

MINUTES FROM MEETING OF THE HYDRO NATION FORUM
13 JUNE 2018
THE FALKIRK WHEEL, LIME ROAD, TAMFOURHILL, FALKIRK, FK1 4RS

IN ATTENDANCE

- Roseanna Cunningham, Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform (Chair)
- Barry Greig, Scottish Government (Vice Chair)
- Craig McGill, Scottish Government
- May East, UNITAR
- Neil Gordon, EnviroCentre
- Gail Walker, Citizens Advice Scotland
- Steven Hutcheon, Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- Adrian Sym, Alliance for Water Stewardship
- Professor Bob Ferrier, James Hutton Institute
- Rachel Helliwell, James Hutton Institute
- Jan Reid, Scottish Enterprise
- Barbara Barbarito, Scottish Water
- Allan Reid, SEPA
- Michael Gormley, Heriot-Watt University
- Maricela Blair, Hydro Nation Scholar
- Armando Borge, Strathclyde University
- Alan MacDonald, British Geological Survey
- Donna Very, Water Industry Commission for Scotland
- Richard Millar, Scottish Canals
- Peter Robinson, Scottish Canals
- Catherine Topley, Scottish Canals

1. Cabinet Secretary opened the 12th meeting of the Forum and welcomed those in attendance. She noted a conversation she had that morning about Hydro Nation and the need to publicise the agenda more to those that as of yet were not aware. Cabinet Secretary put on record her thanks to Professor George Fleming, who had stepped down from the Forum. She welcomed Neil Gordon and Steven Hutcheon as new members. Cabinet Secretary confirmed that the minutes of the previous meeting had been agreed and published on the [Scottish Government website](#).

2. Cabinet Secretary brought the Forum's attention to the agenda and briefly summarised minor amendments to the Hydro Nation strategy which were agreed by the Forum.

3. Cabinet Secretary introduced Richard Miller and Peter Robinson of Scottish Canals who gave a presentation on the impressive canal regeneration projects undertaken in Scotland over the past 20 years.

4. In discussion it was noted by May East the UN had moved towards the term 'best process' which aims to cut across social, economic and environmental aspects and that Scottish Canals' work was an excellent example of such an approach which should be shared more widely across the network. It was agreed to consider this in more detail and that the Secretariat would explore with Scottish Canals how best to take this forward.

Agenda Item 3

5. Cabinet Secretary moved the meeting to Agenda Item 3 on Plastics, referring members to paper HNF 12.2. Cabinet Secretary noted the huge amount of effort and work that the Scottish Government was taking in this area and brought members' attention to the Summit that she was leading in Oban on 18 June.

6. Cabinet Secretary noted that organisations and businesses can act now and they should not wait for Government intervention. She pointed to the Scottish Government's ban on single use coffee cups as an example of the public sector leading by example and invited Barbara Barbarito and Allan Reid to provide an update on Scottish Water and SEPA actions respectively.

7. Barbara Barbarito noted that Scottish Water would be launching a campaign on 20 June 2018 to encourage use of refills and customers to 'top up from the tap'. The campaign will focus on the benefits of tap water. Customers will be at the heart of the campaign. Barbara noted that Scottish Water research suggested those under 40 are the most likely to use plastic bottles and that environmental impact was a key reason for behaviour change. Scottish Water will also be piloting the use of water-refill stations. Public health issues will be recognised by regular sampling and maintenance to ensure quality. The campaign will include the use of social media, television advertisement and posters to ensure the widest reach possible.

8. Allan Reid noted SEPA's intention to play its part; while SEPA is Scotland's environmental regulator, regulation alone is not a solution. Allan highlighted work that SEPA was doing with Interpol as part of the 2018 marine litter campaign and the intention to issue significant fines to ships responsible for dumping plastics in the sea. Allan also noted that SEPA was in the process of developing a concept note to apply for approx £5.5 million EU Life funding along with partners (Zero Waste Scotland and Irish EPA) to support action on plastics in the west of Scotland.

9. In thanking the contributors, Cabinet Secretary noted that Scottish Water, as part of the campaign, was supplying branded jugs and glasses to Scottish Ministers. Alan MacDonald asked Cabinet Secretary about the mineral water company's support on the issue. Cabinet Secretary noted that companies were actively involved in the discussion around the use of PET. She noted that recyclability of plastic was important and that work was ongoing with Local Government on providing facilities to separate these from other recyclables.

10. In response to a question about evaluation Barbara confirmed Scottish Water would be measuring the campaign's success and offered to share the data set idc.

