

# Stakeholder Engagement report

November 2022

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# 1.0 About this document

## 1.1 Setting the scene

This document sets out the stakeholder engagement we have undertaken to date on our plans to secure water supplies for the South East of England.

Before January 2022, our engagement was primarily focussed on how we intended to develop the plan and its key components. Between **17 January 2022 and 14 March 2022** we consulted on our emerging regional plan

From March 2022, our engagement focused on the feedback we received on our emerging regional plan and how we were transitioning from a least-cost to a best-value draft regional plan. This is the subject of a consultation running from **14 November 2022 until 20 February 2023**.

# 2.0 Why we have engaged

## 2.1 Introduction

Water Resources South East (WRSE) is developing a regional plan to secure water supplies for South East England until 2075. We are taking a long-term view and considering the water we need to use at home and at work, as well as that required by the environment, agriculture, to generate electricity, for industry, recreation, and to support the wellbeing of society.

Stakeholder engagement is an important part of developing the regional plan and, for the six water companies that operate in this region their respective Water Resource Management Plans 2024 (WRMP24). As such, we wanted to understand and take account of stakeholders' priorities and preferences in developing a regional resilience plan which ensures a secure water supply for all water users, whilst protecting and improving the environment.

In this appendix, we summarise:

- our **structure and governance** arrangements – generally and specifically for engagement
- our **engagement framework and methods** – and how that has been shaped by external factors
- **who** we have engaged with and **how**

- **what we have learnt** from the engagement so far; and
- how that has **informed our decisions** leading up to our consultation on our emerging regional plan

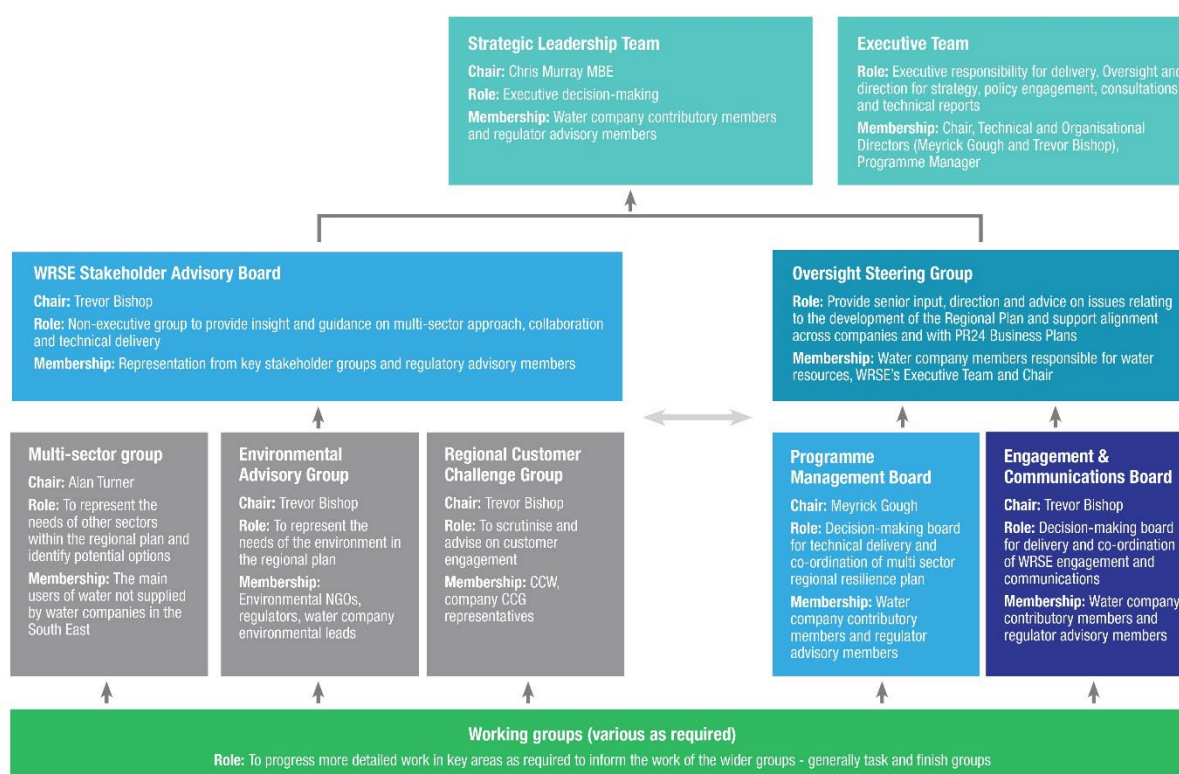
## 2.2 Our structure and governance arrangements

The strengthened role of regional planning, as set out in the National Framework for Water Resources, required us to change how WRSE is structured and governed. This has allowed:

- Greater access for a wider set of stakeholders to influence the process, decision-making and delivery of solutions so our plan is truly multi-sector
- Stronger links with other regional groups so that our plan became an integral part of the national water resources picture

Figure 1 shows the WRSE structure and governance and how we have structured our engagement activity so that it contributes to the development of the regional plan and influences the decision making of the Strategic Leadership Team.

Figure 1 WRSE's structure and governance framework



## 2.3 Our engagement framework

Engagement with a wide range of water users – customers, businesses, other sectors and stakeholders – is an important part of developing the regional plan. However, by its very nature the people, sectors, organisations and interested third parties we want to engage with is a diverse, often time-constrained community, with different interests, needs and requirements.

That being said, all have a stake in how we plan our future water resources and so our aim has been to be open and transparent with the sharing of information in a timely way, and across a range of channels and activities, so that we can maximise active participation. A comprehensive programme of engagement is in place and being delivered by WRSE in partnership with its member companies so that the regional plan will be developed using insight from customers and stakeholders.

We have worked hard to engage with a wide range of water users to understand their future needs and priorities and ensure these are reflected in our regional resilience plan.

## **2.4 External factors that have informed our engagement framework**

### **2.4.1 National Framework and Water Resources Planning Guideline**

We have also designed our engagement framework and programme of activities to meet the expectations set out in the Environment Agency's National Framework<sup>1</sup> and Water Resources Planning Guideline<sup>2</sup> to support the development of the regional plan so that we:

- ensure we develop a plan which provides a secure and sustainable water supply which meets the future needs for public water supply and other sectors, supports the well-being of society and economic growth
- agree the strategic challenges facing the region e.g., climate change, population growth, protection and enhancement of the environment, as well as the foundation data and scenarios that will be used to develop the planning forecasts
- inform the policies that will be adopted in the plan – specifically around key areas such as environmental ambition, risk and resilience, and the use of drought orders and permits
- build an understanding of, and agreement to, the technical methods, data and assumptions employed in the plan
- contribute to the solutions considered in the plan, including catchment, nature based and multi-sector solutions, as well as proposals for innovative solutions
- engage on the strategic resource options which will be considered in the development of the plan
- agree the objectives, criteria and metrics used to inform the development of the best value plan and build an understanding of, and agreement to, the decision-making process to help determine the preferred plan
- gain support for the overall plan, and where there are areas of challenge to understand the basis for the challenges and be able to clearly articulate and evidence the approach and decisions made by WRSE and the member companies
- ensure a clear and transparent approach for stakeholders, specifically in respect of the alignment of the regional plan with other regional plans, and also with other companies WRMP24s and wider planning processes.

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<sup>1</sup> Meeting our future water needs: a national framework for water resources; Environment Agency, March 2020

<sup>2</sup> The Water Resources Planning Guideline; The Environment Agency, July 2021

## 2.4.2 Other regulatory and policy matters

Our engagement framework and activity has sought to shape the future regulatory and policy landscape to ensure we can achieve a more resilient, sustainable water supply in the South East. As such, WRSE has engaged with government, regulators, policy makers and the other four regional water resource groups on the development of its plan and the strategic outputs from it. This has been achieved by:

- Senior representatives from the Environment Agency, Defra and RAPID (Regulators' Alliance for Progressing Infrastructure Development, made up of the three water regulators; Ofwat, Environment Agency and Drinking Water Inspectorate) regularly attending the WRSE Senior Leadership Team meetings
- RAPID, the Environment Agency and Natural England being represented on the WRSE Stakeholder Advisory Board
- The Environment Agency and Natural England being represented on the WRSE Environmental Advisory Group
- Ongoing engagement with WRSE represented at the National Framework Senior Steering Group, Policy Task and Finish Group and Regional Coordination Group
- Contributing to government policy development consultations (with formal WRSE responses) and scrutiny at government committees such as the Public Accounts Committee.

## 2.4.3 Co-ordinated planning on regional and local water resources plans

The WRSE regional plan is the foundation for our member water companies' Water Resources Management Plans (WRMPs) that are required by 2024. The regulatory planning timetable has been devised by regulators to facilitate this important linkage, with the consultations on the critical stages of our developing regional plan supporting the pre-consultation activity that companies undertake on their own WRMPs.

Furthermore, new strategic water resource options that serve more than one region across England – and which are being developed through a gated process overseen by RAPID – will be considered in the WRMPs. The timing of the gates is also aligned with the production of our regional plan.

Water resource planning at this scale is a complex, inter-related landscape of decision-making, consultation and eventual plans with deliverables. That is why WRSE is working hard to ensure there is:

- a clear line of sight between all the decision-making processes
- that engagement activities and consultations are complementary and joined-up; and
- stakeholders are clear about why they are being consulted, the scope of the consultation and how that fits in with the wider water resources planning landscape.

## 2.5 Our engagement method statement

Our dedicated [Stakeholder Engagement Method Statement](#) set out the approach through which we have engaged on our regional plan, via an established engagement programme to make sure our activity is coordinated, inclusive and effective. That approach has evolved, both in response to strategic and technical developments (such as publication of the Environment Agency’s final Water Resources Planning Guideline – see next section) and also feedback from stakeholders specifically as we consulted on our specific Engagement Method Statements.

As a result we made changes and improvements to our strategic approach and tactics. This is summarised in Appendix 1.

