

CITY OF YORK COUNCIL**BRIEFING NOTE**

Yorkshire Water June 2024

To: City of York Council, Economy, Place, Access and Transport Scrutiny Committee

Date: June 2024

1. Background

- 1.1 Yorkshire Water delivers clean and wastewater services to over 5 million residential customers, and 141,000 businesses.
- 1.2 This includes responsibilities for sewage and, in some cases, surface water across the City of York, as well as potable water services. We work closely with City of York Council (COYC) colleagues on a range of work areas, notably highways, streetworks, and flooding.
- 1.3 This paper provides key updates regarding Yorkshire Water's assets, operations and business plan. Updates included within the paper relate to; the company's regulatory business planning process, significant areas of investment, maintenance of assets, flood mitigation, reducing storm overflow discharges and improvement of river health.

2. Overview**2.1 Yorkshire Water business plan**

- 2.1.1 The water sector is regulated in 5-year cycles known as asset management periods (AMPs). The current period started in April 2020 and will end in March 2025, and is known as AMP7. Our economic regulator is Ofwat, who oversees our business planning process, known as a price review, or PR. We are currently undergoing PR24, so named because it will be signed off by Ofwat this year, 2024, and will cover investment in AMP8 (2025-2030).
- 2.1.2 Before the business planning process starts, Government provides Ofwat with a strategic policy statement outlining what they expect from Ofwat and water companies. Our plan, once approved, will confirm the amount of investment in our operating region between 2025-2030, and the subsequent impact on customer bills. We conducted customer research and worked closely with Yorkshire Leaders Board to determine the best way to implement the necessary price increases. Following discussion with Yorkshire Leaders Board we have decided to implement the price increases gradually over the 5 years.

- 2.1.3 To support customers, we offer a range of bill and debt schemes. In our business plan we have outlined our aim to increase the number of customers on our main social tariff, Water Support, from approx. 66,000 in 2023 to 90,000 during 2025-2030. This has already increased from approx. 43,000 in 2022.
- 2.1.4 In addition to Ofwat, the Environment Agency (EA) is also heavily involved in the regulatory process and has oversight of many aspects of the plan where there is an environmental component. The Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP) sets out specific actions that water companies must undertake relating to environmental impact.
- 2.1.5 On October 3 2023 Yorkshire Water submitted our draft business plan to Ofwat. In summary, the plan includes, £1.3bn to reduce storm overflow discharges, £1.7bn to invest generally in our wastewater network, £3.1bn of investment in our clean water network, £250m to support customers who need help paying their bills, and £446m for customer services.
- 2.1.6 Since October we have been responding to any queries from Ofwat regarding our draft plan. We will continue to do so until they make their draft determination, which has been postponed to the 11 July 2024 after the general election. Subsequently, we will amend our plan in line with Ofwat's feedback, who will make their final determination in December 2024. (Though this too may be delayed to the general election.)
- 2.1.7 The plan will come into effect in April 2025 and be effective until March 2030.

2.2 Investment during this Asset Management Period (2020-2025)

- 2.2.1 Each asset management period we work with the EA to set out our programme of works to meet the Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP). For this AMP a large focus of the WINEP was on removing more phosphorous from our final effluent before it is returned to the environment. Current phosphorous investment this AMP stands at approximately £535m, including £10.5m in the York area.
- 2.2.2 Investment in our clean water network is a continuing priority, for example recent and upcoming schemes in York include:
- Stockton Lane lining works to reduce bursts, circa £1.2m - work fully complete
 - Poppleton Road new mains to accommodate growth in the area, circa £320,000, which is currently awaiting confirmation of dates
 - Monks Cross 2.5km of new mains, circa £1.5m, which begins on site late June 2024
- 2.2.3 We also regularly invest in our wastewater network to minimise the chance of failures and ensure it is operating effectively. Investment in York this asset management period includes:
- Foss Bank, lining of the sewer to help prevent infiltration and bursts, circa £0.5m

- New pumps and control panels at Landing Lane Sewage Pumping Station, £600,000
- Buckingham Street sewer relay to improve structural integrity, £84,000

2.2.4 We carefully monitor and record the performance of our assets. These records are used to determine when investment, such as replacing a main, or upgrading a pumping station, is required. We also take into account cost-benefit, impact on customers, scale of the problem and similar factors to ensure we are investing in the most beneficial way for our customers.

2.3 River Health and Storm Overflows

2.3.1 We have three types of sewers in our network: foul sewers, surface water sewers and combined sewers. Foul sewers carry waste from properties including from toilets, sinks, showers and washing machines. Surface water sewers contain rainwater which runs off impermeable areas such as paving, roofs and highways. Combined sewers have a mixture of foul and surface water. Foul and combined sewers transport wastewater to the nearest wastewater treatment works where it is cleaned and safely returned to the environment. Surface water sewers usually drain directly into a local watercourse without the need for any treatment.

