

WATER MANAGEMENT CYCLE WORKING GROUP - NOTES

WEDNESDAY 1 MARCH 2023

5.30 P.M. – 7.00 P.M. VIA MS TEAMS

<p>Present:</p> <p><u>Members</u> Councillor English (Chairman) Councillor Brice Councillor Garten Councillor Cleator</p> <p><u>Reserve Member</u> Councillor Springett</p> <p><u>Visiting Member</u> Councillor Spooner (as Planning Committee Chairman)</p> <p><u>Officers</u> Democratic Services Officer</p>	
Item	Minute
1. Apologies	<p>Apologies had been received from Councillor Jeffery.</p> <p>Councillor Cleator had to leave part-way through the meeting but returned during Item 3 – Review of Evidence.</p>
2. Substitute Members	<p>Councillor Springett was present as Substitute Member until Councillor Brice’s arrival, at which point Councillor Springett was in attendance as a visiting member.</p> <p>Councillor Spooner was invited to attend the meeting and observe the proceedings as Chairman of the Planning Committee, due to the overlap between the group’s review and the development management service area.</p>
3. Review of Evidence	<p>The group reviewed the evidence supplied including:</p> <p><u>Written introduction from Kent Highways:</u></p> <p>The group felt that the written summary did not provide enough information generally, and that the response could’ve been better.</p> <p>It was suggested that the need for greater information within written evidence could be included within the final report.</p> <p><u>Wish-list from Southeast Rivers Trust</u></p> <p>The group reviewed the wish-list, expressing support for the actions contained within it. However, it was felt unlikely that all of the actions could be achieved within the near future as a direct result of the group’s review. Further advice would be needed on which actions to take forward (see next section for further information).</p>

Questions were raised in relation to:

- The policy request for all road run-off and surface water to be filtered before discharge into rivers, as several Members mentioned that this could be considered within the Design and Sustainability Development Plan Document (D&D DPD).

It was suggested that the points within the wish-list relating to the local road network be highlighted and sent to KCC Highways for a response.

- The policy request for ensuring suitable buffer space between rivers and developments, as the group felt that this could be raised at the D&S DPD all-Member briefing, in response to concerns that the current landscape buffers were not enough of a buffer space.

It was noted that the Chairman and Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee had raised the management of SuD schemes directly with the Head of Development Management, particularly given the issues experienced with ineffective management companies in some cases and whether any assistance should be provided to local residents managing these schemes, where applicable.

The group felt that drainage management could be subject to a detailed review in the future, in accordance with the matter as raised with the Head of Development Management.

Water Management Cycle – Follow Up from the Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement

Having reviewed the evidence provided by the SERT and the Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement, which were felt to interact well, the group felt that they should select between three-six schemes/projects to take forward as it was unlikely that all of the suggested actions could be achieved through the current review. The importance of maximising what could be achieved was emphasised.

In response, the Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement and the Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager would be invited to attend the group's next meeting to advise on which would be the most suitable. This would allow for advice to be received once the outstanding wish-lists from external stakeholders had been provided.

Nature Based Solutions for Water Cycle Management Case Studies from the Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

The group felt that the document contained good examples of case studies, highlighting that the creation of managed wetlands could be further explored generally and raised at the D&S DPD briefing; agricultural land that was susceptible to flooding could be used, with specific reference made to Staplehurst Ward given the number of complaints shown within the KCC data provided.

	<p>The group discussed highlighting natural flood mitigation measures within its final report, such as planting Willow Trees and landscaping measures, alongside signposting to the appropriate organisations and/or funds. This would help in mitigating the impact of increased development, with the Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager to be asked to provide further information on the topic. In response, several Members of the group also raised whether landscaping conditions should be set to a longer time period to assist.</p> <p>The group suggested including a recommendation to ask the stakeholders consulted to provide comments on the final report, and briefly discussed whether KCC should be requested to update the Surface Water Management Plan for Maidstone as a matter of urgency, given the likely time it would take to bring this forward otherwise.</p>
<p>4. Summary of Report Contents</p>	<p>The Democratic Services Officer outlined the suggested report sections and requested that the Group provide comments and steer, to ensure the report was drafted as required.</p> <p>The sections included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Group Membership • Background to the review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What is the Water Management Cycle? ○ Council actions taken in relation to the Water Management Cycle, such as the membership of the Medway Flood Partnership • Lines of Enquiry • Review Timeline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meetings ○ Attendees ○ Evidence provided • Recommended Actions and Intended Outcomes • Thanks to witnesses and list of those invited • Appendix (recommendation table) <p>In response, the group stated that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the evidence provided throughout the review should be made available online, with links in the report, to prevent the report from becoming too large a paper pack; • the 'review timeline' section should be concise, with reference to an appendix for greater details; and • the 'thanks to witnesses and list of those invited' should include a comprehensive list of those invited.
<p>5. Meeting Minutes</p>	<p>The Meeting Minutes of 7 February 2023 would be amended to include references to rainwater recycling and brown water, within the 'Co-operation with Southeast Water and Southern Water' section, to better reflect the group's ambitions.</p> <p>The group would review the minutes from all its meetings and inform the Democratic Services Officer if there were any further comments, particularly as the group's sentiments and possible requests had been italicised in supporting the report's production, by 5 p.m. on Friday 10</p>

	March 2023. This would ensure that any comments could be incorporated into the agenda papers for the 20 March 2023 meeting.
5. Summary of Agreed Actions	<p>Actions:</p> <p>That the working group review the minutes of all its meetings so far and inform the Democratic Services Officer if there were any further comments by 5 p.m. on Friday 10 March 2022.</p> <p>That the Democratic Services Officer</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Consult the Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement and Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager on attending the group's next meeting;2. Begin drafting the report on behalf of the Working Group; and3. Amend the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2023, to include references to rainwater recycling and brown water, within the 'Co-operation with Southeast Water and Southern Water' section.
6. Duration of Meeting	5.30 p.m. to 7 p.m.