## 2.6 Our engagement framework in visual form

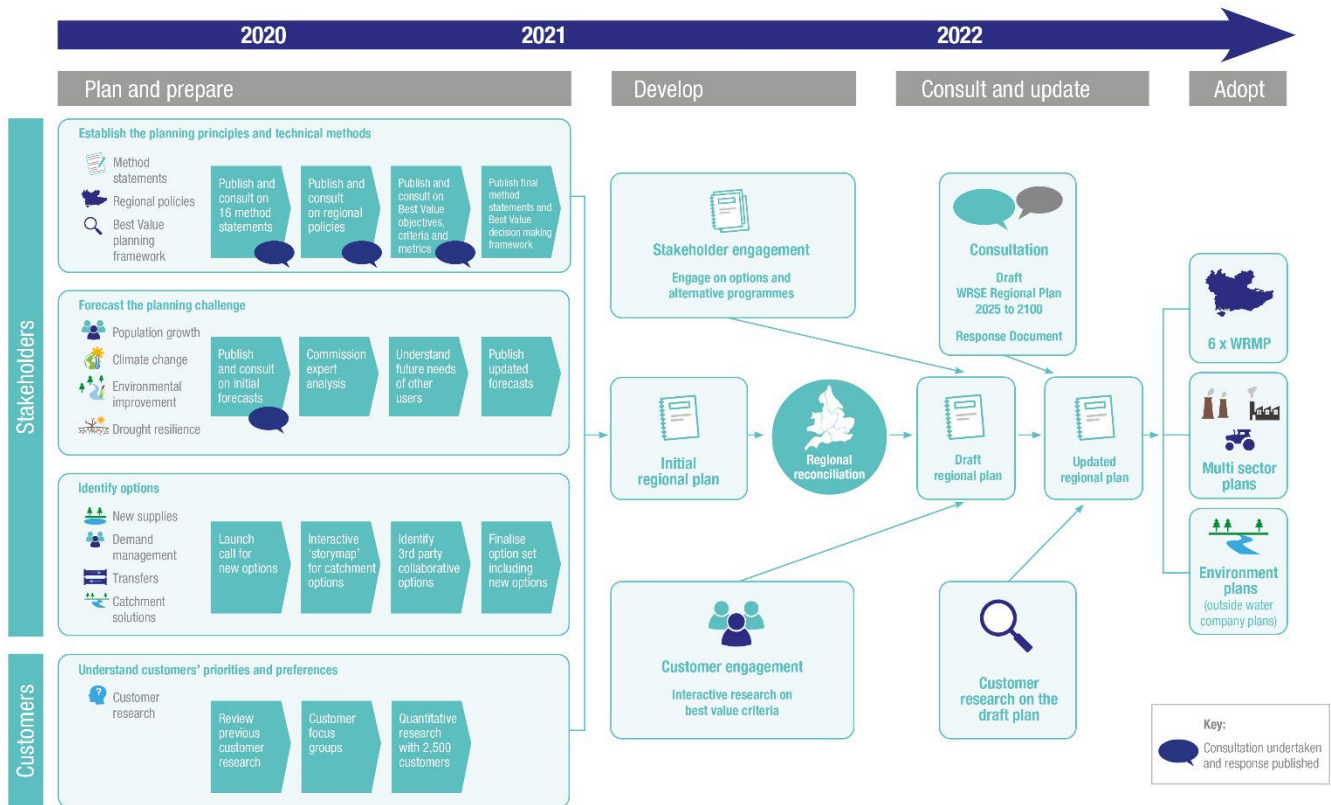
Our engagement framework has been divided into four distinct phases which are:

- plan and prepare
- develop
- consult; and
- adopt.

Each phase had several important deliverables assigned to it to ensure our engagement intentions were clear and, not least, to ensure we remained on track to produce the plan within a challenging regulatory timetable. Figure 2 shows how our engagement framework has been designed.



Figure 2 WRSE engagement framework



Section 4 explains in more detail what activities we have delivered within this engagement framework.

## 3.0 Who we engaged with

### 3.1 Regulators

Regulators have set out their expectations for how we as a regional group should engage. Specifically, these expectations reflect the role of regional planning in underpinning individual water companies WRMPs later in 2022 and 2023. Therefore, the engagement which WRSE undertakes directly supports water companies WRMP pre-consultation activities. The guidance also sets the parameters for this

engagement with an emphasis on the need to clearly set out the plan's ambitions, methods and approaches which the regional plan will take.

As detailed in section 2.4.2 and shown in Figure 1 the water industry regulators are involved at all levels of WRSE governance structure and have actively engaged and provided advice throughout the development of the regional plan to date. Regulators are also involved in the Regional Co-ordination Group (RCG) to ensure a response regulatory approach to the regional plans being prepared.

There has also been a series of additional briefings with regulators on specific topics as detailed below:

- Series of workshops with the Environment Agency on the technical methods being used to develop the plan (September 2020)
- Series of meetings with the Environment Agency on Environmental Ambition (monthly since February 2021 with EA area leads, and monthly since September 2021 with EA national leads and company representatives from PMB)
- Documentation discussion with RAPID (August 2021)
- Meetings with RAPID and the All Company Working Group (ACWG) (October 2021, October 2020, September 2020)
- Series of working group meetings with RAPID (September 2021, June 2021, May 2021, April 2021, March 2021)
- Climate Change meetings with the Environment Agency (February 2021 and November 2020)
- Series of meetings with the Environment Agency regarding the regional system simulator model (January and February 2021)
- Series of workshops focussing on National Supply and Demand (October and November 2020)
- Workshop led by RAPID on bulk supply agreements and pricing (November 2020).
- Draft regional plan discussion with Ofwat (July 2022)
- Discussions with Defra on the emerging and draft regional plans (July and October 2022)

## 3.2 Statutory consultees

Statutory consultees are those organisations and bodies, defined by statute, which must be consulted on relevant plans. Our regional plan is not part of the statutory water resources management planning process so there are no statutory consultees, however, given the role the regional plan will play in informing the company WRMPs we have operated as if it is and have carried out engagement with:

- Ofwat

- The Environment Agency
- Natural England
- The Secretary of State for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)
- Relevant authorities dealing with Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)

In practice, much of our engagement with these statutory consultees has occurred through the WRSE structure and governance arrangements (see Figure 1) where statutory consultees have been members of the various working groups set up. For example, the Environment Agency is represented at all levels of WRSE – the Senior Leadership Team (governance) the Programme Management Board (technical) and the Engagement and Communications Board (engagement) – and have been supportive in helping to shape our plan.

In addition, we have held specific engagement events with statutory consultees, including regulators Ofwat, the Environment Agency and Natural England at a senior level, this has included:

- Weekly meetings with Ofwat and RAPID to update on the latest regional plan developments and any address any outstanding actions
- Other meetings with Ofwat including
- WRSE and company Regulation Directors meeting with Senior Ofwat team (18 December 2020 and 1 October 2021)

In relation to our engagements with relevant SEA and HRA statutory consultees, this has been achieved via our Programme Management Board which has met fortnightly since 2019 with the Environment Agency included as a member of the group.

Likewise, possible options in our plan that could affect a designated site in England or Wales require close liaison with Natural England, which has been undertaken by our Programme Management Board via liaison with their specific area's Natural England lead(s). WRSE have engaged directly with the regional Natural England lead where required, and Natural England have also been part of the WRSE Environmental Advisory Group (meeting approximately every quarter since July 2020).

### 3.3 Non-statutory consultees

We have carried out extensive engagement with other non-statutory consultees as we developed our plan. Table 1 shows who we have engaged and how:

**Table 1 Non-statutory consultee engagement**

| Who   | How  |
|---|--|
| Engagement with other regional water resource groups  | Through the National Framework Senior Steering Group, the Regional Co-ordination Group and the reconciliation process  |
| Water companies that have bulk supply or shared resource agreements with those that operate in the South East | Regional Co-ordination Group and reconciliation process  |
| neighbouring water companies  | (see above)  |
| any water supplier affected by your supply system   | WRSE does not operate a supply system so this engagement has been undertaken by water companies  |
| local catchment partnerships  | <p>WRSE's Environmental Advisory Group (EAG) and the cascade from environmental organisations</p> <p>Series of catchment workshops and the use of an online 'story map' tool for catchment partnerships and others to submit issues and options (300+ options submitted)</p> <p>Local groups are covered specifically via water companies and WRSE has supported as needed</p> |
| any other groups your plan is likely to affect  | Dedicated engagement with the main water using sectors in the South East through a   |

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | <p>multi-sector subgroup which has met regularly since June 2020</p> <p>Representatives from the Greater London Authority and South East Councils on Stakeholder Advisory Board</p> <p>A series of webinars held on key topics including Best Value Planning, the planning challenge, the options and adaptive planning promoted to a range of stakeholders by WRSE and water companies.</p> <p>Bespoke meetings with other stakeholders</p> |
| any potential water supplier, company or third party you may wish to trade with | (as above)   |
| CCW (formerly Consumer Council for Water)                                       | <p>Active member of rCCG and the Stakeholder Advisory Board</p> <p>Member of the National Framework SSG</p> <p>Bespoke meetings</p> <p>CEO attendance at one SLT meeting</p>   |
| Water retailers for business  | <p>Presentations given to the Retailer Wholesaler Group formed by MOSL</p> <p>Previous attendance at the Stakeholder Advisory Board</p> <p>Receive regular communication from WRSE through newsletter and webinars</p>   |
| DWI   | Senior regulator meetings, RAPID and technical engagement  |
| RAPID   | SLT, senior regulator meetings, SSG, RCG, Quarterly Liaison Meetings, bespoke meetings, webinars and newsletters   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| National Infrastructure Commission           | bespoke engagement – series of meeting and engagement with open invitation to engage                                |
| local nature partnerships (where applicable) | cascade from environmental advisory group _ companies lead for local stakeholders and WRSE has supported as needed) |
| water efficiency groups                      | Direct engagement with Waterwise  |

In addition to the formal meetings listed, many of these stakeholders also attended one or more of the webinars we organised during our emerging regional plan consultation.

## 3.4 Other regional water resource groups

Engagement with the other regional groups has been carried out primarily through the Regional Co-ordination Group (RCG). Membership includes the Environment Agency, RAPID, Ofwat, Defra, Natural Resources Wales and the five regional groups (WRSE, WRE, WRW, WCWR and WRN). This group has provided a link between the National Framework Senior Steering Group and the regional plans and has been supported by working groups on specific issues where required. RCG have been meeting approximately monthly since June 2020.

### 3.4.1 Regional Reconciliation

From October 2020 to December 2020 the regulators and regions undertook a series of workshops to determine what should be aligned between the regional plans. The process for integrating the regional plans together is referred to as regional reconciliation process. The conclusion from the reconciliation process held in the Autumn was to set out an agreed set of intraregional transfers which seek to support each regional emerging plans which set out how they will meet their challenges.

In addition to this, WRSE, on behalf of the National Framework, organised a webinar in September 2021 to provide an update to stakeholders on the reconciliation process and raise awareness of the consultations planned for January. This was attended by around 150 stakeholders from across the country from a wide range of organisations including regulators, national and local environmental groups, business groups and trade associations representing large water using sectors.

