

Email from Morton Houston to Catriona Caves on 21 May 2020 – referred to Cllrs Douglas Campbell, Brian McGinley, Martin Dowey and Alec Clark by email on 27 May 2020

Scottish Government consultation - Bathing water season 2020 and Covid-19

Catriona,

As discussed please find attached a very short consultation from the Scottish Government asking 1 simple question

“Do you agree with the proposal to postpone the determination of the period of the bathing season for 2020 and of the designation of any bathing waters, in light of the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, and keep the matter under review throughout the summer months in line with the Scottish Government’s COVID-19 Framework for Decision Making?”

I have delayed coming back to you as I was unsure of what the fuller statement in the preamble from SG meant:

“Scottish Ministers are proposing to postpone the establishment of a formal bathing season on 1 June, and keep this matter under review throughout the summer. **If the restrictions are sufficiently relaxed such that it becomes reasonable to expect large numbers of people on Scotland’s beaches, Scottish Ministers would then consider the establishment of a shorter bathing season at that point.**”

I was concerned that our original conclusion, that answering yes to the proposal would mean that no sample fails would be logged this year and therefore we would not receive our 5th year of failure, was wrong. It seemed that there was potential for a shortened bathing season leading to the questions; would sampling take place and could we still fail for the year with the consequent issues for next year.

I have asked Gordon to speak to a SEPA Manager about this. His SEPA contact’s view was that SEPA are really busy and are struggling to sample. They agree that “yes” means that we are likely to get a year’s grace. This would make it more likely that Scottish Water would complete their capital remediation works which will hopefully mean that the bathing water results next year would pass.

Therefore it seems that the only decision which would be sensible to us is to support this proposal.

Dear Consultee

Please find attached a letter seeking your views on the Scottish Government's consultation on determining the 2020 Bathing Waters season in light of the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, which closes on **Friday 29 May 2020**.

Thank you in anticipation of your response.



David Lister
Water Environment Policy Manager (I am currently working from home and can be contacted via email only)