Your water, your say

Yorkshire Water

Session 1 Final report

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Introduction

This is a final written record of the "Your Water Your Say" session held by Yorkshire Water on Wednesday, 7 June 2023.

This online event was held as part of Ofwat's requirement for all water businesses to present their 2025-2030 business plans and give our customers the opportunity to pose questions about the issues important to them.

This final report comprises two sections. The first section is the written record of the live session which includes the independent chair's introduction, the company's introduction presentation and the questions asked and answered during the event.
The second section covers all supplementary questions and answers (i.e. those submitted by customers and stakeholders that were not answered during the live session).

‘Your water, your say’ session

Speakers

Kevin Johnson, Independent Chair
Kay Greenbank, Ofwat
Steve Hobbs, Consumer Council for Water (CCW)
Nicola Shaw, Chief Executive, Yorkshire Water
Neil Dewis, Director of Water, Yorkshire Water
Ben Roche, Director of Wastewater, Yorkshire Water
Chris Offer, Director of Strategy & Regulation, Yorkshire Water
Attendance: A cross section of customers and other stakeholder representatives also attended the session online

Independent Chair’s introduction

The Chair advised that this “Your Water, Your Say” session is part of the price review process, which is known as PR24 in the industry. As part of PR24, water and wastewater companies in England and Wales, including Yorkshire Water, are currently developing their plans for 2025 to 2030. This will set price controls for water and for sewage companies for the next five-year period. Plans will cover everything that Yorkshire Water does now and what it will do in the future. The Chair confirmed that he had been appointed by both Ofwat and CCW to act as the independent chair for YWYS sessions across the sector. The Company, Ofwat and CCW were keen for customers and stakeholder representatives to pose questions about Yorkshire Water and the issues which were important to them. The Chair was keen for participants to offer constructive challenge to the Company during the session. The Chair noted that the YWYS sessions were in addition to the customer engagement which was already undertaken by Yorkshire Water and that it does not replace any of Yorkshire Water’s regular insight, communications, or consultation activity.

Company Introductory Presentation

Nicola Shaw, Yorkshire Water's Chief Executive Officer, gave a 15-minute presentation introducing Yorkshire Water, describing the diverse area and customer base the company serves, and explained the current and future challenges the company faces. Nicola spoke about the long-term outcomes that are important for the business, and what challenges the company will focus on delivering in the five-year business plan. The presentation also included Yorkshire Water's customer service priorities, what environmental outcomes it will seek to achieve and the type of support available for vulnerable groups. A copy of the presentation is available at: https://www.yorkshirewater.com/about-us/your-water-your-say/

Event questions and answers

Question No.	Questions and Answers
Theme 1: High quality, drinking water and resources	
1.	**I am frustrated that we purify all the water to such a high quality, and then pour it down the toilet. I wish we could find a way to use much less purified water to use for the toilets and for washing machines and so on. There must be some way to not waste all that purifying effort.** We are addressing this issue within our water resource management plan. There is a high cost to treatment (chemical and electricity) and we do know that over 90% of that water is either flushed or used in commercial purposes. Within our water resource management plan we are looking at demand reduction as the first option and we have a target to 2050 to reduce our per capita consumption. We want to reduce the amount we use down to below 100 litres per head per day, from around 130 and we will be doing that through metering and education. Regarding new developments, we are looking to see how we can target 80 litres per head per day by using grey water solutions. We are also looking to work with businesses, where a business is perhaps using drinking water for cooling or manufacturing, how we can help them by providing different solutions, such as reuse of effluent or using grey water solutions. This is a first step before we look to use new resources.
2.	**Can you please clarify in what way this is happening. Are you also linking up with government and local authorities?** There has been a lot of developments on this issue in the last 5 years particularly around bringing all water companies together as regional planning groups before any new solutions are proposed (other water companies present include Anglian Water, Northumbrian Water etc). We look at how we can move to demand reduction rather than new resources. We have just completed our first round of planning (out of