WRSE have continued to work with the other regions since the emerging regional plan (January 2022) to understand any changes to availability of resources for regional transfers, which has been incorporated into the draft regional plan. The regional reconciliation approach for the draft regional plans has been

aligned through the Regional Co-ordination Group (RCG), which has been summarised in a report, available on the WRSE website in the document library.

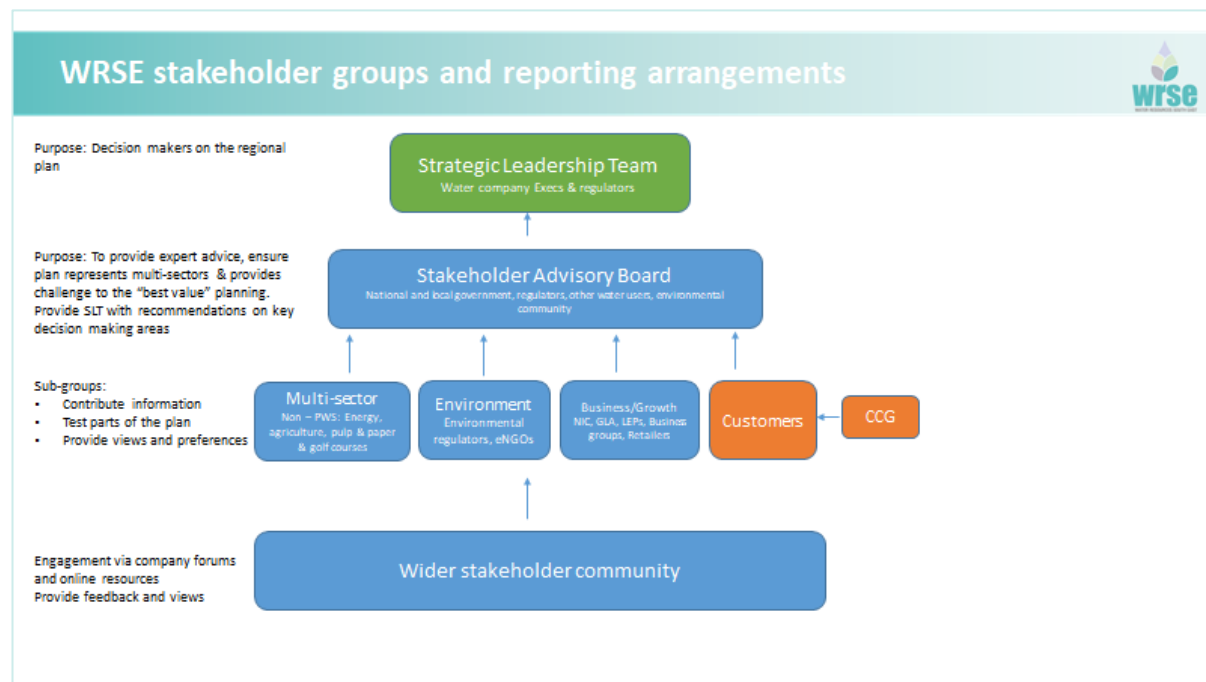
## 4.0 How we have engaged

### 4.1 Our direct engagement with stakeholders

We have set up a series of advisory groups to enable stakeholders to remain briefed and have an opportunity to contribute to the development of our regional plan.

The WRSE stakeholder groups – and their reporting arrangements – are illustrated in Figure 3 and described below:

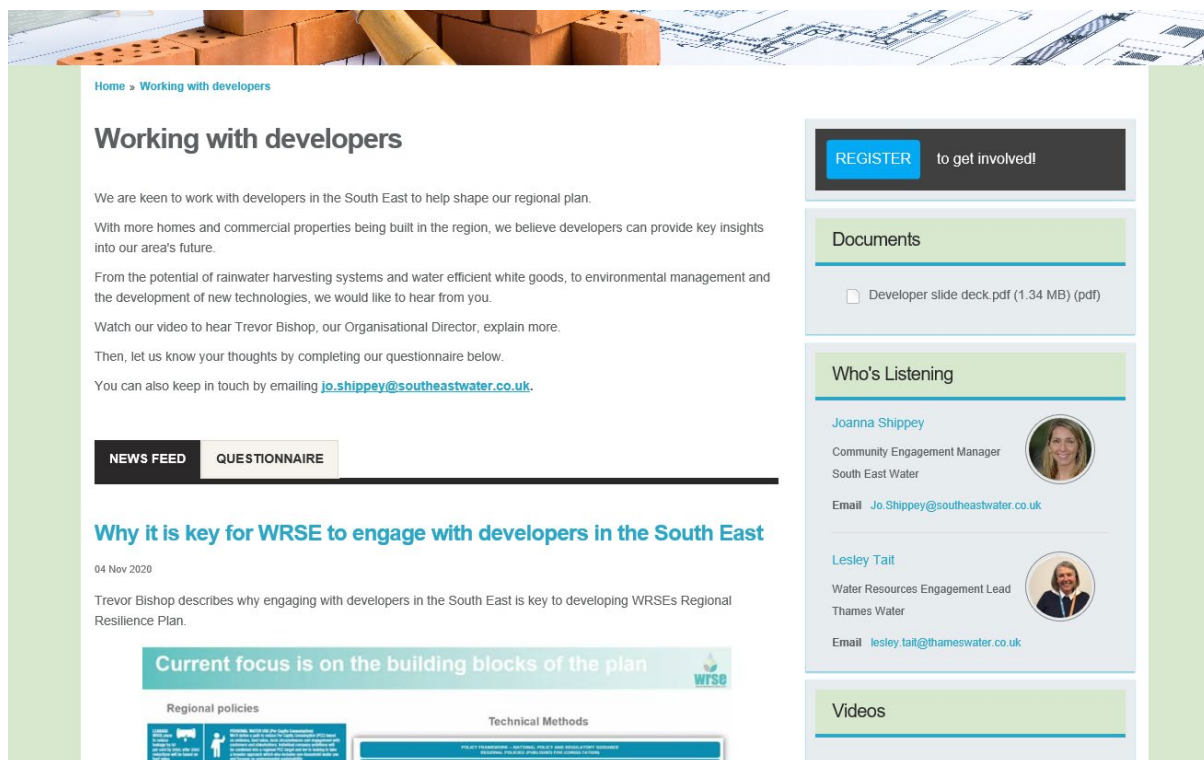
Figure 3 WRSE stakeholder groups and reporting arrangements



- **Stakeholder Advisory Board:** This comprises expert representatives from across the region, as well as organisations involved in determining future water policy and strategy. The purpose of the Stakeholder Advisory Board is to ensure a broad range of interests are represented, to provide challenge, and to help shape the direction and content of the plan.

- **Multi-sector Advisory Group:** This comprises representative of other sectors in the region (many of whom rely on the same natural environment for their business' water needs). The purpose of this group is to understand these other sectors' future water needs, the resilience of their own water supply systems and potential solutions that they could deliver in partnership with WRSE.
- **Environment Advisory Group:** This comprises environmental groups and regulators to develop the plan's environmental ambitions (beyond the statutory minimum) and to advise on WRSE environmental policy.
- **Business/Growth:** It was the intention to establish a group to cover business and the economy; however the diversity of this sector and the pressures due to the COVID19 pandemic during 2020 especially has meant that it has not been possible to form a sub-group with representatives from this sector. In lieu of this, we have engaged with a range of organisations to share our approach and seek input including Local Enterprise Partnerships, the House Building Federation, developers and Chambers of Commerce. See Figure 4 as an example.

**Figure 4: Illustration of engagement with the developer community**



Home > Working with developers

## Working with developers

We are keen to work with developers in the South East to help shape our regional plan.

With more homes and commercial properties being built in the region, we believe developers can provide key insights into our area's future.

From the potential of rainwater harvesting systems and water efficient white goods, to environmental management and the development of new technologies, we would like to hear from you.

Watch our video to hear Trevor Bishop, our Organisational Director, explain more.

Then, let us know your thoughts by completing our questionnaire below.

You can also keep in touch by emailing [jo.shippey@southeastwater.co.uk](mailto:jo.shippey@southeastwater.co.uk).

**NEWS FEED** **QUESTIONNAIRE**

### Why it is key for WRSE to engage with developers in the South East

04 Nov 2020

Trevor Bishop describes why engaging with developers in the South East is key to developing WRSE's Regional Resilience Plan.

**Current focus is on the building blocks of the plan**

Regional policies

Technical Methods

**REGISTER to get involved!**

#### Documents

[Developer slide deck.pdf \(1.34 MB\) \(pdf\)](#)

#### Who's Listening

**Joanna Shippey**  
Community Engagement Manager  
South East Water  
Email: [Jo.Shippey@southeastwater.co.uk](mailto:Jo.Shippey@southeastwater.co.uk)

**Lesley Tait**  
Water Resources Engagement Lead  
Thames Water  
Email: [lesley.tait@thameswater.co.uk](mailto:lesley.tait@thameswater.co.uk)

#### Videos



- **Customers:** The views and preferences of water company customers are important in forming the regional plan and we have engaged with customers through research and other channels to understand, and take account of, their views and preferences. See our customer engagement method statement for more detail on our customer research programme
- **Regional Customer Challenge Group:** Membership comprises CCW and representatives for the region's water company Customer Challenge Groups with the aim of scrutinising and challenging the design and execution of engagement around the plan with customers and stakeholders.
- **Wider stakeholder community** – through meetings and events, hosted both by WRSE and the individual water companies, documentation, consultation and online channels e.g., webinars, on topics as diverse as resilience, method statements, options appraisal, best value and regional reconciliation. The use of webinars in particular became a dominant feature of our wider stakeholder engagement as a result of the COVID19 restrictions in place during most of 2020 and 2021. That being said, they were very well attended and positively received as it allowed a greater number of time-constrained stakeholders to attend and join our discussions.

#### **4.1.1 Stakeholder Advisory Board**

This group acts as the vehicle for strategic stakeholder engagement by WRSE

##### *Terms of reference*

- The WRSE Advisory Board will work with the WRSE senior leadership team (SLT) to ensure that the multi-sector, regional resilience plan meets the needs of all water users, the environment and supports the regional economy. Specifically, the members of the group will:
- Contribute to the development Best Value plan criteria and metrics and provide and advise the SLT on whether the chosen criteria reflect the needs of all water users
- Review the updated Future Water Resource Requirement assessment (demand and supply forecasts) and advise SLT on whether it reflects the needs of all water users based on the engagement and technical work carried out
- Review and assess the draft plan consultation results and make recommendations to the SLT on changes that should be made to the plan to reflect customer and stakeholder views
- Partner with WRSE, and its member companies where appropriate, to promote the development of the regional plan and WRSE's wider objectives.

