It was noted that it had been confirmed that SEPA would carry out year-round sampling on Scottish Water's behalf and this would ensure consistency of method. Scottish Water thanked SEPA for agreeing to take this work on. Winter sampling was already underway for this year.

Action 6: *Scottish Water to confirm the capacity of the proposed new WWTW to support growth within the existing catchment; and why the Mihol Road area was not connected as part of the earlier scheme.*

Scottish Water confirmed that the proposed arrangements for Gairloch included growth capacity for approximately 50 additional connections. The main limitation was in the capacity of the pumps at Lonemore and it was expected that the new WWTW itself would be able to accommodate more if the flows needed to be increased in the future. This need would be identified and addressed at the appropriate time via Scottish Water's connection process and engagement with developers.

A scheme to connect residents in Mihol Road to the public sewer in Gairloch was envisaged when the wider scheme to connect the pre-existing public networks in the area was delivered, around 2002. At that time, funding was made available to carry out this kind of work under Scottish Water's 'regulatory contract' from government, which determines the money that Scottish Water can charge our customers and the objectives we have to meet. However, it was agreed that this work would potentially be delivered as a later phase as part of a future Quality and Standards investment.

Currently, no further funding has been allocated for 'first time provision' across Scotland due to the typically high cost of this work relative to the level of environmental benefit available (when compared with local/private treatment).

Discussions are currently underway about Scottish Water's next regulatory period from 2021 to 2027. However, any funding assigned for first time provision is likely to target receiving waters where there are particular environmental sensitivities.

Action 7: *Scottish Water to provide a summary of the outline agreement in advance of the meeting of Gairloch Community Council on Monday 10th September.*

It was noted that this had been done and the agreement had been presented to the Community Council, which was content subject to confirmation about the way in which additional sampling would be carried out.

Action 8: *Scottish Water to organise and advertise an open information event for Monday 24th September.*

It was noted that this had been done. The written feedback received by Scottish Water had been shared with group members in anonymised form and was positive, particularly reflecting that view of attendees that progress had been made via the group's work.

5. Scottish Water project update

IJ explained that, since the group's last meeting, Scottish Water's proposals for Gairloch WWTW had been revised slightly to reflect the recommendations of the m² work, particularly to provide space for a further stage in the treatment process should the performance of the UV not meet expectations.

IJ noted that Jim Wiseman from Scottish Water's in-house project delivery team and Ross-shire Engineering were now in place and would be working to deliver the work on site with as little disruption to the community as possible. It was the intention for work to begin in February in order to allow some of the heavier civil engineering / groundworks to be done early in the year, minimising the need for HGV construction traffic through the village at busier times of year. Advance procurement of the key equipment needed for the project was on track.

JW noted that there was also work to take place at Lonemore to renew the pumping station and shared a drawing showing the site layout. A new kiosk would be installed on the site, close to the existing one and this would require planning permission. There was also a need for an additional telephone line to provide improved communications resilience and this would be underground. AG noted that an additional overhead line would not be welcomed locally, so the decision to install this underground was welcome.

6. Questions, feedback and next steps

AG noted that the construction of the new treatment process was being done in parallel with the SEPA licensing process. IJ agreed, noting that the amendment to the SEPA licence is required to reflect the bathing water environmental standards, but that the proposed new treatment process would still significantly exceed the requirements of the current licence.

DMacL asked about the commissioning process and how this would be monitored. IJ indicated that the programme for commissioning was flexible at this stage. In principle, Scottish Water was keen to commission the new process as soon as practical in order to resolve the risk to bathing water quality presented by the limitations of the existing plant. However, every effort

would be made by Scottish Water's operational team to maintain the existing WWTW's performance during the 2019 bathing season, as they had in previous years.

AG asked if all the new plant would be outside the existing building at the WWTW and what the building would be used for. IJ explained that the new treatment process would be outside the building, running around the back of the existing site. JW noted that some work would take place within the building to install new control systems etc. He stressed that the building would remain a significant asset – housing control equipment, office space, laboratory facilities and welfare accommodation.

DMacL asked if Ross-shire Engineering had a construction programme. KM confirmed that it did and that he had a copy with him, but that this was still in draft and subject to review. JW noted the uncertainty associated with rock work which was the basis for some caution, but it was hoped the programme was a good estimate. Installation of mechanical and electrical components would follow on from the groundworks and installation of the septic tanks.

AG asked if the old WWTW would remain on standby in case of any issues experienced during the change-over. JW explained that the two plants would be run simultaneously during the commissioning process until Scottish Water was satisfied that the new treatment process was performing as expected. The biological nature of the existing treatment process meant that it had to be in continuous use for as long as it may be required (so that the bacteria continued to be fed).

IJ noted that there were some ongoing discussions with Marine Scotland about the marine licence required for the extension of the outfall from the WWTW. Marine Scotland's current position was that they would not issue the licence until SEPA had determined the amendment to the site's CAR licence. JW noted that plans for the marine work were subject to the outcome of these discussions, but this work would also need to take account of weather risks.

DMacL asked when the SEPA decision was likely to be received. IJ explained that the usual CAR Licence process would take place, starting with the advertising of the application which was expected to be early in the new year. There would then be opportunity for representations to be made to SEPA before they took a decision. Scottish Water was seeking to work with Marine Scotland to see if the licensing processes could take place in parallel, since the purpose of the marine licensing regime was largely distinct from the CAR Licence requirements.

AG asked if it would just be Lonemore connected by wire to the telecommunication network and asked if there were difficulties with the radio communication system which he understood was currently in place. KC indicated that the future telecommunications requirements were currently being explored. The existing system was approaching an age where it may become difficult to maintain.

7. Any other business

There was no other business.

8. Date of next meeting

GS indicated that SEPA had suggested it would be helpful for the group to meet towards the end of April when it would expect to have a good amount of data from winter and pre-season sampling. A proposed date would be circulated by email.

Scottish Water thanked members for attending and the meeting was closed.