



Andover Town Council

To **note** a paper in relation to Southern Water Tankers in Andover.

Item No.
12

Produced for: Full Council

By: Town Clerk

Date of Report: 16 Jan 2024

Background:

Councillor E Reynolds has indicated that there is a problem in the Town caused by Water Tankers contracted to Southern Water.

Proposer: Cllr E Reynolds

Seconder: TBC

Proposal:

- A. To **note** the reports from Cllr E Reynolds and Mr L Gates,
- B. To **consider** what action the Town Council can take
- C. To **instruct** Officers accordingly.

Outdated water system

[See notes below \(1\)](#)

For a number of years now from early winter to late spring there have been a number of tanker lorries visiting the villages around Andover on an hourly basis to remove foul water from storage points. The foul water running down roads and verges during heavy rain is very unpleasant and the tankers are unable to cope with demand.

The last couple of years the system has escalated with tankers becoming bigger and queuing in narrow lanes awaiting their turn to fill for alternative disposal.

That disposal takes place on the communal in dust on the commercial industrial estates where the tankers, some now with tanker trailers, dispose of the waste into an existing already overloaded drainage system. [\(2\)](#)

Now the companies and their staff on these estates have to negotiate around the tankers queued up at disposal points and that queue can be up to six or seven tankers at a time and access to premises is impeded by them. [\(2\)](#)

This same drainage system takes all the wastewater from the existing Andover premises and all of Tidworth and Ludgershall's water as well. [\(3\)](#)

The new Andover development also now uses the existing facility for waste disposal, and not forgetting the tankers bringing in cesspit waste from private houses who are not on mains drainage. [\(4\)](#)

All of this wastewater goes to the treatment works at Fullerton and it has a lot to cope with and as

far as I'm aware there has not been much investment made by the Water Companies to allow for the continued building programme that is going on around Andover and surrounding villages to dispose of water waste from these new builds. (4)

The question has to be also asked, is this overloaded treatment works affecting our waterways and rivers and destroying our wildlife and ultimately adding to the continual discharge of unpleasant waste into the sea along our coastline. (5)

A number of questions do arise from tanker use;

1. Why is it necessary to use tankers to take from one place to another and what would be the consequences of this type of operation were to stop?
2. Is the use of tankers a permanent part of the water infrastructure or a temporary solution to an outdated system in need of investment?
3. What is the annual cost of the tankers being used and is this in addition to normal operating costs?
4. What is the carbon footprint of the tanker operation?
5. What is the capacity of the tank operation annually?
6. Is the use of tankers weather dependant and/or seasonal?
7. The continual use of tankers on minor roads already causing extra damage to road surfaces and verges.
8. Other questions to be considered (6).

On the plus side tankers do slow down traffic using these narrow roads as rat runs.

Cllr Ted Reynolds,

Harroway ward, Andover Town Council

Member of the Public – Mr Len Gates:

- (1) As requested please see below my thoughts and experiences based on eight years as a TVBC borough councillor (2003 – 2011) serving on Northern Planning, Planning Control and Plans Panels and other recollections. Things may have changed but I have seen no evidence of it.
- (2) I can't comment on the villages but my gut feeling is the number of tankers discharging and clogging up the estates has increased.
- (3) I can confirm this as an ex-resident and parish councillor in Ludgershall we had an unusual situation where our water was supplied by Wessex Water but sewage handled by Southern through Fullerton. When (at TVBC) I challenged planning officers about whether developments in Tidworth/Ludgershall would have an adverse effect on TVBC infrastructure and therefore material planning considerations when considering TVBC planning I was told they couldn't be considered.
- (4) I and others regularly challenged TVBC officers on the need to upgrade water and sewage systems to meet the needs of future developments. The population then was about 37,000 and was projected to rise to about 45,000 (figures from memory). I believe the current figure is over

52,000. This has been accompanied by similar sized increases in Tidworth and Ludgershall. Whatever the exact figures – its in the region of 40% increase in population across the area. While water saving measures are incorporated in new developments it was always acknowledged that at some stage upgrades to both the water supply and sewage were going to be needed. I was told that inadequate infrastructure was not a material planning consideration.

- (5) The answer is undoubtedly – yes. It probably is now and will do more so in the future. I know from conversations with farmers on the Test that there were serious concerns about river water quality then and from TVBC officers that Southern Water would have to upgrade Fullerton to cope. Perhaps TVBC scrutiny committee should call in Southern Water to explain what measures have been taken and are planned.
- (6) This very good report covers only issues regarding sewage disposal but not water supply. As already mentioned I and others researched both supply and sewage. Water supply is also a major problem particularly when global warming is taken into account. Andover's water is taken from the aquifer below Test Valley. It fills during wet months and can be pumped out later. But it has a limited volume and if it dries out its capacity to absorb water when it rains decreases, leading to flooding in winter months. This is happening now. We need to plan for wetter winters and drier summers. Even with water saving implemented in new builds it was accepted that one day Andover may need a reservoir to the north and that Southern Water will do it when it's needed. One (not entirely facetious) suggestions was to pump water from Romsey back up to the Overton/Whitchurch to replenish the Test. Others have recently commented on flooding particularly on Northern Avenue where nothing seems to have changed since 2012. The Wickes development at Enham Arch is built on what were water meadows, as are the flats in Shepherd Spring Lane. When both were built we were told drainage systems were in place to cope with flooding. Nothing wrong with that – Salisbury cathedral sits on water but has water meadows to take away the excess. The drains in Andover weren't good enough then and aren't now. In 2012 the solution was to clear the drains so water flowed back into the Anton – moving the problem somewhere else. Current events are showing that the water system in Test Valley is coming under increased pressure from development and action is required.

Len Gates 18/01/2024