

Water Resources Management Plan Stakeholder Workshop Summary



Introduction

Southern Water is working on the five-year update of its Water Resources Management Plan, which sets out how the company plans to secure water supplies for the next 25 years. As part of the pre-planning process, the company is engaging with its customers and interested parties in a series of focus groups, surveys and workshops.

During July and August 2012, four workshops were held with stakeholders across Kent, Sussex, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, attended by more than 100 delegates. The workshops included an overview of the water resource planning process, scenario modelling, resilience, water scarcity charges and catchment management.

Workshop attendees

A database of invitees was drawn up, combining Southern Water's main stakeholder database, a database of stakeholders consulted on the Draft Drought Plan in 2012 and the company's database for the Universal Metering Programme.

Approximately 100 delegates attended the workshops, which represented the following sectors in each county.

Kent:

24 attendees
 2 x Emergency Services
 5 x Environmental Organisations
 1 x NHS
 3 x Other Council Staff
 1 x Other Local Councillors
 3 x Parish Councils
 4 x Regional Business Groups and Organisations
 2 x Regional Business Leaders
 2 x Regulatory Bodies
 1 x Trade Associations

Sussex:

27 attendees
 1 x Civic Societies
 4 x Council Leaders / Members of relevant committees
 5 x Environmental Organisations
 1 x Horticultural Bodies
 9 x Other Council Staff
 1 x Other Local Councillors
 1 x Regional Business Groups and Organisations
 1 x Regional Business Leaders
 4 x Regional Business Leaders

Isle of Wight:

9 attendees
 1 x Charities
 1 x Council Chief Executives and Directors
 1 x Emergency Services
 4 x Environmental Organisations
 1 x Horticultural Bodies
 1 x Other Council Staff

Hampshire:

39 attendees
 1 x Civic Societies
 1 x Council Chief Executives & Directors
 3 x Council Chief Executives & Directors
 2 x Emergency Services
 5 x Environmental Organisations
 3 x Horticultural Bodies
 1 x NHS
 5 x Other Council Staff
 5 x Other Local Councillors
 2 x Parish Councils
 5 x Regional Business Groups and Organisations
 1 x Regional MP's Office
 4 x Regulatory Bodies
 1 x Trade Associations

The full list of attendees can be viewed in Appendix A.

Areas of Feedback

The workshops included an overview of the current options to secure water resources in each county and an exercise for delegates to put forward new options and 'design' a 25-year-plan. The delegates were encouraged to consider the cost of options, the resilience they bring to the network and the environmental impact during the next 25 years. At the conclusion of the exercise, delegates were asked to vote on a series of questions about their priorities for future water resource planning and complete a feedback form. The findings of the workshops will help inform Southern Water's consultation with its statutory regulators in Autumn 2012, prior to the publication of the draft Water Resources Management Plan in Spring 2013.

The main areas of the workshops for feedback include:

- New options for water resources
- Preferences for options during 25-year plan exercise
- Voting on preferences
- Feedback from facilitators on delegate tables about option choices
- Feedback forms

The main findings were:

General

New Options

During the workshop, 54 options for securing water resources were put forward by stakeholders across Sussex, Kent and Hampshire. These included grey water recycling, catchment management solutions, wastewater recycling schemes, river management, community service reservoirs and commercial water efficiency.

All the schemes put forward have been fed into Southern Water's options appraisal process and will be evaluated alongside the existing options in terms of feasibility, sustainability, cost and environmental impact.

The full range of options can be viewed in Appendix B.

Water resource options – planning choices

In all the workshops, delegates took part in an exercise to draw up a 25-year water resources plan to meet a predicted deficit in supply, choosing from a range of generic options or options specific to their supply area. Each option was given a capex and opex cost and lead time.

Strong themes emerged across the workshops with a clear preference of the inclusion of leakage and water efficiency demand measures in the vast majority of plans. While these did not necessarily generate a significant source of water and were relatively high cost, delegates uniformly expressed an opinion that they were the 'right' options to include.

Strong support was also recorded for wastewater recycling schemes across the region, with particular emphasis in Kent. Water efficiency was also high on the agenda in Kent.

The Isle of Wight also showed strong support for wastewater recycling, leakage and water efficiency.