##### *Current external members*

- CCW (formerly Consumer Council for Water)
- RWE Generation

- Chair of the Multi-sector group
- Greater London Authority (GLA)
- Chalk Stream First
- Blueprint for Water
- South East Councils

The members are joined by the following regulatory observers:

- Environment Agency
- Natural England
- RAPID

*Where you can find more information*

Minutes of the Stakeholder Advisory Board can be found at [wrse.org.uk/library](https://wrse.org.uk/library)

#### **4.1.2 Multi-Sector Advisory Group**

This sub-group was set up specifically to act as the platform for engagement with major water users in the region which are not supplied directly by any of the six water companies. It will ensure our regional plan addresses the needs of other users and meets the expectations of the National Framework.

*Terms of reference*

- Agree on the scope of non-public water supply sectors that will be considered in the WRSE regional plan
- Understand the future requirements of non-public water supply users (using the National Framework report as the starting point). This work covers future demands, drought vulnerability and future availability.
- To help define whether loss of supply is tolerable to certain sectors or not – this will help with the resilience service provision definition for each sector
- To advise on sector-specific policy issues and technical processes that need to be considered as the regional plan is developed
- To identify opportunities for new water resource options and shared resources that could be promoted through the regional plan and understand the full range of solutions that could potentially be helpful for non-public water supply users, including funding arrangements
- To create a forum for ongoing collaboration to deliver improved water management across the South East (water efficiency, sustainable abstraction, drought management etc)
- To provide independent advice to the Senior Leadership Team (CEO/senior regulators) group.

The starting point for this group's membership was the work carried out by the National Framework to identify the main water users in the region. That being said, we have undertaken broader engagement

so that we capture sectors that were not included in the original analysis and beyond this formal sub-group. This is addressed in the next section of this document (*Our wider consultation with stakeholders*).

#### *Current external members*

- Kent County Council (independent chair)
- NFU
- West Sussex Growers
- RWE Generation
- Uniper Energy
- Environmental Consultant, BIGGA/England Golf
- DS Smith (paper manufacturer)
- Confederation of Paper Industries
- Mineral Products Association
- Canal and Rivers Trust
- Vitacress
- Environment Agency

### **4.1.3 Environmental Advisory Group**

This sub-group was set up to create a forum for environmental bodies, regulators, policy makers – all with broad, cross-cutting environmental expertise – to agree a number of critical policy and practical issues, including:

#### *Terms of reference*

- Creating a forum to agree shared ambition, use of evidence, definition of process and policy/regulatory gaps
- To review the Environment Agency's proposed environmental scenarios and advise if others are required
- To advise and inform on the process of setting of environmental ambition beyond the statutory minimum by reviewing the current evidence, future challenges against the needs of the environment using agreed scenarios
- To advise on WRSE's environmental policy and be part of the environmental assessment method consultations
- To provide a review of potential environmental solutions.

It will ensure our regional plan addresses the expectations of the National Framework regarding environmental expectations and establishes stronger links from regional plans through to company WRMPs and business plans.

### *Current external members*

- Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust
- Blueprint for Water
- South East Rivers Trust
- Chalk Streams First
- Environment Agency
- Natural England.

A log of our key stakeholder engagement activity to date can be found in Appendix 2.

## **4.2 Our wider engagement with stakeholders**

### **4.2.1 Consultations**

WRSE ran a series of consultations between March 2020 and January 2021 on the ‘building blocks’ of the regional plan to allow stakeholders the opportunity to engage with and shape the process used to develop the regional plan. This included consultations on:

- Future Water Resource Requirements for South East England (March 2020)
- Resilience Framework (June 2020)
- Regional policies (August 2020)
- 17 technical method statements (August 2020)
- Best Value Planning – approach, objectives, criteria and metrics (February 2021).

All consultations have been promoted directly to stakeholders through WRSE’s distribution list and via the member companies’ stakeholder lists. They were also promoted on social media.

### **4.2.2 Consultation on our emerging regional plan**

Between 17 January 2022 and 14 March 2022 we consulted on our emerging regional plan to secure water supplies for the South East and received over 1,150 responses from stakeholders and customers.

In May 2022, we responded to the feedback we received in our Consultation Response Document. This is available on [our website](#).

Specific detail about engagement during our emerging regional plan consultation is below.

### 4.2.3 Events and webinars

WRSE launched its vision and ambition for its regional plan at a stakeholder event in September 2019. This was attended by more than 60 stakeholders and involved; presentations by WRSE, Government and regulators; a panel session involving environmental and other sector representatives and a facilitated discussion session with stakeholders. The outputs from this session were used to inform our engagement approach and provided early feedback on stakeholder priorities that have been reflected in the development of the plan. The report can be found at [www.wrse.org.uk/library](http://www.wrse.org.uk/library)

The use of webinars became a dominant feature of our wider stakeholder engagement as a result of the COVID19 restrictions in place during most of 2020 and 2021. They have been well attended and positively received as it allowed a greater number of time-constrained stakeholders to attend and join our discussions or review them afterwards as they have been made available online.

We held webinars on the following topics:

- Resilience framework
- Method statements
- Regional policies
- Growth forecasts
- Options appraisal process
- Environmental ambition
- Best value plan
- The planning challenge
- Emerging options from the appraisal process (X5)
- Adaptive planning
- Drought management (with retailers)
- Regional reconciliation in conjunction with the other regional groups and the National Framework

These webinars were well attended, with between 40 and 100 typically attending each, including individuals representing a broad cross-section of stakeholders. The recordings were made available online and have been viewed by additional people. We will continue using this as an engagement channel with wider stakeholders as we finalise our regional plan.

WRSE has also attended engagement activity carried out by the individual companies including Thames and Affinity Waters' quarterly stakeholder forum, Southern Water's Strategic Environment Panel and Western Area stakeholder group, SES Water's Environment Scrutiny Panel and South East Water's Environmental Scrutiny Group.

#### **4.2.4 WRSE newsletter**

WRSE has produced a quarterly newsletter since February 2019 which has provided regular updates in WRSE activity, wider industry activity related to water resources and content from many third party stakeholders such as regulators. Since its inception, the distribution list has increased significantly as a result of more people registering for updates through our website (to ensure compliance with GDPR). It is now sent directly to more than 500 people and is promoted on our website and social media channels.

All editions can be found at [wrse.org.uk/library](https://wrse.org.uk/library).

#### **4.2.5 WRSE website**

WRSE launched a new website in May 2020 to help stakeholders access its work. It provides stakeholders with an overview of WRSE's work and houses all the technical and strategy documents that WRSE has produced in an easy-to-use library.

#### **4.2.6 Engagement platform**

To supplement the WRSE website and enable more interactive engagement with stakeholders, WRSE established a dedicated engagement platform. It has been used to promote the consultations run by WRSE and has used features such as surveys, films and blogs to help stakeholders engage with the content. The platform has also been used to house the recordings of webinars carried out by WRSE, enabling stakeholders unable to attend to engage at a time that suits them. It houses also houses all the details of our customer research programme including the detailed reports.

#### **4.2.7 Films**

WRSE has produced a series of short films to help explain the purpose of the regional plan, what we are planning for and the options that are being considered. These were launched in summer 2021, ahead of the emerging plan consultation to help stakeholders to understand the context of the plan and break it down in an engaging and accessible way.

#### **4.2.8 Social media**

WRSE established its own Linked In page in 2020 and has used to promote updates on its work. This has included the webinars, films, blogs and newsletters. Its partner organisations have also promoted WRSE activity via their own pages. This has enabled WRSE to reach out to interested stakeholders included those working within the water industry, the supply chain and in other sectors.

Due to resource constraints, WRSE has not established a wider social media presence. However, its members companies have promoted key WRSE content through their own social media pages to support wider awareness.

## 4.2.9 Media

WRSE has focused its attention primarily on the water industry trade media with features in The Water Report and Utility Week to promote particularly innovative and progressive areas of its work such as how it is engaging with customers, its approach to resilience and how it is working to integrate different planning activity. The purpose of this has been to demonstrate its leadership within the sector and the role regional planning is playing in delivering wider sector priorities. That said, WRSE has contributed to national and local media stories where appropriate, including an interview on Sky News in summer 2019.

# 5.0 Consulting on our emerging plan

Between 17 January 2022 and 14 March 2022, we consulted on our emerging regional plan to futureproof our region's water supplies.

We received over 1,150 responses from a broad cross-section of stakeholders including:

- Environmental groups
- Local authorities – County, Unitary, District, Borough and Parish Councils
- Regulators
- Trade associations – including those representing large water-using sectors
- Local interest and campaign groups – including local political parties
- Canal and Rivers trusts

Our engagement included webinars, an interactive Q&A session, updating our bespoke engagement platform and website, coordination with our member companies to promote the consultation directly to their stakeholders, films, LinkedIn posts and an edition of our newsletter focussing on the consultation.

