

Planning for third cycle River Basin Management Plan 2021 - 2027

December 2019

Consultation on Significant Water management Issues

Appendix 1: Existing Plans which are key for 3rd cycle RBMP

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Some of the most significant water related current and long term plans that the Department will be seeking to ensure alignment with the 3rd cycle RBMP include:

- **Flood risk management plans** (<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/flood-risk-management-plans>) identify the risk of flooding from rivers, the sea, surface run-off, groundwater and reservoirs. They explain how flood risk management staff will work with communities to manage flood risk over the next 6 years. Updated flood risk management plans will be published in 2021. Aligning flood risk and the river basin management plan provides an integrated approach to catchment planning and an opportunity to examine how working with natural processes can better protect ourselves from flooding. We will be aligning our engagement in terms of flood risk management plans and RBMP wherever possible during their development.
- **The Marine Strategy Regulations 2010** transpose the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) into UK regulations (<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/marine-strategy-framework-directive>). The regulations aim to ensure marine waters achieve and maintain the 11 Good Environmental Status indicators ensuring both protection and sustainable use of resources. Although good environmental status is broader than the more specific status indicators for RBMP there is crossover both in terms of the objectives and physical area covered by the MSFD and the WFD. A coherent and integrated approach is vital to ensure that the statutory requirements of the legislation transposing both Directives are met. A draft marine plan for Northern Ireland was undertaken, the plan awaits ministerial approval; it has been developed to support and compliment the RBMPs.
- **Sustainable Water – A Long Term Water Strategy for Northern Ireland (2015-2040)** (<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/long-term-water-strategy-northern-ireland>). This strategy aims to encourage a sustainable and integrated approach to managing the different water needs within a catchment while promoting regional development without compromising the environment or increasing flood risk.
- **Northern Ireland Water (NIW) – Water Resource Plan (WRP) (2010-2035)** (<https://www.niwater.com/managing-northern-irelands-water-resources.aspx>). The plan explains how NIW intend to meet the drinking water needs of the population

of Northern Ireland over the period 2010 to 2035. The WRP takes into account forecast changes in population, housing and water usage and incorporates predicted changes to our climate. The plan includes a range of options to manage demand by improving water efficiency and reducing leakage, as well as options to increase supply through the development of new resources.

- **Price Control process** (<https://www.uregni.gov.uk/price-control-and-tariffs>) - Price Control is the process through which NIW reaches agreement with the Utility Regulator on the organisation's priorities and plans for the period of the Price Control. It also determines the financial framework for the period, setting limits on the levels of non-domestic customer charges. The next price control process will cover the period 2021 to 2027- the same period as the 3rd cycle RBMP will cover. DAERA and Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) will work with the Utility Regulator and NIW to ensure that investment is made which maximizes the potential benefits in terms of achieving the objectives of the 3rd cycle RBMP. Dfi has recently consulted on the Social and Environmental Guidance for Water and Sewerage Services in Northern Ireland. The draft Guidance will help inform how water and sewerage services are provided in Northern Ireland from 2021 to 2027 and sets out the key social and environmental priorities that the Department will expect the Utility Regulator to have regard to when carrying out its role of regulating NIW during the PC 21 price control period. This includes what NIW needs to do to meet its environmental obligations, continue to make improvements in service delivery and work to operate sustainably, taking account of climate change.
- **Climate Change Projections** - Climate change adaptation is an integral part of the RBMP and the revised plan will be based on the latest 2018 UK climate change projections (<http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/24125>)
- **The Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland** - (<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/esni-public-discussion-document>) The issues that need to be addressed to protect the environment are wide-ranging and complex, requiring a cross-cutting approach with a range of stakeholders, including: other NI Departments and public sector bodies; the private sector; the community and voluntary sector; and the general public, working together with the DAERA.

DAERA published a public discussion document, launched on 18 September 2019 designed to give stakeholders the opportunity to express their opinions freely on a

wide range of environmental issues facing Northern Ireland. The strategy will form the basis for a coherent and effective set of interventions that can deliver real improvements in the quality of the environment and thereby create opportunities to develop our economy, improve the health and well-being of our citizens and play our part in protecting the global environment.

- **Living with water: DfI** – (<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/topics/living-water-programme>)

In July 2014, the Northern Ireland Executive agreed to set up an interdepartmental group to develop a ‘Strategic Drainage Infrastructure Plan’ (SDIP) for Belfast. This plan will **protect** against flood risk, **enhance** the environment and support economic **growth**. To facilitate the development of the SDIP for Belfast, DfI is taking forward the Living With Water Programme (LWWP), the Board of which includes senior representatives from: DfI Rivers and Roads, DfI Finance, and DfI Water and Drainage Policy Division (WDPD); The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA); The Utility Regulator; Belfast City Council (BCC) and NIW. The programme is focused on developing integrated, catchment based solutions and where possible avoiding traditional hard engineered drainage and wastewater solutions involving long-term operating and maintenance costs.

The capital works programme identified through the LWWP will be delivered by: DfI - investment in watercourses and road drainage; NIW - investment in wastewater infrastructure / assets; NIEA - diffused pollution reduction measures; and BCC - adding amenity improvements to the drainage works. The programme includes development of an integrated drainage investment planning guide and programme for the rest of NI with the main capital delivery phase expected to be during

- **NIW: Our Draft Strategy** – (<https://www.niwater.com/ourstrategy.aspx>)

NIW invests to meet the needs of current and future generations and this requires long term planning. NIW’s draft strategy is designed to make Northern Ireland a more healthy, sustainable and prosperous place in which to live. The focus of the draft strategy is delivery of high quality drinking water and recycling used water safely to the environment today and tomorrow. The ‘draft strategy’ document provides a longer term view across the next quarter of a century (2021-2046) and updates the existing long term strategy (2015-2040).

It has been designed to take advantage of opportunities available in a way which puts more back into society, the economy and the natural environment than what is taken out.