



Agency Board Meeting

29 November 2022

Board Report Number: SEPA 41/22

Chief Executive's Report to the Board

Summary:	This paper provides the Board with important updates on significant issues affecting the operating environment of SEPA, highlighting areas of environmental achievement and concern, enforcement action and major partnership activities, as well as business related issues in respect of corporate performance and activity since the last Board meeting on 27 th September 2022.
Risks:	There are no additional risks highlighted in this report
Resource and Staffing Implications:	Staff updates are included in the Organisation section of the report.
Equalities:	Equality considerations have been built into decision making in several areas noted in this report.
Environmental and Carbon Impact:	There are no updates relating to our environmental and carbon impact
Purpose and audience of the report:	The Agency Board is asked to note the report.
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Appendices	None

Chief Executive's Report

November 2022

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1. Introduction

I would like to take this opportunity in my first report to the Agency Board to reiterate the message I shared with our people in the 'Meet the CEO' calls scheduled for my first week in post. I'm humbled by the opportunity to lead such a great organisation of committed and capable individuals at such an exciting time. I'm very much looking forward to working with the Agency Board and such a brilliantly talented team. In my first few weeks I have enjoyed meeting over 800 colleagues within the teams that deliver for SEPA, our stakeholders, businesses, and the communities we serve across Scotland. I had the opportunity to attend the coveted VIBES Scottish Environment Business Awards in Glasgow and visit our work with partners to deliver the Hawick Flood Protection Scheme. I look forward to the opportunities ahead in work which is vital to Scotland's future, people, and environment, it's a privilege to lead SEPA in the challenge of a lifetime.

As I take up post, I'm grateful for the very warm welcome I have received from across the Agency, and the support from the Acting CEO, Jo Green and the wider Agency Management Team. My thanks to Jo for her steady leadership during 2022 during a challenging period for the organisation.

I have taken the opportunity to commence a reset of strategic direction of the organisation which the Agency Management Team can work with the Board on, as we work to prioritise delivery of the 2022-2023 Annual Operating Plan Objectives, and plan for the 202-2024 Annual Operating Plan. I will present more in January on my vision for the organisation as we develop our new Corporate Plan for 2024 – 2029.

Work is underway with the Agency Management Team to respond to the key thematic concerns of staff within the listening exercise, monthly health checks and feedback received directly from staff both in person and by email since my commencement in post. These include a review of the Organisation's Governance Structure to ensure greater appropriate delegation of authority and empowerment of teams to innovate using their knowledge and skills to deliver for SEPA and for Scotland. A simplified governance structure ensuring decisions are taken in the right place at the right time by those most able to, and closest to the issues.

In conjunction with this a simplification of Agency Management Team meeting structures and internal comms has commenced with early actions implemented before the calendar year end to move out of 'crisis' mode, sending a strong signal to our people that we are moving towards a brighter future, creating time and headspace, building trust, and resetting the organisational expectations for a new normal with our Future of Work Programme.

Against significant challenges this year, I am delighted to present examples of our environmental achievements, enforcement action and partnership activities since the last Board meeting of the 27 September. I would particularly highlight successful release on the 28 October of information under the [Open Government Licence](#). This is a significant step forward, making our flood maps more available and easier to access. Sharing our information freely and widely is crucial for organisations and people across Scotland. It helps them to make informed decisions about flood risk management, further information is contained at section 3.2.

This report is presented in largely the same format as the previous Chief Executives reports, with timely updates provided. Going forward I would expect the categorisation and format to evolve alongside the development of the new Corporate Plan and the Annual Operating Plan priorities to provide a new corporate standard and style to move us forward into the future, reflecting the agile, innovative partnership-based approach required to develop our response to the climate and nature emergencies whilst undertaking core activities.

2. Regulation

2.1 Reservoir managers appeals (AMT Lead: Lin Bunten & David Harley)

We identified three legal persons as reservoir managers for the Loch Steisebhat reservoir on the Isle of Harris: The Trustees of Kyles of Lodge Trust; South Harris Fishery Limited; and the Firm of Campbell Brothers. They fall within the definition of reservoir managers because they are all owners of parts of the reservoir. The legislation provides that if there is nobody acting as a manager of the reservoir then the backstop is that the owner(s) are treated as reservoir managers.