11. Adrian Sym noted that Nestlé, who are one of the biggest users of plastic, had signed up to the [Alliance for Water Stewardship \(AWS\) Standard](#). This is a publicly recognised and credible model to ensure the use of water is socially equitable, environmentally sustainable and economically beneficial. Cabinet Secretary noted this development and added that labeling was an existing issue – it was noted that labeling often says "may be recyclable and to check local provisions" which is not very helpful for consumers. She also noted that this can have ramifications in many areas, including the economic benefits of recycling.

12. Cabinet Secretary thanked everyone in attendance for their views and handed the Chair to Barry Greig as she departed for Parliament. Barry moved the meeting on to agenda item 4 and invited members to provide an update on their Hydro Nation activities.

Agenda item 4

13. Adrian Sym noted that the Alliance for Water Stewardship (along with Scottish Government, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and SEPA) have been developing a project with the Scotch Whisky sector to introduce the AWS International Water Stewardship Standard to distillers.

14. Bob Ferrier highlighted the Hydro Nation Scholar programme. He noted the recent summer tour undertaken with the scholars which was an informative look at *inter alia* examples of impressive water engineering in Scotland including ongoing works to restore Scottish waterways. Bob further noted the recent five appointees to the programme and the aim to continue to develop global alumni.

15. Catherine Topley noted that since taking up post with Scottish Canals she had been struck by the significant costs associated to achieve the broad ambitions of Scotland as a Hydro Nation – she noted that in order to improve the canal network to an ‘acceptable’ standard would take approximately at least £70 million. She invited the Forum to consider whether there was a project that could be undertaken collectively to help drive forward the Hydro Nation agenda.

ACTION POINT 1 – FORUM TO CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF A COLLECTIVE PROJECT.

16. Rachel Helliwell provided an update on the Hydro Nation International project in India. She noted that the project to introduce waste water treatment to a rural school that had none. This modular project included strong community involvement and was based on a low tech/cost/carbon design. The construction was almost complete and over the next 12 months the focus would be on monitoring results.

17. May East noted the launch on World Water Day 2018 of an eLearning module on [‘Local Water Solutions for Global Challenges’](#). The course had a very good response with 346 registered participants from 83 different counties. 80% of respondents strongly agreed that they would use information acquired from the course. May noted that the course would run again in October 2018 and in April 2019 and invited participants to register interest in contributing 2/3 minute videos of best practice / process examples.

ACTION POINT 2 – MEMBERS TO PROVIDE MAY EAST WITH VIDEOS ON BEST PRACTICE AHEAD OF APRIL 2019 RELAUNCH.

18. Richard Millar noted work that had recently been undertaken by Transport Scotland on a small section of the old Monklands canal currently running through a pipe under the M8. Scottish Canals had opened conversations with Transport Scotland on the future of the canal. There is a need for blue sky thinking around improvements to the canal and Richard was keen for the Forum’s input on known assets near the canal that could be incorporated into future plans.

ACTION POINT 3 – MEMBERS TO GET IN TOUCH WITH RICHARD MILLAR WITH SUGGESTIONS.

19. Jan Reid noted that Scottish Enterprise had just launched research with Scottish Water into pipe testing facilities in Scotland. She brought members attention to a recent report on large water users that Scottish Enterprise currently had the draft and would be published in due course.

ACTION POINT 4 – JAN REID TO FORWARD LINK TO REPORT WHEN PUBLISHED.

20. Donna Very provided an update on WICS activity. She highlighted the ongoing work in Romania with the Hydro Nation Director in Romania every two weeks to assist at the regulatory office. Cooperation MoUs have been signed with Kosovo and Bulgaria with a further MoU expected to be signed with Georgia soon. BG noted that this was a strong example of Hydro Nation's growing international reputation leading to increased opportunity.

21. Alan MacDonald noted British Geological Survey's recent published report on natural groundwater quality in Scotland after over 12 years detailed research. There are currently 15 projects in progress across Africa and Asia. Alan highlighted a project on integrated resource management in eastern Africa which faces severe natural-resource challenges due to exponential population growth, rapid urbanisation, and economic development. Fieldwork has just finished on the project – so much more details are being prepared and will be [available online soon](#).

22. Michael Gormley noted a project that he was involved with focusing on mitigating water runoff – countries involved included Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland – the project was looking into best practice across all the countries and technology for phosphorus reduction.

Agenda item 5

23. BG brought the discussion on to the Hydro Nation agenda update. He noted that the paper provided before the meeting contained more detailed information but that he wished to highlight a few specific items as set out below.

24. Barry offered his congratulations to Scottish Water Horizons on the successful Interreg bid and noted Scottish Enterprise's instrumental support in securing EU funding. He noted the significant funds awarded in excess of €6 million. Barry confirmed that Hydro Nation had now released the final grant to allow investment at the development centres.

