

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Thursday 13 April 2023
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors English (Chairman), Cannon (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Blackmore, Brice, Cleator, Conyard, Garten, Hastie, Hinder, Jeffery, Knatchbull, McKenna and T Wilkinson

The Chairman will assume that all Members will read the reports before attending the meeting. Officers are asked to assume the same when introducing reports.

<u>AGENDA</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
1. Apologies for Absence	
2. Notification of Substitute Members	
3. Urgent Items	
4. Notification of Visiting Members	
5. Disclosures by Members and Officers	
6. Disclosures of Lobbying	
7. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information	
8. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 21 February 2023	1 - 3
9. Presentation of Petitions (if any)	
10. Question and Answer session for Local Residents (if any)	
11. Questions from Members to the Chairman (if any)	
12. Committee Work Programme	4 - 6
13. Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	7 - 19
14. Report of the Water Management Cycle Working Group	20 - 81

Issued on Monday 3 April 2023

Continued Over/:

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

In order to ask a question at this meeting, please call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk by 5 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting (i.e. by 5 p.m. on Tuesday 11 April 2023). You will need to provide the full text in writing.

If your question is accepted, you will be provided with instructions as to how you can access the meeting.

In order to make a statement in relation to an item on the agenda, please call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk by 5 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting (i.e. by 5 p.m. on Tuesday 11 April 2023). You will need to tell us which agenda item you wish to speak on.

If you require this information in an alternative format please contact us, call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk.

To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2023

Attendees:

Committee Members:	Councillors English (Chairman), Cannon, Brice, Cleator, Conyard, Garten, Hinder, Jeffery, Knatchbull, McKenna, T Wilkinson, Joy and Brindle
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72. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Blackmore and Hastie.

73. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Brindle was present as substitute for Councillor Blackmore.

Councillor Joy was present as substitute for Councillor Hastie.

74. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

75. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no visiting members.

76. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

77. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

78. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That all items be taken in public as proposed.

79. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 DECEMBER 2022

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 December 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

80. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

81. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS

There were no questions from Local Residents.

82. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE CHAIRMAN

There were no questions from Members to the Chairman.

Note: Councillors Brice and Cannon joined the meeting at 6.33 p.m. and 6.34 p.m. respectively. There were no disclosures of interest or lobbying.

83. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Democratic Services Officer stated that work was ongoing to produce the scope for the shared Night-Time economy review, which had been due to commence from February 2023. The Committee were asked to delay the review to post-May 2023, to ensure that the relevant information was available when it began.

The Committee felt that the review should be delayed to ensure that the most up to date information was provided at the review's commencement instead of having to review the scope later on.

RESOLVED: That the amended work programme be agreed.

84. WATER MANAGEMENT CYCLE UPDATE REPORT

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report and referenced point 2.5 of the report, which outlined the meetings held so far by the Water Management Cycle Working Group (the Group). The Group's final report would be presented to the Committee before the end of the Municipal Year.

In response to questions, the Democratic Services Officer confirmed that the Environment Agency had not responded to a further invitation to partake in the review, and that the minutes of the group's meeting held on the 7 February 2023 would be available later in the week.

The group members present highlighted the engagement had with other stakeholders, including Southeast and Southern Water, and felt that a further attempt should be made to contact the Environment Agency. National Highways would also be invited to contribute, possibly through written evidence. The importance of continuing to apply pressure to the relevant organisations, particularly the water companies, to improve the water cycle's management, was highlighted.

In relation to joint working, the Chairman outlined their attendance at a Planning and Infrastructure Policy Advisory Committee, to comment on the Water Supply Consultations on the group's behalf; the comments made were taken on board by the Committee.

The Democratic Services Officer was thanked for their work in supporting the group.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

85. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 6.47 p.m.

Maidstone Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2022-23 Municipal Year

Review Title & Objectives	Expected Start Date & Method	Relevant Officer/s	Timetable
<p><u>The Council's performance against the Waste Strategy</u></p> <p>Review the Waste Strategy whilst considering best practice of other Local Authorities to identify innovative improvements</p>	<p>November 2022.</p>	<p>William Cornall, Director of Regeneration and Place</p> <p>Jennifer Stevens, Head of Environment and Public Realm</p>	<p>Evidence Collection - 2 & 3 November 2022.</p> <p>Recommended actions reviewed - 22 November 2022.</p> <p>(draft) formal report presented - 20 December 2022.</p>
<p><u>Safety in the Town Centre</u></p> <p>Review existing measures and ascertain any changes needed, in consultation with stakeholders.</p> <p>Stage 1: Town Centre Safety</p>	<p>September 2022 (safety element)</p> <p>OSC acting as the C&D Committee Meetings</p>	<p>John Littlemore, Head of Housing and Regulatory Services</p> <p>Martyn Jeynes, Community and Strategic Partnerships Manager</p>	<p><u>Town Centre Safety</u></p> <p>External Evidence Collection – 18 October 2022.</p> <p>Internal Evidence Collection – 20 December 2022.</p> <p>Recommended actions & draft report reviewed – 21 March 2023.</p>

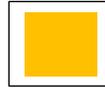
<p>Water Management Cycle</p> <p>Focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the supply and disposal of water; and disposal of sewage <p>to identify improvements.</p>	<p>October 2022, Working Group.</p>	<p>Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement</p> <p>William Cornall, Director of Regeneration and Place</p> <p>Philip Coyne, Interim Local Plan Review Director</p>	<p>Ongoing; Report likely to be presented in from March 2023.</p> <p>Officer consultation – 15 and 22 December.</p> <p>External Stakeholder Consultation – x2 meetings across week commencing 23 January 2023.</p> <p>Lead Member Consultation – (from) February 2023 as required.</p> <p>Report Writing – February/March 2023 as required.</p>
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5 Key:

Completed



In Progress



Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023-24 Municipal Year

Review Title & Objectives	Expected Start Date & Method	Relevant Officer/s	Timetable
<u>Enforcement</u>	Post-May 2023	To be confirmed.	To be confirmed.
<u>Night-Time Economy</u> To review the twilight and night-time economy within Maidstone Town Centre.	Post-May 2023	Shared Review with the Policy, Communities and Engagement and the Economic Development Teams	To be confirmed.
<u>Health Inequality</u> Increased understanding of health inequalities across the borough and an overview of strategy and police across the relevant bodies.	Post-May 2023	Alison Broom, Chief Executive, John Littlemore, Head of Housing and Regulatory Services Senior Public Health Officer	To be confirmed.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 APRIL 2023

Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	13 April 2023
Council	19 April 2023

Will this be a Key Decision?	No
Urgency	Not Applicable
Final Decision-Maker	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Lead Director	Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight & Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Oliviya Parfitt, Principal Democratic Services Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

A report outlining the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee across the 2022/23 Municipal Year, for submission to the Council for information.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendations to the Committee

1. That the report attached at Appendix A be considered, amended as required and submitted to the Council.

Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure • Safe, Clean and Green • Homes and Communities • A Thriving Place <p>We do not expect the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities. The annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee outlines the work undertaken by the Committee in exercising its functions and powers.</p>	Democratic & Electoral Services Manager
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage is Respected • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected <p>The report recommendations do not impact the Council's ability to achieve its cross-cutting objectives. The annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee outlines the work undertaken by the Committee in exercising its functions and powers.</p>	Democratic & Electoral Services Manager
Risk Management	See Section 5 of the report.	Democratic Services Officer
Financial	No impacts identified.	Democratic Services Officer
Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Democratic Services Officer

Legal	The Overview and Scrutiny Statutory Guidance highlights that annual Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports raise awareness of the ongoing work, as part of the 'maintaining the interest of full Council' section of the guidance (11(h)). The Council's Constitution also requires an annual report to be produced and presented to the full Council (Part B4, Rule 1.2.2), and agreeing the report attached at Appendix A will meet this requirement.	Democratic Services Officer
Information Governance	The recommendations do not impact personal information (as defined in UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) the Council processes.	Democratic Services Officer
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Democratic Services Officer
Public Health	No impacts identified.	Democratic Services Officer
Crime and Disorder	No impacts identified.	Democratic Services Officer
Procurement	No impacts identified.	Democratic Services Officer
Biodiversity and Climate Change	The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and are; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no implications on biodiversity and climate change. 	Democratic Services Officer

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 The Council's Constitution states that (Part B4, Rule 1.2.2, p. 76):

'The Overview and Scrutiny Committee must report annually to the full Council on its workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate'.

2.2 Attached at Appendix A to the report, is a draft annual report. The following information has been included:

- Training undertaken at the beginning of the year
- The number of Committee meetings held across the year
- The reviews undertaken, including the:

- Review title and aim
- Outcome
- Next Steps
- Review details; meetings had, attendees and evidence provided.
- Call-In
- 2023/24 Work Programme

2.3 As this is the Committee's first year in operation, the report has been drafted to reflect a 'timeline' of its activity. As the Overview and Scrutiny function continues to develop, the report format and contents are likely to change to ensure it reflects the Committee's views on its year of work. For this reason, the Committee will receive the report earlier in the 2023/24 municipal year, likely around March 2024.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Option 1 – Amend and/or Approve the (draft) Committee report as contained within appendix a to the report.
- 3.2 Option 2 – Do not amend and/or approve the (draft) Committee report as contained within appendix a to the report. This is not recommended, as the Committee is constitutionally required to report its workings to the full Council.
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Option 1 as outlined in point 3.1 of the report.
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5. RISK

- 5.1 As this report and appendix A outline the actions taken by the Committee across this municipal year, there are no risk management implications.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 As this is the Committee's first year in operation, there are no consultation results or previous committee feedback to highlight as part of this report.
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7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 The report will be presented to the full Council at its meeting on the 19 April 2023, in accordance with Part B4, Rule 1.2.2 of the Council's Constitution.
- 7.2 As the agenda for the 19 April 2023 meeting has already been published, any amendments made to the report will be reflected in 'moving' the report at that meeting.
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8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: (draft) Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
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9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Maidstone Borough Council Constitution: [\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Maidstone Borough Council Constitution, 11/11/2019 00:00](#)

Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 2022-23.

This report will be considered formally by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) at its meeting on the 13 April 2023.

Committee Membership:

Councillors English (Chairman), Cannon (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Blackmore, Brice, Cleator, Conyard, Garten, Hastie, Hinder, Jeffery, Knatchbull, McKenna and T Wilkinson.

Further information relating to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can be found here: [Your Councillors - Maidstone Borough Council](#)

Report Contents
Training
Meetings and Reviews
Call-In
2023-24

Training

The OSC undertook two training sessions conducted by external providers before its first meeting in June 2022. These were:

- Introduction to Overview and Scrutiny for Elected Members
- Questioning Skills

Meetings and Reviews

The OSC undertook an ambitious work programme for the 2022/23 Municipal Year; Originally, the reviews chosen were:

- Safety and Enforcement
- Waste and Recycling Strategy, 2018-2023
- Water Management Cycle
- Health Inequality

By December 2022, the OSC agreed to amend its work programme as it was not feasible to complete all of the reviews in one municipal year. In response, the Night-time Economy and Enforcement aspects of the first review, alongside the Health Inequality review, were moved to the 2023-24 work programme.

The tables below provide the details for each of the review's conducted by the OSC this year.

The OSC has met on 15 occasions across the year; 8 of these meetings were scheduled through the calendar of meetings, 7 of these meetings were additional meetings.

