

Appendix 14: Chesham Town Council

1. Chesham Town Council		
1.1	Representation	<p>1. How we are planning to meet the changing needs of the future.</p> <p>We recognise that the future security of water resources is uncertain, due to population growth, the need to leave more water in the environment and the impact from climate change. There is also uncertainty around how water efficient our customers will be in the future and potential changes in related government and regulator policy.</p> <p>Our Plan allows us to adapt to these uncertainties and deliver solutions. We are proposing an approach that focuses on reducing demand for water and developing long-term strategic regional water supply options where we would jointly build a new reservoir with a neighbouring water company and transfer water using a canal. Do you agree with this approach?</p> <p>Response: Yes.</p> <p>We agree with this approach because it is important to reduce both consumer demand and Affinity Water's dependence on chalk aquifers. It is essential that demand reduction results in decreases in groundwater use, to reduce the damage to iconic chalk streams, such as the River Chess. It is desirable that the new reservoir is created as soon as possible, as 2037 is a long time to wait whilst the shortfall in water supply continues to grow in the Central Region due to population growth and climate change.</p>
	Our Response	<p>The timing of our first strategic option has been carefully considered and determined according to our decision-making methodology. The results of that modelling are provided in section 7.2.4 of the main SoR document.</p>
	Summary of any change to our final WRMP	<p>An update regarding decision making is provided in Chapter 5 of the fWRMP19.</p>
1.2	Representation	<p>2. We are committed to reducing leakage. In 2015, leakage was around 21% (189 million litres of water per day) of the water we put into supply. By 2025 we will have reduced this down to 15%. In our Plan, we aim to reduce leakage to between 11% and 13% by 2045, provided we can do it in an affordable way for customers. This would be a reduction of nearly 50% since 2015. Do you agree with this proposal?</p> <p>Response: Yes.</p> <p>We believe that an ambitious programme of leakage reduction is essential to (a) reduce the demands upon the chalk aquifers and (b) increase customers' receptiveness towards demand reduction.</p>
	Our Response	<p>We fully support the ambitions to substantially reduce leakage by 2050. Our initial aim is to achieve a 50% reduction in leakage between 2015 to 2045. This 30-year programme to reduce leakage by 50% is planned to deliver five years earlier than most other water companies because we started the process in 2015, and will already have delivered a 14% reduction by 2020, followed by a further 18.5% reduction between 2020 and 2025. We will then aspire to achieve a higher level of reduction, to 57% from the 2015 position, which will allow us to reduce leakage by 50% from our 2020 position.</p> <p>Clarification of the 50% target and the ambition for 50% post AMP7 (i.e. 57% overall) is included in the fWRMP19 along with clarification of how we have handled mains renewals for leakage and trunk mains schemes. Explanation of how we will achieve leakage efficiencies and details of our leakage reduction strategy are provided in Technical Report 4.8: Leakage Strategy Report and referenced in the fWRMP19.</p>

