

P-06-1232 Stop the proliferation of intensive poultry units (IPUs) by legislating and introduce a moratorium until this can be achieved, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 27.06.22

Could you please confirm that the previous communication responding to PCC is also considered as, at the last meeting, this was deferred until a response from the Minister was received. There are a number of questions from myself that have not yet been responded to.

I am concerned that the focus of this petition has not been addressed in this response. While PCC are on hold regarding poultry unit planning applications there is no clear timeline, nor commitment to any decisions regarding the TAN and a moratorium.

Responses to letter from Julie James inline in black italics.

“Thank you for your letter of 25 October requesting an update following the River Pollution Summit at the Royal Welsh Show and an update on the Technical Advice Note for intensive agricultural development.

The First Minister chaired the second River Pollution Summit on the 8 March. ***Could the year please be included in date references.*** A written statement was issued that set out the discussions which took place and the commitments made by the organisations taking part. The statement can be found on the Welsh Government website at: <https://www.gov.wales/written-statement-second-river-pollution-summit> ***This does not refer to the TAN for intensive agricultural development but talks to affordable housing. IF agriculture, and specifically Intensive Poultry Units are included in this context could you confirm this and ensure it is obvious, not assumed.***

The summit endorsed an action plan ‘Relieving Pressures on SAC River Catchments to Support Delivery of Affordable Housing’. The Action Plan includes the production of various guidance to help address the problems caused by phosphorus levels, and this is also available on the Welsh Government website at: <https://www.gov.wales/relieving-pressures-special-areas-conservation-sac-river-catchments-support-delivery-affordable> ***As above, the questions raised in the petition are not addressed in this Action Plan. Where is the lack of TAN being addressed?***

The summit recognised there is no single measure which will solve this problem and even a contribution of measures will take time to undo the cumulative harm of the past. One theme the action plan includes is the need to work constructively with the agriculture sector to find solutions to reduce and address excess nutrients in the soil and SAC rivers of Wales. I

expect this work to include a contribution from the poultry sector. ***When will this expectation be confirmed, and what form will it take?***

I recognise new poultry developments have the potential to increase nutrient levels within river catchments, so I am giving careful consideration to a request received to call in all planning applications for poultry units currently before Powys County Council. ***What is the timeline on this consideration?*** Holding directions preventing the Council from approving the applications have recent been issued by officials. I will notify you of my decision on whether to call in the applications in due course. ***Please define due course.***

I am pleased to confirm work is progressing on the procurement of an All Wales Nutrient

Calculator, intended to help local planning authorities and applicants determine the level of phosphorus mitigation needed to enable development to progress in SAC river catchments. Contractors have just been appointed to deliver a working calculator by July and subsequently deliver a training programme.

In addition, a review of guidance relating to private treatment plants in areas with public sewers is currently being undertaken. This work is considering whether there are any short-term measures which could be implemented whilst long-term solutions to phosphorus levels are developed by Nutrient Management Boards, established to drive local measures to help improve the quality of SAC river catchments.

A Town and Country Planning Intensive Agriculture Working Group was established in 2019, comprised of stakeholders from public sector, farming unions and environmental groups. The Working Group was set up to contribute to a proposed new Technical Advice Note relating to planning for intensive agricultural developments, however, this was paused due to the pandemic. While it is the intention to return to this work, ***What is the status of this work and the timeline for returning to it?*** priority has been given to progressing the All Wales Nutrient Calculator and reviewing guidance relating to private treatment plans.