

Date and time: 10:30 Thursday 27th January 2022

Meeting held by MS Teams: DWMP Steering Group



Minutes of January 2022 DWMP Steering Group Meeting

Attendees

Mark Worsfold (Chair), South West Water
Ed Beard, NIC
Sally Beck, Southern Water
Simon Carey, Defra
Emily Clarke, Water UK
Alex Codd, Hull City Council
Rob Collins, Defra
Orla Crothers, Northern Ireland Water
Alison Edwards, Welsh Water
Steve Foster, Environment Agency
Steve Grebby, CCW
Jonathan Hunter, Environment Agency
Paul Hurcombe, Severn Trent Water
Adrian Lee, Northumbrian Water
Victoria Lemmon, Anglian
Sandie Mann, Scottish Water
David Martin, Wessex Water

Alice Meacham, United Utilities
Jane O'Connor, South West Water
Sian Padfield, Thames Water
Emma Phillimore, Defra
Juan Scouller, Defra
Claire Seymour, Yorkshire Water
Jennie Seymour, Ofwat
John Spence, Programme Manager
Giles Stevens, NIC
Max Tant, ADEPT

Apologies

Yvette de Garis (Deputy Chair), Thames Water
Hannah Freeman, Blueprint
Phil Hulme, Environment Agency
Rob Wesley, Water UK

1. Welcome

Mark Worsfold (Chair of DWMP Steering Group) welcomed attendees to the seventh (post Framework publication) DWMP Steering Group meeting.

He described the intense interest in DWMPs and that there were lots of expectations from a range of parties. The storm overflow guidance from Defra that had been expected at the end of January 2022 would now not be available until later in the year and we would need to discuss the consequences. He posed the question – are we meeting all expectations? He also noted that there were new expectations arriving late in the process.

2. Minutes and Actions from last meeting (23/09/21)

All actions from the meeting of 23rd September 2021 had been completed with the exception of:-

- **Alex Lane to check if the identity of organisations responding can be shared**

Jonathan Hunter advised that checks were being made with the Environment Agency's Data Protection Team.

3. DWMP Implementation Update

Mark Worsfold gave an update of progress on DWMP implementation, noting the progress since the last meeting:

- All companies continuing to develop their DWMPs with the DWMP Implementation Group acting as a 'self-help' group of water company practitioners to share learning experiences & best practice
- Options Development & Appraisal (ODA) stage completed in December 2021
- Companies have now moved into the Programme Appraisal stage with completion by the end of June 2022 marked by the publication of draft DWMPs
- Linked Timelines Schematic updated
- Working Groups A to D within the Cycle 1 to Cycle 2 Review Group progressing

Mark Worsfold also noted that draft plans were being developed in the absence of the expected Government guidance on storm overflows. He noted that there would need to be three months of modelling work to accommodate the storm overflow policy once it was published.

4. Options Development & Appraisal (ODA) – Final Roundup

Sian Padfield presented a final round up of the ODA stage of DWMPs which had been completed on schedule by companies at the end of December 2021. She stressed that this had been a twelve-month exercise involving a huge amount of work. She went on to describe the next phase of DWMPs, the 'Programme Appraisal' stage. Key features of this stage would include SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) and HRA (Habitat Regulations Assessment). Best Value Frameworks would also feature prominently in this stage of DWMP development.

Rob Collins queried the balance between Nature Based Solutions (NBS) and traditional solutions. Sian Padfield explained that the balance of solutions would emerge from the Programme Appraisal phase once Best Value Frameworks had been applied.

Mark Worsfold noted that SuDS in new developments were an opportunity but were more challenging when retro fitting in terms of cost and affordability.

Jonathan Hunter commented that other RMAs were looking at planning and identifying schemes over the 2021 to 2027 period (900 schemes, £400 million). He asked if water companies could provide good practice examples of co-developed and / or co-funded schemes being considered for or being committed to for DWMP Cycle 1.

- **Water UK to collate good practice examples**

Mark Worsfold commented that in addition to the use of SuDS, 'flow pathways' needed to be considered. For example, where land drainage flows into sewers another pathway needs to be identified. This would need cooperation and collaboration to identify appropriate alternative pathways, which could be 'green' solutions.

Alex Codd described Hull as being very urban but with upstream links to East Riding. SuDS were always the first option for developers. However, it is also about holding water higher in the catchment. He highlighted the potential for another approach to pathway modification i.e. slowing the flow.

