

Broads Authority

27 September 2019

Agenda item number 13

Water Resources East

Report by Director of Strategic Services

Summary

This report considers the Broads Authority's relationship with Water Resources East.

Recommendation

To consider whether the Broads Authority should join the Board or the Strategic Advisory Group of Water Resources East.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Water Resources East (WRE) is a 'Company Limited by Guarantee' pioneering a collaborative approach to water resources planning. Instead of the traditional approach in which water companies look at water resources planning for their respective areas in isolation, WRE brings together regulators, companies, retailers and individuals in the water, agriculture, power and environmental sectors. It looks at the needs and potential trade-offs across all these organisations and balances considerations of customers, agriculture, the economy and the environment.
- 1.2. Members are aware of the critical role that the planning of future water resources will play in a region already vulnerable to water shortages. WRE's mission is: "To work in partnership to safeguard a sustainable supply of water for the East of England, resilient to future challenges and enabling the area's communities, environment and economy to reach their full potential." Information about the company can be found at <http://www.waterresourceeast.com/>
- 1.3. The Board of WRE comprises representatives from the water companies (Anglian Water, Essex and Suffolk Water, Cambridge Water Company, Severn Trent Water and Affinity Water), County Councils (Norfolk, Suffolk and Lincolnshire), the National Farmers Union and others. The minimum financial contribution to join the Board is 1% of turnover or £15,000.
- 1.4. There is also a Strategic Advisory Group whose role is to "support and enable the Board of Directors to make informed decisions". They are members of the Company with a liability of £1 upon winding up of the Company. They vote formally on matters deemed by the Board of Directors.

- 1.5. There is also a Consultation Group for those bodies, such as the regulators, who are unable to become members of the Company.
- 1.6. Given the significance of water resources management in the Broadland Catchment, officers recommend that the Broads Authority joins WRE's Strategic Advisory Group to support this important work and connect initiatives in the catchment to the wider Eastern Region.
- 1.7. Members may be of the view that, as guardians of the East of England's 'National Park', the Authority should consider joining the WRE Board to have a greater involvement and influence in this critical policy area.

2. Financial implications and risk analysis

- 2.1. The cost and risks of joining the Strategic Advisory Group would be minimal. The cost of joining the Board would be £15,000 per year, a significant sum that would need to be funded from National Park Reserves, and the Authority would have its risks limited by the WRE company structure.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. This initiative, led by the water companies, is vital for the future of our region and our society, environment and economy. The Broads Authority should, within its limited resources, support and engage with WRE.

Author: Marie-Pierre Tighe

Date of report: 22 August 2019

[Broads Plan](#) objectives: A

Appendix 1 – WRE Standard Membership application letter

Appendix 2 – [Water Resources East Business Plan 2019/2020](#)

Appendix 1

[TO BE WRITTEN ON CORPORATE LETTERHEAD]

The Directors, c/o Dr Robin Price (Interim Managing Director)
Water Resources East (WRE) Limited
Lancaster House
Lancaster Way
Ermine Business Park
Huntingdon
Cambridgeshire
PE29 6XU

[DATE]

Dear Sirs

Application for Membership of WATER RESOURCES EAST (WRE) LIMITED (the Company)

We, the undersigned of the above address, wish to apply to become a Standard member of the Company and agree to be bound by the provisions of the Company's articles of association (the "Articles").

In particular, we agree to guarantee the debts of the Company up to a maximum amount of £1 if the Company is wound up whilst we are a member and for a period of up to 12 months after our membership ends.

Subject to our application being successful, we authorise you to enter our name in the company's register of members.

Yours faithfully

[PRINT NAME]

For and on behalf of

[ORGANISATION]