

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND COUNCILS  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

Date: 23 September 2013

Subject: Water infrastructure: the South East's future needs

Report of: Nick Woolfenden, SEEC Head of Policy Co-ordination



**Recommendations**

SEEC Executive members are asked to:

- i) Discuss Southern Water's plans to meet growing water supply needs
- ii) Suggest any further action that Southern Water or other water companies should consider to deliver efficient and effective water infrastructure.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Members have previously discussed the importance of infrastructure, including water, to underpin the South East's high levels of development & economic growth.
- 1.2 Southern Water provides water supplies and waste water across a large part of the South East, including Kent, East and West Sussex, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, and parts of Surrey and Berkshire. It supplies a total of some 2.3m customers over 4,450 km<sup>2</sup> and shares borders with eight other water companies. Relationships between these water companies offer opportunities to improve services across the South East (eg sharing water supplies) but also add complexity to service planning.
- 1.3 We are pleased to welcome Southern Water's Planning & Strategy Manager Meyrick Gough to SEEC's Executive Committee to outline its long-term strategic plans and discuss key issues with members.

**2. Water infrastructure and long-term planning**

- 2.1 Southern Water recently [consulted](#) with councils, users and partners on its £3bn statutory 25-year Water Resource Plan. Updated every five years, it sets out plans to ensure water supply meets anticipated demands, all the more pertinent following a year including both drought and flooding. Southern Water's key plans include:
  - Reducing leakage from 88m ltrs to 75m ltrs of water each day by 2040.
  - Helping reduce average water use per person per day from 152ltrs to below 135ltrs.
  - Developing new resources such as:
    - A South East 'water grid' with other water companies and building pipelines to share water
    - Water re-use for domestic customers and industry
    - Storing winter water underground (Aquifer Storage Recovery)
    - Using sea water at desalination plants
    - Upgrading existing sources, rivers or well fields
    - Increasing abstraction licences where water is available.
- 2.2 Reflecting previous discussions, members may want to consider key issues including:
  - How to ensure supply meets growing demand from housing and business development across the South East?
  - The need for additional major infrastructure such as reservoirs?
  - How the South East should best address flooding and drought?
  - Plans to improving efficiency of supply and tackle leaks?