	5), to ensure that we do not rush to any solutions that are high carbon and not right for the environment. These solutions are multisector therefore we are engaging with other bodies: particularly agriculture leisure, and also the power sector where there is a lot of new water demand as we move to green power solutions. We will be working to see where we can use grey water solutions rather than using drinking water. In conclusion, there are a lot of activities happening on the subject to find the appropriate solutions.
3.	**Grey water harvesting question: what will you do to encourage rainwater harvesting which makes so much environmental sense as well as financial sense for customers?** **How is the conflict of interest being managed when rain that is harvested on site reduces the amounts of water that customers need to buy from you?** **How can you make sure that waterbutts are used to maximum effect to harvest rainwater? As well as expand on the role of smart water butts and leaky water butts to slow the flow, even in wintertime?** We first started working on catchment management in the uplands to protect drinking water quality. We then realised that re-introducing different species of moss and rewetting the moorland also had the benefit of holding water up in the catchment. We are big supporters of the work undertaken by Slow the Flow and we are also looking with interest at some other companies. We know that a significant trial has just been completed on the Isle of Wight around smart waterbutts - where they will allow to fill up during a rain event, and then slowly release. We will also be looking at all those solutions as part of the stormwaters work rather than just looking at hard engineered solutions, because we know the value of them. We really do want to promote waterbutt solutions and reinforce partnership working to make a difference together.

4.	**When I want to source a new connection, as a domestic user I have no other choice than to liaise with Yorkshire Water and I have to pay for that quotation.** **I do not understand why I don't have a choice and why I am being charged for that quotation?** **When I want a new boiler I can get various quotes, if I want new windows I get various quotes. All are free and I choose the best quote. Why does Yorkshire Water charge me that quotation?** It is correct that if somebody applies for a new supply there is a charge for that. Within the business sector, the market has opened up, allowing for different providers to come in and there is some competition. That competition has not extended into the domestic market at the moment. However, what we are doing as mentioned as part of our future investment into some of our customer services, is that we are continually looking to improve the efficiency of handling the information coming in, and to be providing the most competitive approach to laying that new pipe work. Of course, you have to look at that pipe work as well in the lifetime of that pipe work, and we pay upfront for a lot of the cost of the connection. Therefore, the price that we charge is reflective of the cost of fitting that piece of pipework. **I would not expect those to last 25 years. We have paid for those as a customer. First of all, I as a domestic user, I do not have the option of using somebody else, I have no choice.** Audio issues - to be followed up following full question being posed in the chat or via the CCW mailbox. In summary, the market has opened up in the business sector, but it hasn't in the domestic. This is a point we can take away and continue to challenge.

5.	**How do you plan to cope with future water supply problems caused by changing weather patterns and increasing housing and industrial developments to ensure that quality affordable water is available to everyone?** The below answer also encapsulates wider questions on our water resource management planning. Every 5 years we produce a statutory document called the Water Resource Management Plan, which forecasts our demand over the next 25 to 50 years (we have expanded the planning horizon to 50 years in this period). We look at various things including supply, areas where we are seeing the climate change and the amount of water coming into the system. We also look at demand (both business and customer demand). The model shows that over the next 50 years, business demand is managed down however domestic demand is growing and increasing, and also that supply is reducing because of the impacts of climate change. If we look ahead by 2039, we see a supply-demand deficit. This means that the type of extreme situations that we saw last year where we had to introduce temporary use bans will occur more often than the once every 25 years, which is our current level of service. Our customers have said they are, at the moment, happy with that one in 25-year level of service. However, because a lot of people experienced it for the first-time last year, customers may be thinking that they would like that to be increased. So one of the statutory duties in this next plan is to increase the resilience and we are looking at one in 500-year dry weather events now rather than one in 100-year. We have run a series of models to look at what we need to do to close that supply demand gap over the next 25 to 50 years. At the moment the options being selected are picked based on environmental and economic grounds such as leakage reduction and demand management.