Western Isles Council had provided us with previously issued inspection reports which contained nine measures in the interest of safety. Due to concerns over safety of the reservoir we appointed a supervising engineer in 2018 under emergency powers and a new inspection report was then issued by a SEPA appointed inspecting engineer. It contained 12 direct measures in the interest of safety requiring to be completed no later than 25 January 2024. Three required temporary measures to be completed by 25 January 2020.

The reservoir managers were given a copy of this report and their duties were highlighted to them under Section 48 of the Act. Subsequent letters were issued to the reservoir managers warning that failure to comply with their duties would result in us issuing enforcement notices under Section 69(2) of the Act.

On 1 May 2022, we served enforcement notices on the parties requiring several direct measures to be taken in the interests of safety. The Trust and the Company appealed together, and the Firm appealed separately.

The three parties appealed against these notices, arguing that they were not the reservoir managers. The Trust and the Company appealed together, and Campbell Brothers appealed separately. Two separate appeals were considered by the Planning and Environmental Appeals Division of the Scottish Government and decisions were issued together.

The three parties argued they were not the reservoir managers. The Reporter, however dismissed the appeals, holding the three parties were the reservoir managers and upholding our enforcement notices.

The Reporter also made it clear to the unsuccessful parties, they have 3 months from the date of the appeal decision to seek a judicial review of the Reporter's decision on 22 September.

2.2 Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases

(F-Gases) (Lead AMT Member: David Harley)

Fluorinated greenhouse gases, commonly referred to as F-gases, are a family of man-made chemicals that contain fluorine. They are used in a range of industrial applications, mainly refrigeration. They are also powerful greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change.

In February, we became aware of a large accidental release of F-gases from a meat producer, when the site submitted its Scottish Pollutant Release Inventory data returns for 2021. This was the second largest accidental release to occur in the food and drink sector in Europe. It represented 87% of the total F-gas emissions for 2021. This resulted in a significant increase in this pollutant (around 112%) compared to 2020. An investigation into the cause was immediately launched, which was related to the site's refrigeration system. The investigation is ongoing, and we will determine whether any enforcement action is required because of the investigation findings.

2.3 Water Environment Fund (Lead AMT Member: David Harley)

2.3.1 Bronie Burn Weir Fish Barrier Removal, Ellon, Aberdeenshire

The Bronie Burn near Ellon in Aberdeenshire is an important tributary of the river Ythan. It has a significant population of migratory fish and is popular for angling.

Through the Scottish Government's Water Environment Fund, we recently commissioned works to remove a weir on the burn. It had previously blocked access to around 32km of habitat for migratory fish such as salmon and sea trout. The weir was the only impassable fish barrier on the waterbody.



Figure 1 - Bronie Burn Weir pre-removal



Figure 2 - Bronie Burn Weir site post-removal

2.3.2 Gateside Mills Weir Fish Barrier Removal, Gateside, Fife

Work commissioned by us and funded by the Water Environment Fund to remove a fish barrier in Gateshead, Fife, has been successfully completed.

The weir was over 100 years old, and its removal has opened up around 18km of habitat for migratory fish including salmon and sea trout. The work has also restored natural river processes to the site.

The project had a sustainability focus and trialled the use of a carbon calculator at the design stage and at the end of works. This helped us to find ways to reduce carbon use by 4.3 tonnes between the design estimate and the as-built calculation, with a low total project carbon cost of 6.7 tonnes of carbon.



Figure 3 – Gateside Mills weir pre-removal



Figure 4 – Gateside Mills weir post-removal

2.3.3 Levern Valley river restoration project - Barrhead

We are working in partnership with East Renfrewshire Council through the Water Environment Fund to restore around 1.5km of the Levern Water which runs through Carlibar Park in Barrhead.

The first phase of the project is near completion. This involves restoring the river and removing a redundant weir. The project will reduce localised flood risk and provide fish passage. It is also turning vacant and derelict land into an attractive green space for the local community. Groundworks for the whole site will be completed in 2023.



Figure 5 – River Instream Works (phase 1)

2.4 Water scarcity (Lead AMT Member: Lin Bunten)

Scotland continued to experience low rainfall into September. Due to water scarcity, we took measures to protect the environment by suspending abstraction licences for some businesses in the Tyne, Ythan and lower Tweed catchments on 1 September.

