

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

KENT FLOOD RISK AND WATER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent Flood Risk and Water Management Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 20 November 2024.

PRESENT: Mr A R Hills (Chairman), Mr D L Brazier, Mr D Crow-Brown, Ms M Dawkins and Mr M A J Hood

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs L Wright

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms J Shippey (South East Water), Mr Andrew Halliday (South East Water), Mr A Feacey (Resilience and Emergency Planning Manager), Roshana Iruthayaraj (Resilience and Emergency Project Officer), Ms G Brown (KALC), Charles Mackonochie (KALC), Cllr C Cornell (Canterbury City Council), Cllr S Brown (Dartford Borough Council), Cllr C Gale (Dartford Borough Council), Ms D Croxton (Gravesham Borough Council), , Cllr Summersgill (Maidstone Borough Council), Cllr R Yates (Thanet District Council), and, Cllr M Boughton (Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Apologies
(Item 1)

Apologies were received from Mr Cole and Mrs McArthur.

2. Declarations of Interest
(Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the meeting on 16 July 2024
(Item 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2024 were an accurate record and that they be signed by the Chair.

4. How the Environment Agency manage water quality
(Item 4)

The agenda item was adjourned due to the absence of a representative from the Environment Agency.

5. South East Water - Water Resources Management Plan

(Item 5)

Jo Shippey, Community Engagement Manager and Andrew Halliday, Water Resources Strategy Manager, from South East Water were in attendance for this item

1) Mr Halliday presented on the Water Resources Management Plan.

2) Further to questions from Members and guests, it was noted that:

- The housing projections and population growth projections were used in the water resources management planning but it was difficult to meet the challenge of localised changes in population density.
- South East Water worked closely with other stakeholders and regulators as part of environmental considerations. South East Water had a close working relationship with Southern Water.
- There was a national forum of water companies where desalination was discussed and other matters. Further understanding of how other countries are using desalination for water supply was being developed.
- South East Water was working with Southern Water on possible water recycling.
- Concerns were raised about risks associated with demand management and the emphasis on customers using less water. It was felt water auditing with customers would help them understand how to use less and smart metering would help to identify leaks.
- South East Water were due to receive the final settlement from Ofwat in December. South East Water were making representations as part of local plan engagement processes and seeking that where possible that developments have lower per capita consumption (PCC).

3) RESOLVED to note the report.

6. Kent Flood Resilience

(Item 6)

Andy Jeffery, Head of Resilience and Emergency Planning, was in virtual attendance for this item

1) Mr Jeffery presented on planning for flooding in Kent. See presentation attached.

2) Further to questions from Members and guests, it was noted that:

- Different agencies who respond where there are flooding incidents have their own stocks of equipment such as sandbags, pumps, etc. Agencies would work together to mitigate the effects of a 'once in a lifetime' flooding event.
- In the case of a very severe event, such as the Wantsum Channel flooding and cutting of Thanet from the rest of Kent, national assistance would be required.

- Each district and borough had its own multi-agency flood plan. KCC worked with the Environment Agency on the template used for these plans and to make sure local representatives of the agencies were part of the process of updating these plans. As part of this work, it was considered where parts of plans could have impacts elsewhere. The plans were to be fully reviewed every 3 years but in the interim, they were monitored on at least an annual basis.
- It was felt that work was needed in communities to make sure residents were prepared and knew what actions to take in event of a flooding emergency.

3) RESOLVED to note the presentation.

7. Environment Agency and Met Office Alerts and Warnings and KCC severe weather response activity
(Item 7)

Andy Jeffery, Head of Resilience and Emergency Planning, was in virtual attendance for this item

1) Mr Jeffery outlined the report.

2) Further to questions from Members, it was noted that:

- Data on Environment Agency flood alerts was missing but this would be brought to the next meeting and it was requested that more information be brought to show the direction of travel in terms of the Environment Agency's work in regard to flooding in Kent.

3) RESOLVED to note the report.