1. Chesham Town Council		
	Summary of any change to our final WRMP	An update regarding leakage is provided in Chapter 6 and Technical Report 4.8: Leakage Strategy Report in the fWRMP19.
1.3	Representation	<p>3. Options to increase the supply of water. To ensure there is enough water available for future generations and be better prepared to cope with drought, our Plan is proposing two new supply options – a reservoir and a transfer of water via a canal.</p> <p>3.a) We are proposing to construct a new storage reservoir in Oxfordshire, called the South East Strategic Reservoir, in partnership with Thames Water. The River Thames will be used to transfer water into the area we serve. This will provide an extra 100 million litres of water per day by the late 2030s. Do you agree with this proposal?</p> <p>Response: Yes.</p> <p>We believe that the South East Strategic Reservoir is crucial to reducing Affinity Water's damaging dependence on chalk aquifers. We are very keen to see the reservoir supplying Affinity Water's Central Area as soon as possible.</p>
	Our Response	The timing of our first strategic option has been carefully considered and determined according to our decision-making methodology. The results of that modelling are provided in section 7.2.4 of the main SoR document.
	Summary of any change to our final WRMP	An update regarding decision making is provided in Chapter 5 of the fWRMP19.
1.4	Representation	<p>3.b) We will continue to investigate the potential to transfer treated wastewater via the Grand Union Canal. This would bring water to the area we serve from near Birmingham, where there is a surplus of water available. This could provide an additional 50 million litres of water per day to customers either in the longer term or as an alternative to the reservoir development. Do you agree with this proposal?</p> <p>Response: Yes.</p> <p>However, we would not want to see this as an alternative to the reservoir development. We would also seek reassurance that any risks to our local biodiversity that are potentially posed by the transfer of water from outside our region have been thoroughly assessed and mitigated for. For example, the risk of transfer of non-native, invasive species.</p>
	Our Response	As described under section 10.2.4 of the SoR, we will be carrying out detailed water quality and environmental investigations on the GUC transfer scheme prior to 2023 and before we commit to development of the scheme.
	Summary of any change to our final WRMP	N/A
1.5	Representation	<p>4. Reducing the amount of water used by each person per day.</p> <p>We have committed to support customers to reduce the amount of water they use each day from the current average of 152 litres per person per day to 129 litres by the end of 2025. In our Plan, we are aiming to reduce this to between 110 and 120 litres per person per day by 2045, but only if this is affordable for customers and delivered in a way acceptable to them. Do you agree with this proposal?</p> <p>Response: Yes.</p> <p>Demand reduction is integral to reducing the shortfall in water supply, particularly as water consumption per person in the Central Region is very high. Effective education (to people of all ages) will be essential in effecting behaviour change and making demand reduction acceptable to the customers. Community groups with good local knowledge will be a valuable resource in successfully engaging their communities. The communities that</p>

1. Chesham Town Council		
		are successful in reducing their demand should be able to see a direct reward in terms of a reduction in abstraction from their catchment.
	Our Response	We welcome your positive representation.
	Summary of any change to our final WRMP	An update regarding our demand management strategy is provided in Chapter 6 of the fWRMP19.
1.6	Representation	<p>5. Cost of our Plan</p> <p>Delivering our Plan will mean a rise in customer bills from the 2018 annual average of £171.70 to £193.70 in 2080. This is an increase of 37 pence per year. This figure does not include inflation or wastewater (sewerage) bills. Is this proposal acceptable?</p> <p>Response: No.</p> <p>We feel that pricing will be a key motivator in changing behaviour. Whilst we are keen to ensure that the cost of living for our residents does not become increasingly burdensome; the threat to our environment and the resulting impacts on our community would be devastating and for this reason serious action needs to be taken. For the majority of people, the current cost of water does not deter wastage; if an asset is sold cheaply, it will not be valued. A 13% increase over 62 years seems unreasonably low. We would like to see a more realistic pricing for water, with the additional income being invested in alternative water supplies to groundwater. However, we would like safeguards to be put in place for low income residents.</p>
	Our Response	Thank you for your representation. The price of water is set by the Ofwat determination process.
	Summary of any change to our final WRMP	An update regarding how customers have shaped our plan is provided in Chapter 2 of the fWRMP19.
1.7	Representation	<p>6. Do you have any other comments you would like us to consider? Please state below:</p> <p>We appreciate Affinity Water's commitment to reducing the damage caused to chalk stream habitats through abstraction. We believe that a significant reduction in abstraction from the Chess catchment is essential to prevent further damage to our local river and are keen for further information on what abstraction reduction we can expect to see in the future, in combination with other methods to support WFD environmental objectives. We believe that this action is particularly urgent at the top of the catchment in Chesham, where long stretches of the historically-perennial river are now dry for many months at a time.</p> <p>We are heartened to see that Affinity Water is being proactive in working in partnership with other companies and organisations to develop sustainable water supplies and would like to encourage this approach.</p>
	Our Response	We welcome your comment and will continue to work with the Upper Chess NEP working group to investigate and deliver reductions in abstraction as appropriate.
	Summary of any change to our final WRMP	Further reduction in abstraction from the Chalk is explored as a scenario under section 5.7 of the fWRMP19, Testing the Plan.