As with earlier water scarcity work in the Eden catchment, the suspensions were applied for as short a time as possible. The action took place after engagement with the businesses affected, trade bodies, the Scottish Government, and Ministers.

We contacted all abstractors prior to the suspensions, carried out compliance visits while licences were suspended, and contacted licence holders to advise as soon as flows improved, and suspensions could be lifted.

We lifted the suspensions for the Tweed, Tyne, and Ythan catchments on 8 and 9 September.

Over the course of this summer, we temporarily suspended 175 licences. When we carried out visits to the areas where licences were suspended, we found excellent compliance with suspension notices.

We are currently undertaking a review of water scarcity work. This will inform an update to the National Water Scarcity Plan and allow immediate engagement with the farming sector to prepare for 2023.

2.5 Enforcement: Illegal Activity (Lead AMT Member: Lin Bunten)

At the start of this financial year, we had registered a total of 285 illegal activities for prioritisation and tracking. Since April, we have registered a further 44 sites from notifications received from members of the public and information from partner agencies. We have concluded investigation and enforcement at 19 sites. Of the sites registered at the start of the year 53 had been identified as high priority. High priority is determined by assessing levels of environmental impact and involvement of organised crime groups which are also having social and economic impact.

Investigation and enforcement at six of the high priority sites has been concluded. Most of the prioritised sites are large scale and of a complex nature.

2.6 Permitting – Renewable Energy (Lead AMT member: Lin Bunten)

A developing trend to increase the output of hydroelectric schemes is to add an impoundment to provide more water storage. The River Pattack Renewable Energy Scheme applied to do just that and if granted would increase production by 10%.

The hydroelectric scheme is located approximately 10km Southwest of Dalwhinnie on the River Pattack. It produces 20GWh of power per year (this is equivalent of delivering electricity to around 6000 homes per annum, an increase of 500 homes*).

This was a difficult application to consider given the activity impacts on several water bodies, including Loch Pattack and the River Pattack. We have worked with the operator to ensure that the impacts of the scheme were acceptable when balanced against the renewable power generation. The permit has now been issued.

*Reference - Based on [Average annual domestic Standard Electricity](#) by home consumption of 3,600kWh/year

2.7 Farm work (Lead AMT Member: Lin Bunten)

2.7.1 Argyll farm work

Amendments to the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 on 1 January 2022 revoked the Control of Pollution (Silage, Slurry, and Agricultural Fuel Oil) (Scotland) Regulations 2003 (as amended) and introduced a six new agricultural General Binding Rules.

During the consultation phase and since the introduction of these new General Binding Rules the only farming areas in Scotland to raise issues are farmers in Argyll. They have lobbied both the Environment and Agricultural Ministers, local councillors, and MSP regarding the economic impact these new Regulations will have on their business. We have responded to numerous Freedom of Information Requests on this subject.

The farmers' concerns have centred around the introduction of a minimum slurry storage capacity of 22 weeks and the need to apply slurry to land using precision application methods, banning the use of splash plates. Also, the effect of the revocation Regulations 2003 was that farmers lost their exemption for pre- 1991 structures for slurry and silage. This has meant they need to ensure old facilities were structurally sound, fit for purposes and impermeable.

The Scottish Government asked us to work with the National Farmers Union and farmers in Argyll to understand their concerns. On 30 June, we hosted a meeting along with the National Farmers Union, with 45 Kintyre farmers in Campbeltown to follow up on their concerns. The meeting was well received, and an agreement was reached with us to directly engage with farmers in this region.

We spent the last week of September in the catchment assessing farm compliance with the General Binding Rules and visited 54 farms during the week.

All visits were positively received, and advice and guidance were provided. This work has helped the farmers better understand the implication of the Regulations on their businesses. We will continue to work with farmers to ensure compliance.

2.7.2 BBC Wales programme on farming

In October, BBC Wales aired an episode [of its 'Investigates' programme](#). The programme raised concerns about agriculture pollution around the River Wye in Wales. We took part in the programme and shared our good practice of regulating the farming sector in Scotland. We explained how we work to build relationships with farmers to ensure compliance and avoid pollution.

