



Diffuse Pollution Management Advisory Group

25th September 2017

Meeting Minutes

Attendees

Anne Gray, SLE	AG	Neil Henderson, RPID	NH
Andrew Bauer, NFUS	AB	Julia Garritt, FCS	JG
Joyce Carr, Scottish Government	JC	Maida Ballerini, FCS	MB
Zoe Frogbrook, Scottish Water	ZF	Ian Speirs, Scottish Government	IS
Carolyn Hedley, Golf	CH	Calum McPhail, SEPA	CM
Sarah Hutcheon, SNH	SH	Stephen Field, SEPA (Chair)	SF
Rebecca Audsley, SRUC	RA	Peter Pollard, SEPA	PP
Jenny Davies, SEPA	JD	Darrell Crothers, SEPA	DC

Apologies

David Lister, RPID	John Gallacher, Confor
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1. Welcome

Stephen Field welcomed the group to the meeting and introduced Peter Pollard as the new Water and Land Unit Manager and future Chair of DPMAG.

2. Diffuse Pollution Delivery Plan – Darrell Crothers, SEPA

DC gave an overview of the updates to the plan and the agreement by the group that it should be concise short doc. The document had been previously circulated and comments were invited.

AB asked if the maps could be interactive maps that linked to the data. It was agreed that SEPA would look into this. **Action DC.** RA offered to provide the map links on the Farming and Water Scotland website. **Action DC to follow up with RA.**

JG suggested a couple of wording changes to be put forward for Focus Areas where forestry was the dominant land use in DWPA's. CM went on to mention that for the purpose of the Bathing Waters Catchments areas were going to be expanded in the Bathing Water Profiles to incorporate not just the drainage basin but the full zone of influence. This will include some of the Galloway coastal areas. This does not affect the Diffuse Pollution Delivery Plan maps. AB asked how this expansion would affect the scoring for slurry storage – SF confirmed that more people would score higher across these wider areas.

SH asked about the progress of getting bathing water catchment maps into SEWeb a task that was left with SEPA. DC said this was underway and might actually be complete. **Action DC.**

Final date for changes to be submitted to Darrell, Darrell.crothers@sepa.org by 13th October after which the document will be uploaded to webpage. **Action all**

3. Protected Area Update – Sarah Hutcheon, SNH

Work for Fresh Water Pearl Mussels, FWPMs has predominantly been funded by the EU Life Pearls in Peril project which came to an end this year. Work is ongoing in the Evelix, Oykel and Borgie where SNH are working with FCS and private landowners to improve conditions. The work is progressing but more needs to be done to address issues such as legacy drainage.

Evelix - some regulatory issues surrounding a quarry have been identified

Oykel - silt from degraded peatland is a wide scale issue.

Borgie -SEPA has undertaken some investigatory work in the Borgie, however SNH still waiting for the report.

Mingarry Burn has had a lot of work done with FCS and the population is thought to be recovering. There is an outstanding fish passage issue on the loch that SEPA are looking into with FCS.

River Spey - it was hoped that the Spey Fishery Board would lead and ECAF funded project but that fund has since been halted so the project stalled. SEPA has been looking at diffuse pollution pressures.

South Uist, Machair – there was a loch with poaching and nutrient inputs but the local work has not yet started..

4. Farming and Water Scotland Update – Rebecca Audsley, SRUC

RA gave an update of the work that had been on going throughout this year's Agricultural show season. Farming and water Scotland continues to make inroads with the agri sector by engaging with many farmers at events.

Farming and water Scotland had attended 40 shows and events over the summer. However the end of show season wash-up meeting had not been held yet so overall feedback was not currently available.

RA finished by asking DPMAG members to support the communications programme by re-tweeting or supporting Facebook messages. DPMAG members agreed that this should be done.

5. Bathing and Shellfish Waters Delivery Update – Calum McPhail, SEPA

The bathing water season closed 15 September. The 2017 season has been dull and wet with some areas receiving up to 175% of their average rainfall so a challenging year. At this time SEPA was not in a position to discuss the results as all the information has not be collated.