Review Title & Objectives: Safety in the Town Centre & 'Review existing safety measures to identify any required changes'.		
Outcomes: The Committee produced a total of 15 recommendations, 14 of which were applicable to the Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement's portfolio; the remaining action was for the Committee to appoint a rapporteur to conduct a post-review evaluation. The recommendations were grouped thematically to include; Greater Communications, Member Support and Future Actions. Information relating to the review can be accessed here: Your Councillors - Maidstone Borough Council		
Next Steps: The report will be presented to the Executive at its 18 April 2023 meeting, with a formal response to be provided early in the next Municipal Year.		
Meetings	Attendees	Evidence Provided
6 October 2022	Community & Strategic Partnerships Manager (MBC) Youth Hub Delivery Manager Maidstone (KCC) Partnership Sergeant, Maidstone, Community Safety Partnership (Kent Police)	Community Safety Plan Extract Data extract from the Town Centre Strategy Data Pack Joint presentation from attendees, and Q&A session.
18 Oct 2022	Community & Strategic Partnerships Manager (MBC) District Commander (Kent Police) Inspector (Kent Police) Youth Hub Delivery Manager Maidstone (KCC) Bid Manager (One Maidstone) Violence Reduction Unit Co-ordinator (Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit)	Themes from Member Briefing. Verbal Q&A Session with attendees.
20 Dec 2022	Communications Manager (MBC) Community and Strategic Partnerships Manager (MBC) Head of Housing and Regulatory Services (MBC)	Written responses from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 Oct attendees concerning future actions; • Housing Associations within the Town Centre. Safer Streets Communication Plan & Verbal Q&A Session with attendees.

Review Title & Objectives: The Council’s Performance against the Waste and Recycling Strategy, 2018-2023 & to:

- a) Assess customer satisfaction with the service, including interaction with customer services and educational communications, to identify improvements;
- b) To identify which actions within the Waste Strategy correspond with actions within the Biodiversity and Climate Change strategy, and make recommendations to improve their shared achievement;
- c) Explore options for increasingly recycling rates through assessing the best practice of other Local Authorities with similar waste collection service. This will also include reducing overall waste; and
- d) To review the impact of shared waste collection facilities within/from new Housing Development on the achievement of Waste Strategy targets.

Information relating to the review can be accessed here: [Your Councillors - Maidstone Borough Council](#)

Outcomes: The Committee produced a total of 27 recommendations; 24 applied to the Executive, 2 applied to the Planning Committee and the remainder applied to the OSC.

The Committee’s report was presented to the Executive at its 25 January 2023 Meeting, and a formal response was published within the 22 March 2023 Executive agenda; 17 of the actions were agreed, 3 were noted and 1 was not agreed. This was then included within the 13 April 2023 OSC agenda papers for noting.

Next Steps: None currently, although recommendation 27 would be action following the commencement of the waste collection services contract in 2024.

Meetings	Attendees	Evidence Provided
2 & 3 Nov 2022	Customer Services Manager Communications Manager Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager Waste Crime Manager Head of Environmental Services and Public Realm Major Projects Team Leader Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid, Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement Councillor Martin Round, Lead Member for Environmental Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s Waste and Recycling Strategy, 2018-2023 • Recycling Data across the period 2018-2022 • Relevant excerpt from the Council’s Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan • Summary of Waste Services related Communications from January 2021-October 2022 • Data on Stage 1 and 2 complaints relating to Waste Services • Relevant excerpt of the results from the Residents Survey 2022 – Waste & Recycling Summary

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table of Top Performing Local Authorities 2020/21 (with similar waste collection services to those provided at the Council) • Information relating to developments with Shared Waste Collection Facilities <p>Verbal evidence from Q&A session with attendees.</p>
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16	<p>Review Title & Objectives: The Water Management Cycle (conducted via a Working Group) & 'To identify actions to be taken by the Council and/or its partner organisations to improve the management and resilience of the water management cycle framework'.</p> <p>The detailed lines of enquiry were:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">Supply of Water</td> <td>Mitigating effects of increased rainfall, including capacity; General supply of water</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disposal of Water</td> <td>Importance and influence of development management; Flooding mitigation Mechanisms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To effectively control water ii. Natural flood mitigation measures Management of highway and surface water flooding; Working with partners</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disposal of Sewage in Water Courses</td> <td>Combined systems (also relevant to point b) and link to foul and surface water mixing. Council powers and partnership Working Working with partners Water neutrality and planning</td> </tr> </table> <p>Information relating to the review can be accessed here (see 13 April 2023 meeting): Your Councillors - Maidstone Borough Council</p> <p>Outcomes: The Group's report was reviewed by the OSC at the 13 April 2023 Meeting. The outcomes included a list of 22 actions; 21 of which fall within the Executive's remit, and 1 is for the Overview and Scrutiny.</p> <p>Next Steps: The Committee is considering whether to conduct a second phase review, as put forward by the Working Group, to focus on other aspects linked to the review that could not be reviewed in time for the end of the 2022/23 municipal year.</p>	Supply of Water	Mitigating effects of increased rainfall, including capacity; General supply of water	Disposal of Water	Importance and influence of development management; Flooding mitigation Mechanisms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To effectively control water ii. Natural flood mitigation measures Management of highway and surface water flooding; Working with partners	Disposal of Sewage in Water Courses	Combined systems (also relevant to point b) and link to foul and surface water mixing. Council powers and partnership Working Working with partners Water neutrality and planning
Supply of Water	Mitigating effects of increased rainfall, including capacity; General supply of water						
Disposal of Water	Importance and influence of development management; Flooding mitigation Mechanisms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To effectively control water ii. Natural flood mitigation measures Management of highway and surface water flooding; Working with partners						
Disposal of Sewage in Water Courses	Combined systems (also relevant to point b) and link to foul and surface water mixing. Council powers and partnership Working Working with partners Water neutrality and planning						

Meetings	Attendees	Evidence Provided
1 Nov 22	Working Group Only	None.
5 Dec 22	Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement	Technical Briefing from the Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement on the Council's actions so far on the topic.
15 Dec 22	Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager	Evidence collection through Officer interviews
22 Dec 22	Director of Regeneration and Place Interim Local Plan Review Director Principal Planning Officer x2 Environmental Health Manager	As Above.
27 Jan 23	Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board Southeast Rivers Trust Kent County Council	Evidence collection through interviews.
7 Feb 23	Southeast Water Southern Water	As Above.
1 Mar 23	Working Group Only	Review of remaining written evidence: Southern Water wish-list Southeast Rivers Trust wish-list
20 Mar 23	Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement	Recommendations produced.
28 Mar 23	Working Group Only	Report Reviewed.

Call-In

It is a legislative power of the OSC and takes place when either:

- The OSC Chairman; OR
- Any three Council Members

Request to call-in a decision for review, after it has been made by the Executive but before the end of the call-in period included in the decision notice.

The OSC has reviewed one call-in request which it reviewed on the 22 November 2022, on the 'Proposed Change to Maidstone AQMA and Request to Consult on New Air Quality Action Plan'.

The Lead Member for Environmental Services and relevant Council Officers attended the meeting and answered questions from the Committee and Members that had called-in the decision. Assurance was given on the quality and applicability of the data used to inform the decision and the Lead Member for Environmental Services suggested alternative ways to provide future updates.

2023-24

It is likely that further training will be provided to the Committee on the roles and powers of Overview and Scrutiny, as the function continues to develop at Maidstone Borough Council.

The OSC's current work programme for 2023-2024 is shown on the next page, with any changes to the programme to be agreed by the Committee.

Committee Work Programme 2023-24.

Review Title & Objectives	Expected Start Date & Method	Relevant Officer/s	Timetable
<u>Enforcement</u>	Post-May 2023	To be confirmed.	To be confirmed.
<u>Night-Time Economy</u> To review the twilight and night-time economy within Maidstone Town Centre.	Post-May 2023	Shared Review with the Policy, Communities and Engagement and the Economic Development Teams	To be confirmed.
<u>Health Inequality</u> Increased understanding of health inequalities across the borough and an overview of strategy and police across the relevant bodies.	Post-May 2023	Alison Broom, Chief Executive, John Littlemore, Head of Housing and Regulatory Services Senior Public Health Officer	To be confirmed.

Agenda Item 14

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 APRIL 2023

Water Management Cycle Working Group Review - Covering Report

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	13 April 2023
Executive	Post May 2023 (exact date tbc)

Will this be a Key Decision?	No
Urgency	Not Applicable
Final Decision-Maker	Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Any agreed actions arising from the review will be presented to the relevant Decision Maker post May 2023.
Lead Director	Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight & Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Oliviya Parfitt, Democratic Services Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All.

Executive Summary

A report supplemented by the draft Working Group report to conclude the first stage of the 'Water Management Cycle' review. Once agreed, the report will be presented to the relevant decision makers from April 2023.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendations to the Committee: That

1. The Committee consider the working group report attached at Appendix 1 and agree any amendments they wish to make to the report; and
 2. The draft working group report attached at Appendix 1 to the report, amended by the Committee as appropriate, be agreed and submitted to the relevant decision makers.
 3. Delegated authority be given to the Democratic Services Officer to amend the report following any changes to Lead Member portfolios post May 2023, if required.
 4. To add to the Work Programme for 2023/24 a second-phase review to review the remaining considerations, as outlined in point 2.3 of the report
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DRAFT

Water Management Cycle Working Group Review - Covering Report

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
<p>Impact on Corporate Priorities</p>	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure • Safe, Clean and Green • Homes and Communities • A Thriving Place <p>We do not expect the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities at this stage.</p> <p>Any actions agreed by the Committee as part of their review will be considered by the relevant Officers and Decision makers. This will take place via the presentation of the Committee’s formal report and Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan (SCRAIP) post May 2023, if the report at appendix 1 is agreed.</p>	<p>Director of Strategy, Insight & Governance</p>
<p>Cross Cutting Objectives</p>	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage is Respected • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected <p>Any actions agreed by the Committee as part of their review will be considered by the relevant Officers and Decision makers. This will take place via the presentation of the Committee’s formal report and Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan (SCRAIP) post May 2023, if the report at appendix 1 is agreed.</p>	<p>Director of Strategy, Insight & Governance</p>