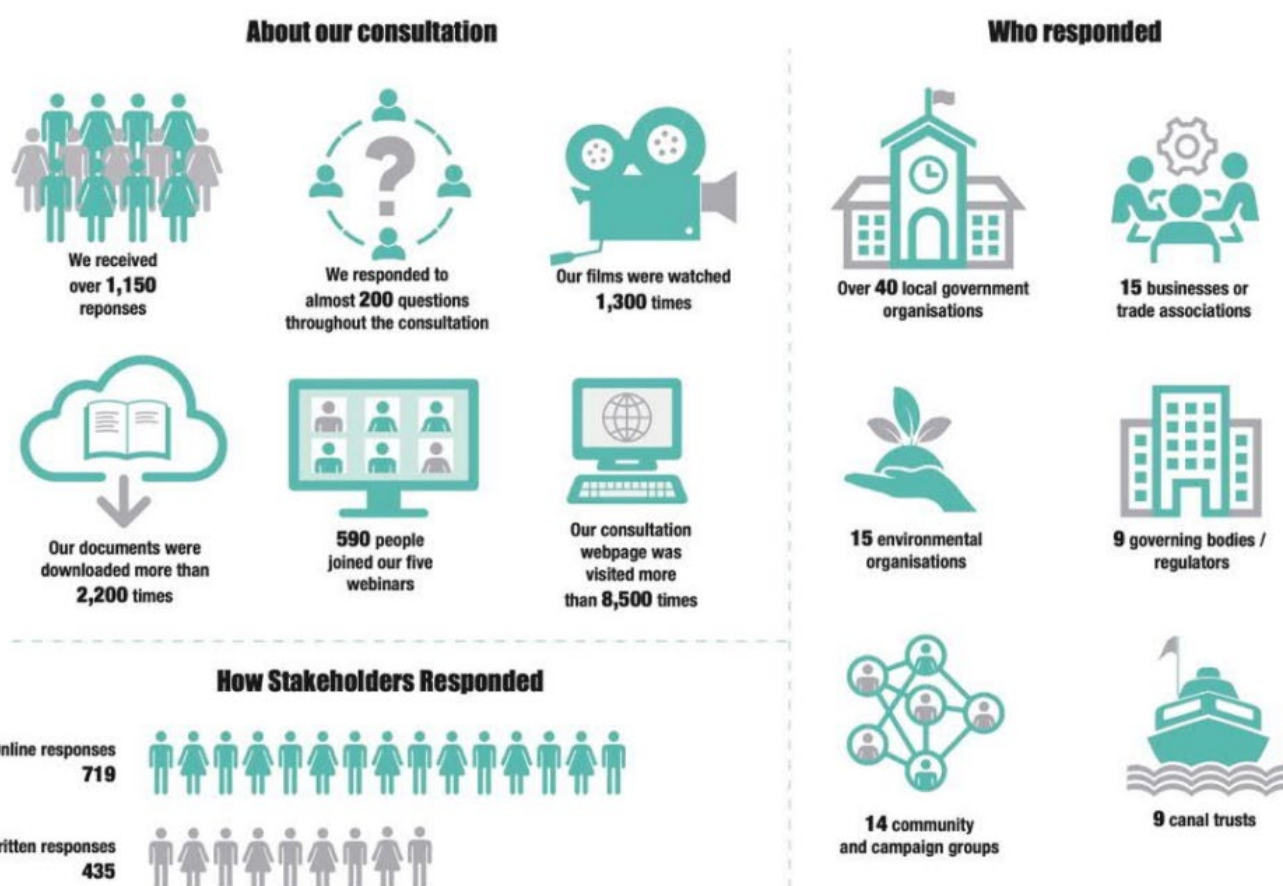
Figure 5 below, taken from our consultation response document, outlines some key statistics from our consultation engagement.

In its response to WRSE's emerging regional plan consultation<sup>3</sup>, Ofwat said "The WRSE approach to stakeholder engagement has been positive. It has hosted a range of well attended webinars and supported the launch of all five regional groups."

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ofwat.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/14-03-2022-WRSE-regional-plan-letter-for-web.pdf>

Figure 5: Illustration of engagement with the developer community



## 5.1 Emerging regional plan consultation webinars

During our emerging regional plan consulted, WRESE arranged and hosted five webinars:

- A webinar to launch the regional plans in coordination with the National Framework
- A webinar to launch WRSE's emerging regional plan
- More detailed webinars focussing on the East, West and North of WRSE's region respectively, supported by our member companies

In total, over 590 different stakeholders attended at least one of our webinars with some joining multiple sessions.



Each webinar provided an overview of the plans being discussed and the wider strategic context, followed by a Q&A and panel session. Attendees could submit their questions via Microsoft Teams chat function or through an interactive Q&A platform. Any questions not responded to during the webinar were responded to in writing afterwards.

| Webinar                    | Date       | Attendees   |
|----------------------------|------------|---|
| National Framework webinar | 17 January | More than 270 people from over 200 organisations    |
| WRSE launch webinar        | 20 January | Over 160 attendees from more than 100 organisations |
| WRSE Eastern area webinar  | 31 January | Over 110 attendees                                  |
| WRSE Western area webinar  | 1 February | Over 125 attendees                                  |
| WRSE Northern area webinar | 2 February | Over 110 attendees                                  |

All our webinars were recorded and shared afterwards on our engagement platform.

In addition to these sessions, we held an interactive Q&A session on 1 March, where stakeholders could submit questions through our engagement platform to be answered the same day. Where we couldn't respond to the question in the same day, we responded in writing within a few days.

In total, we responded to more than 200 questions submitted during the consultation through our webinars, interactive Q&A, website and engagement platform.

## 5.2 Media engagement

WRSE proactively engaged with local and national media during the consultation, resulting in widespread coverage across national, regional, local and trade media. This included:

- In depth- features on BBC News 24 and regional BBC and ITV channels
- Interviews on regional and local radio stations
- Coverage on BBC News website and in local newspapers and their websites

## 5.3 Social media, films, and engagement platform

As outlined in section 4.2.8 above, WRSE does not have a large social media presence. However, leading up to and during the consultation WRSE used LinkedIn to promote the consultation and engagement activity such as the webinars and interactive Q&A to its audience. WRSE also worked with its member companies to provide collateral and messaging to support their social media campaigns.

We created a series of films to explain different core elements of our plans. These included:

- Our approach to adaptive planning
- Demand management
- Nature based solutions
- A network to move water around the region
- Three films on the new sources in our plan

These were shared on our engagement platform and social media channel. In total, they were viewed over 1,300 times during the consultation.

As with our previous consultations, we used our engagement platform to host films, content explaining the consultation and directed stakeholders to this platform to read our documents and respond. Over 8,500 people visited our consultation webpage and our documents were downloaded over 2,200 times.

## 5.4 Other stakeholder engagement

Our online wider engagement has been complemented by briefings to individual stakeholders where appropriate and requested.

During our consultation we attempted to organise a webinar specifically for retailers in the non-household market. However, due to low interest this event did not take place. We engaged with the UK Water Retailers Council (UKWRC) directly to ensure their members were aware of the consultations and how to respond. This is in addition to any engagement undertaken by our member companies.

## 6.0 Using insight to shape our plans

We carried out several consultations that informed the development of our emerging regional plan. We reviewed the feedback we received and recorded our response in a series of consultation response summary documents. We also consulted on our emerging regional plan as detailed above.

| Consultation                       | Consultation date | Response document  |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Future Water Resource Requirements | March 2020        | <a href="#">Microsoft Word - WRSE_ResponseFWRRFinal_May20</a>                                    |
| Resilience Framework               | June 2020         | <a href="#">resilience-framework-response-to-feedback-03-august-2020_final.pdf (wrse.org.uk)</a> |
| Regional policies                  | August 2020       | <a href="#">wrse-response-to-policies-consultation_051020.pdf</a>                                |
| Method statements                  | August 2020       | Updated method statements have been published with changes highlighted                           |
| Best value planning                | February 2021     | <a href="#">wrse-response-to-the-consultation-on-best-value-planning-april-2021.pdf</a>          |
| Emerging regional plan             | January 2022      | <a href="#">wrse-emerging-regional-plan-consultation-response-document-may-2022.pdf</a>          |

Section One of our draft regional plan consultation outlines in more detail how we have responded to stakeholders' feedback – including the changes made to our plan as a result of stakeholders' feedback.

## 6. Preparation for our draft regional plan

Ahead of the publication of our draft regional plan we have continued our proactive engagement with a range of stakeholders. In May 2022, we attended a UK Water Retailers Council meeting to share our consultation response document and explain how we were moving from our least-cost plan to a best value plan for consultation in November 2022. We also held meetings with the South East ADEPT (Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport), Oxfordshire County Council and the Horticultural Trade Association.

We have held further meetings with our Stakeholder Advisory Board, Multi-Sector Group and Environmental Advisory Group in July 2022 and October 2022 to share progress on incorporating stakeholders' feedback from our emerging regional plan consultation, explain the approach we're taking and allow them to provide challenge and feedback. Areas of focus included on the level and location of abstraction reduction that is proposed through the plan and assessment of wider environmental benefits. WRSE will continue to engage with the Environmental Advisory Group to develop a prioritisation process and glidepath to delivering long-term environmental improvements. There was also recognition that further work is needed with other sectors to develop a better understanding of their long-term water needs and work will continue over the winter with the main water users.

In addition, one to one meetings have been held with a range of organisations including Waterwise, South East Rivers Trust, Wildfish and the Institution of Civil Engineers.

### 5.5 Engaging on our draft regional plan

WRSE is planning a similar level of engagement on its draft regional plan for consultation from November 2022.

During this time, WRSE's role is to support its member companies' engagement on their statutory Water Resources Management Plans (WRMPs). As such, WRSE is planning a launch in parliament and a webinar with the wider stakeholder community to share details of its plan and will support companies' local engagement as appropriate.

WRSE is planning:

- A briefing to key stakeholders ahead of the plan's publication to raise awareness of the plan and address concerns their constituents may have
- A launch event in Parliament alongside its member companies to raise awareness of the plan, the strategic links to WRMPs and brief key stakeholders
- A webinar to outline the key elements of the plan to a wider range of stakeholders
- An interactive Q&A session towards the end of the consultation period

This proactive engagement will be complemented by refreshed films, targeted media engagement and proactive stakeholder communication to raise and maintain awareness of the consultation.

WRSE's leadership will also be raising awareness of the upcoming draft regional plan by speaking at events including:

- Westminster Energy, Environment and Transport Forum – 30 September 2022
- Utility Week Live – 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022
- The Water Report Social Contract Summit - 19 January

WRSE will also take part in stakeholder briefings during the consultation, including engaging with retailers and the non-household sector through UKWRC and supporting member companies' stakeholder engagement where appropriate.

### **5.5.1 – Briefings for Parliamentarians**

On 18<sup>th</sup> October, Trevor Bishop supported Southern Water's engagement with the Kent MP Forum to outline their draft WRMP and how this links to WRSE's regional plan. This was attended by 11 MPs or their offices.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> November WRSE held a roundtable briefing to share embargoed details of our draft regional plan. This was targeted at MPs from across our region with an interest in water resources or large schemes in their constituencies. We also invited chairs of select committees from the House of Commons and House of Lords, and Labour's shadow environment minister.

We were joined by:

- Sir Geoffrey Clifton Brown – MP for the Cotswolds (Chair and sponsor for the meeting)
- Damian Green MP – MP for Ashford with an interest in Broad Oak reservoir
- A representative from Layla Moran's office – MP for Abingdon and West Oxfordshire with an interest in SESRO
- Alex Sobel MP – Labour's shadow Environment Minister
- Daisy Cooper – MP for St. Albans with an interest in reducing abstraction to protect chalk streams

We had late cancellations from Flick Drummond (MP for Meon Valley with an interest in Havant Thicket reservoir) and Andrew Griffith (MP for Arundel and South Downs with an interest in water neutrality challenges and Blackstone reservoir).

On the afternoon of 3 November, WRSE briefed Baroness Parminter and Baroness Young of Old Scone (Chair and a member of the House of Lords Environment and Climate Change Committee respectively). This briefing was offered as they were unable to join our 2<sup>nd</sup> November roundtable.

