

# SOUTHERN WATER/PAN PARISH FORUM

## Notes on Meeting held 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022

### Present:

Southern Water	Local Parish Councils
Simon Parker - Director of Asset Management Nick Mills - Head of Storm Overflow Taskforce Keith Herbert - Pathfinder Lead Floyd Cooper - Operational Manager Hants Glenn McCubbin - Local Lead (MTS)	Chris Harris - Amport (Chair) Klaus Tamke - Kimpton Phil Boyes - Fyfield Peter Christie - Thruxton Jessica De Vries - Quarley Mike Cleugh - Monxton Judith Cole – Abbots Ann Peter Heslop – Upper Clatford Will Hawkins-Byass - Water Quality Janet Wright - Secretary to PPF

### Apologies received from:

Joanna Ferguson (Quarley PC)  
Maureen Flood (TVBC - Anna Ward)  
Philip Lashbrook (TVBC - Hampshire Police & Crime)  
Keith Broomfield (EA - Solent & South Downs Area)  
Ian Ackerman (Hants CC - Hampshire Highways)  
Lawrence Gosden (SW - in new role of Chief Operating Officer)

### Introduction:

**Chris Harris (CH)**, Chair of Amport Parish Council, and co-chair of this body, opened the meeting with the following statement:

Welcome everyone to the meeting of the PanParish Forum (PPF). This is the first physical meeting of the PPF since last September, a period in which we have seen a few changes in the attendees here. Welcome in particular to the new participants in person - notable Janet Wright who is now the secretary to this body, to Judith Cole from Abbots Ann, and also to Phil Boyes of Fyfield. I will let everyone introduce themselves in a minute, including the new faces from SW, but I'd like to welcome especially Simon Parker who has taken over responsibility for this project from Lawrence Gosden, who has become the Chief Operating Officer at Southern Water. Lawrence has confirmed that he remains interested in this project and that Simon reports to him.

Before we go round the room, I should say that we had apologies from the Environment Agency and from Hampshire CC - we very much wish they were here. But we will ensure that they receive the minutes of the meeting.

We have had a dry spring with the consequence that we saw far fewer tankers in the villages in comparison to previous years. For the most part, the Parishes have also not seen the warning signs to stay out of the rivers during over-pumping. SW has been engaged in inspection and repair of the main sewers in many of the villages. Good progress has been made in several places, and SW deserves a good deal of credit for that. Perhaps we haven't seen as much progress as we on the PPF had hoped, especially downstream from Monxton.

We had a rising main incident at Little Ann a couple of weeks ago -not the first - giving rise to tankers being needed further upstream overnight. Last week, SW encountered unexpected problems with the condition of the sewers in Monxton. SW can tell us about this, and the consequences for the community – especially the tankering needs and the delays to works. We will want to hear SW's plans for works downstream from Monxton (i.e. from Manor Farm through Abbots Ann to Upper Clatford).

We want to hear about the repair works focusing on the “laterals” (i.e. private sector pipes) throughout the catchment, which remain a challenge. Meetings with local residents will need to be set up in due course.

A further need for the PPF is to see a programme in place of measuring the quality of the water in the Pillhill Brook. We want to see a sustained commitment to water quality improvement.

In the background, the PPF has been working with SW (and SW with the EA) on the development of the Infiltration Reduction Plan (IRP), and also the Infiltration Pan Parish MSP. I gather that these still need more work to make them useful documents. We look forward to news on that front.

There are quite serious concerns locally about the disruption from tankers. I am personally affected by this, living directly opposite the Furzedown Pumping Station in Amport. We are tolerant people where there is good communication, but we do not enjoy multiple tankers day in, day out, sometimes queuing up to 5 at a time, creating (at times) high noise levels, and excessive light pollution at night. It is accepted that most of the tanker-drivers are outside contractors, but we again request that SW re-emphasise to tanker-drivers what is and what is not acceptable practice in our communities.

We have also suggested that the PPF and SW should run a disaster recovery programme at some point over the summer, which may help to alleviate some of the communication problems that are encountered when unexpected events happen.

## SW Presentation led by Keith Herbert (KH)

### 1. Structure

**KH** outlined the SW's new organisational structure & roles

**Simon Parker (SP)** stated that he is now the executive sponsor for this Pathfinder Project & will be working closely with the Environmental Agency (EA) in Hants on the 2023 Regulators Report. He reassured the meeting that Lawrence Gosden would still be keeping an eye on the Project.

**Peter Christie (PC)** raised the issue of regulatory status on fines & rebates for pollution incidents. **SP** stated that SW take every pollution events seriously & that a root & branch review to address these was being carried out. However over-pumping in extremis cannot be mitigated for & alternate solutions were being explored. He [SP] would answer any strategic questions raised in the meeting & KH will address those of a more detailed nature.

