

Bob Taylor – Chief Executive Officer
Portsmouth Water
By Email: bob.taylor@portsmouthwater.co.uk

6 September 2022

Dear Mr Taylor

Havant Thicket Reservoir and the Potential Issue of it Receiving Recycled Water Pumped in by Southern Water

We write following the recent issuing of Portsmouth Water's (PW) Vision Brochure looking forward over the next 25 years.

Rowlands Castle Parish Council (RCPC) will respond to that document through your consultation survey but wishes to make a representation specifically with regard to the Havant Thicket Reservoir (HTR) and the potential for it to be filled with recycled water supplied by Southern Water (SW).

Your Vision Brochure sets out clearly the message that you wish to provide an affordable, reliable and sustainable supply of high-quality water needed by both your customers and the environment. It is the matter of maintaining the supply of high-quality water that concerns us in that SW proposes both to recycle treated water and to pump it up to the HTR.

We have considerable concerns over both the efficacy and the sheer cost to SW customers of recycling in terms of energy consumption, chemical use and carbon emissions but the recycling element of the SW plan is a separate issue and not something you have influence over. However, the fact that SW propose to pump the recycled water into HTR as a holding place is a matter for PW to consider very carefully because it will certainly end up reducing very considerably the quality and taste of the water that its customers enjoy.

The HTR project received a lot of local support because it was perceived as necessary for water conservation during periods of plenty and also because it would enhance the environment, providing an almost unique chalk-aquifer-derived reservoir for wildlife to enjoy and flourish by because of its high-quality water. The proposal to continuously pump recycled water into it has come as a shock to many of our parish residents (your customers) who now feel betrayed by the proposal. The quality of the recycled water cannot be guaranteed by SW; they have admitted in documents that only about 80-85% of the impurities (micro-organisms and chemicals) will be removed by reverse-osmosis and accompanying processes so that those impurities will both adversely impact the reservoir and of course the coastal sea areas via the compensation discharge. The dilution of the excellent chalk-derived water will lead to a poorer taste and quality, thus resulting in some, perhaps many, residents changing to buying bottled water for drinking and cooking, with all the adverse impact on the environment that brings with the use of plastic bottles on a large scale. There is no point in being in possession of a high-quality water supply acceptable to all and then deliberately reducing that quality when it is not necessary.

The completion of the reservoir will give PW's capacity to deliver water to its customers a great increase and that, coupled with a real drive to increase fixing leaks that PW is promising and education of its customers in treating water as a precious commodity not to be squandered, should mean PW can continue to deliver on its vision of having a sustainable, high-quality supply

without having to use any water supplied by SW from its recycling plant for PW's customers. That recycled water should be pumped straight across country to where it is needed and placed in a holding reservoir at that point, a somewhat cheaper and better scheme should the recycling element prove acceptable to authorities and be approved.

Therefore, RCPC is firmly against the aspect of the SW proposal that involves pumping recycled water into the HTR and urges PW not to support this element so that it can continue to supply high-quality water without adulteration to its customers, thus remaining a good, community-focused water company.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Walker', written in a cursive style.

Lisa Walker - Clerk to the Council

For and on behalf of Rowlands Castle Parish Council

CC: County Cllr Marge Harvey – Catherington Division
District Cllr Malcolm Johnson – Rowlands Castle Division
Ruari Maybank – Portsmouth Water, Havant Thicket Reservoir Project Director