Both these sessions included an overview of regional planning, the challenges to supplies WRSE faces and the mix of solutions being proposed. WRSE was challenged on the deliverability of demand and leakage management, as well as some of the planning assumptions made around population growth and environmental protection.

Overall, Parliamentarians were supportive of our approach, with many welcoming the concept of long-term, adaptive planning and an appreciation of the challenges we face. We also clarified how their constituents will be able to respond to our consultation, and the statutory process running in parallel.

### **5.5.2 – Briefing for regulators and National Infrastructure Commission**

A pre-briefing was held with senior representatives from the water industry regulators Ofwat and the Environment Agency, RAPID, CCW and the National Infrastructure Commission. The briefing covered key aspects of the plan including the scale and mix of investment and the role of demand management measures in achieving security of supplies. We also highlighted areas with potential deliverability risks associated with the plan.

## 7.0 What happens next?

On 14 November 2022, WRSE will publish its draft regional plan for consultation. There will be a fourteen-week consultation period until 20 February 2022, during which WRSE will carry out a range of activity to promote the plan (including that outlined above) and encourage customers and stakeholders to provide feedback.

The WRSE engagement platform will be used as the consultation hub and a consultation document will be produced with a series of technical annexes. The platform will also contain a series of short films to break down the emerging plan into bite-sized chunks, engaging visuals and blogs to help less technical stakeholders engage with the content. It will also house the consultations questions through an online survey tool.

All stakeholders on WRSE's stakeholder list will be informed directly via email about the consultation alongside water companies promoting their WRMPs and the links to the regional plan. It will also be promoted on social media and regional media activity is planned.

In parallel with the consultation we carry our research with customers, to capture their views and priorities on key choices within the plan.

Responses to the consultation will be collated and reviewed. A summary document will be produced that will set out the responses to the consultation, highlighting key themes and areas of interest. It will also indicate how WRSE will take the feedback into account as it continues to develop its final regional plan, which we expect to publish in 2023.

Our member companies will also publish and consult on their individual WRMPs, subject to Defra approval, over the winter of 2022/23. They will each produce a Statement of Response following their consultations.

# Appendix 1

## Stakeholder method statement changes

Changes made to the Stakeholder Engagement Method Statement following consultation and publication of the WRP. G.

### Summary of consultation feedback relevant to the stakeholder engagement programme

| Consultation feedback and requirements of the final WRP   | WRSE consideration   |
|---|--|
| <b>Timing of engagement</b><br>Engage at an early stage especially if your plan is likely to be complex or include significant change thereby reducing the risk of issues being identified at a later stage   | The planning challenges faced in the SE are significant and complex and as such the approach and tools used by WRSE to develop the regional plan are detailed and complex. WRSE is committed to develop the plan openly and transparently and has developed a programme of engagement which supports each stage of the technical programme and shares information at a timely and formative stage.   |
| <b>Breadth of engagement</b><br>Stakeholder engagement on such a complex process will be a significant challenge for WRSE, the methodology statement needs to provide more information on how this challenge will be overcome.<br><br>Ensure the engagement involves both statutory and non-statutory consultees including other regional groups, water suppliers affected by the supply system, other water companies, local catchment partnerships to ensure consideration of local pressures and local solutions.<br><br>Ofwat specifically requested pre-consultation engagement prior to the draft regional plan in August 2021. | The WRSE engagement programme involves the wide stakeholder community, as well as customers. As part of the engagement to date we have checked back on whether the approach and technical work is clear and understandable and if there is sufficient opportunity to contribute. Overall, the feedback was positive. We recognise the pressure on stakeholders and resource constraints, and also the potential for engagement “fatigue”, and work to respond to feedback on when and how we engage to ensure the approach is efficient and effective.<br><br>In summary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a host of cross-regional and strategic planning groups which are attended by WRSE and the SE member companies to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and coordinated activity.</li> <li>• Regulators are members of the WRSE technical and engagement boards and as such are able to contribute alongside water companies to the design and execution of activities.</li> <li>• WRSE hosted pre-consultation discussions with Ofwat (March 21 and April 21)</li> <li>• WRSE has established stakeholder groups – the Advisory Board, Environmental Group and Multi-sector group, the membership was designed to ensure the groups represent the broad regional stakeholder community.</li> <li>• WRSE has broadened its reach through other channels such as the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, Developers Forum, LEPS and Retail associations.</li> <li>• WRSE had led engagement and consultation on the components of the plan as the work has progressed using tiered documentation to respond to the varying appetites of stakeholders and various methods.</li> <li>• WRSE and the water companies have held forums and meetings to ensure the wide stakeholder community is briefed and has</li> </ul> |



|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | <p>an opportunity to feed into the development of the plan. This is shown in Figure 4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WRSE will also host the public consultation on the draft plan in January 2022.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>WRSE Stakeholder Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental Advisory Group – CCT commented that the representation is limited in its coverage of heritage, recreational, landscape and other areas outside of the narrower natural environment interests.</li> <li>Multi-sector group should be broader than industries which have a licence to abstract water from the environment and should encompass other sectors that actively manage and invest in water infrastructure, for flood defence, conservation, recreation, navigation</li> <li>Deepen the involvement of the WRSE stakeholder groups in the technical work so that they have more responsibility in the development of the plan. For example, the Advisory and Stakeholder groups should be given some responsibility in the selection of decision making and resilience criteria</li> <li>CCT queried where those stakeholders with a specific interest, such as a specific water resource solution, have a voice within the WRSE stakeholder structure.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Environmental Advisory Group comprises regulators, NGOs and company representatives. The discussions have covered topics including landscape, recreation, and wellbeing, at a high level. We note this concern and will ensure the wider scope continues to be part of the ongoing discussions.</li> <li>We continue to ensure these other, wider interest areas are included within our engagement processes and have the opportunity to scale up/down their level of direct engagement to fit with their needs.</li> <li>We have reviewed and revised the Terms of Reference of the Stakeholder Advisory Board to strengthen its remit in the development of the plan, with specific areas of focus and outputs.</li> <li>The WRSE programme of engagement is multi-faceted and aims to provide multiple touchpoints for stakeholders to get involved and contribute to the development of the plan for example consultation on technical outputs, at meetings and through the consultation. If the current channels are not considered to provide sufficient opportunity or cover the topics of interest, we are happy to meet and discuss.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Clarity and transparency</b><br/>Need for transparency in methods, data, assumptions, and decisions so that customers, stakeholders, regulators, and government can understand and comment</p>  | <p>WRSE recognises that the activity is technically complex and has endeavoured to share information in a clear and accessible way. Method Statements covering the technical aspects of work have been consulted on and published.</p> <p>WRSE has sought feedback on topics for discussion and we have responded to this such as hosting a webinar on the demand forecasts and the adaptive planning framework.</p>   |
| <p><b>Environmental destination</b><br/>Important that there is consultation to define the long-term environmental destination, including engagement at a catchment level to help in developing catchment options.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the updated Future Water Resource Requirements (May 2021) we set out the environmental scenarios being considered. We have held many discussions on this at stakeholder meetings as this work evolved recognising it is significant in shaping the plan</li> <li>In collaboration with the EA we have defined a suite of scenarios to reflect the scale, pace, and delivery mode for the environmental destination. We have discussed these with the EAG who supported the approach. We will share the modelling outputs to enable informed discussion on the path to take.</li> <li>We have engaged with catchment groups, and the wider stakeholder community, to identify catchment issues and potential opportunities, some of which will be taken forward for consideration in the regional plan and others will be promoted to be progressed through other delivery routes such as DWMPs.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Best value planning framework – objectives, criteria, and metrics</b><br/>Objectives should be informed by Government and regulator policy and the aspirations of company, customers, and stakeholders and WRSE should explain how stakeholders are</p>   | <p>WRSE developed a draft best value planning framework including objectives, criteria and metrics taking account of statutory, regulatory and policy expectations and sought feedback via a consultation held in February 2021. WRSE responded to the feedback and published a response document, an overarching summary document as well as the</p>  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| involved in this process and how these are used in decision making including the sensitivity of the plan to metric scoring.  | updated Best Value Planning Method Statement which will set out the approach in detail including weighting criteria and sensitivity testing.   |
| <b>Best value planning decision making</b><br>As part of the decision-making processes WRSE should gather the views of a representative range of customers and stakeholders, who should be aware of the implications of their preferences on the investment programme. Any engagement should make clear the consequences and cumulative impacts of customer or stakeholder choices or preferences. | WRSE is developing an interactive tool to support engagement with customers and stakeholders to help communicate alternative programmes and seek feedback on the programmes.<br>.<br>The detailed decision-making process is set out in the Best Value Planning Method Statement |
| <b>Adaptive planning</b><br>Clarity on how WRSE will define the range of adaptive pathways, the thresholds of uncertainty to justify an adaptive plan, as well as scenarios.   | WRSE has shared the principles of its approach with stakeholders and hosted g a webinar to provide the opportunity for stakeholders to “deep dive” on this topic in response to stakeholder requests. Further details are set out in the Best Value Planning Method Statement.   |

## Appendix 2

### Engagement log

| Date    | Activity  | Stakeholders             | Agenda/Topic  | Comments/Notes  |
|---------|---|--------------------------|---|---|
| 17/5/19 | Advisory Board  | Members                  | Introduction to WRSE<br>Overview of National Framework<br>Priorities/views of members for WRSE plan   | <a href="https://www.wrse.org.uk/media/i2ply5w5/wrse_file_1145_stakeholdergroup_minutes_17may2019final.pdf">https://www.wrse.org.uk/media/i2ply5w5/wrse_file_1145_stakeholdergroup_minutes_17may2019final.pdf</a> |
| 27/9/19 | Stakeholder Event – delivering resilient water supplies to the South East | 54 regional stakeholders | See event report  | <a href="#">Microsoft Word - WRSE Stakeholder Event 270919 Final Report</a>   |
| 10/19   | Thames / Affinity Forum   | TW/AW stakeholders       | The evolving water resource planning framework<br>A resilient, multi-sector plan – WRSE approach<br>Strategic Water Resource options                                      | Minutes available   |
| 13/2/20 | Advisory Board  | Members                  | Update and overview<br>National Framework<br>WRSE Future Water Resource Requirements<br>WRSE forward programme<br>Terms of reference / how best we work with stakeholders | <a href="#">wrse_stakeholdergroup_minutes_130220.pdf</a>  |
| 02/20   | Thames / Affinity Forum   | TW/AW stakeholders       | Overview of national and regional planning<br>Strategic<br>Strategic Water Resource options<br>Focus on the environment   | Minutes available   |
| 18/6/20 | Advisory Board  | Members                  | Update on WRSE programme  | <a href="#">wrse_advisorygroup_18-06-20.pdf</a>   |

