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Dear whom it may concern,

**RE: Southern Water Resources Management Plan**

The Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) is a longstanding group of Local Authorities working together to support the sustainable economic growth of the sub region and to facilitate the strategic planning functions to support that growth. The partnership welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Southern Water Resources Management Plan as part of the current consultation.

PUSH is a partnership of Hampshire County Council, the unitary authorities of Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight, and the district authorities of Eastleigh, East Hampshire, Fareham, Gosport, Havant, New Forest, Test Valley and Winchester. Our response is outlined below.

We welcome the robust approach taken to ensure future water supply with the aim of reducing drought risk. We also welcome the long-term timeframe of the document stretching to 2070, which extends beyond the period of existing or emerging Local Plans in the PUSH region. Please note our response should not be interpreted as support for specific schemes mentioned in the Management Plan as these would need to be considered on a case by case basis.

**Water Use/Water Efficiency**

We welcome the approach of the Target 100 to reduce personal water use to 100 litres per day. Whilst ambitious, this responds to the supply issues Southern Water face as a consequence of the new abstraction licence restrictions. Such an approach would also respond positively to the existing NPPF (Paragraph 7) and Draft NPPF (Paragraph 8) to use natural resources prudently.

We also welcome the included reference to encouraging developers to build more sustainable homes which use less water and work towards Target 100 to reduce the amount of extra water Southern Water needs to find. The reference to plans to recycle wastewater for industry to free up fresh water supplies is also strongly welcomed as an opportunity.

In addition to the above noted measures, it is also suggested that Southern Water consider adding a reference to working with Local Planning Authorities to ensure water efficiency policies are included in emerging local plans. This would be reflective of the Draft NPPF which states that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for water supply along with other matters (Paragraph 148).

## **Other Matters**

One area that would benefit from further understanding is that of any further pipeline routes (or pipeline improvements) relating to water supply provision sourced from Havant Thicket Reservoir (Portsmouth Water) or supplies from the River Avon (Bournemouth Water). We would welcome clarification on whether any additional pipeline routes would have any safeguarding of land implications beyond the safeguarded route already identified in Havant Borough (Portsmouth Water). These should ideally be reflected in emerging and future Local Plans. The avoidance or at least minimisation of potential impacts on European nature Conservation sites would too be welcomed.

It is noted that Southern Water has identified broad locations for additional reservoirs and desalination plants with timescales indicating these could be introduced between 2025 – 2030 and 2030 – 2045 respectively. The provision of such major infrastructure is welcomed in principle, particularly due to the wider water supply challenges faced in Southern Water's region of coverage. On observing the Resources Management Plan it appears opportunities have been identified near the River Test and on the Isle of Wight. Early discussion should take place with any Local Planning Authorities potentially affected by this type of infrastructure requirement so that any issues can be discussed.

We are concerned that the Resources Management Plan is silent on some matters, for example the Peel Common Waste Water Treatment Works (WwTW) (Fareham Borough) where potential improvements may be required. The PUSH Integrated Water Management Study (currently confidential), notes that although no significant impact or deterioration is predicted due to future housing growth, the future Peel Common WwTW may require improvements by 2025 to increase capacity in the WwTW, which will be subject to review in 2022. It further states that sewer capacity upgrades are also likely to be required at this WwTW and that the catchment has nitrate problems and catchment level nitrate measures are required now. This is an example of an important issue which should be referenced against the backdrop of potential housing requirements arising from the Government's proposed standard method for calculating local housing need.

Finally, it would be helpful if the Resources Management Plan provides an indication of costs and how it is anticipated the noted projects will be funded, particularly for significant infrastructure items. This will help to provide certainty to both bill payers, local authorities and developers. As one example, if developers are required to fund these future proposals, the Government's proposed Strategic Infrastructure Tariff (if introduced) could be used as a mechanism but there may be viability considerations that will need to be considered and discussed.

We trust that this response is useful. PUSH would welcome further discussion on any related matters and/or discussions with those individual authorities impacted by specific proposals.

Yours sincerely,



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**Chair of PUSH Planning Officers Group**