

DECISION-MAKER:	SCRUTINY INQUIRY PANEL
SUBJECT:	PROTECTING, PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE RIVER ITCHEN IN SOUTHAMPTON – THE RIVER ENVIRONMENT
DATE OF DECISION:	17 NOVEMBER 2022
REPORT OF:	SCRUTINY MANAGER

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
None	
BRIEF SUMMARY	
<p>In accordance with the inquiry plan, for the second meeting of the ‘Protecting, Preserving and Promoting the River Itchen in Southampton Inquiry’ the Panel will be considering the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The river environment and plans for improvement, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Habitat and biodiversity ○ Water quality and water usage ○ Chessel Bay case study 	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
	(i) The Panel is recommended to consider the comments made by the invited guests and use the information provided as evidence in the review.
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	
1.	To enable the Panel to compile a file of evidence in order to formulate findings and recommendations at the end of the review process.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
2.	None.
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
3.	At the second meeting of the inquiry the Panel will be considering the river environment. Findings from the River Itchen Survey that was conducted prior to the inaugural inquiry meeting, identified improvements to the water quality (87%) and improvements to natural habitats and biodiversity (75%) as the

	improvements that most respondents would like to happen to the River Itchen in Southampton.
4.	<p>To develop the Panel’s understanding of the issues the following guests have been invited to the meeting:</p> <p>Graham Horton, Thames Solent Team Manager from Natural England</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graham Horton has been asked to provide an overview of the ecological interest of the River Itchen in Southampton; to identify the threats and challenges to the Itchen ecology and to provide a view on how Natural England’s role in promoting recreation sits alongside ecology ambitions for the river. <p>Dr David Rumble, Chief Executive Officer at Wessex Rivers Trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Environment Agency were asked to attend the Panel meeting to present an overview of the water quality of the River Itchen in Southampton. They have been unable to provide a representative to attend the meeting but have kindly submitted detailed feedback that has been attached as Appendix 1. <p>In the absence of representatives from the Environment Agency, Dr Rumble has been invited back to provide the Panel with details on water quality within the River Itchen in Southampton and sources of pollution. Wessex Rivers Trust is an environmental charity dedicated to the conservation of chalk streams and rivers in Wessex, working towards healthy rivers for wildlife and people.</p> <p>David Murphy, Wastewater Investment Strategy Manager & Andrew Adams, Wastewater Catchment Planning Manager from Southern Water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Murphy and Andrew Adams have been invited to discuss the environmental challenges caused by the existing infrastructure; the developing Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan for the Test & Itchen Catchment; and Southern Water’s proposals to improve facilities and reduce the discharge of waste product into the river. <p>Lindsay McCulloch – Natural Environment Manager, Southampton City Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lindsay McCulloch will be exploring issues relating to water quality, pollution and potential solutions using Chessel Bay as a case study.
5.	<p>At the inaugural meeting of the inquiry the introductory presentations outlined a number of potential causes of pollution impacting on the River Itchen in Southampton. In anticipation that they may be raised at the 17 November meeting information relating to the following are attached as appendices:</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Southampton’s Nitrogen Mitigation Position Statement</p> <p>In-order to comply with the provisions of the Habitat Regulations to ensure that development does not adversely affect the integrity of a European designation, in 2022 Southampton City Council approved a policy whereby new development which leads to a net increase in residential or hotel units</p>

	<p>must be subject to an appropriate assessment to demonstrate how mitigation measures will be implemented to achieve nitrogen neutrality.</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Water pollution from highways</p> <p>Land based activities can influence water quality as runoff from buildings and roads, collected by surface water sewers and highway drains, is in some areas directed to watercourses. Appendix 3 contains feedback from SCC officers outlining steps the City Council, and our partner Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) are considering, or taking, to reduce pollution into the River Itchen or connected watercourses via the highway network. It also references a review undertaken in Buckinghamshire that may provide useful insight.</p> <p>Appendix 4 – Marinas and the river environment</p> <p>Feedback provided by MDL Marinas, who manage 19 marinas, including Saxon Wharf, Shamrock Quay and Ocean Village Marina on the River Itchen, to develop the Panel’s understanding of actions that are being taken to reduce the impact of marinas on the environment.</p>
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6.	The invited guests will take questions from the Panel relating to the evidence provided. Copies of any presentations will be made available to the Panel.
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RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue/Property/Other

7.	None
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LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

8.	The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Part 1A Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2000.
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Other Legal Implications:

9.	None
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RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.	None
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POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

11.	None
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KEY DECISION?	No
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WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	None
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Briefing from the Environment Agency on the River Itchen
2.	Southampton Nitrogen Mitigation Position Statement
3.	Water pollution from highways
4.	Marinas and the river environment

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None	
Equality Impact Assessment		
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?		No
Data Protection Impact Assessment		
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?		No
Other Background documents available for inspection at:		
Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)	
1.	None	