

Cabinet Lead for Local Plan, Environment and Water Quality – Councillor Elizabeth Lloyd

LOCAL PLAN

Regulation 18 Consultation

Following the approval at the last Full Council, consultation has been taking place on Building a Better Future, the new local plan for Havant Borough.

The consultation started on 3rd October and runs until 14th November. Throughout the consultation period, there have been a series of exhibitions across the Borough, which have been well attended. A total of 567 people attended the first four exhibitions. The final exhibition date at Emsworth, was 3.11.22, after the deadline for this report.

The consultation consisted of a discussion document which considered the environmental, infrastructure and development needs of local residents and businesses. The feedback which is received will help to refine the Local Plan so that it meets the needs of the Borough.

Now that the consultation has finished, officers will compile and report back the findings. This will take the form of a report to the Planning Policy Committee in the New Year.

The Full Council are also considering two reports which have been scrutinised by the Planning Policy Committee. The first, which was considered by the committee on 28th October, is a report which proposes updates to the Council's Position Statement and Mitigation Plan on Nutrient Neutral Development. In summary this:

- Changes the eligibility of the scheme to developments of 15 dwellings or fewer and regeneration schemes in Havant and Waterlooville town centres
- Increases the mitigation cost from £1,308 to £3,000 per kilogram of nitrogen mitigation
- Includes minor updates to clarify the approach to specialist types of overnight accommodation

In addition, following referral from the last Full Council meeting, the Planning Policy Committee also scrutinised, on 9 November, the Proposed Consultancy Review of Southern water Data and Information Provided for Planning Purposes.

WATER QUALITY

Real-time Buoy - anchored at sea off Hayling Island

The buoy is working well and is currently collecting data & transmitting telemetry (*the process of recording and transmitting the readings of an instrument*) for evaluation. Portsmouth University are continuing with a programme of validation including

sampling water quality from a boat at the buoy when water quality is expected to be poorer than usual. The Council has been working hard to ensure that all partners (particularly Southern Water & RS Hydro) understand the requirements for public health purposes. Water quality standards represent a statistical metric (not a measurement), and the value, used for comparison with the accepted standards, needs to be calculated in a way which respects certain principles. Use of data from the buoy for public health purposes will not be possible until, at a minimum, (a) we know how precise & accurate the estimates are, and (b) we are able to achieve E. coli estimate telemetry in the form of a valid metric, which may be directly compared with either a suitable water quality standard, or other measure of public health risk.

Beachbuoy Service

Information from this service can be obtained online at:

[Beachbuoy\(southernwater.co.uk\)](https://southernwater.co.uk), or linked from Havant Borough Council's own water quality information pages at: [Water quality | Havant Borough Council](#). Users are advised to check Beachbuoy before each visit to any recreational or bathing water within Southern Water's waste water management district. Water sports' users are particularly advised to check the Beachbuoy service, if they use water recreationally, which is not specifically defined as that being classified as water monitored for quality purposes. All users are particularly advised to check the Beachbuoy service for any water use outside of the bathing season (15th May – 30th Sept).

The basis for the Beachbuoy's decision-making process is a series of modelling scenarios undertaken for each coastal outfall in Southern Water's waste water management district. These scenarios vary discharge duration, tidal state at commencement of discharge, and a limited range of wind conditions at the time of the discharge. The modelling uses a number of deliberately conservative assumptions with the aim of ensuring that the outcome remains precautionary.

Recent changes to the Beachbuoy service aimed to clarify when a reported discharge from an outfall is considered capable (or incapable) of adversely affecting water quality at a relevant location (i.e. a Bathing Water or Recreational water, such as Langstone Harbour). In particular, the changes reduce the number of 'false positives' reported by the service, minimising the number of occasions that the public are unnecessarily discouraged from using local waters. The Council supports the aims of the changes, in principle.

The primary concern is whether or not the binary decision made by the model (e.g. water quality is affected, or is not affected) is based upon a sound comparison. Deciding whether a comparison is sound requires a detailed understanding of what the model output represents, and exactly how it has been used to inform the binary decisions. Given the afore-mentioned concern, the Council is working with Southern Water & their consultants, Atkins, to ensure that there is an understanding of the requirements for public health purposes. This is an active area of work.