

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 OCTOBER 2022

## Water Management Cycle Review – Update Report

<b>Timetable</b>	
<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6 October 2022

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

### Executive Summary

To provide an update to the Committee on the communications with key stakeholders and Working Group Membership as part of the proposed Water Management Cycle Review

### Purpose of Report

Decision

### This report makes the following recommendations to the Committee:

1. That consideration be given to the suggested approach to selecting the Water Management Cycle Working Group's Membership; and
2. The group's membership be appointed in accordance with either options 3.1 or 3.2 of the report.

# Water Management Cycle Review – Update Report

## 1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure</li> <li>• Safe, Clean and Green</li> <li>• Homes and Communities</li> <li>• A Thriving Place</li> </ul> <p>Accepting the recommendation could materially improve the Council's ability to achieve all corporate priorities, due to the Committee's role in reviewing and recommending actions arising from its work programme topics.</p>	Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight & Governance
<b>Cross Cutting Objectives</b>	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage is Respected</li> <li>• Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced</li> <li>• Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved</li> <li>• Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected</li> </ul> <p>The report recommendations could support the achievement of all the Council's cross-cutting objectives due to the Committee's role in reviewing and recommending actions arising from reviewing the topic.</p>	Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight & Governance
<b>Risk Management</b>	See Section 5 of the report.	Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight & Governance
<b>Financial</b>	The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.	Head of Finance

<b>Staffing</b>	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing, with an additional Member of the Democratic Services Team due to start in the near future.	Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight & Governance
<b>Legal</b>	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 Committees to review and scrutinise executive decisions made, or other action taken – LGA 2000, Section 9F.	Interim Team Leader (Contentious and Corporate Governance)
<b>Information Governance</b>	The recommendations do not impact personal information (as defined in UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) the Council processes.	Information Governance Team
<b>Equalities</b>	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Equalities & Communities Officer
<b>Public Health</b>	We recognise that the recommendations could have a positive impact on population health or that of individuals.	Public Health Officer
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	No impacts identified.	Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight & Governance
<b>Procurement</b>	No impacts identified.	Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight & Governance
<b>Biodiversity and Climate Change</b>	The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and aligns with actions (Actions 5.4; 5.5; 6.7; 6.9 and 8.5) of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan	Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

## 2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting held on 19 July 2022, the Committee agreed to add the 'Water Management Cycle' to its 2022-23 work programme. An excerpt from the Minutes is included below:

### The Water Management Cycle

The topic was felt to be of significant importance to the borough, however there were concerns expressed on the effectiveness of conducting the review as the Council was not the leading authority on the matter. Further concerns were expressed on the likely attendance of external bodies, such as Southern water, as part of the review. The potential to positively impact the Council's future Design and Sustainability Development Plan Document from reviewing the topic was highlighted.

In response to questions, the Head of Policy, Communications and Governance stated that for the topic to be reviewed via a Councillor 'Call for Action' all other possible options would have to have been exhausted, with the topic to be narrower in scope.

Several Members of the Committee and Visiting Members highlighted the need for a narrower scope to effectively review the topic.

In response to some of the comments made during the debate, the Committee felt that the review should focus on the supply and disposal of water and the disposal of sewage in the water courses, as the most problematic aspects of the Water Management Cycle.

The review could be conducted by a working group, to allow the Committee to progress the Safety and Enforcement review and avoid untimely delay. It was requested that the relevant water companies be contacted to ascertain whether they would be willing to attend the review before its commencement.

In response to some of the comments made during the debate, the Committee felt that the review should focus on the supply and disposal of water and the disposal of sewage in the water courses, as the most problematic aspects of the Water Management Cycle.

It was noted that the working group's membership did not have to be drawn solely from the Committee, with the group to determine their meeting arrangements.

(19 July 2022 Committee Meeting – Minute 31)

- 2.2 As requested by the Committee, the below organisations were contacted and have stated that they wish to participate in the review:

Southern Water  
Southeast Water  
Kent County Council  
Southeast Rivers Trust  
The Environment Agency

- 2.3 The next step is to appoint the working group (the group). At its previous meeting, the Committee highlighted that the group's members did not have to be drawn from the Committee's membership.
  - 2.4 The approach agreed with the Chairman and Vice-Chair was to consult group leaders for up to two nominations of Non-Executive Members and a reserve from their respective groups, that would bring benefit to and contribute to the review. A membership of 7 was felt suitable, whilst maintaining the flexibility and effectiveness provided through working groups. Working groups are not subject to the political balance rules of the Local Government and Housing Act (1989).
  - 2.5 An update will be given at the meeting as to which Members have been put forward. However, the final decision on the group's membership rests solely with the Committee.
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### **3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

- 3.1 Option 1 – Appoint the group in accordance with Group Leaders' wishes.
  - 3.2 Option 2 – Appoint the group from the Committee's existing membership and/or any other Members nominated.
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### **4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 There is no preferred option from an officer perspective. However, the Committee is advised to appoint a group of seven, to ensure its functional and conducts meaningful scrutiny and prevent scheduling conflicts.
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### **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 matter was previously considered at the 19 July 2022 Committee Meeting.
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### **7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

- 7.1 The group will be contacted to decide their meeting arrangements and progress the review.

7.2 The group's minutes will be reported to this Committee, providing regular updates on the review's progression in accordance with the Council's Constitution (Part A2, Provision 6, Rule 6.7.3)

## **8. REPORT APPENDICES**

None.

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## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Meeting held on 19 July 2022: [Minutes Template \(maidstone.gov.uk\)](#)

Maidstone Borough Council Constitution, 2022:  
[\(Public Pack\) Agenda Document for Maidstone Borough Council Constitution, 11/11/2019 00:00](#)