

Perth And Kinross Council

Environment, Infrastructure and Economic Development

7 February 2024

RESPONSE TO WATER, WASTEWATER & DRAINAGE POLICY CONSULTATION

Report by Strategic Lead – Environment & Infrastructure (Report No. 24/52)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek elected members comments and subsequent approval to the draft response to the Scottish Government's consultation on water, wastewater and drainage.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee:
- comments on the draft consultation officer response as set out at Appendix A.
 - requests the Executive Director (Communities) to submit the Council's response, taking into account the comments of this Committee.

3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

- 3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:
- Section 4: Background/Main Issues
 - Section 5: Proposals
 - Section 6: Conclusion
 - Appendices

4. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 4.1 The Scottish Government has issued a consultation (Appendix 1), which seeks views on how the water industry needs to adapt to the impacts of the climate emergency. The policy proposals are designed to
- protect water, wastewater and drainage services;
 - better understand the impacts of climate change on these services; and,
 - maximise the benefits that can be delivered for the people of Scotland.
- 4.2 In March 2022, the Scottish Government's Climate Change Committee (CCC) set out a series of recommendations in its independent assessment,

“Is Scotland climate ready? 2022 Report to Scottish Parliament Recommendations (theccc.org.uk)”.

In this report, the CCC identified key areas where Scotland could make improvements to better adapt to the impacts of climate change.

- 4.3 In the letter attached as Appendix 1 to this report, the Scottish Government have considered how to address the risks highlighted and the recommendations made by the Climate Change Committee. These are set out as choices that Scotland needs to consider in adapting and evolving to the impacts of climate change. In addition to this consultation, the Scottish Government will be consulting on a new Scottish National Adaptation Plan later in the year. This will set out a wider response to the risks set out across the natural, coastal and marine environments, communities, public services and businesses. The letter also includes a link to the consultation which is the subject of this report. Our draft response is contained within Appendix 2.
- 4.4 The Scottish Government have stated that the outcome of this consultation could inform potential changes to legislation. This would reflect the views collected from the public and other stakeholders about how water, wastewater and drainage services need to adapt to the impacts of climate change, including increased temperatures, drought and more intense rainfall. The covering letter to local authorities about the consultation outlines the following points within the paragraphs below.
- 4.5 The Scottish Government recognise that there is a need to ensure that there is a reliable supply of water during dry periods and act to protect the water supplies quickly during these times. Whilst most of Scotland is served by a public supply of water, there are some homes across Scotland that have private water supplies, which are especially vulnerable. There is a need to make sure that they are protected in the same way that public supplies are. Across Perth and Kinross, there are more than 3000 private water supplies.
- 4.6 Members will be acutely aware that Scotland, including Perth and Kinross, is also seeing more extreme weather events such as periods of very heavy and/or intense rainfall, which can lead to spills from drainage systems to the environment and/or cause flooding to homes and businesses. It is recognised, therefore, that greater changes are required in the way the consequences of extreme weather events are managed as their frequency increases across the country as a whole.
- 4.7 There is a greater need to better plan and fund drainage services and infrastructure to be able to cope with more rainwater through the integrated drainage of roofs and roads. The Scottish Government believe that there is a need to ensure that the drainage of rainwater separately from wastewater is seen as a vital service that is planned for when consideration is given to how land should be used. Consideration is also needed regarding how we can bring blue-green infrastructure into existing communities by making the best of our existing greenspace whether they are small or large to help manage rainwater. All opportunities also need to be taken to bring in new blue-green

infrastructure and reduce our hard surfaces, for example, by introducing rain gardens at the street scale and replacing paved areas such as driveways with permeable surfaces.

- 4.8 Green and blue infrastructure is the network of natural and semi-natural areas, features and spaces that lie within and between our towns and cities and which provide multiple social, economic and environmental benefits. Included are 'green' features such as parks, woodlands, street trees, wildlife habitats, and allotments along with 'blue' features such as rivers, wetlands, ponds and SuDS features. These are best connected by habitat corridors, and active access routes such as core paths, rights of way and long distance routes. Further information can be found in our Supplementary Guidance [GI Supplementary Guidance - Adopted.pdf \(pkc.gov.uk\)](#)
- 4.9 Any new infrastructure to collect and manage rainwater will need to be delivered efficiently, effectively and designed and built to drain both new developments and existing urban areas. To do this, the Scottish Government recognise that they need to be planned and built in partnership with local authorities, Scottish Water, developers, landowners, communities and other partners. This approach also needs to ensure that they are operated and maintained so they continue to work properly over the long term.

5. PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The Council's proposed response to the consultation is set out in Appendix 2. Elected Members comments are sought on the response. These will be reflected within the Council's submission by 21 February 2024.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Scottish Government has issued a consultation on water, wastewater and drainage and how the water industry needs to respond in the light of climate change. It is important that the Council provide a response as this could inform future legislation. Officers have drafted answers to the consultation questions and a draft response for elected members' consideration and approval is contained within Appendix 2.

Authors

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APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Letter from Scottish Government on consultation on Water, Wastewater and Drainage
- Appendix 2 Water, Wastewater and Drainage draft consultation response.

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You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	No
Strategic Environmental Assessment	No
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	Yes
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	None
External	None
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 Given the importance of the subject matter to all residents and businesses, this report supports all of the priorities within the Community Plan 2022-27.

- (i) *Reducing Poverty (including child poverty, fuel poverty and food poverty)*
- (ii) *Mental and physical wellbeing*
- (iii) *Digital participation*
- (iv) *Skills, learning and development*
- (v) *Employability*

Corporate Plan

1.2 Given the importance of the subject matter to all residents and businesses, this report supports the objectives within the Corporate Plan:-

- (i) *Children and young people grow up safe, respected, well-educated, and confident in their ability to realise their full potential;*
- (ii) *People and businesses are increasingly able to prosper in a local economy which support low carbon ambitions and offers opportunities for all;*
- (iii) *People can achieve their best physical and mental health and have access to quality care and support when they need it;*

- (iv) *Communities are resilient and physically, digital and socially connected;*
- (v) *Perth and Kinross is a safe and vibrant place, mitigating the impact of climate and environmental change for this and future generations.*

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of the recommendations set out within this report.

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no direct workforce implications as a result of the recommendations set out within this report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no direct land and property, or information technology implications arising from the contents of this report.

3. Assessments

IAT report submitted through portal.

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. The proposals have been considered under the Act and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

- 3.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 the Council also has a duty relating to climate change.
- 3.4 The proposals contained within the report are assessed to have a positive impact on sustainability, as the content of the report is focused on the improvements necessary to better manage and respond to the the effects of Cliamte Change.

Legal and Governance

- 3.5 There are no legal or governance issues arising from this report, as its content focuses on proposing improvements to the way the water industry works, which may or may not be considered by the Scottish Government when changing future legislation.

Risk

- 3.6 There are no risks associated with the proposals contained in this report.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 No consultation has been carried out in preparing this report. The proposed consultation response has been drafted by officers who specialise in the areas covered by the consultation, and seeks elected members support to submitting the response as set out in Appendix A.

5. Communication

- 5.1 No communication has been carried out in preparing this report.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 2.1 None.