5. Alignment of Policy expectations

5a Storm Overflows – January additional guidance - Defra

Juan Scouller began by highlighting that he understood the need for planning assumptions and the time required for modelling. However, it would now not be possible to issue guidance in January, as planned, but there will be a consultation in due course. This consultation would cover a range of scenarios which would then feed into the Government plan to be published in September.

5b Environment Act progression and publication of 'Guiding Principles for DWMPs' - Defra

Emma Phillimore described the Environment Bill becoming the Environment Act in November and that it introduced a number of new requirements including reductions in storm overflow discharges, reporting, data publication, near real-time data, monitoring and the preparation of DWMPs. The Act would be enacted in April 2023 ensuring a statutory basis for Cycle 2 DWMPs.

Emma Phillimore advised that the 'Guiding Principles for DWMPs' were currently being translated with an early February 'grid slot'. Sian Padfield queried whether the final version of 'Guiding Principles for DWMPs' would reflect the last draft; Emma Phillimore confirmed that there would be no substantive changes.

Mark Worsfold commented that the Guiding Principles document was important for Cycle 2 and that we need to align expectations of Cycle 1 and Cycle 2. Emma Phillimore offered a follow up meeting to discuss further.

5c DWMPs and Business Plans – Ofwat

Jennie Seymour advised that Ofwat were about to start a series of informal meetings with WaSCs to gain a feel of risks, scope and scale of options. All except two WaSCs had booked their meetings. She acknowledged that WaSCs would be at different positions but it would be a good opportunity for a progress update.

- **Two remaining WaSCs to book their informal meetings with Ofwat**

Jennie Seymour went on to talk about Data Tables. Ofwat are still looking at these and considering such issues as ‘outcome or output’. Ofwat will be in a better position to work up a draft after the informal meetings and will then look at what to track from DWMP to Business Plan. She will share a draft when developed but emphasised that they would not be based on WRMP Data Tables as DWMPs are not at the same level of maturity.

Mark Worsfold raised the topic of assurance commenting that it will align with Business Plan assurance i.e. with the final plan. Jennie Seymour responded by advising that Ofwat had procured facilitation support for the informal meetings but emphasised that these meeting would not be audits. She went on to say that they would explore what the default was for assurance but looking predominantly at Cycle 2. However, it was also important to look at where we are now. WRMPs have board sign off but this was for a statutory plan. What would WaSCs be doing for Cycle 1?

Sally Beck asked if these meetings would affect the criteria for PR24. Jennie Seymour responded that Ofwat needed to understand DWMPs to be able to assess Business Plans but understood that there would be changes between the draft and final, and to the Business Plan.

Max Tant asked if Ofwat were going to consult other stakeholders in addition to the informal meetings with WaSCs? Jennie Seymour responded that Ofwat would be exploring with WaSCs engagement with other RMAs, but would not be meeting with other stakeholders. Max Tant asked if it were not possible to ask a small group of stakeholders for their views on engagement after the draft plan consultation stage. Jennie Seymour offered to take this away.

Mark Worsfold highlighted that we have a two-stage process here, the draft and final DWMP. He commented on the political interest and referenced the previous days question by MP Philp Dunne during PMQs on the Defra direction to Ofwat within the SPS. He went on to say that there was a need for a cost assessment piece of work and the need to reflect expectations and was happy to help. Emma Phillimore added that water policy was under the spotlight and was happy to work with all to ensure the process worked.

5d NIA Baseline Report and associated Call for Evidence – NIC

Ed Beard reported that the Baseline Report had been published. The NIC were looking at challenges over 30 years in six sectors. The first step will be NIA2 in 2023.

Call for Evidence, Surface Water Flooding.

The Treasury had asked for a separate study to report in November 2022. He went on to thank the 48 responders to the Call for Evidence which had informed the development of the scope of the study. He expected the scope to be signed off by NIC Commissioners the following day.

Ed Beard described some of the other influences, for example storm overflows and the Review of Schedule 3, but described the focus of the scope as being on governance, the range of organisations involved, their understanding of their assets, funding streams, are the arrangements fit for purpose, now and in 30 years, what benefits could be driven by co-funding.

In addition to surface water flooding, the NIA2 would also be looking at asset management, use of technology, net zero and waste management.

Sally Beck asked if NIC were going to look at the role of developers for example their adherence to Local Authority guidelines. Ed Beard confirmed this was within scope.