Risk Management	See Section 5 of the report.	Director of Strategy, Insight & Governance
Financial	<p>Any recommendations agreed by the Committee as part of their review will be considered by the relevant Officers and Decision makers.</p> <p>This will include a consideration of the budgetary implications and will take place via the presentation of the Committee's formal report and Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan (SCRAIP), post May 2023, if the report at appendix 1 is agreed.</p>	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Director of Strategy, Insight & Governance
Legal	<p>In accordance with Part 1A of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) the Council is operating under Executive Arrangements. These arrangements must include provision for the appointment of one or more Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review and scrutinise the Executive Decisions made, or other actions taken relating to the exercise of Executive functions. – LGA 2000, Section 9F. Any actions agreed by the Committee as part of their review will be considered by the relevant Officers and Decision makers. This will take place via the presentation of the Committee's formal report and Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan (SCRAIP), post May 2023, if the report at appendix 1 is agreed.</p>	Interim Team Leader (Contentious and Corporate Governance)
Information Governance	<p>The recommendations do not impact personal information (as defined in UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) the Council processes.</p> <p>Any actions agreed by the Committee as part of their review will be considered by the relevant Officers and Decision makers. This</p>	Information Governance Team

	will take place via the presentation of the Committee's formal report and Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan (SCRAIP), post May 2023, if the report at appendix 1 is agreed.	
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment.	Equalities & Communities Officer
Public Health	<p>We recognise that this report recommendations will not negatively impact on population health or that of individuals.</p> <p>Any actions agreed by the Committee as part of their review will be considered by the relevant Officers and Decision makers. This will take place via the presentation of the Committee's formal report and Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan (SCRAIP), post May 2023, if the report at appendix 1 is agreed.</p>	Democratic Services Officer
Crime and Disorder	No impacts identified.	Director of Strategy, Insight & Governance
Procurement	No impacts identified.	Director of Strategy, Insight & Governance
Biodiversity and Climate Change	<p>The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and align with actions 5.4;5.5;6.7 and 8.5 of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan.</p> <p>Any actions agreed by the Committee as part of their review will be considered by the relevant Officers and Decision makers. This will take place via the presentation of the Committee's formal report and Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan (SCRAIP), post May 2023, if the report at appendix 1 is agreed.</p>	Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A review into the 'Water Management Cycle' has been held by the Working Group (the Group) between November 2022 to March 2023. These meetings were attended by a variety of internal and external stakeholders, with the agenda papers and minutes for those meetings accessible through section 9 of this report.
- 2.2 In March 2023, the Group reviewed the list of possible actions from the review in formulating its recommendations, and this included those suggested by some of the external stakeholders. The full list of evidence can be accessed through Appendix A to this report.
- 2.3 The Group has expressed that whilst the review has led to actions to be put forward now, further consideration is needed on some aspects; including lobbying central government and taking forward additional schemes amongst other things. As such, the working group have requested that a second-stage review commence post May 2023, and this is reflected in recommendation 4 of this report. It would be for this Committee to decide if it wishes to progress with a second-stage review.
- 2.4 The Committee is asked to consider and approve the group's draft report for submission to the relevant decision-makers. The Committee should make changes to the draft report where it feels these are necessary. The Group may put forward changes to the draft report at Appendix A, which if required, would be considered formally by the Committee at its meeting.
- 2.5 The relevant Lead Members for the recommendations contained within the (draft) Committee report attached at appendix 1 are the Lead Members for:
- Planning and Infrastructure
 - Environmental Services
 - Corporate Services and Deputy Leader
 - Communities and Public Engagement

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Option 1 – Amend and/or Approve the (draft) group report as contained within appendix 1 to the report.
- 3.2 Option 2 – Do not amend and/or approve the (draft) group report as contained within appendix 1 to the report. This is not recommended, as this will prevent the Democratic Services Officer from formally submitting the group's report (and recommendations) of the review to the relevant decision-makers. This will prevent the consideration of the group's recommendations and prevent any subsequent actions from being taken.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Option 1 as outlined in point 3.1 of the report.

5. RISK

5.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

6.1 The timeline of the Working Group's undertaking of the review is as follows:

Meeting	Attendees	Evidence provided
1 Nov 2022	Working Group	None. Meeting to organise review's timetable.
5 Dec 2022	Working Group Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement	Technical Briefing from the Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement on the Council's actions so far on the topic.
15 Dec 2022	Working Group Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager	Evidence collection through Officer interviews
22 Dec 2022	Working Group Director of Regeneration and Place Interim Local Plan Review Director Principal Planning Officer x2 Environmental Health Manager	Evidence collection through Officer interviews
27 Jan 2023	Working Group Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board Southeast Rivers Trust Kent County Council	Evidence collection through interviews
7 Feb 2023	Working Group Southeast Water Southern Water	Evidence collection through interviews
1 Mar 2023	Working Group	Review of remaining written evidence: Southern Water wish-list Southeast Rivers Trust wish-list
20 Mar 2023	Working Group Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement	Recommendations produced
28 Mar 2023	Working Group	Report reviewed.

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 If agreed, the report will be presented to the relevant decision makers as outlined in point 2.5 of the report.
- 7.2 In receiving the report, the Executive will then be presented with an Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan (SCRAIP) at a future meeting. This SCRAIP will contain comments from the relevant officers on any considerations and/or impacts arising from each of this Committee's recommendations. This will ensure that the decision-makers are presented with all the relevant, appropriate, and applicable information before reaching a decision. This is standard practice and is reflective of good governance.
-

8. REPORT APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: (draft) Committee Report: Safety in the Town Centre Review
 - Appendix 2: (draft) Minutes of the Working Group Meeting held on:
 - 7 February 2023
 - 1 March 2023
 - 20 March 2023
 - 28 March 2023
-

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Agenda and Minutes for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 19 July 2022: [Your Councillors - Maidstone Borough Council](#)

Agenda and Minutes for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 21 February 2023: [Your Councillors - Maidstone Borough Council](#)

Working Group Information Pack.

Water Management Cycle

April 2023



A review conducted by the Maidstone Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee's, Water Management Cycle Working Group

Report prepared by Oliviya Parfitt, Democratic Services Officer, on behalf of the Water Management Cycle Working Group

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Introduction and Rationale

In July 2022, the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (the Committee) agreed to review the Water Management Cycle (the Cycle) via a Working Group (the Group). In considering the proposed review topic, the Committee expressed that whilst the Council was not the leading authority on the matter, the topic was of significant importance to the borough and there was the potential to positively impact the proposed Design & Sustainability Development Plan Document.

The review would focus on the supply and disposal of water and the disposal of sewage in water courses, as the most problematic aspects of the Cycle, and aimed:

'To identify actions to be taken by the Council and/or its partner organisations to improve the management and resilience of the Water Management Cycle Framework'.

What is the Water Management Cycle?

The Water Management Cycle encompasses the different elements of water provision and use; such as household water supply, surface and rainwater management, sustainable drainage, and water efficiency.

Approach to the Review

The review took place via a cross-party working group that met informally between November 2022 to March 2023, with verbal and written evidence collected from internal and external stakeholders. As the review topic was wide ranging, the group decided to further split the lines of enquiry, making it easier to collect evidence:

Lines of Enquiry	Details
Supply of Water	Mitigating effects of increased rainfall, including capacity; General supply of water
Disposal of Water	Importance and influence of development management; Flooding mitigation Mechanisms i. To effectively control water ii. Natural flood mitigation measures Management of highway and surface water flooding; Working with partners
Disposal of Sewage in Water Courses	Combined systems (also relevant to point b) and link to foul and surface water mixing. Council powers and partnership Working Working with partners Water neutrality and planning

The table below outlines the meetings that took place, the respective attendees and evidence provided. Links to the information pack and minutes have been included in appendix 1.

Meeting	Attendees	Evidence provided
1 Nov 2022	Working Group	None. Meeting to organise review's timetable.
5 Dec 2022	Working Group Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement	Technical Briefing from the Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement on the Council's actions so far on the topic.
15 Dec 2022	Working Group Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager	Evidence collection through Officer interviews
22 Dec 2022	Working Group Director of Regeneration and Place Interim Local Plan Review Director Principal Planning Officer x2 Environmental Health Manager	Evidence collection through Officer interviews
27 Jan 2023	Working Group Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board Southeast Rivers Trust Kent County Council	Evidence collection through interviews
7 Feb 2023	Working Group Southeast Water Southern Water	Evidence collection through interviews
1 Mar 2023	Working Group	Review of remaining written evidence: Southern Water wish-list Southeast Rivers Trust wish-list
20 Mar 2023	Working Group Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement	Recommendations produced
28 Mar 2023	Working Group	Report reviewed.

Recommended Actions and Intended Outcomes

Throughout the review, the Group expressed support for the various actions being undertaken but felt that further work was required; the below recommendations have been produced in response.

The recommendations have been grouped thematically into the following sections; Schemes, Design & Sustainability Development Plan Document (D&S DPD) related recommendations, Development Management recommendations, Communication focused recommendations, Recommendations for Noting and Recommendations for External Organisations. The relevant Lead Member and Council Officers have been identified accordingly.

Schemes

1. That £100,000 be allocated to developing feasibility studies, to be matched by external providers, to support the progression of schemes designed to improve the water management cycle.

Lead Member for Environmental Services and/or Planning and Infrastructure dependent on scheme design.

Lead Officer: Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement.

Intended Outcome

This would ensure that schemes were readily available for implementation, taking a proactive approach to managing the effects of the water management cycle, as much of the council's work had been reactive. Historically the Council had been successful in obtaining funding where a scheme's need had been demonstrated.¹

Feasibility studies would need to respond to an agreed set of objectives. These might include some or all of the following:

- Ensure that places and infrastructure are resilient and can adapt to future flooding and coastal risks in a changing climate. Traditionally this has been quantified by assessing whether a scheme gives projection to (eg) a flood event likely to occur every 50 years.
- Support the Council's carbon and sustainability ambitions.
- Enhance the environment, e.g. by creating and improving habitat and rivers.
- Meet statutory requirements, e.g. complying with Reservoir Act duties.

The Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement had advised that feasibility studies would assist in creating suitable schemes, and that

¹ See 15 December 2022 Meeting Minutes.

there was a source of capital funding available within the Council's MTFS for such works.²

Further, conducting feasibility studies could lead to the progression of the joint working and other actions put forward by the Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board, Southeast Rivers Trust and Kent County Council. Please see relevant meeting minutes for further information.³

2. To increase the number of open spaces in the Borough that enhance wetland biodiversity, flood storage and surface water infiltration.

(Primary) Lead Member for Environmental Services for Council owned estate, and (Secondary) Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure for planning policy work.

Lead Officer: Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

Intended Outcome

To bring benefits to the borough, as similar schemes had elsewhere, and build upon the Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager's work in producing business cases for numerous schemes to be implemented on single pieces of land. If the work could be linked to the biodiversity net gain, significant biodiversity improvements could be achieved.

3. To further explore the creation of managed wetlands, including through the D&S DPD.

(Primary) Lead Member for Environmental Services for Council owned estate, and (Secondary) Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure for planning policy work.

Lead Officer: Head of Spatial Planning and Economic Development

Intended Outcome

This would provide increased natural flood mitigation measures, reducing surface water run-off, and slowing water flow.

Design & Sustainability Development Plan Document related Recommendations

Recommendations to the Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure:

4. That a proposals map outlining the areas within the borough where the biodiversity net gain could be used to secure schemes that deliver holistic improvements to the Water Management Cycle, be attached to the D&S DPD.

² See 5 December 2022 Meeting Minutes.

³ Above minutes and 27 January 2023 (external stakeholder consultation) Meeting Minutes.

Lead Officer: As Above.

Intended Outcome

This would support the creation and delivery of improvements to the water management cycle, so that the biodiversity net gain received through new developments could be maximised quickly.

5. To promote the separation of roof water from the sewer systems in new build properties and property conversion and extensions, including through the D&S DPD.

Lead Officer: As above.

Intended Outcome

To reduce the burden placed on combined sewer systems and the likelihood of sewerage flooding.

Through its review, the Group were informed that in some cases, the majority of liquid within the combined sewer systems is rain and surface water.⁴

6. To encourage developers to consider water usage reductions across development sites and within homes, such as water saving technologies and the use of 'grey water', including through the D&S DPD.

Lead Officer: As above.

Intended Outcome

To promote mechanisms that reduce water consumption and increase water recycling from the point of development as opposed to retrofitting.