### Problem Statement & Overview

**Judith Cole (JC)** highlighting that, in her view, these were not problem statements as they are not resident focused. Including a focus on resident disruption would make it easier for everyone to recognise improvements, & that mitigation was working.

### QSW/PPF 17.5.1: Expand Problem Statements (Slide 4) to include disruption to residents - KH/PPF by 30/05/22

**KH** then presented 3 slides (slides 5-7) showing the affect of increasingly higher groundwater (GW) conditions on the sewer network.

### 2. Operational Mitigation

**KH** handed over to **Floyd Cooper (FC)** who presented progress against IRP Commitments II - VI which are listed below for completeness:

I	Capital investment for wastewater infrastructure fit for current and evolving future wastewater needs.
II	A commitment to stop over-pumping and in extreme circumstances only to over-pump when necessary to prevent loss of service to their customers or flooding.
III	Assurances regarding the quality of the water in Pillhill Brook and transparency of the water test regime and results that demonstrate this.
IV	Compliance with the EA regulatory requirements, through their over pumping operations, during monitoring of water quality, and through their Infiltration Reduction Plan (IRP).
V	Consultation with PCs before the execution of any further temporary works (such as tanker operations and highway restrictions).
VI	Engagement with their customers now and continued engagement and communications with them and with Parish and TVBC representatives through the execution of their future plans.

## • UV Over-pumping - Commitment II & IV

Deploying UV equipment during groundwater (GW) season (semi-permanent) would minimise the disruption of moving machinery in & out of the catchment during this period.

**PC** raised a concern that SW would just over-pump & circumvent tankering altogether.

**SP** responded that SW were targeted by the EA on reducing pollution events & fined £78K per event. SW were looking out to 2050 for forecasting extreme weather events & how these would impact on the network.

**Will Hawkings-Byas (WHB)** questioned the signage asking for clarification as to whether wastewater was in fact 'treated' as this might mislead the public.

### QSW/PPF 17.5.2: Review "Treated wastewater released here" signage & circulate to PPF for approval - FC TBA

**WHB** stated that Grayling numbers dropped the last time that SW discharged into the Pillhill Brook & have not recovered. He acknowledged that nitrates from farmers could have been a contributing factor.

### QSW/PPF 17.5.3: Share SW sample data on water quality tests with the PPF - KH/FC TBA

The use of boreholes to control GW levels was discussed. There is a real concern that parts of the Pillhill will dry up this summer & the use of boreholes would likely accelerate this process.

#### **Janet Wright (JW) commented that residents were expressing two strongly held views**

1. the sewer network is not fit for purpose & lining existing pipework is a cop-out  
SW have robustly denied this & the recent challenges with cutting out a piece of lining from Monxton High Street would evidence the lining material is extremely tough
2. the Pillhill Brook was "filthy" & consequently there were no fish in it  
**JW** said this is not true as fish have been seen & photographed swimming in the Pillhill Brook in Amport Fen.

## • Baseline Ecology Survey - Commitment III

SW has separate meetings with the EA on survey results.  
Water Pumping Stations (WPS) will influence survey sites. Could WHB be consulted on these sites?

### QSW/PPF 17.5.4: SW to hold Baseline Ecology Meeting with the EA - FC/WHB? TBA

The term macrophytes was clarified - these are aquatic plants living in or near water.

There was a general agreement that involving local schools in monitoring survey results would help raise awareness of local ecology of their chalk stream.

### **QSW/PPF 17.5.5: SW Ecology survey; investigate developing links with local schools - FC/PPF led by JW to scope TBA**

#### **• Mullens Pond and Stanbury Road WPS - Commitment V**

FC stated that the issues at Mullens Pond are now resolved & SW want to build on lessons learnt: more powerful impeller (photo on slide 10); suitable spares kept within the catchment & a main feed power upgrade which is due to be completed 24/05/22.

The PPF express surprise that spares had not been kept nearby.

Trail holes are to be dug at Stanbury Road to locate the power cable so that the mains power upgrade can be completed. Progress on both these WPS will be reported through the now, fortnightly Update Meetings. **JW** stated that she did not fully understand why Mullens Pond was a 'bottleneck'. What difference will residents see as a result of the work carried out at Mullens Pond?

### **QSW/PPF 17.5.6: SW to clarify bottleneck issues at Mullens Pond & improvements made to date - KH/FC by 30/05/22**

#### **• Flow Management – Commitment V - VI**

OCP stands for Operational Continuity Plan due to be published in a SW document 23/05/22. **JW** stated that the Disaster Recover Exercise, planned for the summer, would be a perfect opportunity to test the robustness of this plan.

