

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE		
DATE:	16 th JULY 2014	AGENDA ITEM:	9
TITLE:	WATER SECURITY SCRUTINY REVIEW - UPDATE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR A PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING & TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION & STREETCARE	WARDS:	BOROUGH WIDE
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To highlight to Councillors the Water Scrutiny Security review carried out in November 2012, the outcome of which is attached to this update report at Appendix A.
- 1.2 To seek approval to engage further with Thames Water and review the outcomes of the Scrutiny review in the context of the recent mains replacement programme and emergency sewer repairs which are having a negative impact on Reading's Road network.
- 1.3 That an update report is brought to a future SEPT committee meeting and that Thames Water are invited to present an update on their current programme of works in Reading.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the work carried out by the External Overview and Scrutiny Commission as detailed in Appendix A.
- 2.2 That an update review is carried out and that Thames Water are invited to a future SEPT meeting to provide a programme update for Reading.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 To secure the most effective use of resources in the delivery of high quality, best value public service.
- 3.2 To make travel more secure, safe and comfortable for all users of the public highway.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In November 2012 the External Overview and Scrutiny Commission set out a framework to work with partners to review a Water Security and Management Plan for Reading. The outcome of this process is attached as Appendix A to this report.
- 4.2 The Commission reviewed the provision of the water supply for Reading, measures to deal with leakage, waste water (foul and surface water sewers) and the need to reduce demand for water and to promote water efficiency.
- 4.3 As a part of this process, Thames Water produced a Water Resources Management Plan for the period 2010 to 2035, this includes consideration of climate change, population growth, a forecast for future clean water needs, demand management, how to reduce water leakage, mains replacement, waste water infrastructure and flooding. This included the value of investment in Reading up to 2014.
- 4.4 Thames Water have carried out a number of investments in their infrastructure over the past few years which have had a temporary impact on the Reading Road Network over recent months. Whilst this investment is essential in providing secure water supplies and waste water capacity, the impact of these improvement works can be significant. Thames Water have worked closely with Reading Borough Council to ensure that these planned works minimise disruption wherever possible.
- 4.5 More recently Thames Water have identified a number of structural failures with their infrastructure (primarily emergency repairs resulting from water leaks or sewer collapses). Whilst by definition these works are emergency repairs and cannot be planned, the negative impact that these works create is significant. This can be evidenced most recently with the closure of the A4 Bath Road for 4 weeks during May 2014 due to a major sewer collapse.

4.6 The combination of emergency closures such as the Bath Road (there are currently repairs being carried out restricting London Road as well) and the impact of the current mains replacement programme in the Town Centre and on the IDR, at Great Knollys Street, is significant and is causing delays to traffic in Reading.

4.7 The purpose of reviewing the Water Management Plan now is to ensure that the Water Management Plan remains current and that this is adequate to minimise the ongoing infrastructure failures.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 Thames Water have proactively promoted improvement works to their infrastructure with a communications plan and direct contact with those immediately affected. This has been supplemented by the Reading Borough Council Network Management Team who have advertised works on the Variable Message Signs and have liaised directly with Public Transport Operators throughout this period.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None arising from this report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None arising from this report.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission 29 November 2012.