The importance of making developments more water efficient was specifically raised by the Water companies consulted on the 7 February 2023.⁵

7. That the policies informing the D&S DPD would be usefully informed if Kent Flood Risk Maps were made available to the Planning and Policy service areas in developing policy documents.

Intended Outcome

To ensure that the recorded flood risk areas (as included within the maps) are considered when developing policy documents applicable to development.

⁴ See 7 February 2023 Meeting Minutes.

⁵ As Above.

8. To explore further the use and range of policy mechanisms to promote recycling of water and reduce water usage, both in newly built houses and as retrofit in existing properties.

(Extension of recommendation six above)

Lead Officers: As above and Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager.

Intended Outcome

To promote these mechanisms for use across small- and large-scale developments; At the 22 December 2022 group meeting, the group were informed that further information on water recycling would likely be provided in the D&S DPD, with the group expressing that promoting these mechanisms would prevent costly, time-consuming retrofitting measures (where possible).⁶

9. See Recommendation 3, as this is also applicable to the D&S DPD.

Development Management Recommendations

Recommendations to the Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure:

10. To increase the Council's control over the implementation of planning conditions relating to Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SuDS), through the spatial policy and development management service areas.

Lead Officers: Head of Spatial Planning and Economic Development and Head of Development Management

Intended Outcome

Through the review, the mismanagement of SuD schemes was highlighted, and this action would support the ongoing discussions being had between the Head of Development Management and the Chairman and Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee on how this could be addressed.

11. That the following requests be made to the Development Management Service area, via the Head of Development Management:

a. To review how water companies can be consulted and/or more effectively involved in the planning process.

Intended Outcome

To involve water companies in the planning process for a range of reasons including; to promote water efficiency, water recycling and

⁶ See 22 December 2022 Meeting Minutes.

reduced water usage within new developments, as developers may not prioritise this themselves, to improve the water management cycle generally.

The group recognised that any comments would carry less weight than those of statutory consultees. The water companies spoke of having greater involvement in the planning process at the 7 February 2023 meeting.⁷

b. To include the Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board (UMIDB) district area within the maps provided with major planning applications.

Intended Outcome

To highlight if the UMIDB district area overlapped with a proposed development, and if it is in a sensitive area for drainage, as Members have greater knowledge of their ward and any water management cycle related concerns, e.g., flooding.

c. To advise on whether Surface Water Management Plans can be used as material planning considerations.

Intended Outcome

To inform Members of the document's weight, if any, when considering planning applications.

d. To review opportunities to the building regulations for water saving, in a similar way to recent updates on the conservation of fuel and power.

Intended Outcome

The group felt that the opportunities available should be reviewed as part of best practice, with any gaps to be actioned as and when they arise through the building control service. In part, this can be linked to the feedback given by the water companies on the 7 February 2023.⁸

12. That when developments come forward in the town centre and adjoining areas, obstacles should either be removed or alleviated, to remove unnecessary restrictions on water courses, which reduce the flow rate, nutrient enrichment and wildlife corridors.

Intended Outcome

As outlined in the recommendation, to remove unnecessary restrictions on water courses, which reduce the flow rate, nutrient enrichment and wildlife corridors that may impact the area local to the development.

⁷ See 7 February 2023 Meeting Minutes.

⁸ See 7 February 2023 Meeting Minutes.

Communications Focused Recommendations

13. That an annual meeting be established between Parish, District and County Members and Officers (from both authorities), to discuss local issues and knowledge relating to the Water Management Cycle, by geographical area (North, Central & Southern Maidstone)

Lead Member for Environmental Services, Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure and Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement.

Lead Officers: Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement; Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager; Head of Spatial Planning and Economic Development; Head of Development Management and Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager.

Intended Outcome

To ensure that local knowledge is maintained and 'passed down' to prevent negative impacts to the area, such as flooding and property damage, through the water management cycle.

This knowledge is often lost over time, particularly when there are no written records of historic mitigation measures.

14. That local 'highway and surface water flooding hotspots' be identified with the Borough and County Members, and meetings organised with Kent County Council, National Highways, and the relevant Water Companies as applicable.

Lead Member for Environmental Services, Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure and Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement.

Lead Officers: As Above.

Intended Outcome

To proactively manage any impacts from flooding and/or water management cycle related matters, by consulting the relevant parties to seek improvements.

15. That the Community Protection Team contact local care home providers to remind them of the ability to register as 'priority customers' with the relevant water utilities.

Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement

Lead Officers: Community and Strategic Partnerships Manager

Intended Outcome

To ensure that local care homes are able to access water supplies during times of disruption, and that vulnerable residents are suitably supported and prioritised.

16. That the Council proactively identify water management cycle related matters for inclusion at events such as the Local Government Association Conference and Rural Urban Commission

(Primary) Lead Member for Environmental Services for Council owned estate, and (Secondary) Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure for planning policy work.

Intended Outcome

To increase the attention given to the Water Management Cycle nationally as well as locally.

Recommendations for Noting

To the Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure:

17. That the contents of the documents provided by Southern Water be endorsed, with the synergy between the company and the group noted.

Intended Outcome

The formally note and draw attention to the synergy between Southern Water and the Group during the review.

To the Lead Member for Corporate Services and Deputy Leader:

18. That the support expressed from both Southeast and Southern Water to use the Heathlands Garden Community, if agreed, as a showcase to demonstrate innovative and efficient water usage, be supported and noted.

Intended Outcome

The group felt that this was important to note formally as part of the review, arising from the group's ambitions to introduce new and innovative measures in the future.

To the Executive (as the relevant Lead Member would be identified depending on the type of development and/or improvement scheme being implemented):

19. That any development and/or improvement schemes to the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office demonstrate innovative and efficient water usage mechanisms, be noted.

Intended Outcome

As above, particularly as the site is a brownfield site which could lead to alternative mechanisms being used to demonstrate innovative and efficient water usage mechanisms.

Recommendations to External Organisations

- 20. That Kent County Council be requested to update the Surface Water Management Plans for Maidstone, including local plans where these have been produced for wards, as a matter of urgency.**

Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure.

Intended Outcome

Surface Water Management Plans (SWMP) are studies that aim to understand flood risks arising from local flooding. As this has likely changed since 2013 when the existing Maidstone SWMP was produced, the group felt it was imperative for an updated version to be produced.

- 21. That the Water Companies (Southeast and Southern Water) be consulted on:**
- a. Whether they would conduct an information campaign, and provide funding for commercial and household schemes, to minimise roof run-off into the sewer system; and**
 - b. Obtaining accurate information on [commercial and household] water consumption, to be linked to educational campaigns to reduce water usage.**
 - c. Investigation of the potential for creation of a new reedbed/wetland at Harrietsham Water Treatment Works to reduce ingress of Phosphates and Nitrates into the River Len.**
 - d. Reconsidering the emerging proposal to increase abstraction rates, for example at Hockers Lane Detling and other sites within the borough, to mitigate likely resultant harm to downstream wetlands and to water courses. Where this does take place, monitoring the abstraction increase to take place to ensure the effects are properly understood and can be mitigated if necessary.**

Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure.

Intended Outcome

The provision of funding would encourage individual households to implement schemes to minimise roof run-off and reduce the likelihood of combined sewer flooding.

The use of accurate water usage data would enable educational campaigns to be better targeted to achieve results. This was discussed by those companies

during the 7 February 2023 meeting, and with Council Officers at the 22 December 2022 meeting.⁹

To the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

22. That a second phase review be commenced in the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

Intended Outcome

To allow the working group to review the outstanding matters (as contained within Appendix 3 to this report). This would involve the Committee re-appointing the working group post May 2023.

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⁹ See 22 December 2022 and 7 February 2023 Meeting Minutes.

Summary of Stakeholder Evidence

A summary of the evidence provided is included below. For further details, please see the group's meeting minutes.

Internal Stakeholders

Mark Green, Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement

The Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement contributed significantly to the review, through providing a technical note and briefing to the group on the actions already taken by the Council relating to the water management cycle and has provided advice to the group generally.

The Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement attended the 27 January 2023 group meeting, and assisted in questioning the external stakeholders, and the 20 March 2023 meeting to assist the group in formulating its recommendations.

The Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement also assisted in contacting external stakeholders for the review.

James Wilderspin, Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

The Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager attended the 15 December 2022 group meeting, and answered questions on the water management cycle, biodiversity and the Council's Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan. The Group was given a list of the actions from the plan that related directly to the review and was given follow-up information from the officer on topic-related case studies, and the business case being produced on areas for biodiversity net gain usage.

Uche Olufemi, Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager

The Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager attend the group meeting held on 22 December 2022 to answer questions on the Council's emergency responses to incidents of flooding and the actions that had been taken to assist residents. The officer also attended the 7 February 2023 external stakeholder consultation meeting to observe the questioning.

The Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager also assisted in contacting external stakeholders for the review.

William Cornall, Director of Regeneration and Place

The Director of Regeneration and Place attended the group meeting held on 22 December 2022 and answered questions on the water management cycle relating to Development Management.

Richard Timms, Principal Planning Officer

The Principal Planning Officer attended the group meeting held on 22 December 2022 and provided a briefing note on how flooding and sewage is considered as part of the Development Management (planning applications) process.

At that meeting, the Officer answered questions on the Council's powers, Kent County Council's power and legislation and guidance as applicable to the subject matter.

Phil Coyne, Interim Local Plan Review Director

The Interim Local Plan Review Director attended the group meeting held on 22 December 2022 and answered questions on the Council's policies and local plan review.

Helen Garnett, Principal Planning Officer

The Principal Planning Officer attended the group meeting held on 22 December 2022 and answered questions on the Council's policies, local plan review, and possible methods to improve the water management cycle, such as through water efficiency measures.

Tracey Beattie, Environmental Health Manager

The Environmental Health Manager attended the group meeting held on 22 December 2022 and answered questions on the role of Environmental Health as part of the Water Management Cycle.

External Stakeholders

Oliver Pantrey, Clerk to the Board (Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board)

The Clerk to the Board attended the 27 January 2023 meeting, and answered questions relating to the UMIDB's remit, role and future aspirations, which included greater opportunities for partnership working amongst other things.

The group wishes to formally applaud the works undertaken by the UMIDB, with further details available in the minutes of the above-mentioned meeting, and the distribution of information on the UMIDB was requested.

To access the UMIDB's website, use the link below:

[Upper Medway IDB](#)

Dr Chris Gardner, Head of Science and Partnerships (Southeast Rivers Trust)

The Head of Science and Partnerships attended the 27 January 2023 meeting, and answered questions relating to the SERT's remit, role, future aspirations and partnership working.

Max Tant, Flood and Water Manager (Kent County Council)

The Flood and Water Manager attended the 27 January 2023 meeting and answered questions relating to Kent County Council's role as a Lead Local Flooding Authority, the role and remit of his team, the partnership working in place with the Council and other organisations and the actions that KCC would find beneficial for the group to consider as part of the review.

Steve Andrews, Head of Central Operations (Southeast Water) and David Murphy, Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager (Southern Water)

The Head of Central Operations and the Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager attended the 7 February 2023 meeting, both providing the group with a presentation and overview of the organisations' role, responsibilities, recent actions taken and future aspirations.

The Head of Central Operations and the Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager answered questions on measures to improve the water management cycle, including improving water efficiency and recycling, reducing overall water usage and partnership working amongst other things.

