

**Sussex North WZ Statement of Common Ground
July 2023**

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will come forward as an alternative to abstraction at Pulborough. The work of the individual signatories will be progressed in a strategic and coordinated manner:

Governance

- 42 Reports on key water neutrality matters are taken to the Water Neutrality Executive Board for their consideration and recommendations. This consists of senior representatives of the signatories to this statement, as well as representatives from DEIRA¹, DLUHC² and Ofwat. The Executive Board is supported by a Water Neutrality Lead Officer Group, who in turn are supported by smaller and more focused working groups. All of these are coordinated by the Water Neutrality Project Manager, which is a joint post between Hisham District Council, Gawley Brough Council, Chichester District Council, West Sussex County Council and the South Downs National Park Authority.**

Evidence

- 43 Chichester District Council, Gawley Brough Council and Hisham District Council, with the input from all signatories to this Statement of Common Ground, have developed a shared evidence base to support a joint approach to water neutrality and help progress the respective Local Plans. Details of this technical evidence base are set out in the Joint Topic Paper: Water Neutrality. A key element of this is an appraisal of water supply offsetting measures, which are necessary to enable water neutral new development.**
- 44 Given that the WRZ crosses administrative boundaries, the different bodies involved have different regulatory roles and cumulative development impacts must be taken into account, the evidence base stresses the importance of working together across the whole of the WRZ. The signatories agree that they have worked collectively and proactively to address issues relating to the need for water neutrality in the WRZ. The signatories agree to continue to work together and with other authorities and bodies, as necessary to deliver and implement water neutral plans and development.**
- 45 It is agreed that the evidence base is up to date and considered sufficient at the point of publication to support the joint policy as outlined below.**

47 Accordingly, a joint model local plan policy has been drafted to ensure consistency across the WRZ with respect to water neutrality. All relevant signatories agree to including a policy in their emerging Local Plans which closely reflects the model policy, albeit worded to reflect

Appendix 1: Stakeholder Statements of Endorsement / intent

Environment Agency (Solent & South Downs / Kent & South London)

The Environment Agency (Solent & South Downs area & Kent and South London area) endorse the principles set out in this document, including attending the Water Neutrality Executive Board and sharing information in a timely manner upon reasonable request (subject to any relevant legislative provisions such as the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

The matters set out in this document are without prejudice to the Environment Agency's powers and discretions. The above endorsement may be withdrawn after having given reasonable notice to the signatories.

Natural England

Natural England (Kent and Sussex area team) endorse the principles set out in this document, including attending the Water Neutrality Executive Board and sharing information in a timely manner upon reasonable request (subject to any relevant legislative provisions such as the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

The views set out in this document are without prejudice to the proper exercise by Natural England of its powers and duties. The above endorsement may be withdrawn after having given reasonable notice to the signatories.

Southern Water

Southern Water continues to be a key partner in the ongoing activities on Water Neutrality, working to support all of our customers within the Sussex North Water Resource Zone, the key local authorities, Natural England and the **lands**

Appendix 2 Map of Sussex North Water Resource Zone

