

Havant Borough Council Response to Draft Water Resources Management Plan, February 2023

Appendix 1: Questions and Concerns Raised by Residents

Following concerns raised by resident groups, Havant Borough Council hosted a public meeting at its offices on 15 February 2023.

Residents were given the opportunity to ask Southern Water and Portsmouth Water questions about how water is provided in the future, including the proposed Hampshire Water Transfer and Recycling Project.

Questions and concerns raised by residents covered the matters set out below. The Council would like these matters to be considered as part of this consultation response and would encourage these to be fully addressed by the water companies in their public communications and their submissions to support the DCO process for the water Recycling Project.

Trust in the Southern Water

- The trustworthiness of Southern Water to safely run the recycling plant and provide drinking water, following a court case and substantial fines for untreated sewage releases, and ongoing releases
- Transparency of company ownership, organisational structure, funding arrangements etc
- Balance of investments in infrastructure vs dividends paid to shareholders
- Public accountability of private water companies
- Treatment of land owners on pipeline route

Interaction between Southern Water and Portsmouth Water

- Greater transparency and clarity needed on whether Portsmouth Water customers will be supplied with drinking water using recycling as a source
- The cost of the project and who will pay for it, including whether Southern and Portsmouth Water customer bills will be affected
- Why water recycling proposals did not form part of the planning application for Havant Thicket Reservoir
- Impact of proposal on environmental credentials of Havant Thicket Reservoir

The need for the water recycling project

- Independent oversight of the water company's assessment of need
- Whether all alternative supply options have been fully explored
- Whether alternative locations for water recycling infrastructure have been fully explored
- Whether water companies are doing enough to stop leakages

- Whether profit is the driver for this project
- Why Havant Thicket Reservoir cannot be filled purely with spring water to meet the identified need

Technical Matters

- The ability of the technology to remove harmful chemicals, pharmaceuticals, pathogens, hormones etc to make recycled water safe for human consumption and the environment
- Future monitoring of the system and public access to data
- Safety measures in case of failures of the system
- Effects on the flavour of the local drinking water
- Effect on the environment, in particular on the reservoir, rivers and the harbours
- Whether recycled water will only form part of supply during a drought, or all the time
- Energy requirements of the technology, in particular in light of the current energy crisis and carbon neutrality targets
- Number, length and location of pipelines

Decision Making and Public Engagement

- Why this is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) to be determined by Development Consent Order (DCO) route, rather than local planning permission?
- Role of the Local Authority in decision making
- The sign off process for this project and opportunities of public influence
- Poor advertising of consultations – eg why was information not provided with water bills?
- Need for compulsory purchase of land
- Delivery timescales