	We also look at transferring water within the region. For example, we already have a license on the river Ouse, but we cannot treat all of that water. We are looking at options to move that water around as well as enhancing and expanding some of our water treatment works to deal with that. There are other options such as building reservoirs or transferring water from other companies. At the moment there isn't a need for those, but we are looking ahead and considering what planning we need to do. One option is to bring water in from the Tees. That's a 140 million litre per day option. But we also know that it would take around 15 years to do the planning, engineering and all associated works completed. That is not required until much later in the plan, so we will keep coming back and reviewing that option. So, over the next 5 years, it is really going to be about increasing our level of meters, moving to smart meters to help with demand reduction, driving our leakage down, but also looking at expanding and enhancing a couple of key water treatment works, to be able to move water around the region. We will start doing some planning and investigation work to ensure that the longer-term engineering solutions are being considered. We will make sure we have done all the feasibility and design work so that we can get those in a timely manner, because some of them are 5 to 7 year-engineering solutions to complete.
6.	**How are you ensuring water security? Sufficient storage and quantity now and in the future, and protection from outside bodies such as China and cyber security issues?** We hope that the water sufficiency topic has been addressed in the question above in terms of water resources planning. We also know that there are new threats emerging. Under the Network Information Services - which is a duty that the drinking water inspectorate now holds - we ensure that all of our treatment works and operations are given the best possible protection. This might include

	activation alarms if anyone tries to enter a reservoir, but also it provides all of the cyber protection in case somebody tried to access. We are also allocating significant investment during this planning period, and we will be looking to strengthen that further as we go forward with an increase in the investment in operational technology. One benefit of the way we operate now is a lot of our treatment works are automated, which is great for being able to operate them 24/7 very efficiently. However, it also incurs risks as highlighted by the question. We assure our customers that we are very alert. We are fully compliant with the new duties the drinking water inspector have and we will be putting more investment into continuing to be compliant going forward.
7.	**I am a retired employee who was in charge of water investment for a while. One of the things that we were doing in the late 1990'S was the Tees link. There were plans in place to deliver that by 2005. I'm wondering why now, when those plans were available and usable, it seems to be pushed back, particularly when we are getting all the weather forecasts that suggest resources will be in short supply. And for those who don't know the Tees link was water transferred from Kielder Water in Northumbria to the River Tees, extract it from the Tees, and using the local river network to take it to York. I am wondering why it is now suddenly being looked at when it was across my desk then 26 years ago.** In simple terms, quite a lot has changed. The first thing is that we brought leakage down an awful lot since the 90's, from 500 megalitres per day now down to 280 now. We have a plan to get it down further to 250 and by 2050, we want to get it down to 160 megalitres per day. That is one of the big changes that has created headroom. We also have to thank people like you for the legacy of the grid network which we have expanded and built on over the last 25 years which has given us even more flexibility to move water around.

	One other thing that has changed is business demand has dropped off considerably, industrial demand has changed a lot. It is still an option within our water resource management plan, but it isn't coming up as the top priority. However, we are conscious that in the next 15 years, we will have to look at doing something. Another thing that has slightly changed now is Northumbrian are also looking at their position because they have climate change occurring and they have new energy supplies that they need to provide for on the East coast. Environmentally as well, the movement of water between rivers and the kind of invasive species that can be moved around is a major constraint that perhaps was not as prevalent back then. We are not excluding this option however we are putting forward the most economic and environmentally sound solutions at the moment.
8.	**With energy and gas, there are smart meters that give you real time information. Is this something that you have got in in the plan to show the real time water consumption, and to hopefully build on to gain people's trust?** **When it comes to leaks, it would be great if again, you make it public, or at least for Yorkshire Water customers. A webpage where they can actually see real time leakage and how quickly you fix them. Because the numbers mentioned before are just mind blowing, and even the fact that you have plans to reduce them, or even half them by 2050 - that seems like a long time. I have no experience in terms of how difficult the challenge would be but it seems like a long time.** **Finally, regarding the rain harvest, when new estates are being built, as part of Building Regulations, they have to have an energy performance rating. Is it something that you can work to, to encourage them to use more rainwater harvest for washing and flushing toilets? Or do you just connect them as you would do an old property?**

