



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee
26 July 2018
Agenda Item 6

Key Decision [No]

Ward(s) Affected:N/A

Presentation by Southern Water on sewage spill incident in July 2017 and matters relating to bathing water quality

Report by the Director for Digital and Resources

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

1.1 This report provides the Committee with some background information to assist it in reviewing the sewage spill incident from July 2017 and also further information on works to improve bathing water quality and improvement works to the East Worthing Treatment Works being undertaken by Southern Water.

2.Recommendations

2.1 That the Committee reviews a presentation from Southern Water and questions them on works to improve bathing water quality, improvements to the East Worthing Treatment works and also the sewage spill incident from July 2017.

3. Context

- 3.1 As part of its Work Programme, the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) requested that representatives from Southern Water attend a meeting of the Committee to discuss issues relating to the sewage spill incident which occurred in July 2017.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 Representatives from Southern Water will be attending this meeting to address the Committee on issues relating to the sewage spill incident which occurred in July 2017. This sewage spill stemmed from a total loss of power related to the failure of equipment at East Worthing Wastewater treatment works. Southern Water will also address the Committee on improvements which they are making to help improve bathing water quality and improvements now being made to the East Worthing Wastewater Treatment works.
- 4.2 JOSC is requested to review the presentation from Southern Water and question them on the action taken to mitigate further sewage spills and also to review the ongoing works to improve bathing water quality. JOSC is also requested to consider if any further information is required on this matter.

5. How the Councils are working with Southern Water to improve Bathing Water quality

- 5.1 The Environment Agency take seawater samples to assess bathing water quality at designated bathing locations around the UK coastline. Under the 2017 bathing water ratings, which are the latest available, Worthing bathing water is classified as 'Sufficient' i.e it meets the requirements of the European Bathing Water Directive.
- 5.2 Southern Water has identified Worthing bathing water as one of the seven Locations in its region to be allocated a share of £30 million investment as part of its Bathing Water Enhancement Programme (BWEP). The aim is to enhance Worthing's current bathing water classification of 'Sufficient' to 'Excellent' by the end of 2019 ready for the commencement of the following bathing season that commences in May 2020.
- 5.3 This will be achieved in partnership with Adur & Worthing Councils by encouraging property owners to fix any misconnected sewage pipes. These

misconnections incorrectly plumb into surface water drains, allowing foul wastewater to reach the sea without any treatment via surface water outfalls.

- 5.4 There is a Worthing Bathing Water Steering Group that meets every 3 months to ensure the programme is kept on track and this is a project within Platforms for our Places. The Group comprises representatives from Environmental Health, Foreshore, the Environment Agency, Southern Water, both Southern Water and Council Communications Teams and is chaired by the Councils' Public Health & Regulation Manager.
- 5.5 In addition to the misconnection work, there is a current grant bid for further funding from Southern Water for extra dog control signage (to make people aware of dog controls on the beach), extra summer patrols by the Councils' dog wardens on the beach front and extra bird proof bins are also being provided. .

6. Engagement and Communication

- 6.1 Southern Water, the Director for Communities and the JOSOC Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen have been consulted on this report.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications relating to this report.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Councils have the power to do anything to facilitate or which is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions.
- 8.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a Local Authority to do anything that individuals generally may do (subject to any current restrictions or limitations prescribed in existing legislation).
- 8.3 Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Background Papers

N/A.

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

Issues relating to bathing water quality and the closure of beaches can impact on economic development long term.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

The closure of the beaches in 2017 and the potential impact on bathing water quality can impact on the communities.

2.2 Equality Issues

Matter considered and no issues identified.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

Matter considered and no issues identified.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

Matter considered and no issues identified.

3. Environmental

The protection of beaches is important for the protection of the environment.

4. Governance

Matter considered and no issues identified. .