

# Agenda Item IMD22

## INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

REFERENCE IMD: IMD 2018/22

<b>TITLE</b>	Wokingham Borough Council Response to Thames Water's Consultation on the Draft Water Resource Management Plan 2019
<b>DECISION TO BE MADE BY</b>	Leader of the Council - Charlotte Haitham Taylor, Executive Member for Environment - Norman Jorgensen
<b>DATE, MEETING ROOM and TIME</b>	18 May 2018 SF1 at 11.15AM
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific;
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Director of Corporate Services - Graham Ebers, Interim Director of Environment - Josie Wragg

### OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

To ensure that Thames Water's Water Resources Management Plan 2019 (Water Plan) has minimal negative impacts upon Wokingham Borough and that any positive benefits are maximised.

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Leader of the Council and the Executive Member for Environment agrees that Wokingham Borough Council:

- 1) Recognizes that Thames Water has identified the area of Wokingham Borough covered by the River Kennet Water Resource Management Zone (RKWRMZ) as having a medium to long term water supply/demand deficit;
- 2) Notes TW's initiatives of water efficiency and leakage reduction and improvements to metering, which have been applied to all 6 Water Resource Zones, as well as the specific initiatives for the RKWRMZ;
- 3) Requests that Thames Water produce an Action Plan that addresses how the requirements of future housing supply in Wokingham Borough will be taken into account and mitigated where required, given the substantial increase in population in Wokingham Borough and future planned growth to be advanced through the Local Plan Update;
- 4) Continues to welcome further engagement with Thames Water as work on the Water Plan 2019 continues, with reference to water supply;
- 5) Continues to welcome further engagement with Thames Water as work on the Local Plan Update and Site allocations progresses, with reference to wastewater connections and sewers.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

Thames Water (TW) has published a draft Water Resource Management Plan 2019 or 'Water Plan' which will update and replace Thames Water's (SEW) current water resources management plan (adopted 2014).

The Water Plan sets out TW's estimate of the amount of water required and the measures considered necessary to maintain the supply-demand balance over the period covered by the plan, from 2020 to 2100.

## Background

The Water Resource Management Plan 2019 (Water Plan) will update and replace Thames Water's (TW) current water resources management plan (adopted 2014). The Water Plan has been prepared to meet the statutory requirements of section 37A to 37D of the Water Industry Act 1991 (as amended by the Water Act 2003) and the Water Resources Management Plan Direction 2016; which require each water company to prepare a water resources management plan showing how it intends to manage and develop water resources to maintain an efficient and economical system of water supply within its area.

The Water Plan sets out TW's estimate of the amount of water required and the measures considered necessary to maintain the supply-demand balance over the period covered by the plan, from 2020 to 2100. The Water Plan has been prepared to cover the period up to 2100 to consider long-term water supply options. It explains how TW have taken into account the implications of climate change, sustainable abstractions, future population and housing growth, and other factors that affect long term future uncertainty. TW are also preparing a Business Plan which looks the services that will be delivered in the first five year period 2020-2025.

TW's supply area covers an area of some 13,000 square Km, extending from Cirencester in the west to Dartford in the east and from Banbury in the north to Guildford in the south. This area is divided into 6 Water Resource Zones. The zones form the basic framework TW use for planning water resources, managing supply and demand, and identifying investment priorities. The boundary of each zone describes an area within which the supply and demand for water is largely self-contained; they do not follow administrative boundaries.

Water is supplied in the borough by both Thames Water and South East Water (SEW). Eastern parts of Wokingham Borough are mostly served by South East Water, with parts also served by Thames Water. The part of the Borough served by Thames Water falls into two different Water Resource Zones: Kennet Valley and Henley (see Figure 1-2).

It should be noted that Thames Water provides a separate service for the removal and treatment of wastewater and sewerage treatment that spans the whole of Wokingham Borough.

