

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION OF THE LEAD MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Decision Made: 20 February 2023

Water Supply Consultation

Issue for Decision

This decision covers three water supply consultations. One by the regional water company alliance (Water Resource South East), and the others by the water supply utility companies that operate in the Borough (South East Water & Southern Water).

The consultations referred to in this decision include:

- Water Resources South East – Draft Best Value Regional Plan
- South East Water – Draft Water Resources Management Plan
- Southern Water - Draft Water Resources Management Plan

Decision Made

That the proposed responses to the three water supply consultations at the amended appendix 1 of the report are approved.

Reasons for Decision

1.1 There are three consultations running concurrently on water supply. These involve two water companies operating in the Borough (South East Water & Southern Water) and the south east regional alliance of water companies (Water Resource South East), which covers the Borough. The consultations run from **14 November 2022** to **20 February 2023**.

1.2 The consultations are as follows:

- Water Resources South East –Best Value Regional Plan
- South East Water –Water Resources Management Plan
- Southern Water - Water Resources Management Plan

1.3 This decision summarises the consultations. All three consultations have a standard template to collect responses.; The Council's proposed responses to each of the three consultations is attached in Amended Appendix 1.

1.4 There are two water companies that operate within Maidstone Borough providing water supply services. The companies are Southern Water and South East Water. Southern Water supplies water to north the Borough on the border with Medway. Whilst South East Water supplies water to the rest of the Borough.

1.5 Both these companies are required every 5 years to produce a water resource management plan. The aim of the plan is to maintain water supply over the timeframe 2025-2075.

1.6 A third consultation is being run by Water Resource South East (WRSE), and is the Best Value Regional Plan. WRSE is a south east regional alliance of the six operating water companies within its geographical area. WRSE is not directly involved in the provision of water supply. Like the WRMP produced by the water companies the Best Value Regional Plan produced by WRSE assesses the water needs for the region and identifies strategic solutions to the problems identified. The plan covers the same timeframe as the WRMPs and is also similarly a requirement within the water regulatory system.

1.7 It should be noted that outside of these consultations the Council has been engaging with the relevant water companies through the Local Plan Review to confirm if there is capacity for the planned growth. This engagement has taken place at the statutory consultation periods at Regulation 18 and 19, plus through the development of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan that is evidence to support the Local Plan Review. Therefore, water supply capacity has been factored into the Local Plan Review.

Alternatives considered and why rejected

3.1 Option 1: That the Lead Member for Planning & Infrastructure approve the response to the consultation as originally presented in Appendix 1 to the report. This would allow the response to be sent by the submission deadline.


3.2 Option 2: That the Lead Member for Planning & Infrastructure approve the response to the consultation as presented at Amended Appendix 1, which includes the comments of the Planning and Infrastructure Policy Advisory Committee. This would allow the response to be sent by the submission deadline.

3.3 Option 3: That the response at Appendix 1 of this report is not approved by the Lead Member for Planning & Infrastructure. However, this would mean the response would not be sent and the Council's views would not be factored in.

Appendices

Amended Appendix 1: MBC Responses to Water Supply Consultation.

I have read and approved the above decision for the reasons (including possible alternative options rejected) as set out above.

Signed: 
Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure

Due to the urgency required to submit the consultation response by the deadline of 20 February 2023, this decision was not subject to call-in.

Full details of both the report for the decision taken above and any consideration by the relevant Policy Advisory Committee can be found at the following area of the [website](#)