2.8 Enforcement: Fixed Monetary Penalties (Lead AMT Member: Lin Bunten)

We have issued 13 Fixed Monetary Penalties so far this year. In March 2022 our [Policy for Communicating Penalties and Undertakings](#) was updated to notify the public that any Fixed Monetary Penalties issued after 1 March 2022 would have names and partial addresses of the individuals published on our web site. Of the 13 Fixed Monetary Penalties issued this year, the names and partial addresses of two individuals have now been published on the [Penalties Imposed and Undertakings Accepted](#) page on our website.

Civil debt recovery processes are now being used for unpaid Fixed Monetary Penalties.

2.9 Network Rail Engagement (AMT Lead Member: David Pirie)

Network Rail and its contractors are undertaking a programme of works to ensure the safety of railway crossings over rivers. Approximately 100 structures need urgent attention.

We have been working with Network Rail to help support this work. We have held four workshops where we explained how our permitting process works and shared some fundamental principles of river hydromorphology (hydromorphology considers the physical character and content of water bodies).

This will help Network Rail to create designs that are more resistant to the increased size and frequency of flooding that we expect to see due to climate change. The designs should also be less likely to block the movements of migratory fish.

This increased understanding should also mean licence applicants are able to get the details of their application completed correctly. This will allow licences to be issued more quickly and with less input needed from us.

2.10 Bathing Waters – Electronic Beach Signs (AMT Lead Member: David Pirie)

In October, replacement ‘totem style’ electronic signs were installed at Ayr, Prestwick, and Irvine bathing water beaches. A further two of these totem signs will be installed later in the autumn at Troon and Saltcoats/Ardrossan.

The signs currently display tide times and public information messages to help keep beaches clean. During the bathing water season, they will display our daily water quality forecasts or inform on any pollution event. They will provide real-time advice to bathers and beach users.



Figure 6 – Ayr Bathing Waters Electronic Beach Sign

2.11 Visit by Scottish Government - laboratory testing wastewater for Covid-19 (AMT Lead Member: David Pirie)

On 6 October, we hosted a visit by the Scottish Government's - Population Health Directorate. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have been undertaking analysis of wastewater samples for quantitative signs of Covid-19 in samples collected by Scottish Water. This analysis gives us an indication of the level of Covid-19 in samples of wastewater and an indication of the level of Covid-19 in the communities whose wastewater we are sampling.

The group included the Director of Population Health and the Deputy Director Future Threats Surveillance Division.

After the visit to the laboratory, we held a discussion around the future potential of wastewater-based epidemiology and how it can support public health in Scotland. We are expecting to continue this analysis programme until the end of March 2023.

2.12 National Modelling Framework (AMT Lead Member: David Pirie)

We have been the lead organisation in delivering the National Modelling Framework for Air Quality in Scotland. This involves developing a two-tiered standardised approach to modelling air quality in Scotland.

The framework supported the development and introduction of four Low Emission Zones in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. We provided detailed air quality models for the four cities.

In partnership with the four local authorities and Transport Scotland, we are now developing the template for reporting on the performance of these Low Emissions Zones. We are planning to develop a series of visualisation tools for the public-facing [Low Emission Zones website](#).

2.13 Local Authority analysis of road transport emissions

(AMT Lead Member: David Pirie)

We have been working with Glasgow City Council on their sustainable transport strategy. We have developed a CO₂-emissions tool using the Spotfire software. This replaces the Council's spreadsheet-based tool.

The new tool provides an interactive way to explore the make-up of CO₂ emissions from road transport. It includes data for all Scottish Local Authorities, combining vehicle and road traffic statistics from Transport Scotland and the UK Government with detailed emission factors.

The tool calculates the proportion that each of the 15 vehicle types contribute to total CO₂ emissions across the Local Authority. It is interactive and can be used to explore and visualise the CO₂ impact of different traffic policy interventions. These include changing the make-up of the fleet e.g., by fuel type, or varying the distance and speed that is travelled by different categories of vehicle, and traffic reduction measures with the local authority areas.

2.14 Community Science activities (AMT Lead Member: David Pirie)

We are currently involved in a range of projects designed to inform, educate, and engage with communities on air pollution and the steps they can take to reduce their impact on poor air quality.