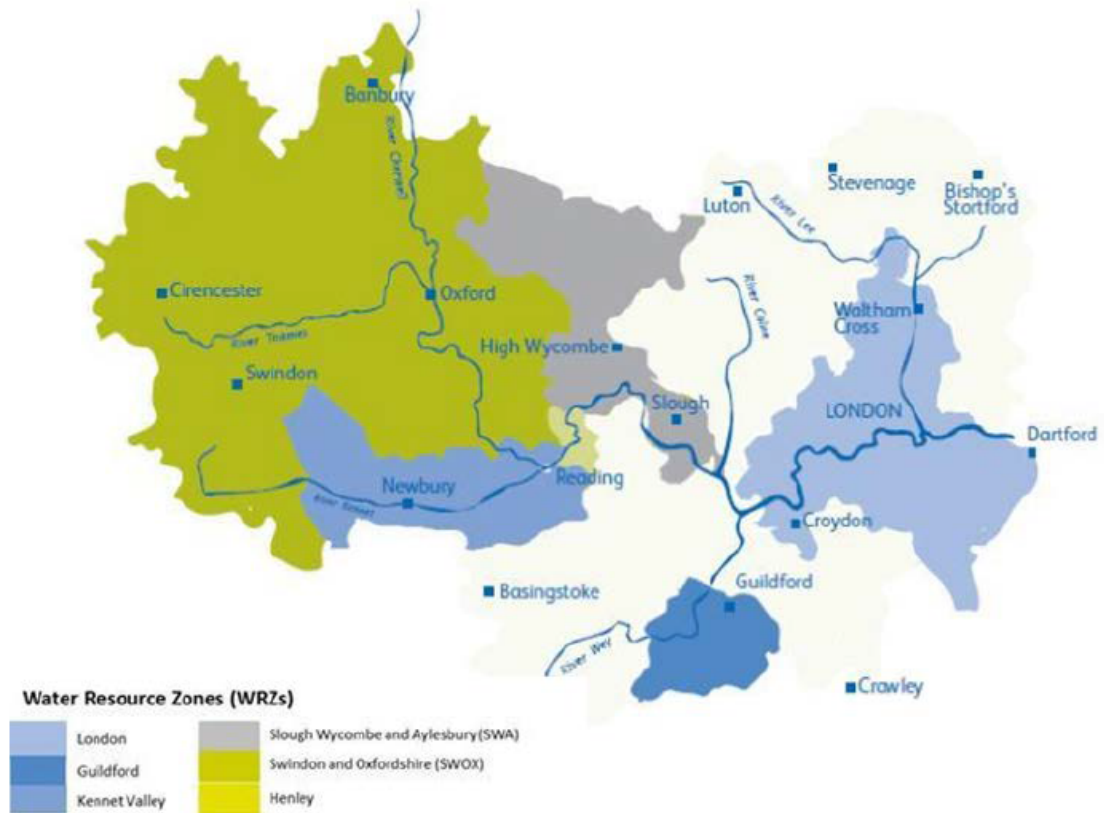


Figure 1-2: Thames Water Supply area showing Water Resource Zones (taken from page 4 of the Technical Report section of the Water Plan)

## Analysis of Issues

### Water Supply and Water Resource Zones

Studies undertaken by TW as part of the draft Water Management Plan 2019 confirm that there are almost 400,000 more people within TW's total supply area at the end of 2016/17 than was forecast in WRMP14 when it was prepared in 2014. Most of this growth is within the London WRZ. The trend of accelerated population growth is likely to increase, which will drive demand for additional water.

TW have worked to review the risks and uncertainties in the water supply/demand for each Water Resource Zone. The River Kennet Water Resource Zone (which encompasses part of Wokingham Borough) is considered to have a medium to long term water supply/demand deficit. As such TW state that early intervention in this Zone will reduce future risks and uncertainty.

The Henley Water Resource Zone (which also encompasses part of Wokingham Borough) is considered to have no identified water supply/demand deficit. However, TW consider it may still be appropriate for planned interventions for the Henley Zone to ensure equity across the supply area.

### Planned and future growth of Wokingham Borough

WBC is a proactive planning authority, seeking to shape future development through a carefully managed approach. As part of the current Local Development Plan, large-scale, strategic development is being delivered at four Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) across the Borough:

- Land at Arborfield Garrison
- Land South of the M4 in Shinfield
- Land North of Wokingham Town Centre
- Land South of Wokingham Town Centre

It is expected that in total over 9,500 homes are to be delivered across these SDLs and development at each of the four sites is already underway. Indeed as at 30 November 2017, works have been either completed or have commenced on over 2,600 homes across each of the four sites. Particularly strong progress is being made at both the Arborfield Garrison and South Wokingham Strategic Development Locations.

WBC's planning strategy is to deliver sustainable, infrastructure rich communities. There are significant infrastructure investments being made, a number of which have been delivered, with several more planned. WBC's approach is enabling £400m worth of investments in 7 new primary and 1 new secondary schools; 7 new strategic roads, 6 new neighbourhood centres and 1 new district centre, 3 new sports hubs and one enhanced sports hub, parkland and improvements to public transport, as well as over 30% affordable housing.