	There is a huge investment going in this period, and it will be continuing to the next to improve how intelligent our network is. 20 or 30 years ago, we didn't necessarily know where the water was going and where the leakage was. We have got an absolute handle on where it is now to the point where we know a third of it occurs on customer side, on the property side, and two thirds is on our network. It is more complicated to get leakage down as there is a lot of infrastructure out there: 32,000 kilometres of pipe work, with 2.2 million connections off. So there are a lot of opportunities for there to be leakage. But we now have a real handle on it. This is combined with about 1.6 million meters out on the network that we are also going to be moving to smart meters. That is something that customers will welcome because as we have seen with gas and electric, once people will be able to see what they are using then we see the behavioural change. This will be one of the big things that leads to behavioural change and reduction of consumption. We touched on the rainbutts earlier so hopefully that part of the question is covered. We remain absolutely focused on it.
9.	**A lot of the buildings cannot be proactively covered by grey water connection. With all the new housing being built, that could be a testing ground to try and get something done to try and recycle grey water instead of having to use purified water.** It is an area we continue to work with house builders as an industry and as a sector to encourage it. We would like, perhaps greater legislation and statutory powers to be able to do it. What we will see is that smart metering will become compulsory in new housing. It has been the case that efficient use of water has had to be standard in-house building, and it is an area we need to remain focused on. It is a great point that it is very difficult to retrofit on some of the older housing and the opportunity is in the new build. We also need to bear in mind that some commercial areas use a lot of water, and it is quite easy to develop a relationship with them and look at their greywater options which is the area we are prioritising.

	On water recycling – some industries clean water before putting it back into the system. Is that still happening? In the next planning period there will be a new target that we are going to have specifically on business plan. Businesses are very much incentivised. [Answer interrupted]
Theme 2: Assets and services	
10.	**What are your plans for dealing with the shocking release of wastewater into rivers and the sea, and also for dealing with the many disruptions and leaks on the pipe work?** We are absolutely clear that it is not where we want to be. So we are putting £180m into a plan for the next 2 years to invest in 190 of our combined sewer overflows. When there is a storm, we let sewage and water from the storm into rivers and we are taking action on those immediately to get significant reduction by 2025 and then the next bit of our plan is from 2025-30 to focus on places where people want to swim, and on places of real high priority. We have got investment planned for another 200 places to reduce the impact we are having on the environment. The obvious question that comes up in is why we have them in the first place, and why does Yorkshire have so many? The reason we have them in the first place is they act as pressure relief valves. We are planning to come away from them, but they are pressure relief for the combined sewerage. 'Combined' because it is a mix of wastewater and surface water; so when it rains, the system capacity fills up, needs to relieve pressure and releases that sewage to the environment. We know our tolerance of this is completely changing but this prevents it overflowing into gardens and homes.

	Now, why do we have so many? The North of England actually has the highest number of storm overflows in the country and the improvement required (just over half of the national improvement) will have to come from either side of the Pennines: ourselves Yorkshire Water and United Utilities. The reason why we have so many in the North is because of our development during our industrial heritage: populations grew in valleys adjacent to the water sources that we have and in areas of high rainfall. Unfortunately, most of our overflows are on that Pennine corridor in the west, in the shadow of the Pennines – The Calder and the Aire. But we are committed to doing something about this which is going to be the largest environmental improvement program that we have ever embarked on. We are making improvements now and importantly for the next investment period. Our first step will be to make improvements on 211 overflows which will cost an approximate £700m, distributed across the Nidd, the Wharfe, the Ouse, and importantly in West Yorkshire on the Aire and the Calder, the Colne, the Holme but also in South Yorkshire on the Dearne and for those that love the coast we will be going to Scarborough too. There are a lot of questions about how much we are going to use concrete, and what are called grey solutions versus blue-green solutions which are much more natural. There are two ways to do that, and we really want to do it: The first is to make sure that we slow the flow to stop the water getting into the service network, and so working in partnership with the upland farmers on all sorts of things and partnership to help with that. The second is natural solutions: working to improve the extent to which we really keep the water and treat the wastewater naturally. All of those things are in the plan, and they take a bit more time to deliver because we have to work hard to work with our colleagues in different areas of the sector and in different places in the local area. We would very much welcome any ideas about how we could do that in partnership.

