

Water Steering Group for Herefordshire Meeting
Minutes and Action Points
Thursday 21st April 2011, 10am
Maylord Orchards, Gomond Street, Hereford.

PRESENT:

Richard Amos	RA	Dwyr Cymru Welsh Water
Dane Broomfield	DP	Environment Agency
Philip Deeley	PD	Planning Policy, Herefordshire Council
Mark July	MJ	Natural England – CHAIR
Hayley Pankhurst	HP	Natural England
Jane Reeves	JR	Planning Policy, Herefordshire Council
Kevin Singleton	KS	Planning Policy, Herefordshire Council
Bridgit Symons	BS	Conservation, Herefordshire Council
Helen Waite	HW	Natural England

ALSO PRESENT:

Melissa Walker Directorate Services, Herefordshire Council

APOLOGIES:

Chris Botwright Strategic Delivery, Herefordshire Council

ITEM			ACTION
1.	<p>INTRODUCTION TO THE WATER STEERING GROUP</p> <p>MJ was the chair for this meeting. He advised that 2011 is a crucial year for water strategy. The 20 year growth ambitions for Hereford & Leominster will be set, as well as the goals for the internationally important rivers of the Wye & Lugg.</p> <p>DB advised that as a result of the high level policy review some decisions have been made within the Environment Agency which will need to be communicated at director level to advise of policy changes and what effect these could have. They will also need time to review and understand the effects of these changes, and will also need to have the same conversation with Welsh Water before the next meeting.</p> <p>MJ asked what are people’s ambitions / aspirations of what they want to see this group achieve?</p> <p>PD stated that we need to ensure that any new planning sites do not have a detrimental effect on the watercourses, JR stressed that we need to get a sound strategy. RA commented that we need to ensure we are all working together, and he hoped other councils will pick up on the idea and follow a similar lead. This is the first formal meeting he has attended and he will feed back that this working group is the best way to move things forward. He has also promoted Herefordshire’s Water Cycle study to other areas. HW felt that a main concern should be protecting European sites and working with Herefordshire Council to ensure that the core strategy achieves that. There is an emphasis on Natural England and DEFRA to speak with one voice, they have different roles but complimentary roles. DB suggested broadening into considering the water framework as a whole. This is a subset of the Water Framework, so do we want to widen the emphasis of this group?</p>		

ITEM		ACTION
	<p><u>Terms of reference</u></p> <p>1. DB feels it would be useful to widen the membership of the group, and thinks it would be useful to consider others from his organisation, (DB to sort names) farming unions / industry representatives, Severn Trent, and third sector parties i.e. non public sector. MJ commented that we don't want to bring to many people to the table to early, DB appreciates this but thinks they should be involved later. HP thought the CCW should be included. MJ supported this and said they should see the minutes. We need to include an action point to review the membership at the end of the year. It was agreed to invite CCW to the next meeting and ask if they wish to attend.</p> <p>ACTION – PD TO INVITE CCW TO ATTEND FUTURE MEETINGS</p> <p>PD advised that he has spoken to Dawn Williams at Severn Trent, and she was included within the original email about arranging dates of meetings. He will liaise with Dawn and see what input they can have. Severn Trent may not need to be a standing member, but may need to be involved with certain issues. We are going to be predominately discussing Welsh Water issues. DB advised that he will forward the papers to Mark Davies and see who else might wish to attend. PD to include MD on the circulation list. Might also need to cc in colleagues of RA at Welsh Water who are involved with the strategic planner.</p> <p>ACTION – DB TO FORWARD PAPERS TO MARK DAVIES</p> <p>ACTION – PD TO ADD MARK DAVIES TO THE CIRCULATION LIST</p> <p>2. Over the next twelve months the meetings will be predominantly chaired by Herefordshire Council, but in the future it could be useful for others to chair – all were happy with this.</p> <p>3. MJ felt it would be useful to have statements of common ground. It was felt that need to add 'with respect to sustainable development'.</p> <p>4. It was suggested that 'water-reliant European sites' should be changed to the rivers. This point just refers to water supply, there is no mention of water quality. There should be a sentence including water treatment.</p> <p>5. All agreed to leave this point as worded.</p> <p>6. Agreed</p> <p>7. DB to redraft this point concentrating on the Water Framework Directive (WFD).</p> <p>8. All agreed timetabling was very important.</p> <p>ACTION – PD TO AMEND THE TERMS OF REFERENCE AS AGREED ABOVE.</p> <p><u>Priority issues.</u></p> <p>1. Agreed</p> <p>2. Agreed</p>	<p>PD</p> <p>PD</p> <p>DB</p> <p>PD</p> <p>PD</p>