| Date     | Activity                           | Stakeholders                              | Agenda/Topic   | Comments/Notes   |
|----------|------------------------------------|---|--|--|
|          |                                    |   | Engagement framework<br>Policy assumptions for the regional plan   |  |
| 18/06/21 | Resilience Framework webinar       | 49 stakeholders                           | Presentation and Q&A on the Resilience Framework <a href="https://www.engagementhq.com/Resilience-Framework-Water-Resources-South-East">Resilience Framework   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a> | Feedback received from 12 organisations and 4 individuals<br><a href="https://www.wrse.org.uk/resilience-framework-response-to-feedback-03-august-2020-final.pdf">resilience-framework-response-to-feedback-03-august-2020_final.pdf (wrse.org.uk)</a><br>Update to framework underway |
| 24/6/20  | Multi-sector group                 | Members                                   | Overview of the WRSE programme<br>Non public water supply demand – review of Woods work / early output of non-household demand   | Consider membership of group, needs to reflect all abstractors including those going through the EA’s new authorisation process.<br>Come back with examples of multi-sector options  |
| 06/20    | Regional CCG                       | CCW and representatives from company CCGs | Introduction , terms of reference and agreement for how group was to proceed   | ToR available  |
| 06/20    | Thames / Affinity Forum            | TW/AW stakeholders                        | WRSE – what we’ve done and what’s ahead<br>WRSE – working with you<br>How do we make sure the regional plan is resilient – Resilience Framework  | Minutes available  |
| 07/07/20 | Environmental Advisory Group       | Members                                   | Objectives for group<br>WRSE Introduction – environmental workstreams<br>WRSE – Resilience Framework consultation<br>Term of reference for group   | ToR revised  |
| 30/7/20  | Multi-sector group                 | Members                                   | Update since last meeting<br>Resilience Assessment – how we develop non-PWS element<br>Multi-sector – take group through existing options  | Work to understand all abstraction to be progressed with EA and to understand consumptive element<br>Work to take place with each sector to feed into the Resilience Framework over coming months<br>Presentation on identified multi-sector options                                   |
| 07/08/21 | Method Statements overview webinar | 28 stakeholders                           | Presentation and Q&A on the method statements  | <a href="https://www.engagementhq.com/Method-Statements-Water-Resources-South-East">Method Statements   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a>  |

| Date     | Activity                               | Stakeholders                              | Agenda/Topic  | Comments/Notes   |
|----------|--|---|---|--|
| 10/08/20 | Regional Policies Consultation webinar | 17 stakeholders                           | Presentation and Q&A on the regional policies consultation <a href="#">Regional Policies   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a>  | Feedback received from 15 organisations<br><a href="#">WRSE response to Policies Consultation 051020.pdf 3d728d9a4be8c784d2c59f4f0df3f578 (amazonaws.com)</a>  |
| 25/08/21 | Growth Forecasts webinar               | 71 stakeholders                           | Presentation by Edge Analytics on the method used to develop the growth forecast  | <a href="#">Method Statements   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a>  |
| 26/8/20  | Multi-sector group                     | Members                                   | Update since last meeting<br>Multi-sector approach method statement – feedback<br>Vulnerability assessment<br>Regional connectivity model   | Formal feedback on method statement to be provided – recognition that other sectors don't plan in the same way, including on drought resilience and that all use different terms/language<br>Add seasonality scenarios into the vulnerability assessment   |
| 09/20    | Thames / Affinity Forum                | TW/AW stakeholders                        | WRSE update<br>Setting our environmental destination<br>Deciding on a Best Value plan<br>What options are we looking at?  | Minutes available  |
| 9/20     | Regional CCG                           | CCW and representatives from company CCGs | Best Value Planning<br>Phase 1 customer research - update   | <a href="#">Customer Engagement   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a>  |
| 15/9/20  | Environmental Advisory Group           | Members                                   | Update Terms of Reference<br>How outputs feed into WRSE 'process'<br>Catchment workshops – whats coming up<br>WRSE Environmental method statements - feedback<br>Plan of how outputs from group are translated into action. | Individual comments received on method statements from members   |
| 28/9/20  | Multi-sector group                     | Members                                   | Update since last meeting<br>Trading experiences – five examples of different trading experience presented by group members   | Water use for livestock should be pulled out separately<br>Further work needed to understand canal and river abstraction<br>Month by month time slice of abstraction in the catchment would be helpful to understand peaks of water use<br>A multi-sector engagement tool is being developed for submission of options, Mott MacDonald will gather feedback from members |

| Date     | Activity                       | Stakeholders   | Agenda/Topic   | Comments/Notes   |
|----------|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| 10/09/21 | Option Appraisal Webinar       | 26 stakeholders  | Presentation and Q&A on the options appraisal method   | <a href="#">Method Statements   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a>  |
| 5/10/20  | Regional CCG                   | CCW and representatives from company CCGs                                | Phase 1 customer research update   | <a href="#">Customer Engagement   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a>  |
| 13/10/20 | Advisory Board                 | Members  | Update on WRSE programme<br>Regional policies consultation<br>Best Value Plan – criteria and metrics<br>Customer research update                         | <a href="#">wrseadvisorygroupminutes_13-10-20.pdf</a>  |
| 13/10/20 | Environmental Advisory Group   | Members  | Chalk Streams<br>Catchment Workshops - update<br>Workshop on SEA Scoping Report  | Detailed feedback to team on developing the SEA scoping report   |
| 26/10/20 | Regional CCG                   | CCW and representatives from company CCGs                                | Update on Phase 1 research – fieldwork   | <a href="#">Customer Engagement   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a>  |
| 16/10/20 | Environmental Ambition webinar | 26 stakeholders<br><br>Members of EAG invited                            | Presentation and Q&A on environmental ambition   | <a href="#">Method Statements   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a>  |
| 10/20    | Catchment workshops x 4        | 120 stakeholders – regulators, catchment partnerships, eNGOs, land users | Workshops in partnership with Atkins and The Rivers Trust to introduce the online catchment tool and invite stakeholders to contribute issues and ideas. | More than 300 local issues and a further 300 potential opportunities were submitted which have been reviewed and categorised. Catchment portfolios are being developed to bring this together and provide a picture of each catchment to inform the future decision making and activity that will be carried out. Around 170 options will go forward to the next phase of screening for this regional plan and the rest need further work and development. |
| 12/11/20 | Multi-sector group             | Members  | Options workshop<br>Resilience Framework   | Review of context for regional plan including environmental protection expectations set out in the National Framework. Overview of options available and discussion about multi-sector   |

| Date     | Activity                     | Stakeholders                              | Agenda/Topic  | Comments/Notes  |
|----------|------------------------------|---|---|---|
|          |                              |   |   | options, particularly demand-side option such as smart metering. All member asked to submit potential options through the online engagement tool.<br>Overview of updated Resilience Framework was presented. Mott MacDonald to contact members individually to go through in more detail.   |
| 11/12/20 | Environmental Advisory Group | Members                                   | National Framework - guidance<br>Resilience and the 25 YEP<br>Best Value Plan – pre- consultation discussion  | Feedback on the Best Value plan to inform the consultation documentation.   |
| 12/20    | Regional CCG                 | CCW and representatives from company CCGs | Phase 1 customer research update  | <a href="https://www.waterresourcesoutheast.co.uk/customer-engagement">Customer Engagement   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a>  |
| 16/12/20 | Multi-sector group           | Members                                   | Update on WRSE programme<br>Non-public water supply (non-PWS) demand forecast<br>Resilience Framework update<br>Environmental Destination – presentation by the EA on updated environmental scenarios | Artesia work on non-PWS demand forecast shows there is little information available post 2050 so discussion about holding demand at 2050 or projecting forward. All sectors asked to provide feedback on this.<br>Support for the Resilience Framework and the role it could play in showing the benefits interventions could bring and enabling more collaboration.<br>EA presented update forecasts for abstraction reduction and explained how these have been developed. The majority will impact public water supply abstractions but important we see the full picture. Further work needs to be done by WRSE to look at what this means for water companies. |
| 12/20    | Thames / Affinity Forum      | TW/AW stakeholders + wider stakeholders   | WRSE update<br>Looking at potential options<br>Developing a best value plan – discussion  | Minutes available   |
| 20/01/21 | Multi-sector group           | Members                                   | Non-PWS demand forecast<br>Environmental Destination<br>Resilience Framework  | Updated non-demand forecast presented which includes abstractions previously not included known as ‘new authorisations’. The farming sector felt the figures for spray  |

| Date                  | Activity                             | Stakeholders                              | Agenda/Topic  | Comments/Notes   |
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|                       |                                      |   | Best Value Plan development and sign-off  | irrigation need consideration, particularly as more storage reservoirs are likely to be built to hold water abstracted in the winter. Energy sector also to feed in potential future scenarios regarding the Didcot site. All sectors asked to feedback. WRSE presented an update on work be carried out to understand impact of updated EA forecasts on abstraction. Group agreed that consideration needed to how the is communicated and presented. Recognition that although primarily as water sector issues it could impact other abstractors. |
| 01/21                 | Regional CCG                         | CCW and representatives from company CCGs | Reporting Phase 1   | <a href="#">Customer Engagement   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a>  |
| 12/02/21 and 16/02/21 | Best Value Plan consultation webinar | 75 stakeholders                           | Presentation, discussion and Q&A on the Best Value Plan objectives, criteria and metrics  | Invitation issued to all stakeholders on WRSE's stakeholder list and sent via the water companies<br>Final criteria and metrics to be published in BV Method Statement   |
| 18/02/21              | Advisory board                       | Members                                   | Introduction to refreshed advisory board, terms of reference and work programme<br>Best Value planning approach   | <a href="#">wrse_advisorygroup_minutes_18-02-21final.pdf</a>   |
| 02/03/21              | Environmental Destination workshop   | Regulators and EAG members                | The Environment Agency presented its updated abstraction reduction scenarios and WRSE explained the work being done to develop this further to identify the environmental destination for the regional plan and its work to develop catchment portfolios. | EAG members were positive about the fact that EA was looking towards the Enhanced scenario, particularly for some sensitive catchments. The representative from Chalk Streams First highlighted some aspects of its action plan that he felt should be considered as part of the work.<br>Blueprint for Water supported the development of catchment portfolios and the fact that it brought a range of issues and potential solutions together.   |
| 03/21                 | Regional CCG                         | CCW and representatives from company CCGs | Scoping Phase 2 customer research   | <a href="#">Customer Engagement   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a>  |
| 08/03/21              | Environmental Advisory Group         | Members                                   | Environmental destination<br>BV planning – criteria and metrics   |  |