There are 19 improvement plans in place some of which have delivered significant improvements, Nairn is a good example. There are some long term problematic sites that require are a large resource and financial commitment resolve. This year has thrown up a significant issue of dealing with intermittent discharges that are not

related to rainfall events where the results are showing huge spikes in faecal coliforms that we don't know the source of. CM reiterated the importance of this programme of works to SEPA, as a corporate objective there is a major resource commitment to deliver the necessary improvements. IS agreed and reiterated that these spikes can come and go very quickly and identifying the source is very challenging

Throughout this bathing water season SEPA has been undertaking investigative monitoring and BLITZ monitoring to create a robust evidence base on which to progress improvements.

Ettrick bay has seen significant improvement; Girvan, despite concerns has also stayed at "Good" with the Solway providing challenging longer term issues. SEPA will be reviewing the collated data over the winter to inform and improve the monitoring programme ready for the 2018 bathing water season.

CM went on to discuss the approach to addressing septic tanks discharges within the Bathing Waters catchments and the challenge of locating the non-registered tanks. SEPA has undertaken a mapping exercise to target these tanks and conduct a questionnaire to gather intelligence about the number of septic tank discharges and the level of maintenance in these small sewage systems. The hope is that following this exercise targeted regulatory improvement programmes can be progressed where necessary.

ZF – asked if SEPA could share the template septic tank questionnaire with Scottish Water as their diffuse pollution team could also use it to collate information and feed it back to SEPA. **Action CM to forward template to ZF.**

RA asked if we have any guidance materials about septic tank ownership and maintenance they could circulate – group confirmed the river Dee pamphlet is the best one available and does not require updating CM confirmed the door to door approach with the questionnaire was very useful and had identified new discharges that were previously unknown. AB asked about the communication network supporting this work and asked if SEPA needed support. CM said the catchments were variable in uptake but as the evidence case is built we gain confidence and can target engagement where regulatory improvements will be needed. CM went on to add that the contributions from stakeholder engagement had to date been very useful and positive.

AB raised concerns that when the 2017 results are published the negative press will be targeted to the agricultural sector and asked what pro-active communication and engagement was being done to reflect the good work farmers are doing to improve the Bathing waters. CM responded that he has been working with the new head of communication in SEPA about the need for positive proactive approach to reporting the Bathing Waters work. SF reiterated that this is a priority for SEPA. RA suggested that a TV programme such as Countryfile or Landward may be interested in running a piece. PP and IS agreed that communication the amount of work underway, investment, improved data and information was a good news story that we must promote. Help people understand the pressures are not always agricultural and raise awareness about the likely other contributors. CM wrapped up by saying that the approach for Bathing Waters would inform the development of the improvement of the Shellfish Water Protected Areas in the coming years.

6. Scottish Water Update – Zoe Frogbrook

Presentation is available at; <https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/river-basin-management-planning/who-is-involved-with-rbmp/dpmag/>

Scottish Waters sustainable land management programme did not get the uptake that they had hoped for. The scheme has been updated and rebranded as the Drinking Water Protection Scheme. The scheme is now targeted directly on the pressure that is associated with DWPA issues in the Ugie and Orkney. In 2017 the main pressure has been pesticides, in particular MCPA that is difficult to monitor due to sporadic applications.

Loch Ascog on Bute has been problematic, the landowner is keen but the tenant farmers are less so. The estate has got the woodland trust involved as they would like to plant trees around the loch.

On Arran Asulam was detected in the final water at Lochranza which cannot be removed via the treatment plant. The application was consulted upon and the contractor applied and undertook the application in accordance with best practice guidance, however Asulam was still observed in the final drinking water AB – mentioned that Asulam use is likely to increase given changes with the European rules.

Current pressures are related with organic matter – increase in Dissolved Organic Carbon, DOC, related to changes in land use/ management and climate change. Most DWPA catchments are in peatland or organic rich friable soils. DOC creates problems with colour, increased costs of treatment and increased risk from bacteriology as it provides a food source. SW are working with SNH with the Peatland Action Fund and Forestry Commission Scotland to identify and progress peatland restoration projects.