Environment Agency

The Working Group wishes to note that the Environment Agency was contacted on multiple occasions, as it had previously agreed to take part in the review, but it was not possible to arrange for the Environment Agency to participate. The Environment Agency therefore did not participate in this review.

Thanks to Witnesses

The Water Management Cycle Working Group would like to extend its thanks to the Internal and External stakeholders that supported the review, either through providing verbal evidence, written evidence and/or by attending a group meeting. The work undertaken by all parties involved has been noted and endorsed throughout the review.

Future Actions – Second Phase of the Review

Through consulting external stakeholders, the Group was requested to lobby central government on various matters such as funding and legislative powers. The group also feels that greater avenues should be explored to involve Water Companies in the planning process, amongst other matters.

To enable the recommendations produced so far to be agreed by the end of this Municipal year, the group has suggested a second phase review; that review would allow the group to finalise how it would like to address these issues, post May 2023 and would require the Committee to re-appoint the group to resolve these matters specifically. Please see appendix 3 for further details.

Appendix 1 - Information Relating To The Review

Written Information

Information pack and supplementary evidence provided to the group, including:

Information Pack:

- Gov.Uk Guidance on Water Supply, Wastewater and Water Quality (Planning)
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Summary Document for the Southern Water Consultation on the Draft Water Resources Management Plan
- Draft Water Resources Management Plan 2025 to 2075 (Southern Water)
- Briefing Note provided to the Executive on Water Quality Motion
- SERT Links:
- Environmental Land Management Schemes
- Natural Flood Management in the River Medway
- Briefing note provided by the Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement
- Tree Cover Article (Urban Centre for Green Metrics in Great Britain)
- EA Chief Executive Speech, 'Surface Water: The biggest flood risk of all'
- Maidstone Surface Water Management Plan (Kent County Council)
- Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan Draft for Consultation (Southern Water)
- DWMP Investment Plan for Sewer Flooding (Southern Water)
- DWMP Investment Plan for Wastewater Compliance and Pollution
- Medway Flood Partnership, 4-year update
- Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan
- MBC – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment & Appendices
- Briefing Note on how flooding/sewage is considered as part of the planning application (development management) process.

Other:

- KCC Land Drainage Enquiries Data
- MBC Sewage and Flooding Complaints Data
- Follow-Up Note on Project Feasibility, (Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement)
- Nature Based Solutions for Water Cycle Management Case Studies, (Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager)
- Southeast Rivers Trust Wish-list
- Southern Water Documents;
 - 'Our Policy Statement on Sustainable Development'
 - 'Planning and Growth: Briefing from Southern Water'

Working Group Meeting Minutes.

Working Group Membership:

Councillors:

English (Chairman), Brice, Cleator, Garten, Harwood and Jeffery

Substitutes: Councillors Conyard, Springett and D Wilkinson

Contact details for these Members can be found here:

[Your Councillors - Maidstone Borough Council](#)

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Recommendation	Relevant Lead Member/Council Officers (as applicable)	Intended outcome
<p>That £100,000 be allocated to developing feasibility studies, , to support the progression of schemes designed to improve the water management cycle.</p>	<p>Lead Members for Environmental Services and Planning and Infrastructure</p> <p>Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement</p>	<p>This would ensure that schemes were readily available for implementation, taking a proactive approach to managing the effects of the water management cycle, as much of the council’s work had been reactive. Historically the Council had been successful in obtaining funding where a scheme’s need had been demonstrated.</p> <p>Feasibility studies would need to respond to an agreed set of objectives. These might include some or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that places and infrastructure are resilient and can adapt to future flooding and coastal risks in a changing climate. Traditionally this has been quantified by assessing whether a scheme gives projection to (eg) a flood event likely to occur every 50 years. - Support the Council’s carbon and sustainability ambitions. - Enhance the environment, eg by creating and improving habitat and rivers. - Meet statutory requirements, eg complying with Reservoir Act duties.

		<p>The Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement had advised that feasibility studies would assist in creating suitable schemes, and that there was a source of capital funding available within the Council's MTFS for such works.</p> <p>Further, conducting feasibility studies could lead to the progression of the joint working and other actions put forward by the Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board, Southeast Rivers Trust and Kent County Council. Please see relevant meeting minutes for further information.</p>
To increase the number of open spaces that enhance wetland biodiversity, flood storage and surface water infiltration.	<p>Lead Members for Environmental Services and Planning and Infrastructure</p> <p>Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager</p>	To bring benefits to the borough, as similar schemes had elsewhere, and build upon the Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager's work in producing business cases for numerous schemes to be implemented on single pieces of land. If the work could be linked to the biodiversity net gain, significant biodiversity improvements could be achieved.
To further explore the creation of managed wetlands, including through the D&S DPD.	<p>Lead Members for Environmental Services and Planning and Infrastructure</p> <p>Head of Spatial Planning and Economic Development</p>	This would provide increase natural flood mitigation measures, reducing surface water run-off, and slowing water flow.

<p>That a proposals map outlining the areas within the borough where the biodiversity net gain could be used to secure schemes that deliver holistic improvements to the water management cycle, be attached to the D&S DPD.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure</p> <p>Head of Spatial Planning and Economic Development</p>	<p>This would support the creation and delivery of improvements to the water management cycle, so that the biodiversity net gain received through new developments could be maximised quickly.</p>
<p>To promote the separation of roof water from the sewer system in new build properties and property conversions and extensions, including through the D&S DPD.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure</p> <p>Head of Spatial Planning and Economic Development</p>	<p>To reduce the burden placed on combined sewer systems and the likelihood of sewerage flooding.</p> <p>Through its review, the Group were informed that in some cases, the majority of liquid within the combined sewer systems is rain and surface water.</p>
<p>To encourage developers to consider water usage across developments and within homes, such as water saving technologies and the use of 'grey water', including through the D&S DPD.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure</p> <p>Head of Spatial Planning and Economic Development</p>	<p>To promote mechanisms that reduce water consumption and increase water recycling from the point of development as opposed to retrofitting. The importance of making developments more water efficient was specifically raised by the Water companies consulted on the 7 February 2023.</p>
<p>That the policies informing the D&S DPD would be usefully informed if Kent Flood Risk Maps were made available to the Planning and Policy service areas in developing policy documents.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure</p>	<p>To ensure that the recorded flood risk areas (as included within the maps) are considered when development policy documents applicable to development.</p>

<p>To explore further the use and range of policy mechanisms to recycle water and reduce water usage, both in newly built houses and existing properties.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure</p> <p>Head of Spatial Planning and Economic Development</p> <p>Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager</p>	<p>To promote these mechanisms for use across small- and large-scale developments; At the 22 December 2022 group meeting, the group were informed that further information on water recycling would likely be provided in the D&S DPD, with the group expressing that promoting these mechanisms would prevent costly, time-consuming retrofitting measures (where possible).</p>
<p>To increase the Council's control over the implementation of planning conditions relating to Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SuDS), through the policy and development management service areas.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure</p> <p>Head of Spatial Planning and Economic Development and Head of Development Management</p>	<p>Through the review the mismanagement of SuD schemes was highlighted, and this action would support the ongoing discussions being had between the Head of Development Management and the Chairman and Vice-Chair of Planning Committee on how this could be addressed.</p>
<p>That Development Management review how water companies can be consulted and/or involved in the planning process.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure.</p> <p>Head of Development Management</p>	<p>To involve water companies within the planning process for a range of reasons including; promoting water efficiency, water recycling and reduced water usage within new developments, as developers may not prioritise this, to improve the water management cycle generally.</p> <p>The group recognised that any comments would carry less weight than those of statutory consultees.</p>

<p>That Development Management include the UMIDB district area within the maps provided with major planning applications.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure Head of Development Management</p>	<p>To highlight if the UMIDB district area overlapped with a proposed development, and if it is in a sensitive area for drainage, as Members have greater knowledge of their ward and any water management cycle related concerns, e.g., flooding.</p>
<p>That Development Management advise on whether Surface Water Management Plans can be used as material planning considerations.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure Head of Development Management</p>	<p>To inform Members of the document's weight, if any, when considering planning applications.</p>
<p>To review opportunities for enhancements to the building regulations for water saving, in a similar way to recent updates on the conservation of fuel and power.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure Head of Development Management</p>	<p>The group felt that the opportunities available should be reviewed as part of best practice, with any gaps to be actioned as and when they arise through the building control service. In part, this can be linked to the feedback given by the water companies on the 7 February 2023.</p>
<p>That when developments come forward in the town centre and adjoining areas, obstacles should either be removed or alleviated, to remove unnecessary restrictions on water courses, which reduce the flow rate, nutrient enrichment and wildlife corridors.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure Head of Development Management</p>	<p>As outlined in the recommendation, to remove unnecessary restrictions on water courses, which reduce the flow rate, nutrient enrichment and wildlife corridors, that may impact the area local to the development.</p>
<p>That an annual 'roundtable' meeting be established between Parish, District and County elected Members and Officers (from both authorities), to discuss local issues</p>	<p>Lead Members for Communities and Public Engagement, Environmental Services and Planning and Infrastructure</p>	<p>To ensure that local knowledge is maintained and 'passed down' to prevent negative impacts to the area, such as flooding and property damage, through the water management cycle.</p>

and knowledge relating to the Water Management Cycle, by geographical area (North, Central & Southern Maidstone).	Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement; Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager; Head of Development Management; Head of Spatial Planning and Economic Development and Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager.	This knowledge is often lost over time, particularly when there are no written records of historic mitigation measures.
That local 'highway and surface water <i>flooding</i> hotspots' be identified with the Borough and County Members, and meetings organised with KCC, National Highways and the relevant Water Companies as applicable	Lead Members for Communities and Public Engagement and Environmental Services.	To proactively manage any impacts from flooding and/or water management cycle related matters, by consulting the relevant parties to seek improvements.
The Community Protection Team contact local care home providers to remind them of the ability to register as 'priority customers' with the relevant water utilities.	Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement Community and Strategic Partnerships Manager	To ensure that local care homes are able to access water supplies during times of disruption, and that vulnerable residents are suitably supported and prioritised.
That the Council proactively identify water management cycle related matters for inclusion at events such as the Local Government Association Conference and Rural Urban Commission	Lead Members for Environmental Services and Planning and Infrastructure	To increase the attention given to the Water Management Cycle nationally as well as locally.