| Date                | Activity                                 | Stakeholders                              | Agenda/Topic   | Comments/Notes  |
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|                     |  |   | Options – focus on catchment options<br>Forward plan   |   |
| 17/03/21            | Multi-Sector group                       | Members                                   | Overview of position for each sector   |   |
| 05/21               | Regional CCG                             | CCW and representatives from company CCGs | Co-design activities with customers  | <a href="#">Customer Engagement   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a>   |
| 18/05/21            | Stakeholder Advisory Board               | Members                                   | Workshop on the customer research and stakeholder engagement approach  |   |
| w/c 24/5, 7/6, 14/6 | Options webinars                         | Wider stakeholders                        | A series of webinars focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The planning challenge</li> <li>- ASR and reservoir schemes</li> <li>- Desalination and reuse</li> <li>- Catchment schemes</li> <li>- Demand management</li> <li>- Intraregional transfer</li> <li>- Interregional transfers</li> <li>- Adaptive planning</li> </ul> | Up to 50 stakeholders attended each webinar and much positive feedback was received about the content and the presentation. All webinars are available online.<br><br>Invitation issued to all stakeholders on WRSE's stakeholder list and sent via the water companies |
| 05/21               | Agriculture / horticulture working group | Sub-set of the multi sector group         | First session to look in detail at what opportunities there are for shared options with agricultural and horticultural stakeholders  |   |
| 23/6/21             | Multi-sector group                       | Members                                   | Update on the modelling work<br>Discussion about next steps for agriculture/horticulture working group   |   |
| 06/21               | Regional CCG                             | CCW and representatives from company CCGs | Update on Phase 2  | <a href="#">Customer Engagement   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a>   |
| 2/07/21             | Retailer webinar                         | Retailers                                 | Focussed on the company drought plan consultations and introduced the regional plan  |   |

| Date     | Activity                                      | Stakeholders                              | Agenda/Topic  | Comments/Notes  |
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| 07/21    | Regional CCG                                  | CCW and representatives from company CCGs | Further update on Phase 2   | <a href="#">Customer Engagement   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a>   |
| 17/09/21 | WRSE EAG                                      | Members                                   | Focus on the environmental destination for the SE   |   |
| 22/09/21 | Agriculture / horticulture working group      | Subset of multi sector group              | Workshop to explore options put forward by members  |   |
| 29/09/21 | Multi-sector group                            | Members                                   | Update on modelling and RR<br>Outputs of agriculture/horticulture workshop  |   |
| 30/09/21 | Regional reconciliation webinar               | Wider stakeholders                        | Recap on role of regional planning<br>Overview of reconciliation process<br>Updates from regional groups  | Being organised by WRSE and run in partnership with the National Framework and the other regional groups. Over 100 stakeholders registered to date. |
| 11/21    | Regional CCG                                  | CCW and representatives from company CCGs | Plans for consultation  | <a href="#">Customer Engagement   Water Resources South East (engagementhq.com)</a>   |
| 20/10/21 | WRSE SAB                                      | Members                                   | Focus on the adequacy of the approach to ensure stakeholder and customer views are considered in the development of the plan.   |   |
| 17/11/21 | Stakeholder Group workshop                    | Members of the SAB, EAG and MSSG and rCCG | Focused on the adaptive planning approach and the scenarios that have been used in the adaptive pathways. Provided early sight of the key consultation areas and questions and gathered feedback on this. Provided an update on multi-sector element of the plan. |   |
| 17/11/21 | Presented to Horticultural Trades Association | WRSE, HTA, other stakeholders             | Briefing on the emerging regional plan  |   |
| 19/11/21 | Briefing to CPRE                              | WRSE and CPRE                             | Briefing on the emerging regional plan  |   |
|          | Thames /Affinity Forum                        | TW and AW stakeholders                    | Update on WRSE plan and SROs  |   |

| Date     | Activity  | Stakeholders             | Agenda/Topic   | Comments/Notes  |
|----------|---|--------------------------|--|---|
| 07/12/21 | Briefing to the NFU   | WRSE and NFU             | Briefing on the emerging regional plan   |   |
| 09/12/21 | Briefing to CCW   | WRSE and CCW             | Briefing on the emerging regional plan   |   |
| 09/12/21 | Briefing to South East Water's Environmental Advisory Group   | SEW, WRSE, Group members | Briefing on the emerging regional plan   |   |
| 13/12/21 | Briefing to Blueprint for Water                               | Blueprint members        | Provided an overview of the emerging plan and how it is performing against the Blueprint's scorecard for regional planning         |   |
| 15/12/21 | Briefing to South East Rivers Trust                           | WRSE and SERT            | Briefing on the emerging regional plan   |   |
| 07/01/22 | Briefing with National Infrastructure Commission              |                          | Briefing on the emerging regional plan   |   |
| 11/01/22 | Presentation to SES Water Environmental Scrutiny Group        | Group members            | Briefing on the emerging regional plan   |   |
| 12/01/22 | Presentation to Souter Water's Western Area stakeholder group | WRSE and group members   | Briefing on the emerging regional plan   |   |
| 17/01/22 | Draft plan consultation                                       | Wider stakeholders       | Launch of draft plan consultation via email to stakeholders from WRSE and member companies   |   |
| 17/01/22 | Water Resources National Framework webinar                    | Wider stakeholders       | National Framework lead webinar on the national water resource picture including a summary of each regional group's regional plan. | Invitation issued to all stakeholders on WRSE's stakeholder list and sent via the water companies |
| 20/01/22 | WRSE consultation launch webinar                              | Wider stakeholders       |  | Invitation issued to all stakeholders on WRSE's stakeholder list and sent via the water companies |
| 31/01/22 | WRSE consultation webinar (West)                              | Wider stakeholders       |  | Invitation issued to all stakeholders on WRSE's stakeholder list and sent via the water companies |

| Date     | Activity  | Stakeholders                              | Agenda/Topic  | Comments/Notes  |
|----------|---|---|---|---|
| 01/02/22 | WRSE consultation webinar (East)                                  | Wider stakeholders                        |   | Invitation issued to all stakeholders on WRSE's stakeholder list and sent via the water companies |
| 02/02/22 | WRSE consultation webinar (North)                                 | Wider stakeholders                        |   | Invitation issued to all stakeholders on WRSE's stakeholder list and sent via the water companies |
| 19/05/22 | Briefing to Water Retailer Council                                | WRC members                               | Briefing on the plan with a focus on the role of retail   |   |
| 26/04/22 | Briefing to SE ADEPT  | SE ADEPT members                          | Briefing on the plan with a focus on the relationship with local government   |   |
| 07/06/22 | Water Resources Forum – Thames and Affinity                       | TW and Affinity Water stakeholders        | Protecting and improving the environment<br>Managing demand<br>New water sources<br>Adaptive planning   |   |
| 08/06/22 | Meeting with Oxfordshire County Council                           | WRSE and OCC                              |   |   |
| 05/07/22 | Briefing to Ofwat   | WRSE and Ofwat                            |   |   |
| 06/07/22 | Briefing for Defra  | WRSE and Defra                            |   |   |
| 28/07/22 | Briefing to Wildfish  | WRSE and Wildfish                         | Briefing on plan and focus on environmental programme   |   |
| 11/07/22 | WRSE SAB meeting (including Environment and Multi Sector members) | Members of the SAB, EAG and MSSG and rCCG | Focus was on feedback from the emerging regional plan, development of the updated least cost plan, process of developing the best value plans, updated adaptive pathways. | Minutes can be found in WRSE document library   |
| 28/09/22 | Briefing to ICE on draft regional plan                            | ICE Water Panel                           | Briefing on plan and focus on infrastructure  |   |
| 30/09/22 | Westminster environment, Energy and Transport Forum               | Range of delegates                        | Briefing on regional planning   | Transcripts available from the Forum  |
| 06/09/22 | Discussion with RWE   | WRSE and RWE                              | Discussion on power demands   |   |

| Date     | Activity  | Stakeholders                              | Agenda/Topic   | Comments/Notes                                |
|----------|---|---|--|---|
| 09/09/22 | Discussion with NFU   | WRSE and NFU                              | Discussion on agricultural demands   |   |
| 09/09/22 | Discussion with CaBA  | WRSE and CaBA                             | Discussion on environmental destination profiles, prioritisation framework and implications for CaBA chalk streams first                           |   |
| 09/22    | Water Resources Forum – Thames and Affinity                       | TW and AW stakeholders                    | Update on the water resource situation<br>Update on regional planning and autumn consultations   |   |
| 04/10/22 | Briefing to Waterwise on draft regional plan                      | WRSE and Waterwise                        | Briefing on plan and focus on water demand management  |   |
| 07/10/22 | WRSE SAB meeting (including Environment and Multi Sector members) | Members of the SAB, EAG and MSSG and rCCG | Focus was on the draft best value plan, differences between alternative plans, the level of environmental ambition and the needs of other sectors. | Minutes can be found in WRSE document library |
| 18/10/22 | Kent MP forum   | Hosted by Southern Water                  | A number of MPs with an interest in water resources and the plan   |   |
| 20/10/22 | Regional CCG meeting  | rCCG members                              | Meeting discussed the draft plan consultation and the proposed approach to the next phase of customer engagement.                                  |   |
| 24/10/22 | Briefing to Defra   | WRSE and Defra                            | Outline of the regional planning approach and the draft regional plan  |   |
| 27/10/22 | Briefing to SERT on draft regional plan                           | WRSE and SERT                             | Briefing on plan and focus on environmental programme  |   |
| 02/11/22 | Parliamentary roundtable  | Parliamentarians                          | A pre-launch discussion to highlight the main features of the plan and cover issues of interest  |   |
| 02/11/22 | Regulator roundtable  | Ofwat, EA, RAPID, CCW and NIC             | A pre-launch discussion to highlight the main features of the plan and cover issues of interest  |   |
| 03/11/22 | Briefing to The Lords Environment and climate change committee    | Environment and climate change            | A pre-launch discussion to highlight the main features of the plan and cover issues of interest  |   |

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| Date     | Activity   | Stakeholders          | Agenda/Topic  | Comments/Notes |
|----------|--|-----------------------|---|----------------|
|          |  | committee members     |   |                |
| 03/11/22 | Water Resources Planning: Stochastic weather data for drought assessment | Range of stakeholders | Stochastics webinar hosted by WRE on behalf of the National Framework for Water Resources Regional Co-ordination Group (RCG). |                |
| 07/11/22 | Utility Week Forum   | Range of delegates    | Overview of regional planning and WRSE plan   |                |