2.14.1 Engaging Stirling village communities on air quality

A partnership project between the University of Stirling, Stirling Council and SEPA. The project started in October in Aberfoyle. It will move onto Doune and Deanston, Fintry, Kippen, and Thornhill, running until March 2023. During the first phase of the project, in Aberfoyle, Stirling Council installed air quality monitors on lampposts.

A series of village community engagement activities were also held. The University of Stirling held a community-based workshop. We visited the local primary school and held in-class demonstrations on the different sources of air pollutants. We have also installed air quality monitors across the village. The sensors will capture emissions from vehicles and from off-grid domestic heating sources.

The data collected will encourage communities to be more aware of local air pollution.



Figure 7 – Air Quality sensor

The monitoring in each village will last a month. During this time, the University of Stirling will host a series of community engagement events. These events aim to empower local communities to take ownership of local air quality monitoring. We are managing the project and developing visual tools for the public to view the data, with support from researchers at the University.

2.14.2 Mobile air quality exhibition

We launched, a mobile air quality exhibition in 2020, in partnership with Glasgow Science Centre. The aim of the exhibition is to highlight the importance of good air quality. The exhibition has been on display in Aberdeen and Edinburgh. It moved to Dunblane Library from 19-22 October as part of the Stirling Science Festival.

The exhibition encourages visitors to think about their local environment. How poor air quality can affect them and their families and how we can all help to improve air quality through our daily choices.

It uses an air quality 'Place Standard' tool. This allows visitors to share their thoughts on the environments they live and work in, and what can be done to improve air quality.

The exhibition is also being promoted as part of the engaging Stirling village communities project on air quality and will be in Dunblane [until early November](#).

2.15 Scotland's Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) – stakeholder awareness campaign progress (Lead AMT Member: David Harley)

The first phase of the producer focused Deposit Return Scheme campaign is now completed. We have now moved into the engagement phase. The campaign aims to signpost drink producers to our website for information and guidance.

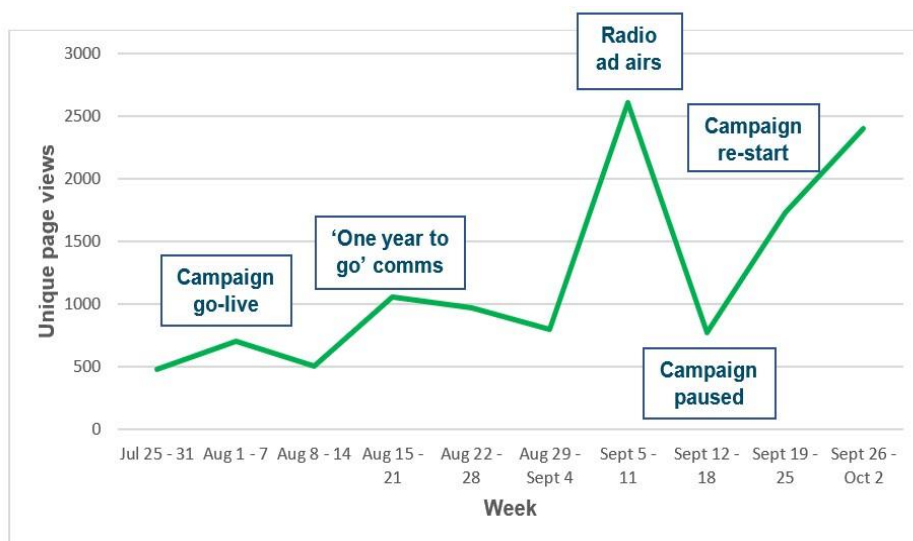


Figure 8. Traffic to the DRS web pages – weekly analytics during campaign period

By tracking traffic to the [Deposit Return Scheme pages on our website](#), we can monitor the impact and effectiveness of the campaign. Early analysis using google analytics illustrates the campaign performance so far. The peaks in page views coincide with key activity.

The launch of the campaign in August saw 119% increase in traffic to web pages compared to July. The radio advert airing on 5 Sept saw a 104% increase in traffic to web pages compared to August. The drop in traffic was during the period of national mourning, which saw all communications activity paused.

The Deposit Return Scheme landing page is now the fourth most frequently visited page on our website compared to pre-campaign when it was 36th.

