

Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland

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Your ref:
Our ref: A5968812

17 May 2013

Dear Karen

A HEALTHIER SCOTLAND: CONSULTATION ON CREATING A NEW FOOD BODY

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the consultation on a new food body. I am in general, supportive of the creation of a new food agency for Scotland. The only area in which I have a specific comment is in relation to question 10, which suggests that the remit of the new food body could be expanded to include the enforcement and monitoring of drinking water quality.

10: Should the new food body take on any roles and responsibilities not currently fulfilled by the FSA in Scotland? If yes, please give details and reasons.

The office of Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland (DWQR) was created by the Water Industry (Scotland) Act 2002 as part of the regulatory framework put in place to support the water industry in Scotland. This framework gives the DWQR a single clear remit for drinking water quality and is not subject to conflicting priorities in the allocation of resources in this most critical area for public health and public confidence.

I believe there remains a need to maintain a strong independent drinking water regulator and the loss of the Scottish identity of the DWQR far outweighs the benefits of being absorbed within a new food body. Whilst there would appear to be a perception of synergy between food and drinking water, the regulatory framework is different and the remit of drinking water quality regulation goes well beyond being a product in terms of consumption and extends into domestic use for washing, cooking and sanitation purposes.

I do not believe that a change in the current arrangements for DWQR would be in the best interests of the people of Scotland and that drinking water quality regulation should continue to maintain a strong and individual identity.

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I trust that further consideration of this proposal as an option for Scottish Ministers will be subject to consultation with the water industry and detailed assessment of benefits. I am more than happy to provide information and be involved in this process.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of this letter or to discuss more generally the concept of absorbing drinking water quality regulation you can contact me by at the above address or by telephone on 0131 244 0186.

Yours sincerely



Sue Petch

Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland