



**Scottish
Water**
Trusted to serve Scotland

Title: Seil WwTW's Information Meeting

Location: Teams call, hosted by Scottish Water
7th December 2020

Notes of Meeting

Present:

Michael Russell MSP for Argyll & Bute (Chair), Keir Low Constituency Assistant, Cllr Kieron Green & Cllr Elaine Robertson Argyll & Bute Council, Jakki Carter-Brown Secretary & Rhoda Thomson Seil & Easdale Community Council, Ann Robin, David Ainsley, George MacKenzie, John Gordon (previous members of the original stakeholder Group), Lisa Robinson & Jim Sedgewick Save our Seil, Alan Thomson SW, Paul Sexton SW, Michael Will SW, Bill Elliot SW & Sam Neil aBV.

Apologies: Cllr Julie Mckenzie.

1	Welcome & Introduction Attendees welcomed by the Chair Michael Russell MSP Agenda of the meeting: 1. Welcome & Introductions (11.00 – 11.10) Michael Russell MSP Chair 2. Planning Delay Announcement (11.10 – 11.15) Alan Thomson Scottish Water 3. Current position of preferred option (11.15 – 11.30) Paul Sexton Scottish Water 4. Next Stages of Review & Timeline (11.30 – 11.40) Mike Will Scottish Water 5. Discussion (11.40 – 12.00) All	
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2	<p>Planning Delay Announcement</p> <p>Points from Alan Thomson SW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressed his thanks for everybody coming on to call. • Highlighted the meeting agenda. • SW took the decision to ask Argyll & Bute Council to defer our planning application to enable a review to be undertaken following significant cost increases to deliver the preferred option. • Noted that SW had written to all stakeholders and the community directly to provide an update Fully appreciate people’s frustration on this matter. • Commitment to make sure that we work our way forward over the next few months of the review. 	
3	<p>Current position of preferred option</p> <p>Points from Paul Sexton SW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided a high-level overview of the preferred option 1a. • Overview of the component parts of the scheme and some of the issues that have come to light as the designs and costs were further developed. • The original estimated costs are more than double the original estimate of £5.6m Reasons costs have risen:– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Treatment Works increase in capital costs as market costs have risen. 2. By far the most substantial cost increase is the access road due to the change of route now required. The biggest challenges are associated with the ground conditions and the wetland ecology. Completed detailed environmental surveys and also undertaken ground investigation that shown the peat needs to be dealt with in a very specific manner and also has resulted in the need for a permanent bridge 3. Opportunity to reduce this estimate by changing works access and road design to a floating road. 	
4	<p>Next Stages of Review & Timeline</p> <p>Points from Mike Will SW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Water is duty bound to undertake a further review of options and proposals. • Primarily continuing to undertake the review of the existing preferred option of 1a with findings at the end of January 21. • Investigating UV treatment at the existing site. • Full cost appraisal of the preferred plan and UV treatment alternative based upon learnings from other UK sites • The outcomes of our findings and the recommendation on the way forward with be shared towards the end of April 21. 	

Discussion

Points and questions raised by those in attendance:

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- Significant disappointment by individuals in attendance of Scottish Water's announcement and concern raised over the deferment of option 1a at this late stage.
- Members of the original Stakeholder Group expressed their belief that the only acceptable way forward is for Scottish Water to proceed with what had been agreed and accepted by majority in the community at the time.
- Chair of the Stakeholder Group, Michael Russell MSP, noted his strong disappointment and dismay given members of the community had engaged in good faith and that significant effort had been made to have a fair and transparent decision-making process despite there being differing views in the community.
- Concern was raised by individuals present that the decision made to pause the planning application process was due to costs. Members of the original Stakeholder Group noted a commitment made by Scottish Water's Chief Executive at the start of the process that any decision reached would not be entirely cost-based.
- The Chair indicated in the light of the feelings expressed he would be writing to the Chief Executive of Scottish Water.
- There was some concern raised that this decision by Scottish Water would result in some members of the community calling for a full reconsideration of options. It was noted that the new works location is still not suitable to all in the community.
- Some individuals present did indeed welcome the news as they had previously opposed the chosen option and the Community Council requested that lines of communication with the original stakeholder group be closed and any further communication be directed through the Community Council.
- It was also noted that a resolution to the situation which was regarded 5 years ago as an unacceptable level of service to this island has not, as yet, been delivered and this is a breach of environmental regulations.
- Stakeholder members expressed scepticism about the efficiency of UV treatment in dealing with untreated sewage overflows of considerable duration, pointing out that it had not proved possible to get satisfactory guarantees about its performance in relation to Option 3. They also drew attention to the need for a solution to any overflows at intermediate pumping stations.
- Environmental standards on both sides of the island need to be adhered to.
- The issue of first-time sewerage provision at Ellenbeich and other properties not connected to the public system was raised.

Scottish Water Comments to points/questions raised:

- Scottish Water recognised the strength of feeling and anger at the decision, particularly given the comprehensive process actively engaged in by residents to reach this point.

- It is intended that the period of reconsideration would be completed by the end of April 2021 when a final decision was made.
- Scottish Water does not look to make decisions driven entirely on cost, although it is an important factor as we have an obligation as a public body to ensure that all costs have been fully evaluated and justified.
- At the conclusion of the earlier work on options appraisal which involved the Stakeholder Group, we proposed progressing with option 1a subject to gaining planning and regulatory permissions and final cost appraisal.
- In terms of the UV option, Scottish Water has done some initial exploration of other water companies use of this technology on stormwater overflows and believe that it is also prudent to investigate the technical feasibility of this option again in tandem with the wider review of option 1a.
- Option 1a is still on the table however we are exploring UV treatment as part of the review.
- Scottish Water are committed to keeping the lines of communication open and accept the points that the Community Council raised. We will communicate with interested parties and make sure that everybody is kept up to date over the next period
- We will aim to meet the environmental standards that are set by the relevant independent Regulators. SEPA will have to determine whether to license or not the agreed solution in their role as environmental regulator.
- SW acknowledge this process has taken longer than anticipated for a number of reasons, some of which were a number of studies requested and required due to the sensitive location of the area and environment. We have asked for the next few months to review the costs and the potential option of UV treatment at the existing site. If, after further review, option 1A continues to be the most viable option then we are willing to proceed with this, but we do need to pause and carry out this review.
- We very much regret and apologise if anyone feels the announcement of this review was carried out in a contemptuous manner, this was in no way intentional. The original scheme is still on the table but we do need to pause and carry out this review.
- Scottish Water confirmed that first time sewerage provision at Ellenbeich and other properties not connected to the public system is presently determined by Ministers and regulators based upon environmental requirements across Scotland. These decisions subsequently determine decisions for Scottish Water to deliver within its capital programme.

6	<p>Next steps</p> <p>Carry out a full review</p> <p>Reconvene this group in the next 3 to 4 months</p>	SW
7	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>End of April 21</p>	SW
8	<p>Meeting Slides</p> <p>Option 1a</p> 	

Option 1a



SW Private
General

Cost Estimate

Seaview Septic Tank	Cost
Septic Tank	£0.4m
Cost to Date	£0.2m
TOTAL	£0.6m

Treatment Works Cost Components	Cost
Treatment works	£4.7m
Access Road	£4.2m
Development and Design Costs	£2.5m
TOTAL	£11.4m

Floating Road proposal and other more minor opportunities could reduce total by up to £1.7m.

SW Private
General