

South Hams Council



Title:	Agenda																														
Date:	Thursday, 25th July, 2024																														
Time:	2.00 pm																														
Venue:	Council Chamber - Follaton House																														
Full Members:	<p style="text-align: center;">Chairman Cllr Taylor Vice Chairman Cllr Pannell</p> <p><i>Members:</i></p> <table><tbody><tr><td>Cllr Abbott</td><td>Cllr Jackson</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Allen</td><td>Cllr Lawford</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Birch</td><td>Cllr Long</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Bonham</td><td>Cllr McKay</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Brazil</td><td>Cllr Munoz</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Carson</td><td>Cllr Nix</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Cooper</td><td>Cllr O'Callaghan</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Dennis</td><td>Cllr Oram</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Dewynter</td><td>Cllr Penfold</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Dommett</td><td>Cllr Presswell</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Edie</td><td>Cllr Rake</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Hancock</td><td>Cllr Steele</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Hawkins</td><td>Cllr Thomas</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Hodgson</td><td>Cllr Yardy</td></tr><tr><td>Cllr Hopwood</td><td></td></tr></tbody></table>	Cllr Abbott	Cllr Jackson	Cllr Allen	Cllr Lawford	Cllr Birch	Cllr Long	Cllr Bonham	Cllr McKay	Cllr Brazil	Cllr Munoz	Cllr Carson	Cllr Nix	Cllr Cooper	Cllr O'Callaghan	Cllr Dennis	Cllr Oram	Cllr Dewynter	Cllr Penfold	Cllr Dommett	Cllr Presswell	Cllr Edie	Cllr Rake	Cllr Hancock	Cllr Steele	Cllr Hawkins	Cllr Thomas	Cllr Hodgson	Cllr Yardy	Cllr Hopwood	
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Interests – Declaration and Restriction on Participation:	Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest not entered in the Authority's register or local non pecuniary interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda (subject to the exception for sensitive information) and to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on an item in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest.																														
Committee administrator:	Democratic.Services@swdevon.gov.uk																														

- 1. Minutes** **1 - 12**
to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 23 May 2024;

- 2. Urgent Business**
the Chairman to announce if any item not on the agenda should be considered on the basis that he considers it as a matter of urgency (any such item to be dealt with under 'Business Brought forward by the Chairman');

- 3. Exempt Information**
to consider whether the consideration of any item of business would be likely to disclose exempt information and if so the category of such exempt information;

- 4. Declarations of Interest**
In accordance with the Code of Conduct, Members are invited to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Registerable Interests and Non-Registerable Interests including the nature and extent of such interests they may have in any items to be considered at this meeting;

- 5. Business Brought Forward by the Chairman**
to consider business (if any) brought forward by the Chairman;

- 6. Public Question Time** **13 - 14**

- 7. Reports of Bodies**
to receive and as may be necessary approve the minutes and recommendations of the under-mentioned Bodies:

* Indicates minutes containing recommendations to Council.
- (a) Development Management Committee - 15 May 2024** **15 - 24**
- (b) Licensing Committee - 16 May 2024** **25 - 26**
- (c) Executive - 6 June 2024** **27 - 34**
- (d) Development Management Committee - 20 June 2024** **35 - 44**
- (e) Executive* - 18 July 2024**
To follow

8. Questions

to consider the following question(s) (if any) received in accordance with Council Procedure Rules.

9. Notice of Motion

to consider the following motion received in accordance with Council Procedure Rules:

(a) From Cllrs McKay and Bonham

“South West Water has not delivered the service that could be reasonably expected of it for many years. It was formed in 1989 some 35 years ago. Since that time it has paid out £4.5 billion in dividends and now has debts of £3.1 billion.

It has paid out £127 million in 2024 alone.

This is a company that:

- 1. is rated by the Environment Agency’s Environmental Performance Assessment metric as being the worst in England;*
- 2. in May this year was fined a record £2.1 million as a result of charges brought by the Environment Agency. It was shown to be responsible for many hundreds of illegal discharges at seven sites across Cornwall and one in Plymouth over a six-year period;*
- 3. was responsible for at least 58,249 sewage overflows in 2023. On average 159.6 times a day. These lasted for 530,736 hours (That's 61.43 years!) - in 1,117 different locations across its service area;*
- 4. leaks over 20% of water delivered;*
- 5. has recently allowed its water supply to be polluted and cause a serious outbreak of cryptosporidium infections; and*
- 6. has not invested in the necessary infrastructure, yet puts forward schemes like the desalination plant in Cornwall, that would not be necessary if just 2% of leaks were fixed.*

This litany of failure has also to be considered in the context of climate change and it is clear that South West Water has put us all in a very difficult position. It is one that cannot be allowed to continue.

By any measure South West Water is a poorly run company that has failed to balance the need to attract investment with providing a satisfactory service to its customers. It is this that has led OFWAT to have to approve a price rise.

Given such an appalling track record of poor performance, the CEO (Susan

Davy) turned down a £237,000 bonus and diverted a further £298,000 pay bonus to the Watershare+ customer scheme. While this is laudable and needs to be recognised, it is hardly sufficient and the question remains why she and her board are still in post.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- 1. Call on the government to recognise the guiding principle in all policy that clean water is a right and not a commodity;*
- 2. Call on the government to ban all bonuses and company dividend payments until such time as the Environment Agency's Environmental Performance Assessment (EPA) metric is 'good' (4 stars);*
- 3. Call on the government to limit the time to no more than five years to reach an EPA of 4 stars after which it would take the company into 'special measures' with a view to the possible creation of a public benefit company or re-nationalisation;*
- 4. Call on South West Water to provide a detailed plan and timetable on how it intends to achieve an EPA of 4 stars and to undertake to consult with and seek the approval of all the local authorities in its service area;*
- 5. Call on South West Water to provide a detailed plan on how it intends to reduce leaks by at least 50% in the next 5 years;*
- 6. Call on South West Water to provide a full explanation of why it initially failed to detect the presence of cryptosporidium in the Brixham water supply, either directly or through regular monitoring for e-coli as a proxy for its possible presence;*
- 7. Call on the government to strengthen the Environment Agency and the Drinking Water Inspectorate so that they are better able to monitor and provide oversight of the water services sector;*
- 8. Request the CEO of South West Water to attend a session of this Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee to answer questions;*
- 9. Call on the board of South West Water to give serious consideration to their position if the requests of this Council are unacceptable; and*
- 10. Call on the CEO of SWW to attend a water summit of local MPs, Councillors and Community Groups to explain the cause of recent failures, provide plans for remediation and answer questions, to be held by 30 September 2024."*