

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.

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>

<p>and knowledge relating to the Water Management Cycle, by geographical area (North, Central & Southern Maidstone).</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>This knowledge is often lost over time, particularly when there are no written records of historic mitigation measures.</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>Lead Members for Communities and Public Engagement and Environmental Services.</p>	<p>To proactively manage any impacts from flooding and/or water management cycle related matters, by consulting the relevant parties to seek improvements.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement Community and Strategic Partnerships Manager</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>Lead Members for Environmental Services and Planning and Infrastructure</p>	<p>To increase the attention given to the Water Management Cycle nationally as well as locally.</p>

<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.

DRAFT