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11.	**There are 2 key components to sewage flooding, particularly from CSOs (combined sewers overflows).** **Number one is the surface water flows that overwhelm the systems. Number two is the capacity of those combined sewers and there's been precious little action to protect us from number two and even if increased, it will take some time. But there is a lot of scope for considerable reduction in number one from slowing the flow in natural flood management, and that includes soil, qualities, etc. So how much funding are you willing to commit and ring fence to number one, as in slowing the flow? Considering the cost benefit analysis, and that so much can be achieved with relatively limited funding.** Specific allocated funding to be provided to audience member following the event. **Our organisations is looking at exactly that and we actually do work with somebody from Yorkshire Water, who does soil quality, soil organic matter etc. You are already funding some of that, but we could certainly find, or we could certainly use some money to do exactly that slowing the flow business, which incidentally tends also to be good for water quality in terms of getting sediments out to the water, and so on.** We want to do the nature-based solutions: blue, green infrastructure. And if we take the investment program that we have got on reducing spills in this 5-year period, i.e. to reduce spills by 20% by April 2025, already we are getting solutions that deal with surface water. Hence out of the total solutions that we deliver, 48% of those will be either nature based or surface water removal. We want to do more of those. We have a huge investment program ahead of us and everyone at Yorkshire Water wants to do the right thing for the environment and get multiple natural capital wins like the scheme as suggested.

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12.	**How many storm overflows will be eliminated as a result of the £1.8 billion you propose spending. How will sites be selected? It needs to include urban and rural areas.** We are targeting 211 overflows in the first 5-year period of this massive environmental improvement program. The reason why they have been selected is because of their priority status. Either they are overflows discharging into a bathing water which are some of the most sensitive water environments or they are deemed a high priority water course because they are sites of scientific interest or a site where the overflow is impacting on ecological health. In terms of abandoning overflows, it is also a priority in our decision-making. The investigations for the larger program of work are still underway therefore we do not have the precise number of where we are looking to abandon the overflows. The number of overflows does change from year to year because we do go through a process of abandoning overflows wherever we can. However, the reason why we are focusing on the first 5 years is because they are the most sensitive water courses which overflows discharge to.
13.	**I think farmers and landowners have a massive role to play and the more and more I thought about this is that it is cyclical.** **There have been a lot of questions about reusing water. Rather than the concrete box that is measurable, quantifiable, that can be huge and expensive, to collect storm water and grey water. There must be a role to play in the future of scarcity of water where we can have settlement ponds for breeding for fish, polishing ponds before it goes into the water course. And I think that's incredibly valuable the farmers and landowners on adjoining land in the valley bottoms where the treatment plants are. That has to be the solution, and I'm really open to providing that key to unlock it.** There is an opportunity for landowners and farmers to use our land differently and potentially open up different revenue streams in line

	with overall interests of the environment. We do not want to be pouring huge amounts of concrete. We are also going to come on to why net zero is so important for us. Hopefully, our earlier answer provided assurance as to how we are treating this issue, trying to do nature-based solutions as part of this overflow program. Over the next 2 years, 48% of our overflow solutions will be nature-based or surface water removed. We would be happy to continue the conversation about the Esk and that beautiful part of Yorkshire but working with others is a key part of our plan moving forward.
14.	**Question about the metering and monitoring of flows in the sewage network and in the assets. It seems to me that flows are not being assessed adequately and surely smart meters are all the rage and low cost. For example, Peter Hammond's recent report suggested that many sewage assets were spilling before they reached the maximum treatment level. So it is a question about monitoring your own assets and managing your network.** One of the real advantages of monitoring for the water industry on this particular issue is the advent of event duration monitoring on sewer overflows that had led to this citizen regulation / citizen science boom that we have seen. We are proud of our levels of monitoring on the sewer network which is one of the highest in the industry. We have achieved about 98% of the event duration, monitoring of overflows and we will get to a 100% by the end of this financial year. We like what Professor Hammond is doing in terms of his data science approach and really interrogating company performances. There is a lot that we agree with and a lot that we don't agree with. There is a movement to try and measure the volume from overflows; we do not think that is the best environmental outcome: it doesn't provide any additional environmental benefit and has a huge cost to customers. But we do agree that we should be transparent with our reporting and our data**.**