Work is currently underway on a new local plan (the Local Plan Update) which will guide development in the Borough for the next 20 years up until 2036. The Council needs to plan for more housing and employment facilities, schools, roads, shops and community facilities and may need to accommodate further large-scale strategic developments through the Local Plan Update. This will have the potential to significantly increase the Borough's population over and above that which is anticipated as a result of the development that is already underway.

### The Water Plan

TW's Preferred Plan involves initiatives to reduce customer demand for water and to reduce leakages, improve metering and improving water efficiency across all of the Water Resource Management Zones.

The River Kennet Water Resource Management Zone is considered to have a medium to long term water supply/demand deficit. In order to address this issue TW's Preferred Plan measures include:

- A water efficiency campaign to be initiated by 2039/40
- Development of a new groundwater scheme at Mortimer in 2080

Given that the Henley Water Resource Zone is identified as having no supply/demand deficit, TW's Preferred Plan for this specific Zone would be to continue promoting water efficiency.

The planned initiatives for the River Kennet Water Resource Management Zone are considered to be longer term solutions and WBC is concerned that the Water Plan does

not address the short-to-medium term water supply issues that will arise as a result of the Borough's population increase and planned growth detailed in the Council's current Development Plan and the future Local Plan Update.

Thames Water are the largest wastewater provider in the UK, covering London and the Thames Valley, including Wokingham Borough. Thames Water have produced a draft 5 year Business Plan (starting in 2020) which includes their long term ambitions for such things as sewage flooding, looking after the environment and protecting customers from drought and water shortages.

Thames Water are responsible for turning wastewater into clean water and returning it safely back to the environment. Thames Water plans to invest more in their sewage treatments works to make sure they are more reliable. They have already invested heavily in technology and control systems to improve real-time monitoring of over 109,000km of sewers, 4,700 pumping stations and 351 sewage treatment works.

Currently, a number of Thames Water sewers, pumping stations and treatment works are running at near to capacity during heavy rainfall. Given the expected population increase in the South East, and the impact of unexpected weather patterns as a result of Climate Change, Thames Water plan to continue to invest in increasing the sewer size to manage the increase in waste. They also plan to invest around £20 million by 2020 in sustainable drainage solutions, such as porous paving and separating wastewater and surface water sewers. This will help reduce the risk of sewer flooding. In addition, Thames Water plans to replace 9km of water mains in the Wokingham/Bracknell area. It also plans to pledge further investment at the Bracknell sewage treatment works.

From April 2018, Thames Water will also be changing the way they charge developers for new water and wastewater connections, lateral drains, new water mains and sewers. Charges will be fixed and published, rather than provided on application, allowing developers to more easily and accurately estimate costs. WBC will continue to engage with Thames Water regarding potential site allocations as part of the work on the Local Plan Update, in order to assist Thames Water in planning for new water and wastewater connections and sewers.

### Conclusion

WBC recognize that TW has identified the area of Wokingham Borough covered by the River Kennet Water Resource Management Zone as having a medium to long term water supply/demand deficit.

WBC notes TW's initiatives of water efficiency and leakage reduction and improvements to metering, which have been applied to all 6 Water Resource Zones, as well as the specific initiatives for the River Kennet WRMZ. However, it is requested that Thames Water produce an Action Plan that addresses how the requirements of future housing supply in Wokingham Borough will be taken into account and mitigated where required, given the substantial increase in population in Wokingham Borough and future planned growth to be advanced through the Local Plan Update.

WBC continues to welcome further engagement with TW as work on the Water Plan 2019 continues, with reference to water supply.

WBC also continues to welcome further engagement with TW as work on the Local Plan Update and Site allocations progresses, with reference to wastewater connections and sewers.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

***The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.***

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Nil	Nil	Nil
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Nil	Nil	Nil
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Nil	Nil	Nil

### Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None anticipated

### Cross-Council Implications

The ability of Thames Water to plan, manage and deliver water resources across the Borough will be significantly affected by the amount of development that is already planned for the Borough as part of the current Local Development Plan, as well as future growth as part of the Local Plan Update.

### SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

<b>Director – Corporate Services</b>	No response received
<b>Monitoring Officer</b>	No comments
<b>Leader of the Council</b>	No response received

### Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

N/a

### List of Background Papers

Information published by Thames Water regarding their Water Resource Management Plan 2019:

<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/yourwaterfuture>

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