### **QSW/PPF 17.5.7: OCP to be shared with PPF ahead of Disaster Recovery Exercise - FC by 27/5/22**

#### **4. Capital Improvement Works**

FC outlined SW's planned & completed works (slide 12).

**JC** expressed concern that no works were planned for Abbots Ann in the MSP. She cited the constant overflow of the bell valve at Manor Farm & "ragging up" of the valves at Mill Lane (requiring constant manual intervention) plus the sewer collapse at Little Ann Bridge. Consequently Abbots Ann have no confidence that SW know the location or state of their sewage network & requested that a full GIS survey be undertaken to remedy this.

### **QSW/PPF 17.5.8: What else can be done to alleviate the "ragging" of valves at Mill Lane in Abbots Ann? - KH 03/09/22**

### **QSW/PPF 17.5.9: Investigate how we might raise awareness of "ragging" problems in sewage network with local community/retail sector - KH/PPF - led by JW 30/06/22**

KH to invite SW Fat, Oil & Grease (FOG) team to Fortnightly Update mtg

## 5. **Plan & Options**

**KH** responded by presenting the information given on slide 13. This shows that risk of infiltration is highest in the north of the catchment, so this is where SW have focused their lining activities. Also sewer pipe diameters increase toward Fullerton Wastewater Treatment facility providing greater capacity to handle GW infiltration. Graphs on slides 14 & 15 show that lining works are making a difference when GW levels are low (< 84 m above sea level) but have little impact when GW levels are high (> 84 m above sea level). As ~40% of the sewage network are private laterals, which sit higher in the ground than the public sewers, evidence suggests that these private laterals that a major contributing factor to GW infiltration.

**SP** added that all intervention options are being considered including Smart Water butts which **KH** will cover later.

Linked to Action QSW/PPF 17.5.6 above the PPF requested an understanding of SW's decision making process when GW infiltration is forecast/observed to be overwhelming the sewage network. This knowledge would be crucial to a successful Disaster Recovery Exercise, a date for which needs to be agreed.

### **QSW/PPF 17.5.10: SW to provide clear step by step guide of the decision process to mitigate increasing GW infiltration; from when pumps cannot cope through to the very worst case scenario of over-pumping - KH/FC TBA**

**FC** explained that some surface water entered the sewage network through the drainage system. As HCC was not present it was not possible to discuss this further.

**Phil Boyles (PB)** asked if SW had a central contact for reporting issues similar to that of the National Grid for reporting power outages. **KH** confirmed that they did.

Five high level options were then presented & discuss by the meeting summarised on (slide 25). Option 1 - Mitigate flow & 2 - Manage GW level are not expected to stop disruption or protect the environment in times of high GW levels. So SW is working on a plan to deliver a combination of:

Options 3 - Seal & investigate

### **QSW/PPF 17.5.11: Share SW's next relining programme with PPF - KH 30/06/22**

Option 4 - Slow the flow

Using a combination of Smart Water Butts, lining of private laterals & open drainage. Tubogel proof of concept testing is nearing completion & the next step would be to carry out a local trial.

### **QSW/PPF 17.5.12: Present to PPF how SW plan to engage regarding private lateral work and water butts - KH TBA**

**FC** stated that temperature sensors could be used to identify the location of private laterals that are the most leaky.

### **QSW/PPF 17.5.13: Temperature sensors to be deployed in catchment - FC TBA**

### Option 5 - Wetland

Two successful examples were cited, one on River Dee in Aberdeenshire & the other in Cromhall in Gloucestershire. **JW** highlighted that how such a project was presented to residents & the public would be crucial to its success.

**SP** stressed that SW could not deliver these alone & funding would need to come from all other agencies involved i.e. the EA, Hants CC, TVBC. He [SP] stressed that how these options are ultimately delivered & communicated to residents would very much be a joint effort between SW & the PPF.

**JW** stated that she was currently communicating SW scheduled & emergency updates by a combination of Facebook & website posts, & articles for publication in the Parish magazines but was concerned that these did not reaching all residents. PC agreed saying that Thruxton publish a newsletter, posted through resident's letterboxes, & even this had mixed results. **JW** said that going forward she would send out formal notes from the regular SW Update meetings to all PCs.

### **QSW/PPF 17.5.13: Consolidate & strengthen Pan-Parish communication channels - at next PPF 08/06/22**

To be held at the Sea Scout Hall, East Cholderton at 19:30

The meeting closed at 20:10.

### **Janet Wright**

Secretary to the PPF