<p>That the contents of the documents provided by Southern Water be endorsed, with the synergy between the company and the working group noted.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure</p>	<p>The formally note and draw attention to the synergy between Southern Water and the Group during the review.</p>
<p>That the support expressed from both Southeast Water and Southern Water to use the Heathlands Garden Community, if agreed, as a showcase to demonstrate innovative and efficient water usage, be supported and noted.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Corporate Services and Deputy Leader</p>	<p>The group felt that this was important to note formally as part of the review, arising from the group's ambitions to introduce new and innovative measures in the future.</p>
<p>That any development and/or improvement schemes to the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office demonstrate innovative and efficient water usage mechanisms, be noted.</p>	<p>Executive (relevant Lead Member would be identified depending on the type of development and/or improvement scheme being implemented)</p>	<p>As above, particularly as the site is a brownfield site which could lead to alternative measures being used to demonstrate innovation and efficient water usage mechanisms.</p>
<p>That Kent County Council be requested to update the Surface Water Management Plans for Maidstone, including locals plans where these have been produced for wards, as a matter of urgency.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure Kent County Council</p>	<p>Surface Water Management Plans (SWMP) are studies that aim to understand flood risks arising from local flooding. As this has likely changed since 2013 when the existing Maidstone SWMP was produced, the group felt it was imperative for an updated version to be produced.</p>

<p>That the Water Companies (Southeast Water and Southern Water) be consulted on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether they would conduct an information campaign and provide funding for household schemes to minimise roof run-off into the sewer system; • obtaining accurate information on water consumption, to be linked to educational campaigns to reduce water usage; • Investigation of the potential for creation of a new reedbed/wetland at Harrietsham Water Treatment Work to reduce ingress of Phosphates and Nitrates into the River Len; and • Reconsider the emerging proposal to increase abstraction rates, for example at Hockers Lane 	<p>Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure</p> <p>Southeast and Southern Water</p>	<p>The provision of funding would encourage individual households to implement schemes to minimise roof run-off and reduce the likelihood of combined sewer flooding.</p> <p>The use of accurate water usage data would enable educational campaigns to be better targeted to achieve results. This was discussed during the 7 February 2023 meeting.</p>
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<p>Detling and other sites within the borough, to mitigate likely resultant harm to downstream wetlands and to water courses. Where this does take place, monitoring the abstraction increase to take place to ensure the effects are properly understood and can be mitigated if necessary.</p>		
<p>That a second phase review be commenced in the 2023/23 Municipal Year.</p>	<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>To allow the working group to review the outstanding matters (as contained within Appendix 3 to this report). This would involve the Committee re-appointing the working group post May 2023.</p>

The following table outlines the actions and/or requests to be explored in a second-phase review. Where put forward by external stakeholders, permission has been given to include these:

Origin	Request
Working Group Meetings	To further consider farmland run-off and riparian rights, receipt of information from National Highways and to attempt re-contacting the Environment Agency for its input.
Request from Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board	To lobby central government for secondary and tertiary legislation required to allow IDBs to actively work within catchment areas and levy those within it to support the work's completion.
Request from Southeast Rivers Trust	To fit passive collectors in the river to collect and dispose of plastic waste and prevent it impacting downstream and oceans
	Increased funding and resource provision.
	To lobby central government on the funding available to replace the funding previously provided by the European Union to support project delivery.
Following consultation with Kent County Council	To consider lobbying central government on applying the principle of nutrient neutrality across all water courses.
Following consultation with Southeast Water	To consider lobbying central government to provide legislative powers to Southeast Water and similar organisations, to enable them to take action against illegal water usage.
	To explore greater avenues to allow water companies to be involved in the planning process, such as via a working group.

Following consultation with Southern Water

To explore greater avenues to allow water companies to be involved in the planning process, such as via a working group.

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WATER MANAGEMENT CYCLE WORKING GROUP - NOTES

TUESDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2023

10.30 A.M. – 1.10 P.M.

<p>Present:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><u>Members</u> Councillor English (Chairman) Councillor Harwood Councillor Cleator Councillor Garten Councillor Jeffery Councillor Springett</p> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding-left: 20px;"> <p><u>Officers</u> Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager Democratic Services Officer</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p><u>External Attendees</u> Head of Central Operations, Southeast Water Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager, Southern Water</p>		<p><u>Members</u> Councillor English (Chairman) Councillor Harwood Councillor Cleator Councillor Garten Councillor Jeffery Councillor Springett</p>	<p><u>Officers</u> Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager Democratic Services Officer</p>
<p><u>Members</u> Councillor English (Chairman) Councillor Harwood Councillor Cleator Councillor Garten Councillor Jeffery Councillor Springett</p>	<p><u>Officers</u> Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager Democratic Services Officer</p>		
Item	Minute		
1. Apologies	Apologies were received from Councillor Brice.		
2. Substitute Members	Councillor Springett was in attendance as a Substitute Member for Councillor Brice.		
3. Evidence Collection – External Stakeholder Interviews.	<p>The Chairman welcomed the External Stakeholders to the meeting, with all attendees asked to introduce themselves, and outline their expertise and interest to the topic.</p> <p>The aims of the review were outlined, with the working group’s (the group) previous consultation meetings with the Council’s officers highlighted to the external attendees.</p> <p>Each External Stakeholder was asked to introduce themselves and their organisation, followed by questioning from the group.</p> <p><u>Head of Central Operations, Southeast Water</u></p> <p>Steve Andrews introduced themselves as the Head of Central Operations at Southeast Water (SEW) and stated that they were responsible for the water supply call and control centres, amongst other things.</p> <p>The Head of Central Operations provided a short presentation to the group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEW’s history and areas of responsibility were outlined, with the company providing clean drinking water to 2.3 million customers, with a daily average of 530 million litres of water provided. Each customer used on average 150 litres per day; it was hoped that this could be reduced to around 125 litres per day. • SEW operated 87 treatment works, had 9,000 miles of water pipes and managed 33 sites of Special Scientific Interest. The latter, 		

coupled with the rural locations across SEW's network, led to environmental and maintenance challenges. SEW's focus was to ensure that customers had a continuous supply of high-quality water.

- It was stated that the water management process worked across five-year periods, with SEW's current Asset Management Plan Period being 2020-2025; the plan had been produced prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and the changes to water usage and demand since then had not been built into the current plan period. During the pandemic water usage increased by 20% and homeworking had remained. The challenge this presented to SEW was strongly emphasised.
- SEW's Draft Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) was currently under consultation and included efforts to reflect the increased demand for water. A brief outline of the plans aims was provided, to include a collaborate approach working with other water companies across the Southeast, looking into new water reservoirs such as at Broad Oak and Arlington, water recycling schemes and a desalination plant; the latter would provide assistance for short-term issues, but SEW would not ideally promote this as a long-term solution given its significant environmental impact.

Up to 85% of Kent's water supply was sourced from ground water, with the importance of sourcing water sustainably strongly emphasised.

- The WRMP focused on reducing general usage and leakage. This included improving the network's resilience, with pipework connecting different regions to transfer water across areas being installed. An example given was between the Maidstone and Ashford areas.

The Head of Central Operations drew particular attention to the effects of extreme weather as seen in 2022, including:

- Wide scale power disruption, with fixed and mobile generators being used where needed. This had impacted water treatment areas, such as those supplying the Paddock Wood Area.
- Extreme heat and droughts, with the dry conditions having caused pipework breakage and an increase in burst water mains. This had impacted the Coxheath, Linton and Loose areas, as a trunk main burst in Maidstone preventing water from being treated and stored in the local reservoir.
- Flooding events across October-November 2022. This extended to the water treatment works located at Tunbridge, causing it to be unavailable for several weeks.
- Extreme cold in December 2022. The changes in weather outlined above across a 45-day period placed significant strain on SEW's infrastructure.

- The challenge in meeting the increased demand for water, whilst conducting winter maintenance works, and responding to the weather extremes. The latter could not all be attributed to climate change, although the impacts to the water network were occurring more frequently.

The resulting actions being were outlined, which included engagement with Local Resilience Forums, and reviewing which of SEW's planned actions could be brought forward to increase the systems resilience. The biggest challenge for the Maidstone area was the amount of water available. The water licence for the Aylesford Paper Mill had been purchased, and the site provided 5million litres of water daily (future production to be 20million litres), with a new water treatment works to be built on site and linked to a new water main between Aylesford and Ashford.

An external consultant had been commissioned to review SEW's procedures, with a focus on providing help and support to its customers in managing the water leaks, particularly in Winter. This included responses to water shortages, given the reliance upon bottled water that could be impacted through supply chain difficulties. Free repairs would be provided when the customer was unable to pay, with methods of further support being considered. A dedicated feedback form had been created to receive customer feedback.

During the interview process, the group raised the following points:

- Methods to reduce water usage and leakage, following questions from the group on how this could be facilitated.

The Head of Central Operations stated SEW encouraged using products that promoted water efficiency, including Water Butts, and 'grey water' for garden use. SEW had been working with farmers to look at rainwater harvesting.

SEW was not a statutory consultee for planning applications, with few developers using grey water and/or water recycling initiatives within new developments. For example, SEW offered a discounted rate for environmental connections, but larger connections were preferred, in part to accommodate additional bathrooms and ensuite facilities; many of those fixtures would eventually experience leakages.

SEW would provide funding to support initiatives to reduce water demand but struggled to engage with developers. The Head of Central Operations stated that support from the Group to encourage developers to consider water usage across their developments would be welcomed. In response, the Council's ongoing development of the Design and Sustainability Development Plan Document was highlighted as a potential mechanism to achieve this.

In response to questions concerning water leakage, the Head of Central Operations stated that around 25% of the water produced by SEW was wasted through leakage; one-third of this was from customer supply lines. The WRMP focused on reducing water leakage and included a target for SEW to reduce leakage on its supply lines by half across the plan period. To assist, SEW were using additional

sensors and satellite and acoustic technology where possible to identify leaks earlier, as currently 80% of the leaks were registered by customers. However, the Head of Central Operations stated that a low amount of leakage where water was returned to the environment was not unreasonable; clean water entering the drainage system and being unable to be used was an issue.

- Smart Meter Usage

Several of the group's members expressed concern that promoting behavioural change would not significantly reduce water usage on its own. The use of smart meters would enable people to see how much water they were using and the cost, to encourage a reduction in usage.

In response, the Head of Operations stated that as the water meters were not located at individual properties, it was difficult to obtain accurate readings from the properties' Wi-Fi. However, a pilot scheme was operating in the Hartley area, with fully smart networks installed, providing better information to customers on their usage and enabling water links within the customer's pipework to be identified. In Faversham, monthly readings of the centralised water meters were being trialled, although this needed to be balanced against the environmental impact of travelling to the meters, and the cost of conducting the additional readings. More information on future smart meter usage was included within the WRMP.

The Head of Operations stated that 90% of the properties SEW supplied water to had smart meters, with building sites having one metered standpoint. A suggestion was made to the group to promote further scrutiny into the developer's use of water at development sites.

The group expressed strong support for engaging further with developers, including more robustly, with the potential for the group to lobby central government to provide legislative powers to SEW (and similar organisations) to take action against illegal water usage.

- SEW's incident responses

Several Members of the group expressed that SEW's responses to water incidents had been good. The importance of ensuring that vulnerable individuals were properly supported during incidents was reiterated.

In response, the Head of Central Operations stated that SEW's incident responses were prioritised. For example, the primary action during water outages was to support hospitals; although most large hospitals, such as Maidstone Hospital, had water tanks and continuity plans in place.

The responses could be improved through the creation of a data-sharing mechanism and protocol, similar to that used by Local Resilience Forums. Residents would then be able to sign up to the service. A suggestion from the working group to encourage injection

points within care home water supply tanks, alongside the creation of Business Continuity Plans for those sites, was supported by the Head of Central Operations as this would reduce reliance on bottled water and increased resilience.

- Southeast Water's 'wish-list' of actions for the Group to consider as part of the review, as the group felt that this would support the review being solution driven and outcome focused.

In response, the Head of Operations stated that they would produce a list and send this to the Group following the meeting. In the meantime, increased involvement in the planning process was reiterated.