7. Forest and Water Scotland Update – Julia Garritt, FCS

Presentation is available at; <https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/river-basin-management-planning/who-is-involved-with-rbmp/dpmag/>

JG ran through the timeline from scoping the development of the Forest and Water Scotland to the present day and the contributions of partners through the initial steering group. The group agreed that the recognisable DPMAG branding between the forest and farming was a real positive. The materials are also being produced in Polish as, for many contractors, this is their first language

JG went on to outline the work that has gone towards delivering the targets set out in the first diffuse pollution delivery plan. IS – reflected on the great progress that has been made but said it was a bit of a shame there wasn't a large public launch. MB - explained that the demand for the materials was so good and timing didn't allow for the launch type event they were keen on. The demand, distribution and feedback all indicates that the project has been a great success and the materials are well circulated across the industry in Scotland. MB – suggested that there may be demand to adapt the farming and water templates to create guidance materials for wind farm construction developments.

CH – suggested that the materials could be adapted for golfing and suggested that the Greenkeepers association meeting next April could provide a deadline to compile and publish the materials; booklet, sticker, videos etc. JG and RA have offered CH support to progress this. **Action DC to contact CH to take proposal forward**

8. Delivery of the Priority Catchment Objectives for Cycle 1 and 2 – Stephen Field, SEPA

Presentation is available at; <https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/river-basin-management-planning/who-is-involved-with-rbmp/dpmag/>

The work is progressing well, on schedule and may be completed earlier than initially thought. The uptake of improvements has been very positive with only a very small percentage, 2-3%, failing to comply on the third visit. Some of these may progress to the use of Fixed Monetary Penalties that will start being used at the end of October 2017 in the South Esk and the Ugie catchments. During cycle 1 the first visit compliance was 34%, it's now 57% - it is thought this is due to the communication and engagement works through Farming and Water Scotland.

A significant problem arising in priority catchments is the storage and application of anaerobic digestate which is causing pollution in priority catchments. One of the main concerns is that we have limited control on the how this material is stored on farm land and also on the facilities used to store grass and digitate in operating plants. RA – suggested that a proactive communication campaign could help farmers understand the issues with these materials. AB – raised concern that Scottish Governments Bio-energy strategy was not going to reflect the scale of the issue. ZF – mentioned a major pollution incident in the Ugie that impacted the drinking water and has asked that the agencies liaise with each other to address this issue.

9. Scottish Government update on GBRs and SRDP – Iain Speirs, Scot Gov

Presentation is available at; <https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/river-basin-management-planning/who-is-involved-with-rbmp/dpmag/>

IS gave the group an update on the legislative changes that were recently consulted upon. Of the 20 responses most were about the changes to oil storage. The changes relevant to the DPMAG group are targeted at providing more clarity for the General Binding Rules.

Next year there will need to be further updates to the outdated SSAFO regulations address the issues that have arisen surrounding anaerobic digestate.

Regarding SRDP – 805 contracts have been issued amounting to £5.7 million. The next round starts in January 2018.

10. Meeting close and AOCB

No AOCB

SF noted the significant progress that has been made and significant contributions that the DPMAG members are making to delivering improvements to diffuse pollution pressures. SF thanked everyone for coming along and said he looked forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting early next year. AB asked that at the next meeting if Scottish Government could provide an update on the possible impacts of Brexit. CH said she hoped to give an update on the development or publication of the Golfing and Water Guide and sticker.

Actions log

1.	DC	Request interactive maps in the DPAP
2.	DC & RA	Provide the interactive maps in the Farming and Water Scotland website
3.	DC	Provide the Bathing Water Catchment maps on SEWeb
4.	ALL	DPMAG members to feedback comments on the draft changes on the Diffuse Pollution Delivery Plan to be submitted to Darrell, Darrell.crothers@sepa.org by 13 th October after which the document will be uploaded to webpage.
5.	CM	To provide the septic tank questionnaire template to ZF, Scottish Water
6.	CH & DC	To progress with the development of the Golf and Water guidance documents similar to the farming and forestry ones.