

Terms of Reference for the Havant Thicket Reservoir

Strategic Advisory Stakeholder Group

Introduction

Portsmouth Water originally purchased the Havant Thicket Reservoir site as a potential location for a new reservoir in the mid-1960s.

A Stakeholder Forum was set up in 2008, following a significant consultation into the development of a reservoir at the Havant Thicket site. The forum has sat at regular intervals while the current reservoir plans have been drawn up. It has played a key role in testing and shaping the developing scheme components, whilst also building support from regulators and a range of other stakeholders.

Following the submission of planning applications for Havant Thicket Reservoir in October 2020, a proposal was put to the Stakeholder Forum at its December 2020 meeting to split the forum into two, more specialist groups. The number of stakeholders actively involved in the project was increasing, with a diverse range of issues to be addressed. It was agreed during the meeting that two stakeholder groups would provide more effective platforms for raising and addressing stakeholder concerns and issues, as the reservoir and related schemes move from design and development, through to delivery and operation.

Purpose

The purpose of the two groups is to ensure that stakeholder views are understood and properly considered during the on-going design, construction, and operation of the Havant Thicket Reservoir.

The two groups are:

- **The Strategic Advisory Group**
- **The Community Advisory Group**

The **Strategic Advisory Group** will:

- Provide strategic oversight, with a focus on 'principles, processes and performance'. The group will support the timely progression of the reservoir and related schemes, including strategic planning decisions, delivery of planning conditions and regulatory milestones.
- Focus on the sustainability impacts and benefits of Havant Thicket Reservoir. The group will help shape, support and scrutinise the delivery of the project's environmental, social and economic mitigation and compensation strategy.

The **Community Advisory Group** will

- Support highly effective community engagement and participation for the reservoir and related schemes. The group will provide clear channels of communication for local communities during the design and construction of the site, including the visitor's centre and wetland area.
- Ensure that opportunities around education, skills development and local job creation are maximised.

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The two groups will be chaired by a single Independent Chair supported by the Havant Thicket Project Team and wider Portsmouth Water employees.

Governance

Role of the Strategic Advisory Group

The role of the Strategic Advisory Group is to provide a forum for water industry regulators, environmental organisations, local planning authorities and others to raise and resolve strategic issues relating to the planning and delivery of the reservoir scheme within budget. This includes strategic planning decisions, and ensuring compliance with the planning conditions and regulatory milestones.

The group will provide valuable input to the reservoir scheme, within the context of Portsmouth Water's other strategic activities and plans. It will supplement the more detailed engagement that needs to take place on an individual basis with certain members and organisations.

The group's input and oversight on sustainability matters will inform and support a range of detailed work. This includes maximising safe and active travel to and within the scheme, maximising the project's contribution to minimising carbon emissions and shaping and supporting the implementation of the environmental mitigations works.

Finally, the group will challenge any changes to the timescales and potential impacts on the budget and use the escalation process defined below if needed.

Composition of the Strategic Advisory Group

Independent Chair

The role of the independent chair is to ensure that:

- The representation on the Strategic Advisory Group provides the level of scrutiny required to ensure the project is accepted and seen as a success by the regulatory bodies, environmental groups, local community organisations and the general public.
- The key issues raised by the Strategic Advisory Group are addressed by the Havant Thicket Reservoir Working Group / Project Team / Portsmouth Water.

The Independent Chair is appointed for an initial term of one year, which can be extended annually by mutual agreement.

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Strategic Advisory Group Manager

The role of the Strategic Advisory Group Manager is to ensure that the necessary level of support is provided to the group for its successful functioning. The support is to be provided by the Havant Thicket Reservoir Project Team and / or Portsmouth Water.

Strategic Advisory Group Members

The Membership of the Group will be kept under review to ensure that it continues to represent the key stakeholder organisations involved with, and impacted by, the project. Membership of the group will be at the discretion of the independent chair and the executive management team of Portsmouth Water in consultation with group members as appropriate.

The current list of member organisations represented is attached in Appendix A.

Attendance

Not all members will attend all meetings, it will depend on the agenda topics. Should a stakeholder representative be unable to attend, they may arrange for a substitute to attend the meeting.

Meeting Arrangements for the Strategic Advisory Group

The Strategic Advisory Group will meet 3-4 times a year with the Havant Thicket Reservoir Project Director, his team and Portsmouth Water Executive Team members and employees. In addition, subject to approval by the members of the group, there will be a pre-meeting 4-6 weeks in advance of the main formal meeting. This will involve members of the Strategic Advisory Group, excluding Portsmouth Water and the Havant Thicket Reservoir Project Team staff, and will identify the key issues to be raised and addressed in the formal meeting. Both the group's pre-meeting and main meetings will be chaired by the Independent Chair.

Agendas and pre-reading will be circulated approximately one week before the meetings. The group will maintain an issues log which will record issues, opportunities, potential risks and mitigating actions where appropriate.

Minutes of meetings will be circulated to both Havant Thicket Reservoir stakeholder groups and published in the Havant Thicket Reservoir section of the Portsmouth Water website. Comments in the minutes will not be attributable to individuals, in order to promote open discussion.

Escalation Process

The Advisory Group has no executive decision-making authority. Where matters arise through the Advisory Group that require an executive decision then the escalation route is through the Independent Chair to the Project Director and / or the CEO of Portsmouth Water, either directly or through regular meetings as appropriate. Ultimately the Board may be required to make any significant decisions on this key project.

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Appendix A - Strategic Advisory Group Attendee List

Membership of the Strategic Advisory Group includes:

- Environment Agency
- Natural England
- Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI)
- Consumer Council for Water (CCW)
- Chair of Portsmouth Water Customer Challenge Group (CCG)
- Southern Water
- Havant Borough Council / East Hants District Council Planning Team
- Havant Borough Council Regeneration Team
- Portsmouth City Council (Strategic Development team)
- Hampshire County Council (Countryside Service)
- Forestry England / Forestry Commission
- South Downs National Park Authority
- Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
- RSPB
- Hampshire Ornithological Society
- Hampshire Bat Group
- Campaign Group Stop the Chop.