The Head of Central Operations outlined that whilst the WRMP was designed to manage the development achieved through Local Plans, they would encourage the group to ensure that future developments were as water efficient as possible. An example given was to include reduced water consumption targets and water butts into the development process.

Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager, Southern Water

Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager, Southern Water

David Murphy introduced himself as the Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager at Southern Water (SW), stating that his primary role is to identify future investment needs for wastewater systems through the production of drainage and wastewater management plans and the water industry national environment programme. The amount of funding available to reduce pollution incidents, enhance biodiversity and to reduce risks to people and the environment was briefly outlined.

SW's area of responsibility for wastewater services reaches across Kent, Sussex, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, with six water supply areas within the region. A total of 556million litres of water is supplied to approximately 2.6 million customers daily. SW supplies water to two areas within Kent (Chatham area and Thanet) and works closely with SEW to share precious water resources.

SW processes the wastewater of 4.7 million customers, with 381 separate wastewater systems used to recycle the water; 77 were within the River Medway catchment, of which 12 are within Maidstone BC area. SW maintained 40,000 kilometres of sewerage networks and 330 pumping stations across the River Medway catchment area.

As SW moves and treats a high volume of water, increased energy costs had become a significant issue for the company. Other challenges included population growth, extreme weathers, climate change, asset reliability and environmental protection, in the context of providing the service without increasing risks to the environment or customers through sewage flooding.

The importance of planning future investment was strongly reiterated and had been included within SW's draft Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP). The plan would be published by the end of May 2023, following an industry wide request to undertake further works on the

plan. The DWMP was a 25-year plan, allowing for the trajectory of the challenges outlined to be factored into SW's work.

The Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager stated that general funding was controlled by Ofwat as the Water Services Regulation Authority, with additional funding obtained through the Environment Agency's 'National Environment Programme' for investment into its assets where required, or through development contributions. SW was not a statutory consultee on planning applications process, but they were consulted through the Local Plan Review process and monitored the adoption of Local Plans to ascertain where development was likely to occur. SW often did not know which wastewater network a development would be linked to until a planning application was received for the site; developers contribute towards the necessary upgrades to the wastewater systems through the connection charges, with SW's Board and Shareholders often supporting the upgrades in extending SW's network.

During the interview process, the group raised the following points:

- Co-operation between SEW and SW, in the context of working with the Council as Local Planning Authority to achieve greater improvements to the Water Management Cycle. The example given was the proposed Heathlands Garden Community.

In response, support was expressed from both external attendees to use the site as a showcase, for example through installing Smart Meters in the first instance, promoting rainwater recycling and the use of brown water, to demonstrate the improvements that could be made to water usage and efficiency through ambitious measures, and promote these types of methods being used in other areas.

- The mechanisms available to reduce rainwater within sewerage systems

The Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager stated that in some of SW's networks, rainwater accounted for up to 97% of the water flow in a storm; removing rainwater from sewers would reduce the likelihood of sewerage flooding and discharges from storm overflows. Increasing rainwater capture will relieve pressure on sewers and make more water available for home usage (e.g. watering gardens). Attention needed to be given to designing sustainable communities, for example through using sustainable drainage schemes, green roofs and tree pits, to prevent rainwater from joining the sewerage system.

The group expressed support for the example measures outlined above, following consideration of such measures across its previous meetings.

- Incidents of sewer flooding

Several of the group's Members highlighted that detrimental impacts caused to local residents from sewer flooding from combined systems, in part due to high rainwater levels, and the need to implement more natural flood management solutions to reduce this.

The Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager noted their agreement with the views expressed, stating that the Kent area suffered from water stress which could be reduced through greater rainwater capture and reuse. Pilot schemes were taking place in Portsmouth whereby a water resources reservoir is being planned to be filled with spring water and recycled wastewater, which would then be suitably treated and re-used as a water supply; a water recycling scheme is also being considered for the Aylesford area, however it was a complex task.

The need for greater acceptance of grey water use and wastewater recycling, as part of a wider relationship change on how water was used, was strongly emphasised.

In response to comments on combined sewerage systems, the Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager stated that whilst separate systems were useful in managing rainwater, there was a risk of misconnection. Misconnections significantly impacted water quality; only one or two lavatories being incorrectly connected to the system could prevent the achievement of an excellent bathing water quality standard. SW had carried out significant investment into wastewater treatment works and had formed a Misconnections Team to tackle the issue, with a higher success rate achieved than originally expected.

An enquiry with a local council was given as an example, as the high number of surface water discharges having caused concern due to the impact of environmental pollution in the local river.

- Actions taken by SW on spillage incidents and natural flood measures

In response to questions, the Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager stated that they understood the need for urgency in tackling spills but noted that storm overflows in the wastewater system have existed since sewers were first built 150 years ago. Storm overflows are designed to achieve a level of dilution before discharging to prevent harm to the environment. All discharges are permitted by the Environment Agency (EA), with any unpermitted discharges resulting in a potential pollution incident and financial penalty on the water company.

Infiltration from groundwater into sewers can cause consistent discharges, with SW having highlighted this through its response to the public consultation on Defra's Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan. The Environment Act 2021 places additional requirements on companies to address the issue, with SW wishing to address 149 storm overflows within the next five-year plan period, in order to improve the local environment. To maximise improvements, a Storm Overflow Task Force (SOTF) had been created to review the different ways of reducing storm overflows, with two 'pathfinder' projects having commenced within the Kent area. In response to questions, the Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager stated that they could circulate the figures demonstrating the reduction in storm overflows to date through the SOTF's work.

The group expressed that preventing spillage across Maidstone and across SW's operational area was a priority and that this should include natural flood mitigation measures. In response, the Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager stated that they were looking to introduce further wetlands as part of the wastewater treatment process and hoped to install up to two across the current investment period. SW had another 15 other potential areas for wetlands. The funding provided for the next investment period through the National Environment Programme was highlighted as an opportunity for nature based solutions, and significant investment to reduce the nitrate and phosphate levels within water.

- Greater involvement from water companies in the planning process, as several members of the group questioned how this could be achieved.

In response to questions, the Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager stated that WaterUK had been lobbying central government for water companies to have increased powers as part of the planning process. It would be helpful if the Government enacted the approval body function for sustainable drainage, which would be applicable to County Councils and Upper Tier Authorities (as contained within Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010). This would require drainage systems to be approved before construction work commenced. A public consultation on this was expected later in 2023.

The group felt that there should be greater avenues for water companies to be involved in the planning process, and that this should be explored as part of the review. The ability for the Council, as a Local Planning Authority, to request comments from non-statutory consultees was highlighted although any comments received would carry less material weight than those received from statutory consultees. The importance of natural solutions was also emphasised.

- Southern Water's 'wish-list' of actions for the Group to consider as part of the review, as the group felt that this would support the review being solution driven and outcome focused.

In response, the Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager stated that they would submit the list at a later date but emphasised the opportunity for enhancements to the building regulations for water, in a similar way to the recent updates to building regulations on the conservation of fuel and power. For example, potentially requiring new development to reduce water consumption below the current 110 litres per person per day. SW is aiming to reduce overall consumption to 110 litres per person per day by 2040 and this was likely to need to be reduced further in the future.

Ahead of the meeting's conclusion, the external attendees were thanked for their attendance and contribution to the review.

Councillor Harwood left the meeting after this item.

5. Any other points to raise	<p>It was noted that the external stakeholders would be submitting further information on the 'wish lists' for review.</p> <p>The group reiterated their support for a working group between the external stakeholders and the Council. In response, the Democratic Services Officer was requested to review similar Overview and Scrutiny Reviews where this had occurred.</p>
6. Review of Meeting Timetable	<p>It was agreed that the Democratic Services Officer would circulate alternative review timetables to the group outside of the meeting.</p>
7. Summary of Agreed Actions	<p>Actions: That the Democratic Services Officer</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Circulate alternative review timetables for the group to consider; and 2. Research similar reviews where a working group was created, to advise the group on how this could occur.
8. Duration of Meeting	<p>10.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m.</p>

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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; and 3. 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.

WATER MANAGEMENT CYCLE WORKING GROUP - NOTES

WEDNESDAY 20 MARCH 2023

5.30 P.M. – 7.45 P.M. VIA MS TEAMS

<p>Present:</p> <p><u>Members</u> Councillor English (Chairman) Councillor Brice Councillor Garten Councillor Jeffery Councillor Cleator</p> <p><u>Reserve Member</u> Councillor Springett</p> <p><u>Officers</u> Democratic Services Officer Director of Finance, Resources & Business Improvement</p>	
Item	Minute
1. Apologies	There were no apologies.
2. Substitute Members	Councillor Springett was present as Substitute Member until Councillor Brice's arrival.
3. Next Steps of Review	<p>The Democratic Services Officer raised the review's continuation and conclusion with the Group given the short time until the end of the municipal year.</p> <p>The outstanding information from National Highways, and the Environment Agency was noted, with no further attempts to contact the latter recommended.</p> <p>The options raised were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclude the review by April 2023, focusing on the actions that the group would like to put forward for presentation to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC); OR • Continue with the review, with a brief pause between late April to approximately June 2023. This will allow further information to be received and produce the report, however the group would have to be re-appointed by the OSC, and the review would probably be completed between August-September 2023. <p>The significant amount of information provided already, and the current list of possible actions was lengthy, which whilst not a bad thing, was something for the group to consider in deciding which option to proceed with.</p> <p>The Group supported a third option; to conclude the review and have a second stage review to examine any outstanding issues, mainly the lobbying and funding requests received by external stakeholders.</p>

<p>4. Review of Evidence (Including meeting minutes and any other information provided)</p>	<p>The Group reviewed the list of possible actions in turn and agreed the following actions. (See table appended to the minutes).</p>
<p>5. Summary of Agreed Actions</p>	<p>Actions: That</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A second stage review be put forward for the OSC to consider; and 2. The Democratic Services Officer draft the report for circulation ahead of the next meeting, in accordance with the actions agreed following review of the list of possible actions.
<p>6. Duration of Meeting</p>	<p>5.30 p.m. to 7.45 p.m.</p>