Sally Beck went on to ask about unsewered areas and the fact that there was no requirement to connect when sewers were available. Ed Beard responded that the challenge was keeping to the scope and that these issues were more environmental than surface water flooding.

Alex Codd was interested in the point on governance and described working with Arup and Yorkshire Water. He offered to share a Case Study on governance.

Mark Worsfold made a point about Local Authorities having noticed the increase in paving over front gardens to accommodate electric vehicle charging points. Was there a need for legislative change here?

5e WINEP methodology and DWMPs – EA

Phil Hulme had offered his apologies but would cover the issue at the next meeting.

5f FCERM Action Plan – EA Measures 2.7.1, 2.7.2 and 2.7.3

Jonathan Hunter described the approach by EA, Ofwat and Water UK to implement the FCERM strategy recommendations and referred to the engagement survey carried out in the summer of 2021. He thanked the WaSCs for their Case Studies and advised that these were to be published soon. In February there would be a release of updated FCERM Appraisal Guidance. The EA were now working with engagement consultants to enhance the follow up survey to be undertaken in 2022.

Looking forward a roadmap for a four-year action plan would be published in February with actions around building capability in the RMA community and adaptive pathway pilots.

Mark Worsfold asked whether DWMP engagement should be a statutory requirement for other RMAs? How do we encourage DWMP engagement? Jonathan Hunter responded that this would need to be looked at, but there was already a duty to cooperate.

Alex Codd highlighted that the challenge was where something is non statutory - will it be significant for individual Local Authorities? Non-statutory funding follows the prioritisation of risk for each local Authority.

Max Tant agreed and went on to say that the key was to make DWMPs meaningful to Local Authorities. We might have missed it in Cycle 1 through COVID restrictions, but there would be a better opportunity for co-creation in Cycle 2.

6. Timeline and Delivery Expectations

Mark Worsfold described some of the timescale pressures, for example, the delayed storm overflow guidance, the forthcoming storm overflow consultation and the slightly delayed WINEP / WISER guidance. He posed the question should we be looking to defer the June draft DWMP publication date and shorten the consultation period e.g. to the autumn?

Jennie Seymour asked how material the absences were? Incomplete picture vs time to accommodate comments. Mark Worsfold responded that the substantive issue was the absence of a clear position on storm overflows.

Jonathan Hunter thought there was value in sticking to the original timetable with some 'crunching'. The SPS was consulted on and some WINEP / WISER information had been released.

Emma Phillimore explained that Defra were grappling with the issues but wished to stick to the DWMP timelines. She went on to offer a discussion with Mark Worsfold.

Adrian Lee and Alison Edwards spoke of the missed opportunity if dates were moved.

Jennie Seymour asked if postponing to allow incorporation was a better option or would we go with best estimates?

Mark Worsfold concluded by saying that he would take the issues to the following days DWMP Implementation Group meeting and then revert to Defra

- **Mark Worsfold to consider the DWMP timescale issue with the DWMP Implementation Group and then revert to Defra**

[Post Meeting Note]

A letter (22nd February 2022) was sent to Defra. See extract below;

'Following the discussions at the DWMP steering group, the timeline was further discussed at both the DWMP implementation group on 28th January and at the Water UK Environment

Committee on 3rd February. Based upon these discussions a consensus has been achieved based around a third option.

3. Water companies would continue to produce their draft DWMP plans, showing a preferred plan, by June 2022. As part of programme appraisal these plans would explore a range of scenarios and costs for storm overflows, based on regulatory and stakeholder discussions that have taken place in the development of the DWMP. Given the discussions that have taken place to date at DWMP SG it is anticipated that these will broadly align with the Defra consultation scenarios to be published in March 2022. Full consideration of the Defra policy options will not take place until published in September and after consultation on the draft plan.

As an industry, we are confident that this offers the best option for managing the current absence of government guidance, ensuring that customers and stakeholders get a meaningful opportunity to comment on the options and of still getting well-developed plans as part of cycle 1 of the DWMPs.'

7. Next steps

DWMP Steering Group Telecons

Thursday 24 th March	10:30 to 12:30
Tuesday 5 th July	10:30 to 12:30
Tuesday 25 th October	10:30 to 12:20

Cycle 1 to Cycle 2 Review Group Telecons 2022

Thursday 17 th March	10:00 to 12:00
Thursday 16 th June	10:00 to 12:00
Thursday 15 th September	10:00 to 12:00
Thursday 15 th December	10:00 to 12:00