

### **Appendix 3: Proposed Interim Response to River Basin Management Plan and Area Management Plan Consultations**

The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) welcome the opportunity to respond to the draft River Basin Management Plan for the Scotland River Basin District and its associated Area Management Plans.

While much of the remit of the plans fall outwith the scope of the SDPA, there are three general points that are worth making by way of an interim response from the perspective of the SDPA. This response should be seen as supplementary to any response made by the two councils.

- 1) There are a number of points in the documents where updates and clarification can be provided in relation to the recently submitted finalised structure plan and the process and timetable for preparing a strategic development plan. These will be taken forward through discussions with SEPA, although a copy of our development plan scheme (2009/10) is enclosed.
- 2) Although the documents talk about linkages between different planning processes, these need to be firmly grounded so that all parties have realistic expectations of what is achievable. This is particularly significant at the current time where the development plan system is undergoing significant reform and there is pressure to move forward swiftly with a new development plan framework. There is also a need to build these links and the SDPA is keen to play its part in this over the coming months and into the implementation phase, including attendance at advisory group / forum meetings as appropriate.
- 3) The finalised structure plan already recognises a number of areas of mutual interest, potentially the most significant of which is the issue of water abstraction from the River Dee. The actions identified in the finalised plan will be worked up into an action programme during 2009 and this presents an important opportunity to engage and align work streams. It is hoped that this will be mutually beneficial and the Strategic Development Plan team are keen to move forward with both the action programme as well as the plan's implementation as soon as possible.

On the back of the discussions and engagement identified above, as well as more detailed consideration of the plans, it will be determined whether a more detailed response is required by the 22 June 2009 deadline.