Hampshire showed a trend in support of tariffs (seasonal or block), strong support for an option to secure further resources from the River Test and support for desalination.

Sussex showed the strongest support for desalination, which was not popular in other areas, in addition to leakage, water efficiency and river abstraction options.

The total costs of the plans developed by delegates varied greatly – ranging from £27.5 million to £888.3 million.

The choices made by delegates during the exercise and the reasoning behind their choices and trade-offs will be considered by the planners as the WRMP is developed.

The range of plans can be viewed in Appendix C.

Voting on Preferences

The workshops included a voting section on preferences to gather a clear quantitative indication of delegates' priorities for future water resources. The results, which are shown below, will be considered as priorities for the Water Resources Management Plan are developed.

Resilience

Do you believe that Southern Water should consider using a wider range of droughts when deriving its water resource plans?

Kent	Yes	90%	No	10%
Sussex	Yes	100%	No	0%
Hampshire	Yes	92%	No	8%
Isle of Wight	Yes	75%	No	25%

Valuing the Environment – Scarcity charges

Do you believe that shadow price scarcity charges should be used as a better alternative to the current methodologies?

Kent	Yes	37%	No	63%
Sussex	Yes	77%	No	23%
Hampshire	Yes	78%	No	22%
Isle of Wight	Yes	88%	No	12%

Catchment Management Options

Do you believe that catchment management options should be included in our library of options to choose from when deriving our plans?

Kent	Yes	90%	No	10%
Sussex	Yes	100%	No	0%
Hampshire	Yes	97%	No	3%
Isle of Wight	Yes	75%	No	25%

Scheme Preferences

What type of schemes do you prefer?

Kent

Resource schemes	52%
Demand management schemes	29
Leakage reduction schemes	19%

Sussex

Resource schemes	33%
Demand management schemes	38
Leakage reduction schemes	29%

Hampshire

Resource schemes	23%
Demand management schemes	50
Leakage reduction schemes	27%

Isle of Wight

Resource schemes	13%
Demand management schemes	63
Leakage reduction schemes	25%

When selecting a combination of schemes to meet any deficits, should we select them on:

Kent

Construction, Operational, Environmental and Social costs only	18%
The impact a scheme has on customer bills only	0%
The overall cost of the schemes and improvements to resilience of the zone	82%
Resilience only	0%

Sussex

Construction, Operational, Environmental and Social costs only	33%
The impact a scheme has on customer bills only	4%
The overall cost of the schemes and improvements to resilience of the zone	63%
Resilience only	0%

Hampshire

Construction, Operational, Environmental and Social costs only	10%
The impact a scheme has on customer bills only	3%
The overall cost of the schemes and improvements to resilience of the zone	87%
Resilience only	0%

Isle of Wight

Construction, Operational, Environmental and Social costs only	25%
The impact a scheme has on customer bills only	0%
The overall cost of the schemes and improvements to resilience of the zone	63%
Resilience only	13%

Would you like another session like this once we have published our draft WRMP next year?

Kent	Yes	100%	No	0%
Sussex	Yes	86%	No	14%
Hampshire	Yes	87%	No	13%
Isle of Wight	Yes	100%	No	0%

Have you found today useful?

Kent	Yes	100%	No	0%
Sussex	Yes	96%	No	4%
Hampshire	Yes	97%	No	3%
Isle of Wight	Yes	100%	No	0%

Feedback from facilitators

During the water resource planning exercise, representatives from Southern Water and its contractor Atkins helped facilitate the discussion on the tables and discussed the choices, trade offs and motivations behind the final choices.

Below are extracts from their observations:

Kent

Once the stakeholders were aware of the cost-benefit for each of the options, they were overwhelmingly in favour of the wastewater reuse schemes.

However, It would have been interesting to see how/if their preferences would have changed before hearing any of the cost/benefit info, as I think without it, the focus would have been on leakage reduction and water efficiency rather than reuse.

The leakage and water efficiency options were the most popular and the participants these options first when putting together their strategy.

However, when they began to add up the water savings and costs they realised that water resource schemes would be required. They also recognised that their preferred strategy was not very resilient, so put together an alternative strategy with a greater focus on water resource schemes and resilience.

Greywater use in the home was very popular, and there was a discussion on the feasibility of introducing this in existing homes. It was concluded that all new homes in the area should have greywater use systems, and that it is difficult to install such systems in the existing housing stock.