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Meeting	Request	Action Agreed
15 Dec 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing feasibility studies, to support the progression of schemes to improve the water management cycle. Relates to making sure water management cycle related schemes were readily available for implementation. • Proposals map (similar to the map created by the biodiversity and climate change manager) be attached to the Design & Sustainability Development Plan Document. • Increasing the amount of open spaces available to improve biodiversity and to take actions to increase the Council’s control over the implementation of conditions relating to SuDS and highways drainage. • Additional recommendation: Development Management review how water companies can be involved/consulted as part of the planning process; 	<p>Include as recommended action. Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement to be consulted on whether he would like a specific amount included.</p> <p>As Above.</p> <p>As Above, with reference made to the ongoing discussions with the Head of Development Management on the management of open spaces, which overlaps into the management of SuDS and Highway Drainage.</p> <p>Additional recommendation to facilitate involvement from Water Companies in the interim; particularly as lobbying central government to provide powers and/or make the companies statutory consultees would be considered as part of the second stage review.</p>
22 Dec 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Near future review on the processes for monitoring tap water; Amend to: Encourage water companies to obtain accurate information on water consumption figures; link to educational campaigns to reduce water usage. • Development and/or influence on SuDs would need to be achieved through a policy hook through the Design and Sustainability Development Plan Document. 	<p>Amended to encourage accurate information to be used in trying to achieve education change.</p> <p>Include as recommended action.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Explore whether Water Companies would sponsor and assist with delivering an educational campaign (reducing water usage).</i> • Explore further the use and range of mechanisms to recycle water and reduce water usage, both in newly built houses and existing properties. Reference made to residential extensions and conversions, as applicable to the D&S DPD. • Improve attention given to Water Management Cycle, through following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parish, District and County representatives to meet with officers annually, to discuss local issues and ensure local knowledge is maintained based on geographical area (north, central & southern); ○ Group Members to provide feedback to their respective political networks; ○ Council to proactively identify water management cycle related matters for inclusion at events such as LGA Conference and Rural Urban Commission 	<p>Include as recommended action, with additional text to highlight retrofitting also, and that this would be applicable to the D&S DPD.</p> <p>Include as recommended action, to be organised by borough areas.</p> <p>Not required – action already occurring.</p> <p>Include as recommended action.</p>
<p>27 Jan 2023</p>	<p><u>UMIDB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint working with the UMIDB to consider funding schemes that would slow water-flow outside of the district (UMIDB) • Providing further information on the UMIDB and its role within the group’s final report, 	<p>Request covered by feasibility study recommendation; the Group were advised that that recommendation would facilitate further partnership working on schemes put forward.</p> <p>Include in report for information.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UMIDB Wishlist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For the Council and KCC to be involved in the modelling and delivery of projects; ○ To lobby central government for secondary and tertiary legislation required to allow IDBs to actively work within catchment areas and levy those within it to support the work's completion. ○ For further joint working opportunities, through Public Sector Collaboration Agreements. ○ Acknowledgement from other authorities, such as District and County Councils, that the UMIDB should be and could be doing more. ○ Additional recommendation – request that development management include the UMIDB district area within the maps provided with major planning applications. Follow-up action – find out KCC minimum threshold before finalising above recommendation & Development Management on appropriate level. ○ Funding welcomed with emphasis given to joint projects. ○ <i>For the UMIDB to be consulted as a non-statutory consultee on planning applications submitted within flood plains (link to drainage schemes)</i> 	<p>Request covered by feasibility study recommendation.</p> <p>To be examined through second-phase review.</p> <p>Request covered by feasibility study recommendation.</p> <p>Include in report for information.</p> <p>Additional recommendation - To highlight if the UMIDB district overlapped with a proposed development in an area sensitive to drainage issues during consideration of major planning applications.</p> <p>Covered as part of second-phase review.</p>
27 Jan 23	<p><u>SERT</u></p> <p>Need for effective preventative measures against the mixing of surface and clean water with foul water; this extended to</p>	<p>Action within the remit of Kent County Council and National Highways</p>

	<p>ensuring proactive enforcement where issues had been identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional recommendation - seek to identify local hotspots with borough and county local members, to take forward appropriate meetings with KCC, national highways and the relevant water companies as applicable. • SERT Wish-list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased funding and resource provision. ○ To lobby central government on the funding available to replace the funding previously provided by the EU to support project delivery. ○ See previously circulated SERT wish-list (1 March 2023). 	<p>Additional recommendation – To proactively manage any flooding/WMC impacts by consulting relevant parties and seek improvements.</p> <p>Covered as part of second-phase review.</p> <p>Covered as part of second-phase review.</p> <p>Requests 1-6 as applicable to feasibility studies recommendation.</p> <p>Requests 7-9 noted as likely to be covered through future LDS and Town Centre Strategy.</p> <p>Request 15 – further information required, consult NFU as part of second phase review.</p> <p>No comments on other requests.</p>
27 Jan 23	<p><u>KCC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to questions on areas for improvement/joint working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promotion of robust policies concerning sustainable drainage; ○ Increase in proactive planning enforcement. • Group briefly considered whether the government should be lobbied on applying the principle of nutrient neutrality across all water courses; 	<p>Comments to be made through D&S DPD and Town Centre strategy.</p> <p>Action within the remit of Kent County Council and National Highways</p> <p>Covered as part of second-phase review.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schemes to address legacy impact of historic land drainage systems having not been maintained; scheme would be beneficial, preferred approach would be to locate the appropriate areas and produce a work programme demonstrating its significant benefit through a cost-benefit ratio. • Support expressed for separating roof water from sewer system, in new build properties and property conversions/extensions; and highlighted for D&S DPD. • Additional recommendation – Ask water companies if they would conduct an information campaign and provide funding for schemes to minimise roof run-off into the sewer system. • KCC stated they were keen to promote efficient water use at the development level, including use of 'grey water' – Group expressed support; highlighted for D&S DPD. 	<p>Follow-up with KCC to ask where the information is held.</p> <p>Included as recommended action, to include new builds, and property extensions and conversions to cover as many properties as possible.</p> <p>Additional recommendation – To increase mechanisms available to local residents.</p> <p>Include as recommended action within report for D&S DPD.</p>
7 Feb 23	<p><u>SEW</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to a request for the group's support to encourage developers to consider water usage across its developments, the development of the D&S DPD was highlighted. • Support expressed for engaging with developers, potential for group to lobby central government to provide legislative powers to SEW and similar organisations highlighted, to enable them to take action against illegal water usage. • Group suggestion to encourage injection points within care home water supply tanks, alongside creation of business continuity plans; replace with: 	<p>Include as recommended action.</p> <p>Covered as part of second-phase review.</p> <p>Include as recommended action.</p>

	<p><i>Community Safety contact local care homes to remind them of the ability to register with the relevant providers.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEW Wish-List: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased involvement in the planning process. ○ For future developments to be as water efficient as possible. 	<p>Covered as part of second-phase review.</p> <p>Covered through other recommendations.</p>
7 Feb 23	<p>SW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from both external attendees to use the Heathlands Garden Community as a showcase (water efficiency measures) • Need to implement more natural flood management solutions to reduce sewer flooding; • For greater avenues allowing water companies to be involved in the planning process to be explored as part of the review; • SW Wish-list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Opportunity for enhancements to the building regulations for water, in a similar way to recent updates to building regulations on the conservation of fuel and power; to be reviewed as part of best practice, with any gaps identified to be actioned as and when they arise. ○ See previously circulated SW wish-list; 	<p>Include as recommended action for noting, including to relevant Officers.</p> <p>Request covered by feasibility study recommendation</p> <p>Covered as part of second-phase review.</p> <p>Include as recommended action, as part of best practice for building control service.</p> <p>Include in report as recommendation for noting, due to synergy between documents and group sentiments.</p>
1 Mar 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggested need for greater written information from external attendees be included in the final report; 	<p>Not to be included in report.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice needed on the actions proposed by SERT, as group likely to take forward some actions only (as unlikely to achieve all in the near future);. • Drainage management could be subject to a detailed review in the future; • Creation of managed wetlands could be further explored (and raised at D&S DPD briefing) – • Highlighting natural flood mitigation measures within final reports, alongside signposting residents to the appropriate organisations and/or funds. (e.g. Valley Conservation Society). • Recommendation to ask stakeholders consulted to provide comments on the final report; • KCC to be asked to update the Surface Water Management Plans for Maidstone, including local plans where these have been produced e.g. Yalding, as a matter of urgency; • Additional recommendation – For Officers to advise on whether Surface Water Management Plans can be used as material planning considerations. 	<p>Discussed during the meeting, and felt to be covered by feasibility study recommendation</p> <p>Action within the remit of Kent County Council and National Highways</p> <p>Include as recommended action.</p> <p>Include as recommended action, to provide further information for residents.</p> <p>Once report published, stakeholders will be contacted.</p> <p>Include as recommended action, given length of time since these were last produced.</p> <p>Include as recommended action, to inform Members if they carry weight when considering planning applications.</p>
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WATER MANAGEMENT CYCLE WORKING GROUP - NOTES

TUESDAY 28 MARCH 2023

5.30 P.M. – 6.45 P.M. VIA MS TEAMS

<p>Present:</p> <p><u>Members</u> Councillor English (Chairman) Councillor Garten Councillor Jeffery</p> <p><u>Reserve Member</u> Councillor Springett</p> <p><u>Officers</u> Democratic Services Officer Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement</p>	
Item	Minute
1. Apologies	There were no apologies.
2. Substitute Members	Councillor Springett was present as Substitute Member.
3. Review of Evidence	<p>The group reviewed the draft report circulated, and made the following amendments to strengthen the recommendations included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To change 'improvement' to 'improve' within the review's aim in the Introduction and Rationale Section • To make reference to the £100,000 in funding required for the proposed feasibility studies (recommendation 1) <p>Following advice from the Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement of the funding required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To change 'open spaces available to improve biodiversity' to 'open spaces in the Borough that enhance wetland biodiversity, flood storage and surface water infiltration' (recommendation 2) • To change 'multiple improvements' to 'holistic improvements' (recommendation 4) • To change 'water usage across development and in homes' to 'water usage reductions across development sites and within homes, such as water saving technologies' (recommendation 5) • To add an additional recommendation (to become recommendation 7) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 'That the policies informing the D&S DPD would be usefully informed if Kent Flood Risk Maps were made available to the Planning and Policy sectors in developing policy documents'

As it was felt that the maps could help shape Council policy.

- To add the word 'policy' to recommendation 8
- To add the word 'saving' to recommendation 11d.
- To add an additional recommendation (to become recommendation 12)
 - 'That when developments come forward in the town centre and adjoining areas, obstacles should either be removed or alleviated, to remove unnecessary restrictions on water courses which reduce the flow rate, nutrient enrichment and wildlife corridors'
- To change 'flooding hotspots' to 'highway and surface water flooding hotspots' (recommendation 14)
- To change 'ability to register with the relevant providers' to 'ability to register as 'priority customers' with the relevant water utilities' (recommendation 15)
- To add 'supported and' to recommendation 18.
- To add an additional recommendation (to become recommendation 19)
 - 'That any development and/or improvement schemes to the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office demonstrate innovative and efficient water usage mechanisms, be noted'
- To add an additional two recommendations (to become recommendations 21c and 21d)
 - 'Investigation of the potential for creation of a new reedbed/wetland at Harrietsham Water Treatment Works to reduce ingress of Phosphates and Nitrates into the River Len'; and
 - Reconsidering the emergency proposal to increase abstraction rates, for example at Hockers Lane Detling and other sites within the borough, to mitigate likely resultant harm to downstream wetlands and to water courses. Where this does take place, monitoring the abstraction increase to take place to ensure the effects are properly understand and can be mitigated if necessary'.
- To add an additional recommendation (to become recommendation 22)
 - 'That a second phase review be commenced in the 2023/24 Municipal Year'.

	<p>To formally reflect the group’s wish to carry out a second phase review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make reference to farmland run-off, riparian rights and the receipt of information from National Highways and the Environment Agency as part of the second phase review. <p>The Democratic Services Officer would amend and then re-circulate the report by the end of day Thursday 30 March 2023, for the group to approve the report ahead of publication on Monday 3 April 2023.</p> <p>The Chairman stated that any comments not received by that time would have to be provided at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting scheduled for 13 April 2023.</p>
5. Summary of Agreed Actions	<p>Actions: That</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Democratic Services Officer amend the report in accordance with the below recommendations; The (draft) report of the Water Management Cycle working group be amended in line with the changes outlined in section 3 of the minutes.
6. Duration of Meeting	5.30 p.m. to 6.15 p.m.