	By the end of this calendar year we will have all of our overflows in near real-time on an interactive website for every customer to be able to access. We have led the way in terms of monitoring deployment in Yorkshire.
15.	**Yorkshire Water should strongly engage in partnerships that are not just those of Yorkshire Water's creation. YW has created some great partnerships but is sometimes reluctant to engage with other partnerships.** **There is a big opportunity around River Trusts partnerships and existing networks to invest in local rivers.** **For example, the East Yorkshire Rivers Trust is significantly underfunded compared to some of the more urban Rivers Trusts around the UK. So there are a lot of opportunities there and we would like to see more. We want to see evidence of it at an operational level.** We are at the beginning of a blossoming relationship with the Rivers Trust however we agree that there is much more to do on partnership working. We have got some good symbolic programmes, but we understand your question whether on a tactical level we are fully committed. We are very much bought into working in partnership with the Rivers Trust, and we have some great examples of where we have delivered real environmental value across the county by doing so.
16.	**When will the Yorkshire Water program of updates to the Aire Valley wastewater treatment works be completed? In particular, when will Marley wastewater treatment works and Dowley Gap Wastewater treatment works have the long-promised tertiary phosphorus treatment in place?** We are investing hugely in phosphorus removal in this 5-year period. We are investing £790m to improve about 640 km of Yorkshire's rivers. Key to removing 56% of phosphorus to reach a target of 80% in the long-term are some of our large wastewater treatment

	works at Keighley and at Shipley and at Bradford. We are investing in those now and the compliance dates for those are the turn of the year 2024/2025. That is when we should see the improvements as we have contracts activities on those sites now.
Theme 3: Protect and improve the natural environment	
17.	**What are Yorkshire Water plans for allowing swim access to reservoirs? I understand they are issues and dangers but the blanket ban and current messaging around swimming in reservoirs has little credibility in terms of the dangers. Are there any plans to work with organisations or allow swimming and also perhaps stop the security patrols that stop swimming?** It is a real challenge for us because we know how much people like the natural resources that we have got, and the reservoirs that we manage, and we let them have access and try to let people have as much access as we can. There are some places where we are working with sailing clubs, for example, and we would really encourage them and be interested in a conversation with them about whether they could allow swimming there. Unfortunately, we do need to be really careful about letting people use the reservoirs in full. A bucket load of reasons for that one is, they tend to be a lot colder than people realise, and people get into difficulty if they swim when it's cold, and there's nobody there full-time to make sure they stay safe. Secondly, there is stuff under the water, some of which is pretty nasty, and you probably saw some of them last year during the draught, like rebar and things. You would not want to hit these when you were swimming and that is another reason why we get concerned. The third is that we have people going to swim when they are not really in the right state, and that worries us too, so we don't want to confuse people. Working with existing organisations using the reservoir for