Whilst wastewater reuse was also popular, some of the participants were strongly opposed to desalination due to the perceived high level of carbon emissions.

One participant felt that water companies should be focusing on more on microcomponent uses of water in the home.

It was felt that it is important to incorporate carbon costs into the options appraisal.

There were several ideas for alternative options. One of the options discussed was designating an area of land for groundwater recharge, e.g. in a national park.

Sussex

Wastewater reuse was considered a bit of a “no brainer” – many participants could not understand why it was not being done already. There was a strong feeling among the group that releasing water back out to sea when it is treated to such a high quality is a waste and that we should be reusing this water where possible.

There was often a selection of leakage or water efficiency options because it was the “right thing to do”. However, the participants did seem to recognise that actually in many cases it was expensive for the saving it could give. A few people were trying to link water supply with energy use – i.e. use of renewables to make supplies cheaper, etc.

Hampshire

Desalination was a favourite and demand management/efficiency schemes were strongly emphasised by some people but not others. Those that favoured desalination did so with the caveat that it would be powered as far as possible using renewable energy sources.

It would have been helpful to have had extra information for each scheme, particularly £/Ml as many wanted this information to help with the exercise, and it took them time to work it all out.

There was support for introducing more sophisticated tariffs that would help stimulate behaviour change and a reduction in demand. Comments were made such as “if you want to introduce behaviour change it has to hit the pocket and tariffs are the way to this” were made but with the recognition that it needed to be done in conjunction with water efficiency and education. The group did recognise that the introduction of tariffs could impact on poorer families, however they felt that it was the only way to get across the link between cost, impact and usage.

Isle of Wight

Decided very quickly that demand management and water efficiency measures on the IOW, which is already metered, produce only small reductions in demand/DO equivalent and that some, such as retro-fitting, work out at a high unit cost. They were, however, very keen to see more comprehensive water efficiency programmes as they felt it was the right thing to do.

After some discussion the group understood that you can't stop all leaks and that there is an economic level of leakage, although they felt it would lower with time, as leak detection technology improved and the cost of other water resource options increased.

Very keen on the Island developing indigenous resources and not relying more and more on the Cross-Solent.

Much more in favour of wastewater reuse than desalination, as they regarded it as more environmentally friendly, (greener), and in line with the concept of Eco Island.

Feedback forms

Delegates were asked to complete a feedback questionnaire at the conclusion of the workshop. A total of 83 forms were received and the responses showed an increase awareness of water resource planning and its issues following the workshop and a strong agreement that the sessions had been a good forum for information sharing and discussion.

Out of the 83 respondents, 53 were interested in taking part in a further workshop during the public consultation on the draft WRMP between April and July 2013.

The results of the questionnaires will be considered for subsequent workshops to ensure they are as useful and engaging for stakeholders as possible.

View the full feedback in Appendix D.

Summary

The workshops were well attended by stakeholders, regulators and community representatives across the region, who demonstrated a high level of engagement in the session and planning exercise.

Overall, key themes to appear were the overall support for the principles of recycling and water efficiency. These were manifested in support for wastewater recycling, a focus on grey water in new homes and promotion of water efficiency campaigns and retrofits.

When asked to consider options in the context of capital and operational costs, sustainability and environmental impact, the attendees make choices which they may not have necessarily initially chosen.

Leakage was a priority, despite relatively high costs, as important from a perception point of view and leading by example.

Attendees understood and supported the principle of creating a more resilient water supply network, to plan against a wider range of droughts and eliminate the risk of rota cuts and standpipes. The research has also shown that there is acceptance for temporary use bans. These two preferences are not in conflict and are understandable. Resilience drives to the heart of the basic design standard for a water supply system; the temporary use ban, for our systems, typically determines the peak demand we plan to.

Therefore in summary the key points from feedback to date are:

- Resilience is important to customers
- Temporary use bans are, however, acceptable
- Continued water efficiency messages on an annual basis are preferred
- There are regional preferences for the make up of solutions
- Wastewater recycling at the catchment level has attracted a lot more support from customers than initially anticipated
- The non-technical document will be the key document for consultation
- The valuation of reducing leakage goes beyond current economic considerations

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