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By email

Colin Skellett
Chief Executive Officer
Wessex Water

8 December 2021

OFFICIAL

Dear Colin,

Strategic regional water resource solutions: Standard gate one final decision for Wessex Water

I am writing to inform you of our final decisions in respect of the following strategic regional water resource solutions:

- West Country South Sources and Transfers
- West Country South Southern Water Transfer

The RAPID partner regulators would like to thank Wessex Water for submission timeliness, its collaborative approach and positive engagement which has helped drive the quality and speed of progression of these solutions.

This letter should be read in conjunction with the final decision documents for each of these solutions, which are published alongside this letter. Both this letter and the final decision documents are published on our website on 8 December 2021.

The solution sponsors and other interested parties had the opportunity to respond to the draft decisions during the representation period, which followed the publication of the draft decisions on 14 September 2021. We have taken all relevant representations into account in making our final decisions.

The table below summarises the elements of our final decisions in respect of the Wessex Water-sponsored solutions. Further details are contained in the accompanying final decision documents.

Final decision summary in respect of Wessex Water sponsored solutions

Recommendation item	West Country South Sources and Transfers	West Country South Southern Water Transfer
Solution sponsors	South West Water, Wessex Water and Southern Water	South West Water, Wessex Water and Southern Water
Should further funding be allowed for the solution to progress to gate two?	Yes – Poole effluent recycling and transfers No – Roadford reservoir pumped storage and transfer	Yes – Poole effluent recycling and transfers No – Southern Potable Water Transfer
Is there evidence all expenditure is efficient and should be allowed?	Yes	Yes
Delivery incentive penalty?	No	No
Is there any change to partner arrangements?	No	No
Is there a need for a remediation action plan?	No	No

Solutions' progress and funding

Funding is allowed for options within the West Country South Sources and Transfers and West Country South Southern Water Transfer solutions to continue to be developed to standard gate two.

The following options are to continue to be investigated:

- Poole effluent recycling and transfers

The following options are not to continue to be investigated as part of the RAPID gated process:

- Roadford reservoir pumped storage and intra-regional transfer
- Southern potable water transfer

Further funding is not allowed for these options due to the high investment required for a low water resource benefit under a 1 in 500 drought scenario involving a transfer of over 200km.

The source element (Roadford reservoir pumped storage) has approved funding via Ofwat's green economic recovery decisions. The intra-regional transfer element (Roadford transfer from South West Water to Wessex Water) is small in size and local scale and we therefore consider it is not strategic in nature and should not continue in the RAPID gated process. This option element can be progressed as part of business-as-usual through water resources management planning and business planning.

To reflect this reduced solution scope, we will halve the final determination gate two allowance for both solutions.

As set out in the PR19 final determination, any money spent during the gate one assessment stage on these options can be claimed at PR24.

We will also combine West Country South Sources and Transfers and West Country South Southern Water Transfer solutions into a single solution. The two solutions are intrinsically interdependent, with either solution becoming unfeasible if they both do not progress. Combining the two solutions also brings potential working and reporting efficiencies; the solutions both have the same solution sponsors, under which the same teams work on both solutions. The combined solution will be named 'Poole effluent recycling and transfers'.

The combined solution's total allowance and gate allowances will be formed by combining the two solutions' reduced allowances and gate allowances from the final determination. We have also decided to merge the gate one and gate two allowances. The allowances for the Poole effluent recycling and transfers are shown below.

Poole effluent recycling and transfers - (£million 2017-18 prices)

Gate allowance		Gate 1	Gate 2	Gate 3	Gate 4	Total
		10%	15%	35%	40%	100%
Original funding allowance	West Country South Sources and Transfers - Poole effluent recycling - Roadford reservoir pumped storage and transfer	0.55	0.83	1.93	2.21	5.52
	West Country South Southern Water Transfer - Southern Raw Water transfer - Southern Potable Water transfer	0.40	0.59	1.39	1.58	3.96
	Total	0.95	1.42	3.32	3.79	9.48
50% funding adjustment from gate two	New combined solution - Poole effluent recycling and transfers	n/a	0.71	1.66	1.90	4.74
Merge gate one and gate two allowances	New combined solution - Poole effluent recycling and transfers		0.80	1.66	1.9	4.74

Our decision to merge the gate one and gate two allowances also applies to West Country North Sources, which results in an available gate two allowance of £0.731m.

Evidence of efficient expenditure

For West Country South Sources and Transfers and West Country South Southern Water Transfer we determine that all expenditure of £0.496 million for the former and £0.282 million for the latter is efficient and appropriate, and we allow it in full. This reflects final and reconciled costs information provided during the representation period.

Submission quality

Our overall classification of the submissions for West Country South Sources and Transfers and West Country South Southern Water Transfer is that they are "Good (meets expectations)".

Remediation

A list of remediation issues is provided in the Appendix to each final decision document divided into priority actions, actions and recommendations. Priority actions are those that should have been completed at gate one and must now be addressed on a short timescale in order to make sure a solution stays on track.

We have not identified any priority actions in respect of West Country South Sources and Transfers and West Country South Southern Water Transfer and therefore there is no need for Wessex Water to submit a remediation action plan for these solutions.

Should you have any questions about this letter or final decisions, please e-mail rapid@ofwat.gov.uk and someone from the team will be in touch.

Once again, Ofwat would like to thank Wessex Water for the work that it has carried out over the gate one period.

Yours sincerely,

David Black
Interim Chief Executive Officer

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