25. Barry noted that HNWIS was currently closed to new entrants but that procurement was progressing ahead of an expected relaunch in late summer. He further noted that significant lessons had been learned from the first iteration of the service and that those would be used for improvements to the service provided by HNWIS. Jan Reid added her thanks to partners for their ongoing support for the record.

ACTION POINT 5 – BARRY GREIG TO KEEP FORUM UPDATED ON RELAUNCH OF HNWS.

26. Barry noted impressive progress made by Scottish Water on energy and heat generation – an announcement in March 2018 confirmed that Scottish Water was now generating twice as much electricity from renewable sources as they used. Barbara highlighted the exciting potential for the production of heat from sludge and noted that this was an excellent example of the circular economy.

27. Barry provided an update on work ongoing in Malawi. He noted that a significant milestone has been reached with the Water Futures Project with over 30% completion of the national water-asset mapping exercise.

28. Barry noted that good progress had been made on establishing the Hydro nation Commercial and Advisory Services group (HNCAS). A number of stakeholders had been awarded significant projects that will deliver Scottish expertise and know-how building on Scotland's increasingly widely acknowledged strengths – including WICS' engagement in Romania and SEPA's in Cyprus.

29. Barry highlighted that the OECD Water Governance review had been completed and that an Action Plan had been discussed to identify potential improvements which would be shared with the HN Forum in due course.

Agenda Item 6

30. Barry moved the meeting on to agenda item 6. He noted that consumers are at the heart of everything that we do so it is right that we have a standing item that focuses on this. Barry invited Gail Walker to present on Consumer Principles.

31. Gail provided a brief overview of CAS and noted that all of us are consumers in every aspect of our daily life and when a problem occurs it can have a negative effect on our life. Gail noted that CAS' main tool is a set of 7 principles that are consumer focused and these are:

- Access – can people get the goods and services they need or want?
- Choice – is there any?
- Safety – are the goods or services dangerous to health or welfare?
- Information – is it available, accurate and useful?
- Fairness – are some or all consumers unfairly discriminated against?
- Representation – do consumers have a say in how goods or services are provided?
- Redress – if things go wrong, is there a system for putting them right? First time?

Gail brought members attention to paper HNF 12.4 and the case study on wet wipes. Noting that consumers are largely unaware of the damage that wet wipes cause in contributing to sewer flooding, and to the industry's infrastructure (Scottish Water estimate annual costs of £6 million to address blockages in the sewers) particularly when mixed with fats and oils. CAS research shows that environment impact is a key choice for consumers in changing habits; the challenge is making consumers aware of the impact and more needs to be done in that area. Key points made in the presentation were:

- Although related research highlighted a degree of good progress in moving towards a greater focus on consumers, sectors should reflect on what more is needed to ensure that consumers needs and wants are at the heart of everyday decision making and business practice.
- Principles based regulation is less complex than rules, simpler for regulators, less prescriptive for businesses and easier for consumers to engage with. Principles and rules can be applied together during transition but thereafter, rules should form a subset to support the operation of principles.
- Principles based regulation can improve transparency and accountability, and foster behaviours within organisations, such as consumer-orientated decision making and business practices, that result in greater consumer confidence and trust.
- There are limits to a 'one size fits all' approach to harmonised principles across all regulated sectors, and we believe that consumer-focused frameworks should be tailored to fit the unique situations and circumstances of each sector.
- Progress towards a more principle-based approach varies considerably – and some sectors are more developed than others. CAS are currently working with Scottish Water to establish a suitable set of consumer-focused principles. This involves identifying an appropriate process for researching and developing principles that meet the needs of the organisation and are designed to drive better consumer outcomes. Ideally CAS would like to get to a position where Scottish Water can use a consumer-focused framework to assess how consumer-centric the organisation is.
- Finally, although it is recognised that the CFU consumer principles are not a 'silver bullet', they can be used as a robust tool in the absence of any other framework to drive more consumer focused policy and outcomes.

32. Barry noted that engaging with the target critical. Barbara noted Scottish Water's current consumer engagement with its ['Shaping the Future' consultation](#).

33. Barry provided a brief summary of the meeting and highlighted points including Hydro Nation's profile, Plastics, CREW and the AWS whisky sector project before invited members to highlight AOB.

34. Adrian highlighted the AWS' Global Water Stewardship Forum which was taking place on the 30 and 31 October 2018 at The Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh.

ACTION POINT 6 – ADRIAN SYM TO PROVIDE FURTHER DETAILS ON AWS FORUM WHEN AVAILABLE.

36. Barry thanked those in attendance for their participation and closed the meeting.

ACTION POINT 7 – THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD IN DECEMBER 2018. CRAIG MCGILL TO ARRANGE NEW DATE WITH PO AND INFORM MEMBERS.