

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

## Agenda Item 68d(6)

**Subject:** Southern Water Investment  
Notice of Motion from the Green Group

**Date of meeting:** 18 January 2022

**Proposer:** Councillor Hills  
**Seconder:** Councillor Lloyd

**Ward(s) affected:** All

The Committee notes the critical health and environmental concerns around the dumping of raw sewage in our rivers and seas by water companies. Despite being fined £90m for illegally discharging sewage into our waters, Southern Water used the Portobello Storm Outfall near Saltdean to dump raw sewage more than 50 times last year, posing a significant threat to human health and marine ecology.

The Committee notes local residents pay to ensure water is effectively managed and considers Southern Water is not fulfilling its duty to update drainage systems to cope with the impact of climate change.

The Committee therefore requests that the Chief Executive writes to Southern Water

- asking for clarification on plans to stop sewage overflows as soon as possible, by 2030 at the latest.
- Inviting their CEO to a meeting of Health Overview Scrutiny Committee to explain recent actions and to discuss workable ways forward to improve water quality.
- Asking them to engage with local government, the public and community groups to identify investment to improve our city's drainage, in order to reduce flooding and dependence on *the combined sewer capacity*.

The Committee resolves to:

- Work with Southern Water and partners to design and implement a citywide SuDS<sup>i</sup> strategy to reduce surface water flooding by 2030.
- Investigate whether funds from Southern Water's recent fines can be redistributed to pay for works.

### Supporting Information:

[1] [Sewage dumped in sea at Saltdean Beach in Brighton & Hove | The Argus](#)[2] [Southern Water Beachbuoy Stormwater Information](#)

[3] [Surfers Against Sewage Safer Seas and River Service app and online map](#)

[4] [Surfers Against Sewage responds to Southern Water OFWAT fine • Surfers Against Sewage \(sas.org.uk\)](#)

[5] [Surfers Against Sewage 2021 Water Quality Report](#)

[6] [Southern Water response to Surfers Against Sewage 2021 Water Quality Report](#)

[7] Southern Water recently paid Lewes Council to plant trees for this purpose, following calls by council leadership following discharges into the River Ouse.

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<sup>i</sup> Sustainable drainage systems