ITEM		ACTION
	<p>3. The River Lugg is already not compliant, in terms of phosphate.</p> <p>4. Agreed</p> <p>5. The Frome at Bromyard fails the WFD phosphate levels, it is three times over the required level. This is contributing to problems further down at the Lugg. We need to look at how the Housing Need in Bromyard can be improved without having a detrimental effect on the rivers Frome & Lugg. KS suggesting merging this one with priority 3.</p> <p>ACTION – KS & PD TO REWORD AND MERGE WITH PRIORITIES 3 & 5</p> <p><u>Timetabling</u> PD has done some work on addressing the key issues (Appendix 7) which provide the agenda items for the next three meetings.</p> <p><u>Agreed and Future Meetings and their short-term objectives.</u> Suggestions agreed, will need to review at the end of each of each meeting.</p>	<p>KS, PD</p>
<p>1.</p>	<p>HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL: CORE STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT</p> <p>PD thanked everyone for attending. With regard to the future timetable, the County is in the process of local elections at present so no major decisions can be made. An interim timetable was agreed prior to the purdah period. It is planned that we will consult again in the summer, with amendments to preferred options, and it will include a poll on the outer relief road. The Consultation will take place from June to September. It is hoped that the core strategy will be produced in March/April 2012, with submission to secretary of state in May 2012. Therefore within that timeframe we need to complete as much of the timetabling within this plan as possible and need to get everything done on Core strategy before January 2012.</p> <p>MJ queried if the strategy is amended following the next consultation will it then require another consultation. KS felt it should be ok as the whole idea of consultation is to make changes. PD feels confident that the challenges can be overcome, and as we may not have the expertise in house, we will require assistance from experts in the area. The land use consultants are still in place should we require to use them. What we can get agreed through these meetings will hopefully feed into the final report produced. KS advised that there is no money to spend on consultants so they trying to get advise from others. DB queried if there were any issues with them offering advise as ultimately it will go to them to review, and they cannot be seen to review something that they have had an involvement in writing.</p> <p>HRA queries / concerns are picked up within the 26 questions. Onus is on us to do something with information provided.</p> <p>Within the Water Quality and Quantity Report, version 4.1, with the 26 questions listed in Appendix 7. PD queried if anything is missing, does anyone think there is anything additional that the Herefordshire Council should be including.</p> <p>Questions 1, 2, 7, 8 & 9 are all water resource questions, the rest are all about water quality.</p>	

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	<p>RA queried why the infrastructure was not included. PD advised that there were originally a lot more questions, but he had to reduce them down to a realistic number. PD advised that he has other questions that are subsets to these that he hopes will answered as we go through the list of 26 questions.</p> <p>Point 2.3 on page 4 of the report refers back to the Core strategy draft Habitats Regulations Assessment. All these sites are identified as sites that could have a detrimental effect on the water.</p> <p>Point 2.4, page 4, refers to policy WM.1 shown in appendix 1. MJ felt that this was a good policy.</p> <p>ACTION - NATURAL ENGLAND TO ANSWER IS THAT SUFFICIENT AS WRITTEN TO CATER FOR THE HRA REQUIREMENTS.</p> <p>Point 2.5, page 4, Non site specific plans could cover anywhere, whereas site specific plans allocate land for employment, etc. There are lower tier plans for site generic plans, and just show that they have a target and how they might meet it.</p> <p>ACTION - PD TO REDRAFT PARA 2.5.</p> <p>Point 5.2, page 8 – Welsh Water have stated the water improvements required are not within their remit and are down to developers to finance.</p> <p>There are 5 strategic sites, 4 on the outskirts, and then the ESG site in the centre of Hereford. There is another area to be added that is not shown at present, but it cannot go forward as developers cannot afford to do the required works to the water mains.</p> <p>JR commented that any contribution requirements need to filter through to the delivery plan, and if any further development contributions are required to bring forward sites. This view is taken by water companies countrywide. It needs to be fed in to establish if a site is viable, and need to establish what infrastructure is required. RA advised that he has had a quick look at the site, and in order to meet the network requirement some work will be required but he hasn't looked at cost yet. He advised it could possibly be a few months before he is able to answer the question. He asked if he could provide as much info as possible by 30th June.</p> <p>ACTION – RA TO WORK ON POSSIBLE COSTINGS.</p> <p>KS queried if we were to look at the two sites, would one work out more expensive than others, or would they be approximately the same. Possibly North & South would be easier than a West site.</p> <p>Appendix 2 – welsh water response. PD feels some of the targets are incorrect, they are short of what we are proposing. RA admitted they could be as they are based on the Welsh assembly targets. Factor in the targets and actual for councils. Worked off population rather than properties.</p> <p>ACTION - PD TO DISCUSS WITH RA AND RYAN AND TRY AND GET MORE REALISTIC FIGURES TO ENSURE THAT THE FIGURES TIE UP.</p>	<p>MJ</p> <p>PD</p> <p>RA</p> <p>PD, RA, RYAN</p>

