



# Water Quality & Strategy Board Minutes

2<sup>nd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2025

## ATTENDEES

- Minister for the Environment (MENV)
- Minister for Health (MH)
- Minister for Infrastructure (MINF)
- Minister for Sustainable Economic Development (MSED)
- Chief Officer – Infrastructure and Environment (COIE)
- Group Director Regulation (GDR)
- Group Director Natural Environment (GDNE)
- Director of Public Health (DPH)
- Director Housing, Environment & Placement (DHEP)
- Deputy Director of Public Health (DDPH)
- Head of Media Relations (HMR)
- Legal Advisor (LA)
- Senior Regulatory Improvement Manager (SRIO)
- Senior Public Health Officer (SPHO)
- Technical Support Officer (TSO)

## MINUTES AND ACTIONS

### Decisions:

- The minutes from the most recent public meeting were approved.

### Actions:

- Final sign-off of board and team minutes will follow once input is received from Public Health colleagues.

## STEERING GROUP

### Discussion

- Clarified that the Steering Group is not a decision-making body but facilitates staged discussion and coordination.
- Decision-making authority remains with the Water Quality and Safety (WQS) Board.
- Steering Group provides general oversight and is Government-led, with a Government representative as Chair.

### Decisions:

- Terms of Reference approved, with amendment to reflect the need for a Deputy Chair (e.g. delegated representative from Regulation).

### Actions:

- SRIO to update ToR to include Deputy Chair provision.

## ARCADIS REPORT

### Discussion:

- The Q&A document has been updated.
- A high volume of enquiries from individual sources noted.
- A central repository for answers could help manage communication pressures.
- PoJ has been briefed and confirmed attendance at the upcoming public meeting about the Arcadis report.
- A pre-briefing session for the public meeting is proposed for 17 June.

### Decisions:

- Confirmed that Detailed Response will proceed to ELT and CoM for awareness ahead of publication.

### Actions:

- Continue maintaining the Q&A repository and consider making it more prominent in communications.
- Communications team to prepare high-level slides for CoM by 12 June.
- Ministerial leads to issue joint email to CoM and ELT confirming the Board's decision.
- Pre-briefing to be arranged by TSO.

## DETAILED RESPONSE

### Discussion:

- Two recommendations relate directly to Infrastructure; Minister for Infrastructure invited accordingly.
- Infrastructure colleagues raised queries regarding the timing and feasibility of some recommendations.
- Some operational matters may result in changes to the action timeline, particularly ahead of June publication.
- Future Steering Group meetings will provide further clarity.
- Emphasis on the preference for concise but meaningful contributions from stakeholders.
- Ministerial feedback on the draft detailed response will be shared with stakeholders at the next engagement session.
- Desire expressed for stakeholders to nominate spokespeople for the June 18th Public Meeting.
- MENV to provide revised wording for his statement.
- MSER put himself forward to act as spokesperson in absence of MENV.

### Actions:

- MENV to submit three changes to his statement.

- Liaison through Steering Group with stakeholders regarding spokesperson nomination.
- MSED to act as spokesperson in absence of MENV.
- TSO to forward meeting invitation to MSED.

## BOREHOLE UPDATE

### Discussion:

- Query over the number of listed fields (198), which seemed high.
- A figure of 28 active fields was confirmed via physical count.

### Actions:

- TSO to ensure updated field figures are reflected in public-facing materials.

## REPORT FOUR

### Discussion:

- Scrutiny to receive previous PFAS Panel meeting links to understand level of expertise informing Report 4.
- Testing methodology to be published by end of June.

### Actions:

- SRIO to coordinate sharing of PFAS Panel links with Scrutiny.
- SRIO to ensure testing methodology is submitted to the Board for review before publication.

## RISK SECTION

### Discussion:

- Board emphasised the importance of precise and cautious language, recommending use of “if” and “potential” to avoid overstatement.

### Actions:

- Drafting team to review and refine risk language in final documents.

## REPORT THREE

### Discussion:

- Discussion about the Panel’s recommendations for testing and interventions. Interventions have been recommended for three groups:
  - Women of childbearing potential

- Individuals with high cholesterol
- Individuals expected to receive exceptional benefit from an intervention
- Highlighted the need to consider public perception and expectations.
- Acknowledged Jersey's leadership in the absence of a large scientific evidence base.
- Reaffirmed that operational decisions must be evidence-based.

