

## Appendix 2: Summary of Environment and Sustainability recommendations and the executive responses

On 25 September 2023, the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee having considered a report on ‘River Water Pollution’, made the following recommendations to the executive.

<b>Recommendation a)</b>	<b>That the Executive should consider drawing up a River Improvement Direct Action Plan itself, constructed around the Council’s existing statutory responsibilities, to inform policy development, prioritisation on actions to be taken, including those in the pipeline, budgeting and resourcing. This would also refer to and draw from related plans being constructed by partners</b>			
<b>Executive response</b>	Partially Agreed.			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Target / success criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
A scoping exercise is currently underway to identify roles and responsibilities of the Council and wider organisations, including EA and NE/NRW to deliver improvements to water quality. This can be broadened to include the resourcing allocated to the Council to deliver this function as well as any resource provided by the Council to wider partners.	ED	July 2024	A finalised report including diagrammatic highlight role of stakeholders and their associated plans.	A diagram is under draft to set out the relationship between all of the plans relating to the River Wye and the proposed improvements.

<b>Recommendation b)</b>	<p><b>That the Executive should collect its own water quality samples, through funding analysers on the river Lugg specifically:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- first to fulfil its role as the “competent” authority under the “Habitat regulations”</li> <li>- second, to use as evidence on the true state of our rivers in our catchment area, in negotiations with partners on the required river improvement actions;</li> <li>- third, as a response to the claim by RePhokUs in their latest report, “that current inconsistencies in river water quality monitoring programmes are confounding understanding of the impact of variable farming pressures and P surpluses on river P pollution.</li> </ul>			
--------------------------	--	--	--	--

<b>Executive response</b>	Agreed in part			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Target / success criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
The Council investigated the costing of SONDEs to provide an automated monitoring of Phosphates (Water Quality) on the River Lugg. The costs are considered prohibitive (£40,000, to purchase and £20,000 p/a to operate). The Council will investigate alternative methods for supporting monitoring on the River Lugg. It is noted that currently The Citizen Science work collects over 20,000 samples collates monitoring data which is shared with the Environment Agency.	N/A	July 2024	A summary of alternative monitoring options, as well as potential for monitoring Total Phosphorous alongside Soluble Reactive Phosphorous.	ED to seek advice from WUF.

<b>Recommendation c)</b>	<b>With the EA, an awareness and engagement campaign should be run within the livestock and agricultural sector, covering manure management plans and compliance with the requirements of the “Storing silage, slurry and agricultural fuel oil regulations”.</b>			
<b>Executive response</b>	Agreed in Part. EA have an existing communicationss strategy to highlight this grant scheme HC propose to share this.			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Target / success criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
HC will commit to sharing EA existing Communications strategy to highlight the grant schemes.  HC will publish on its Nutrient Neutrality guidance webpage advice on how to evidence grant funded applications of this nature are considered betterment by the Council.	ED	June 2024	Published guidance and wider Communications from EA.	ED has raised a request to share Communications with EA at the SoG group for NMB.

<b>Recommendation d)</b>	<b>With livestock and agricultural producers, the Executive should explore the value of a kitemark designation for local sourced produce to indicate they have come from “Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF)” practices. This should include discussion with the Herefordshire Food Alliance and any other interested partners.</b>			
<b>Executive response</b>	Agreed.			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Target / success criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
A scoping exercise to determine costs and benefits can be proposed at the HCNB and Food Alliance.	BB	July 2024	Briefing note on feedback from the HCNB and Food Alliance	TBC

<b>Recommendation e)</b>	<b>That the Executive should push strongly through the existing Cabinet Commission, for the proposed SoS led plan for the river Wye to include a glide path to a Water Protection Zone, if all voluntary arrangements fail to achieve river recovery.</b>			
<b>Executive response</b>	Agreed in part.			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Target / success criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Full Council previously requested a WPZ in a letter to the Secretary of State. A formal request for a WPZ was also made at the Nutrient Management Board. Defra/EA have advised a WPZ could be considered when all other options are exhausted. The River Wye Action Plan is being developed by Defra to explore these alternative options.  HC can propose to the Cabinet Commission that a recommendation to the Secretary of State can be reiterated.	ED	Autumn 2024	Briefing Note on outcome from the Cabinet Commission meeting.	TBC