	other purposes is what we would really like to do. We think that might be a helpful way forward. **I was not asking information about why it is dangerous to swim. Regarding the drought and obstructions in water, we will have seen during the drought some of the reservoirs 20/30meters lower than I have seen them previously and all I have seen is wood, sand, rubble. I am not talking about swimming near sink holes or submerged villages. I am talking about using the top 5 meters, 1 meter of the water. There is an awful lot of reservoir estate that would make suitable swimming, I would just like you to consider it please.** We will continue to consider it. We are worried about the insurance implications and all of the things that go along with it, but we will continue to consider it.
18.	**How are you managing the public access to reservoirs so that birds and small mammals are protected from disturbance and vegetation is not damaged by trampling and the effects of eutrophication from dog faeces.** We need to find a balance. One thing we have in place is reservoir rangers to try and help us manage the relationship between people who are enjoying the environment and the environment. We also encourage people to use all of the facilities like those for people to pick up and dispose of their dog faeces, to make sure that they stay out of the environment. There are all sorts of things we are going to do, and we are going to keep trying to find the right balance. It is a challenge.
19.	**[…]How can we engage with Yorkshire Water to have dialogue about opening up swimming access?** Our reservoir rangers are one way into that conversation as well as working with Yorkshire Water CEO and our public affairs team on what the options are would be really helpful. The challenge we have had is that many of the people who try and swim are not the experience

	people you're talking about with all of that knowledge and learning. We need to make sure we don't send mixed messages, and that's one of the things we are really worried about. Talking to you about your learning, and how you think we might be able to do it better, would be really helpful. **We would really welcome the opportunity to do that. There are lots of things that we can draw on to help and work with you positively. We are just not quite sure of the routes in really.** Contact details to be provided to continue the conversation. We had people dying last year when they were swimming in the reservoir. That is the reason why we are so nervous about this. If we are going to do anything we have to do it right. We don't want people dying. That is a terrible result.
20.	**When will you be able to deal with the difficulties created by pollution?** The industry is assessed by the Environment Agency with what is called the Water Framework Directive, which sets out a number of reasons for not achieving good ecological status. Actually, the overflow bit, despite all the press and media that we've seen recently, contributes quite a small amount - about 7% overall – to not achieving good in terms of ecological health. The bigger issue for the water industry, and indeed Yorkshire Water, has been that of the nutrient pollution from continuous discharges from our wastewater treatment works, and that is because we have ammonia and phosphorus in our sewage, and we need to reduce and treat it before its returned. That is why there has been a huge amount of focus on removing nutrients from our wastewaters and we are spending a huge amount of money in this investment period. We have talked about some of the large wastewater treatment works that are getting it. We intend to improve about 640 km of river, and we are spending hundreds of millions of pounds in this 5**-year** period

	(2020-2025) to reduce the risk of eutrophication, which is the toxicity to fish, associated with ammonia and phosphorus pollution. To end with a positive story: in Yorkshire we have got some big industrial rivers that were in a very poor ecological state many years ago. It was said that the river Don was ecologically 'dead' at some point because of all the industry and the pollution from assets. We can now see, after working in partnership with Rivers Trust and removing fish barriers and putting fish passes in, (we have done 5 on the river Don) that for the first time in 200 years salmon migrating up the river Don. That is because as an industry with the support of customers and working in partnership with people at the Rivers Trust, we are seeing improvements. We are doing it on the nutrient pollution. We are turning our attention to overflows as we have discussed, and we have got a track record of improving things. So I would say, the future is positive, and we have got a good track record of making a real difference in Yorkshire.
21.	**I am concerned about the notion of taking water out of rivers as it seems particularly damaging. When Yorkshire Water takes water from rivers, what's the impact to the environment and the wildlife? Why are you removing water from rivers and what can you do to limit any potential environmental damage that removing that water may have?** All of our water in Yorkshire comes from rivers of some form whether it is up in the catchments or where we impound it in reservoirs, it always starts life as a river. In the west of the county, rivers have a reservoir where we impound the water and then we take the water down and treat it. We have a number of abstraction points directly off rivers at the Wharfe, the Derwent and the Ouse, and the reason is because there is very plentiful supply of water on those rivers. They are very big rivers that collect waters from all across the Yorkshire catchment, so they are a good source of water. But they are incredibly, tightly regulated, and we work with the Environment Agency all the time to make sure that where we are abstracting water it isn't having environmental harm. We keep those licenses under review all the time. It's for that