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	<p>Non potable water requirements – these are better gauged at application stage. If they damage the habitat it wont meet the WFD and the application is likely to be refused. Some industries are more water intensive than others. Do we need any further work at Herefordshire Council end or are all happy.</p> <p>MJ asked if anyone else has any general observations on the report or the structure of the contents.</p> <p>HW commented that once discussions have been had at director level it might be worth reviewing the water level before next meeting as may alter the discussions for the meeting – appendix 3 also.</p> <p>Dave Throup has indicated to Geoff Hughes, Director of Places and Communities, that he wishes to meet with him to discuss the changes.</p> <p>RA queried if formal feedback was required. PD confirmed that if everyone could have a read through and feedback any comments on any changes required, or anything that needs removing it would be useful. DB suggested that everyone copy in each other on comments, so everyone can see the views expressed. HP has already given some track changes to PD, suggested PD forward to all and then everyone can do track changes on the same document.</p> <p>ACTION – PD TO FORWARD DOCUMENT TO ALL FOR COMMENTS MADE VIA TRACK CHANGES.</p>	<p>PD ALL</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>WELSH WATER: UPDATE ON THE WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN</p> <p>The draft was submitted in 2008, and they then waited 9 months for direction. It was published for comments in Jan 2009, and working on the revised plan. There was a slight delay until June 2010, with the final outcomes incorporated into the draft final plan. There have been material changes on climate change, and the revised draft consultation plan will go out to public consultation shortly. It will then go back to the welsh assembly government hopefully this summer. Once the board are happy, it goes to wag to revue security. The next planning cycle begins in 2012, the plans address 2010 – 2035, and are revised every five years.</p> <p>At present the Herefordshire Council plan runs until 2026, although may look to extend this date.</p> <p>PD commented that climate change is factored in, and queried if any evidence or background reports are available to be seen, as these could help with our plans on climate change. RA felt that they could probably allow them to see it, as they have done presentations on it to other organisations. MJ asked if they could supply figures that would affect Herefordshire. DB queried if are there any constraints linked to Hereford. RA advised that the Hereford licence remains the same, and most of Herefordshire’s water comes from Broomy hill. It was queried is there the potential that the conservation phosphate targets would have any effect. RA advised that they don’t think so. Releases from the Elan reservoir assist with the water at Broomy hill.</p>	

ITEM		ACTION
3.	<p>AGREE SUITABLE OPTION OF ENSURING WATER RESOURCE AVAILABILITY</p> <p>PD advised that they wont get to see the plan until after we have submitted ours. Hopefully the plan will go out to public consultation in July. RA advised that he will take it back and see if this group can see the plan prior to public consultation.</p> <p><u>Meeting future water demand (page 5)</u></p> <p>PD advised that there are two options and they need a steer on which to choose.</p> <p>Option 1 – wait for publication of the final WRMP plan. This is a risky option as they are not expecting it to be published until 2012. Therefore not a viable option.</p> <p>Option 2 – relied on Natural England and the Environment Agency to agree. HW advised that they are in agreement.</p> <p>Point 3, stage 3 – DB queried doesn’t point WM.1 cover that? It covers the lack of clarity of habitat issues. Needs further thought and possibly RSS rewording. Figure working to is achievable, but if not deliverable it can be reviewed.</p> <p>ACTION - PD TO RE-WORD WHERE REQUIRED.</p> <p>They have had confirmation and reassurance from Welsh Water that the water is not an issue. If the draft water resource management comes out, cannot confirm that will be the one that will be formally adopted as it could be altered following consultation.</p> <p>Option 3 – Not required – go with option 2.</p> <p><u>Questions</u></p> <p>Q1 – <i>Is there capacity for water supply within current consents to meet the Core Stragey housing growth figure for Hereford (6,323 units)?</i> Answer – this can be met</p> <p>Q2 – <i>Will extensions to consents be required to meet housing grpwth and if so what are the impacts upon river flow? If the consent does not allow for increased abstraction, what alternatives are available and could they impact upon housing deliver / phasing?</i> Answer – this can be met – plus other supplementary questions raised in relation to.</p> <p>Q8 – <i>It has been stated that DCWW can meet water supply demands to Bromyard, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye. However, confirmation is required that this incorporates the RoC?</i> Answer - will fall into place once numbers can be confirmed.</p>	PD
4.	<p>WATER PROVISION FOR RURAL SETTLEMENTS</p> <p>Appendix 2 – response from Welsh Water. Addresses all plans and has all figures for all areas apart from;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eardisley • Pembridge • Whitchurch 	