We can also identify where traffic is coming from, re-campaign this was predominantly through google searches or signposting from Circularity Scotland (the scheme administrator) or Zero Waste Scotland. Now it is through google searches, signposting direct from our digital marketing or through the direct link used in the campaign.

3. Flooding

3.1 Scottish Flood Forecasting Service (AMT Lead Member: David Pirie)

The Scottish Flood Forecasting Service is our strategic partnership with the Met Office. The service integrates expertise and information from both organisations. The aim is to deliver a state-of-the-art flood forecasting service for Scotland. Our flood duty forecasters speak to the Met Office forecasters daily. This is to assess the risk of flooding over the next five days, and to draft our daily Flood Guidance Statement.

This statement is issued to over 900 civil contingencies responders. We also talk regularly with Met Office staff through the partnership steering and working groups, where we cover all aspects of our joint work.

At the end of September, and for the first time in over three years, we held an in-person roadshow in Perth. The roadshow brought together Met Office forecasters and civil contingency advisors. Our flood forecasters and advisors also attended. The event helped us reconnect and discuss topics such as risk assessment decision making, customer satisfaction, the challenges around surface water forecasting and our roadmap to address these topics.

We also held a half-day virtual session in early October. This session was open to all our flood duty officers and Hydrology & Flooding staff. Over 100 people from our organisation and the Met Office joined the session. We heard from Moray Council's senior engineer, who talked about how they are using our and the Met Office services. We also presented information, along with the Met Office, about service delivery.

These activities show the strength of the partnership and our excellent operational and strategic relationship with the Met Office.

3.2 Open Government Licencing (Lead AMT Member: David Pirie)

On the 28 October, we released a set of flooding information under the [Open Government Licence](#). This information included:

- Flood Hazard Maps (release version 2.0)
- Flood Risk Management Local Plan Districts dataset
- Potentially Vulnerable Areas dataset
- Flood Risk Management Target Areas dataset

The flood hazard maps summarise the best publicly available information on flood hazard in Scotland. The other three datasets help define the focus of national and local flood risk management plans. The plans are designed to reduce the impacts of flooding for Scotland. They are available through our flood map viewer and our data download webpage.

This is a significant step forward, making our flood maps more available and easier to access. Sharing our information freely and widely is crucial for organisations and people across Scotland. It helps them to make informed decisions about flood risk management.

It also reduces internal workload in terms of data enquiries and securing permission for externals to use data for projects. We achieved this milestone following a lengthy process where we worked with the organisations, who provided information, to secure their consent in making the information publicly and freely available.

3.3 @SEPAFlood - Twitter channel (Lead AMT Member: David Pirie)

During climate week, we introduced a new twitter channel, [@SEPAFlood](#), to share live updates and information with those who benefit from our flooding services. The twitter channel will make our information more available and relevant to those who rely on our flooding information. Since launching, the flooding twitter channel has over 350 followers.

3.4 Flood Information Display Portal (Lead AMT Member: David Pirie)

We are currently developing a Flood Information Display Portal. Several of our products will be made available through this single portal including flood risk and hazard maps, reservoirs, Natural Flood Management, and potentially vulnerable areas information. The Flood Risk Assessment Scotland will be the first project added to the portal.

3.5 Maintaining Gauging Stations (Lead AMT Member: David Pirie)

Work on the 2022-2023 Hydrometric Network upgrades programme is progressing well with only minor delays. A significant proportion of the contracts for this year have now been awarded and work has started. Land access continues to be an issue at some of our stations and this is being actively worked on to alleviate future pressures in 2023-2024.

4. Organisation

4.1 Scottish One Health Breakthrough Partnership: Eco-directed formulary

(Lead AMT Member: Bridget Marshall)

We are a key partner of the Scottish One Health Breakthrough Partnership. The partnership is a global, cross-sector group formed in 2017. Group members include us, researchers, pharmaceutical public health specialists and Scottish Water. The partnership has been successful in a recent application to the UK Research and Innovation Medical Research Council – ‘Environmental sustainability in life sciences and medical practice’ fund.

NHS Highland, the University of the Highlands and Islands - Environmental Research Institute, and the University of Nottingham have been awarded £100,000 from the fund.

The project will build on established networks and resources from the One Health Breakthrough Partnership. It aims to develop and evaluate, for the first time in the UK, an eco-driven prescription methodology.