### Actions:

- Continue to progress actions needed for final decision making and securing funding etc.

*Due to time constraints, the meeting was adjourned before the full agenda could be completed. A commitment was made to reconvene later in the week to conclude the outstanding items.*

*The meeting recommenced on 5th June 2025, where the remaining agenda items were discussed.*

## REPORT 3: SERVICES OPTIONS

### Discussion:

- Review of key decision points on clinical intervention service and expanded blood testing.

## CLINICAL INTERVENTION OPTIONS

### Discussion:

- Four intervention options were presented and discussed, with greatest focus on option 3 – providing the offer of interventions to the criteria provided by the Panel (women of childbearing potential, those with high blood pressure and those who will receive exceptional benefit) - and option 4, where the Panel's criteria would not be strictly applied.
- Option 4 was supported, recognising the importance of equity for impacted Islanders.
- Discussion acknowledged the challenges of messaging, expectations management, financial planning and securing new funding.
- It was recognised as important that affected Islanders are given the appropriate medical support and information to be able to provide informed consent before the intervention is initiated.

### Decisions:

- Option 4 approved: clinical interventions will not be limited only to those that the Panel listed specifically but for the plume area, interventions should be available to those who meet broader eligibility criteria, including PFAS levels.
- The programme will be made available to those in the expanded plume area, as now defined by the Arcadis Report, who meet the eligibility criteria, requiring a Government funded test to have been undertaken and the results meeting.
- Messaging and rationale will emphasise the unique status of the plume area and ongoing environmental differentiation work.

#### Actions:

- Budget requirements discussed; confirmation of funding is required.
- High-level cost summary and rationale to be included in submission to CoM.

## EXPANDED TESTING

#### Discussion:

- Reviewed options to extend PFAS blood testing to people in or previously in the plume area on private supplies, where they've not previously been tested by Government, and occupational groups.
- Options 3 and 4 considered, with different estimates of the number of additional tests to be funded.
- Acknowledged it is important that Islanders are supported by clinicians to make informed decisions about whether they would like testing.
- It is assumed that some people being tested for PFAS will meet the eligibility criteria for clinical interventions, and the budget needs to be available to provide access as appropriate.

#### Decisions:

- Proceed with extended testing aligned with Option 4, subject to funding.
- Testing will be supported by clinical appointments to ensure they are able to make informed decisions that are right for the individual.

#### Actions:

- Cost estimates to be included in CoM submission.
- Paper to include clarification that costs are thought to be over-estimates; actual costs may be lower.

## FUNDING AND GOVERNANCE

### Discussion:

- Funding has not yet been secured. Ministers agreed that public announcements should be preceded by formal agreement from the Council of Ministers and Treasury.
- Discussion covered potential avenues: contingency allocation, ministerial underspends, or government plan bid.
- Ministers emphasised the need to avoid initiating a service without securing sustainable funding.

### Decisions:

- Proposal to proceed with joint ministerial email to CoM, supported by slides and summary.
- Formal CoM paper to follow, led by the Minister for Health.
- Board agreed on proactive communication while acknowledging budgetary constraints.

### Actions:

- Meeting to be arranged with Chief Minister and Treasury Minister to seek informal endorsement in the first instance.
- DDPH and GDR to finalise costings and support paper development.
- Messaging for June 18 public meeting to focus on Arcadis findings, with reference to planned testing & interventions being subject to funding confirmation.

## COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

### Discussion:

- Ministers agreed that communication with the public should remain open, honest, and proactive.
- Acknowledged that the Arcadis report will be the main focus for the June 18 public meeting.
- Testing and intervention proposals will be shared when financial assurance is secured.

### Actions:

- PR & Comms Group to support development of consistent messaging across departments.
- SRIO to coordinate slide pack for June 18th.
- Combined message to be issued following Board confirmation and CoM circulation.

### Next Steps:

- Ministerial joint email and slides to CoM and ELT for 12 June
- June 18 Public Meeting Focus: Arcadis Report, with contextual updates on intervention approach
- Formal CoM submission to be developed in parallel for consideration at the earliest opportunity

Meeting Adjourned.

**Next Meeting:** 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025