ITEM		ACTION
	<p>Require updated figures from Welsh Water, areas might be serviced from another area.</p> <p>ACTION - RA TO PROVIDE FIGURES TO PD.</p> <p>Our population figures differ from DCWW, etc regarding existing and predicted assumptions. This could cause problems in the future. For Hereford and the Market Towns used census data from 2011 to calculate number of households and populations, and water supply affected.</p> <p>Herefordshire Council's Research Team have come up with some figures for proposed population figures for end of strategy period (2026). MJ queried if there was a single national way of calculating population figures. KS advised that there are a significant number of the population within Herefordshire that are not on the water framework, who have private water resources.</p> <p>Growth is seen at 17,500 by DCWW, and 18,000 by Herefordshire Council. Differing baselines and different formula used for forecasting. DCWW forecast lower population but higher water use, whereas Herefordshire Council have forecast higher population and lower water use, so the figures should balance out. We need to work through and agree a baseline. It was picked up that there are discrepancies in the calculations and figures arrived at. HW suggested just including some text explaining how the figures are reached and why there are differences.</p>	<p>RA</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>SEVERN TRENT WATER SUPPLY</p> <p>The river Leadon & Ledbury. We need to find out if the Severn Estuary has any issues. There are no nutrient phosphate targets for the Severn Estuary. The Leadon is short of compliance with the WFD, its failure is diffused pollution from agriculture.</p> <p>ACTION – PD TO CONTACT DB WHO WILL PUT HIM IN TOUCH WITH THE RELEVANT PERSON AT THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY.</p> <p>The EA website has a section on the river Leadon and talking about WFD and its failures. It mentions that work has been done on the river Leadon, although it is still in a poor ecological state. Are they in the process of upgrading the treatment works, under amp5. to help with WFD targets.</p> <p>DB advised will be able to provide information and figures. Diffused water plans were developed with SSSI for the rivers Wye and the Lugg, but the Leadon was not included. The reasons for failure were queried, and what measures need to be implemented to turn them around and get them to reach status. There is capacity there for growth within Ledbury, and we need to establish if the sewage works are able to cope with any additional framework.</p> <p>ACTION - DB TO ESTABLISH.</p> <p>It was queried if Severn Trent supply water to any houses within Herefordshire? They only provide sewage works from the North of the County, but all water is provided by Welsh Water. It was suggested that there might be some small pockets along the border supplied by them. They take water from the Wye in certain areas but do not supply. All details are in the water cycle study.</p>	<p>PD, DB</p> <p>DB</p>

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	<p>Q9 – Is there sufficient capacity to meet housing growth at Ledbury STW's?</p> <p>ACTION - DB TO ASSIST WITH ANSWERING Q9.</p> <p>Ledbury has issues with water resource, BS felt it was more to do with sewage works.</p>	DB
7.	<p>DISCUSSION ON THIS MEETINGS ACHIEVEMENT TOWARDS COMPLIANCE WITH THE HABITATS DIRECTIVE</p> <p>Progress has been made and everyone has found it useful</p> <p>DB brought up issues with winter storage reservoirs. Farmers face difficulties with the planning process with allowing the construction of winter storage. He suggested it would be a good idea for the Herefordshire Council to produce a council code on winter storage (similar to the polly tunnel policy).</p> <p>Could produce a supplementary planning guidance, to advise what boxes they need to tick, what works, etc so that they know what they need to do to submit a successful planning application. KS stressed that if we are going to produce a SPG we need to ensure that its related. In principle doesn't have a problem with it, the only problem will be finding the resources to facilitate it. BS felt it was important to talk to Planning officers about the idea, i.e. Debbie Klein (Principle Planning Officer Minerals and Waste). DB felt that this is an important issue, we could produce a code with organisations logos on stating how we would like to see it done. We need to encourage the farmers not to take water out of the rivers during the summer months. BS felt a discussion was required between planners, DB, etc to try and develop a best practise. The design code SPG could be a simple A4 side of paper. DB queried how to take the idea forward.</p> <p>ACTION – KS TO DISCUSS WITH JO HARTHERN (PLANNING POLICY OFFICER) AND PASS DB DETAILS ONTO HER FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION.</p> <p>Important to finish each session with how are we doing and have we helped.</p>	KS
8.	<p>FUTURE TIMETABLE</p> <p>The meeting arranged for the 27th June needs to be rearranged due to attendees availability.</p> <p>All agreed on Thursday 14th July. To be chaired by Herefordshire Council.</p> <p>RA advised that he won't be attending the next meeting but someone form his team will attend.</p> <p>HP queried if Herefordshire Council have a facility to do telephone conferencing. Only available at Plough Lane. PD to look into and hopefully book for the next meeting.</p>	
9.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thursday 14th July, venue and time to be confirmed. 	