2.3.2 We all know rainfall in Yorkshire can be unpredictable, so when the networks we operate were constructed, in the main prior to privatisation of the water sector, storm overflows were installed to act as a relief valve for heavy rainfall events. Overflows reduce the pressure on combined sewers and stop the system from backing up and flooding homes and gardens. Most of our storm overflows have preliminary treatment such as screens or storm settlement before they operate.

2.3.3 This asset management period (AMP7), we had already planned to invest £147m directly in reducing discharges from our network. In 2022 we announced £180m of additional investment, with £c.99m of new investment from our shareholders, to reduce Yorkshire Water's use of combined storm overflows. The target of this investment is to reduce discharges by at least 20% from our 2021 baseline figures. We are using 2021 figures because this was the latest complete data set at the time of announcing the additional investment.

2.3.4 To ensure this investment has the largest impact, we have been undertaking ground surveys, feasibility studies and detailed design and have identified over 130 sites for investment.

2.3.5 Assets in York identified for investment include:

- Fishergate
- Layerthorpe
- Coney Street
- Kexby Wastewater Treatment Works
- Wheldrake (known as Courtneys)
- Elvington
- Fulford
- Lower Poppleton

- Riverside Gardens

2.3.5 In August 2022 the Government published their Storm Overflow Discharge Reduction Plan, which includes 3 key targets; investment in Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and nature reserves, investment in bathing waters, an overall target that storm overflows will not discharge above an average of 10 rainfall events per year by 2050. Storm overflows including in our business plan for investment next AMP in York are:

- Bootham Hospital
- Foss Bank
- Foss Island Road
- Fulford Main Street
- Heworth Green
- Huntington Road
- Lendal Hill
- Marygate Landing
- Marygate Lane
- Queen Street Bridge
- Queen Staith
- Skeldergate
- York Landing Lane

2.3.6 To ensure we meet or exceed these targets we have created a plan for storm overflow investment through to 2050. By nature, combined systems take both surface water and wastewater, and it is the prolonged or heavy rainfall that causes the networks to become overwhelmed, therefore surface water removal is a very effective way to reduce discharges. As such, partnership working with the Council is important to identify where we can collaborate on surface water removal and the use of sustainable urban drainage and other blue-green initiatives.

2.3.7 Earlier this year we published a live storm overflow map, to help ensure transparency about the use of Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs). The map is publicly available on our website and has every Yorkshire Water storm overflow plotted. For each storm overflow the map shows if it is currently discharging, has recently discharged, is under maintenance or hasn't discharged recently. The map is available at: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/45b567b9b39d4ceea64c22c19366d118/page/Page/> This page also provides answers to frequently asked questions, as well as information about our investment in individual overflows.

2.3.8 We also publish our Annual Event Duration Monitoring data, that we submit to the EA each year, on our website. The map is available at: <https://yw-dwmp-portal.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/1afa8a411aba48d0b5f1855672158577>

2.4 Flooding

2.4.1 Yorkshire Water has a number of flood risk assets and temporary pumps that are deployed when river levels are high to minimise surface water and sewer flooding. The deployment of the YW flood plan is done in close consultation with COYC and

the EA. Winter 23/24 saw our flood plans deployed much more regularly than usual and we're currently in a period of review, we will consider how we can improve our communication with customers; minimise disruption for customers, where we could implement automation and the longer term resilience of our network to flooding.

- 2.4.2 Over the last couple of months, we have met with the local community of Bishopthorpe and Acaster Malbis; Councillors representing residents at Clementhorpe and the Member of Parliament for York Inner to discuss our flood plans and our current process of review.

3 Contacting Yorkshire Water

- 3.1 Members of the public should contact Yorkshire Water through the contact details provided on our website, <https://www.yorkshirewater.com/get-in-touch/> or by phone on 0345 124 2424.
- 3.2 Councillors and Council Officers should contact the Public Affairs Team with any issues. They monitor their phones and inbox during normal working hours. The email is publicaffairsteam@yorkshirewater.co.uk. Please only share these contact details with Councillors and ask them not to share them any wider.

Tim Myatt
Head of Corporate Affairs

Contact Officer: Sarah Robinson
Corporate Affairs Advisor

AMP	Asset Management Period
PR24	Price Review 2024
SuDS	Sustainable Urban Drainage
WINEP	Water Industry National Investment Programme
WRMP	Water Resource Management Plan
CSO	Combined Sewer Overflow