

AFFINITY WATER

Executive Summary

Affinity Water's draft Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) has been launched for consultation. The plan is published every five years and sets out the future actions needed to combat water shortfall and provide reliable, resilient, sustainable, efficient, and affordable water between 2025 and 2075.

Affinity Water is seeking engagement with their consultation from stakeholders and customers, including Woking Borough Council and residents of Woking Borough. A representative of Affinity Water will present to the Committee to explain the key details of the plan, the options Affinity Water has identified, and answer any questions.

The consultation is running until 20 February 2023. Full consultation documents and the questions can be found at <https://affinitywater.uk.engagementhq.com/wrmp>.

Recommendation

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That

- (i) the report be noted; and
- (ii) the presentation be noted

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendation set out above.

Background Papers: None.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Affinity Water's Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) aims to address a significant future shortfall in water resources within their supply area. The plan is published every five years, and provides a roadmap for ensuring the supply of reliable, sustainable, and affordable water between 2025 and 2075.
- 1.2 The draft plan has been launched for consultation, inviting comment from stakeholders and customers, and is running until 20 February 2023. The final plan will be published in Autumn 2023.

2.0 Affinity Water

- 2.1 Affinity Water operates across the southeast of England, supplying, on average, 950 million litres of water every day to more than 3.83 million people.
- 2.2 Woking borough is exclusively supplied water by Affinity Water.
- 2.3 Affinity Water produces a WRMP every five years to address future problems for their water supply.

3.0 The Water Resources Management Plan

- 3.1 The WRMP sets out a roadmap for how Affinity Water will cope with a possible future shortfall of water caused by a rising number of customers and the need to reduce groundwater abstractions. The shortfall is estimated to be 449 million litres a day by 2050. The aim is to create a reliable, resilient, sustainable, efficient, and affordable water supply to customers between 2025 and 2075.
- 3.2 Currently, 65% of Affinity Water's supply is abstracted from groundwater sources. As part of their 'environmental destination', to provide sustainable, high-quality water while making better use of water supply and safeguarding the local environment, these abstractions must be reduced and alternative sources found.
- 3.3 Possible actions detailed in the WRMP include reducing customer demand, reducing leakage further than ever before, smart metering, and investment in new infrastructure for new sources of water, including working across the water industry to plan and share resources regionally. The plan will also make Woking Borough's water supplies more resilient to droughts, which are becoming more frequent due to climate change.
- 3.4 The plan has been put together by Affinity Water working closely with the Environment Agency, Natural England, river restoration groups and environmental organisations.
- 3.5 A representative of Affinity Water will present to the committee to explain the key details of the plan, the options Affinity Water has identified, and answer any questions.

4.0 The consultation

- 4.1 The consultation consists of eight open questions, inviting stakeholder and customer feedback on different sections of the WRMP.
- 4.2 The questions can be viewed on page 30 of the WRMP's 'Non technical summary document', viewable from the WRMP webpage at <https://affinitywater.uk.engagementhq.com/wrmp>.

5.0 Corporate Strategy

- 5.1 The consultation supports the Corporate Strategy's Greener Communities strand by helping to develop a more sustainable approach to water supply in the Borough, and making our supply more resilient to droughts.
- 5.2 The consultation supports the Corporate Strategy's Healthier Communities strand by helping to ensure long term access to clean, reliable water for residents.

6.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

- 6.1 There are no finance and risk implications associated with the consultation.

Equalities and Human Resources

- 6.2 There are no equalities and human resources implications associated with the consultation.

Legal

- 6.3 There are no legal implications associated with the consultation.

7.0 Engagement and Consultation

- 7.1 The consultation opened on 14 November 2022 and will close on 20 February 2023. The final plan will be published in Autumn 2023. Affinity Water is welcoming responses from stakeholders and customers.
- 7.2 The consultation can be accessed online on the Affinity Water website at <https://affinitywater.uk.engagementhq.com/wrmp>. Alternatively, responses can be submitted by email to water.resources@defra.gov.uk, or by post to Defra Water Resources Seacole 3rd Floor, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.
- 7.3 Affinity Water is also running a number of engagement events regionally and locally to explain more about the plan. Future events can be viewed on the Affinity Water website at <https://affinitywater.uk.engagementhq.com/wrmp>.

REPORT ENDS