This methodology incorporates environmental sustainability alongside clinical and cost effectiveness. Health boards have a list of preferred prescribing choices for clinicians called a formulary. Currently these formularies consider patient safety, clinical effectiveness, and cost effectiveness. They do not consider the environmental impact of a medicine.

The proposed approach is that if pharmaceuticals are of a comparable medical efficacy, safety, and effectiveness, then the environmental impact (e.g., drug eco-toxicity, predominance towards antimicrobial resistance) should be considered during the formulary process. This will better inform prescribers, enabling them to make more sustainable prescribing choices.

The project will use our recently launched interactive [visualisation tool](#). This tool compares environmental pharmaceutical data and prescribing rates in Scotland (a world first) to progress prioritisation of formulary changes, and aid environmental risk profiling with eco-toxicity experts.

4.2 Future of Work (Lead AMT Member: John Kenny)

We continue to make progress with the re-opening of our buildings. Fourteen buildings are now open. This includes Arbroath, Dingwall, Dumfries, Newton Stewart and Glenrothes which all re-opened during September and October.

This will give more staff the option of hybrid working. Public access to these offices is still restricted to arranged access only. We are on schedule to re-open all our buildings except for Stirling and Fraserburgh offices, by December. While some of our buildings remain closed, our public sector partners (NatureScot, the Scottish Government and Scottish Enterprise) are providing access to their buildings for several staff who find it difficult to work from home.

4.3 Pay Offer - Financial Year 2022-2023 (Lead AMT Member: Angela Milloy)

We recognise the ongoing economic challenges for staff and the organisation and pay negotiations with Unison and Scottish Government are continuing.

4.4 Health and Wellbeing Group (Lead AMT Member: John Kenny)

The Health and Wellbeing group was set up to support organisational wellbeing. The group includes senior leaders, UNISON representatives and staff representatives from across the organisation.

The group met for a planning day on 24 October. The purpose of the day was to identify and develop ideas and actions for supporting wellbeing in 2022-2023 and the longer term.

Public Health Scotland's – Healthy Working Lives Officer also attended the session. They provided an update on the revised Healthy Working Lives programme. This update will help us to review what aspects of the Healthy Working lives programme we will take forward and promote.

The group will meet again in November to develop a Health and Wellbeing action plan.

4.5 Finance (Lead AMT Member: Angela Milloy)

In September's report, we advised that the draft Annual Report and Accounts 2021-2022 was well underway. We also gave details of the planned timeline for submission to the Audit Committee and the Agency Board.

The timeline has changed at the request of external audit and the report will now be considered at the Special Audit Committee meeting on 24 November and the Agency Board on 29 November. We have sought Audit Committee member comments on the draft before the meeting and are currently working through these.

Long term support to the Agresso Helpdesk remains a priority. We have successfully recruited to the Agresso Team Manager post and are currently negotiating a start date with the successful candidate.

The Sustainable Procurement Manager left at the end of August to take up their new role in Hydrology, Evidence and Flooding. Following a recruitment process an internal appointment has now been made to fill the vacant Sustainable Procurement Manager post.

4.6 Procurement (Lead AMT Member: Angela Milloy)

Work is progressing against the Procurement pipeline in consultation with Contract Managers.

Procurement participated in the Supplier Development Programme – ‘Meet the Buyer’ North event in September and attended the ‘Procurex Scotland’ Conference in October.

We have refreshed and republished our Standard Procurement templates. This included an emphasis on incorporating our Regenerative SEPA goals.

Efforts to review Standing Financial Instruction 4 - procurement controls, are nearing completion. and in consultation with Finance, Capital Procurement Governance and control points are being drafted to improve realisation in this space.

This will introduce a transparent ‘3-phased-approach’ to agreeing Capital inclusions with defined decision points and standardised templates embedded in the process. It will also include mechanisms for project prioritisation and substitution if needed.

4.7 Charging (Lead AMT Member: Angela Milloy)

The invoicing run for 2022-2023 was issued at the beginning of August and outstanding debt is being pursued. We plan to send outstanding debt to the debt collectors in November.

The service provision for taking online payments and Special Waste Consignment Notes will cease in January 2023. We have identified the replacement and are putting in the appropriate contracts.

Nicole Paterson
Chief Executive
November 2022