

**Outer Hebrides Area Advisory Group Meeting**  
**SEPA's Stornoway Office**

**Minutes**  
**08/10/2013**

<b>AAG Representative</b>	<b>Initials</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Stuart Baird	SB	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Jenny Davies	JD	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
David Denoon	DD	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Malcolm MacPhail	MM	Scottish Water
Ben Collier	BC	Outer Hebrides Fisheries Trust
Celine	C	Outer Hebrides Fisheries Trust
Isla MacAulay	IM	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, council planning and development

**Apologies;**

David Muir (CNE-Sair), Diane MacPherson (CNE-Sair), Patrick Hughes (SNH)

**Welcome and introduction. Stuart Baird, Chair**

SB welcomed all and introduced the meeting by doing a round the table introduction. JD introduced as the new coordinator for the group. SB gave thanks to the significant contributions made by MG over the past few years. SB asked if, given the change to the boundary the attendees felt the group was well represented and should we look to bring in new members. The group discussed representation from the aquaculture industry (Marine harvest, TSSC, Loch Duart and Hjaltland are the 4 companies in the area) representation has been sought unsuccessfully before. JD to action It was suggested an update from the Aquaculture team would be useful at the next meeting, Hazel McLeod to be invited to attend the next meeting JD to action BC suggested seeking a representative from the Stornoway Trust but due to the fact that they don't cover the whole area it was agreed BC would represent their interests.. The Port Authority do normally attend so worth asking as no apologies received in this instance JD to action SLE representative Drew McFarlane Slack usually attends but no apologies received JD to action if SLE intend to represent landowners on the islands. Attendance from the crofting association was discussed as NFUS not as relevant now due to the boundary change JD to action  
JD raised that a small scale DP event may be a worthwhile exercise for the spring. JD to action with BC and the land unit.

The north region fisheries event was discussed, the presentations and papers for this can be found here;

[http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/river\\_basin\\_planning/area\\_advisory\\_groups/north\\_highland.aspx](http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/river_basin_planning/area_advisory_groups/north_highland.aspx)

The group reviewed the actions from the previous meetings. The revised action list is available here.

The group were unanimous in the decision to be called the Outer Hebrides Area Advisory Group.

The group meetings are usually followed by the Local Advisory Group for Flood Risk Management with [Steve MacFarland](#) but this has been postponed until the Spring. In the interim, if anyone has any questions or queries with regard to the Flood Risk Management work please email Steve.

## Presentation 1 Implementing the first plans

JD gave a presentation on the first plan implementation work underway including the pilot catchment work (link to the web page [here](#)) also an update on the priority catchment diffuse pollution work and the new Water Environment Fund unit.

The restoration plan has been published and can be found [here](#).

## ROUND TABLE UPDATES

**Willow glen** – BC and Susan Cowie involved Scottish Water to discuss pipe crossings on the burn near Mary Bank. The issue of oil from the harbour was also discussed, old boats are bilging oil that stays within the harbour and affects migratory fish at the mouth of the catchment – to be raised with the Harbour Master. The Stornoway Trust has also expressed an interest having been approached by BC to provide on the ground assistance.

**Small water bodies project** – Sue Bell from SNH has been working to look at the various data sets and prioritise catchments. A progress report is required for the group on this work – JD to action

**Pearls in Peril** project has been running successfully on the island. BC provided a brief update about various work and training on the Moriston catchment to encyst juvenile salmonids. Unsuccessful on the first attempt but hopeful for future work.

MM provided an update for **Scottish Water**. The Sustainable Land use Management section has done 2 studies on the island to better understand the impacts of diffuse pollution on their source catchments as high levels of hydrocarbons had been found, MM to provide further information on the outcomes of these studies and could be involved with a joint diffuse pollution event in the spring.

Scottish waters water resources are looking to Loch Maddie and the linking lochs to determine if the yield can sustain the island population without significant environmental harm. This would then mean that fish passage could be restored into the existing reservoir that would be decommissioned. SW continue to monitor nutrient sensitive areas and are happy to share the data. SW are also looking at the pipe crossings on the island to assess current use, condition and environmental impact. This work is in the early stages but it is hoped that pipelines can be removed or upgraded to alleviate environmental impacts through the capital investment programme.

**IMc update from the council** – the Local Development Plan has been adopted incorporating RBMP messages, supplementary guidance regarding water resources and the marine plans have also been published. The council continue to implement the RBMP through their planning processes. A new member of staff has been employed – Peter Caldwell based in Balivanich and he will perform a wider environmental officer role

DD informed the group that the 2012 classification data publication has been delayed until November 2012. Once published it will be available on the SEPA website and also through [SEWeb](#). The 2013 data is expected to be available at the end of April 2014.

## Presentation 2 Current condition and challenges for the future

DD gave a presentation on the CCCF report and associated forthcoming consultation. The presentation can be found [here](#). The presentation highlighted that there is, as was expected, a lag between doing improvement works and seeing the improvements in the monitoring work. Highlighted that the 2 issues that are not on track of achieving the 2015 targets are the morphological (physical condition) pressures and the pressures from diffuse pollution whereas the measures being covered by regulation are on target for 2015. Queries arose about classification and grouping. A basic explanation of classification can be found [here](#). JD has asked for a more detailed explanation with grouping and the revised classification standards be drafted and circulated [JD to action](#). Discussion around the toxic substance – and should the anti parasitic chemicals from finfish farming be included.

BC asked about SUDS systems and if maintenance was an issue. Action [IMac](#) to feedback to the group to ask if maintenance is incorporated into planning consents.

INNS – a biosecurity booklet on the RAFTS website can be found [here](#). Discussion about having biosecurity information at the airport and ferry terminals, OHFT has raised this but neither would put information up without a significant fee. [JD action](#) to raise this issue with the NAG.

JD explained the new consultation tool to the group to try to ease the process of responding for stakeholders.

DD gave a demonstration of the function of the SEWeb page that can be found [here](#)  
**Presentation 3 Developing the second river basin plans**

JD gave a presentation on the development of the second plans including the proposed changes, engagement and consultations activities that will take place as we develop Scotland and the Solway Tweeds second plans.

#### **AOB and close**

SB raised that DM has been involved with sector interactions matrix project looking at the issue of environmental harm following sea lice treatment. Concern has been raised regarding the cumulative impacts. There is a SARF project that is scoping the delivering a post authorisation monitoring programme that will focus on in feed chemical impact. The project has just started and will take a couple of years to conclude, [Action JD](#) to ask Hazel McLeod for an update at the next AAG. BC asked if the Loch Shell report had been progressed, SB thinks they have re sampled lately. Action JD to seek an update from Ross in operations. BC also asked about the redeveloping of Autodepomod, SB said that SEPA and SAMS are working together to refine the Autodepomod tool as it is felt the tool does not work as well for high current speeds and sloping sites. This should be incorporated into an aquaculture update from Hazel at the next meeting.