	reason last year when the rivers were lower, rather than just continuing to take water that could have caused ecological harm, we had to apply for the drought permits. Ahead of that we have to make sure we communicate with customers to say let's use as little water as we can during this environmentally stressed period so that we can protect the environment. We are very tightly regulated but there is a plentiful supply of water. What we will be doing is balancing the environment versus the needs as we put our water resource management plan together. We are very tightly regulated, and very well managed. We are principally concerned with having great ecologically thriving rivers, as well as our customers are. **Who does the monitoring of that?** We work with the Environment Agency: we submit all the data and they make sure that we are completely in compliance with the abstraction and compensation licenses that we have in place.
Theme 4: Customer service and company	
22.	**Where will you raise the funds required for the investment that you are proposing, and how is that going to affect shareholders dividends? How much of the money raised will be used to pay the shareholders?** Using the same analogy about having a home – if we think about our own homes and mortgages, we are never in a position to pay for our home within the year: we have to invest over the long term and we pay that back over time, and in reality this is how it works. So when we talk about our plans and the scale of the investment required, this means that our investors need to raise that money. We need to make sure

	that we are able to perform as a business so that people that ultimately lend us the money will invest in us, so that they can earn a return. There is a lot of news headlines around levels of return and dividends. Yorkshire Water have not paid a dividend to our investors in the last 6 years. Ofwat within its price review assumes that we should be able to earn about 4% return on the money that gets invested, and certainly over the last few years our returns have been significantly below that. This is a measure of the fact that it has been a really challenging time for us as a company. We have got a lot to do particularly following the last 12 to 18 months. We have all been impacted by Covid, we have seen a lot of the macroeconomic events impacting the business such as the inflation that everybody is feeling. There are a lot of challenges in this area. We want to dispel some of the myths that there are huge amounts of dividends being paid to our investors. What we are aiming to do is to provide them with a fair return, which Ofwat regulates. There is a fair assessment of us performing well as a company, the challenge of managing the business is that we need to perform well, to ensure that those returns are earned for solid, good, reliable, underlying performance.
23.	**Our understanding is that you don't pay dividends to your shareholders, but you do pay interest payments on loans that you raise inside of your holding company.** **As water companies are privatised, we expect that money that was available at that point would be invested in the infrastructure and the services that were delivered. We have been very involved in putting a clean river campaign in Ilkley and are delighted Yorkshire Water will be putting improvements in place, but we are very disappointed to be told we have to pay for that. Ofwat assured us there would be no extra bills for improvements in Ilkley. The idea is that we have already paid our bills, so proposed increase of £12 a year on bills a year is £138m over five years which is the same as**

	Yorkshire Water profit from 2013 to 2017. We are disappointed about bill increases to pay for this, we fell it has already been paid for. Regarding the first point on inter-company loans, this is something we have been in discussion with Ofwat and our shareholders about. We are in the middle of making sure that we are taking out any of those legacy arrangements with respect to intercompany loans. It is a complex area of corporate finance however the good news is that those inter-company loans are being taken out. Regarding increased bills – looking at the broader context - the industry was privatised on the assumption that it would be better able to access much needed investment. The water authorities at the time had been significantly underfunded for decades and that was really the basis of why the government took the decision to privatise the industry in order to access the finance that was needed to make those investments over time. The short answer to your question is, over that time period, the priorities and what we have needed to invest in have shifted and changed. There are probably lots of examples like Ilkley, where a particular scheme theoretically should have been paid for. The reality is that over time it is the regulatory requirements and the areas we need to deliver against that are shifting and changing. Societal attitudes have shifted and changed, and regulation has shifted and changed. We are absolutely on the front foot, recognising and understanding these changes and responding as quickly and as swiftly as we can and developing our plans. That does mean we will need additional investment to be able to realise the improvements needed and to deliver the outcomes that everybody is looking for.
24.	**I am on a water meter, and I have a medical condition that requires me to use more water. I am finding that I need to be very careful with the use of water, how can you help people like me?**

	Please get in touch with us, we have mechanisms to support somebody in your situation. If we can help through our Water Support, we will. We can help people with a medical condition that requires them to use more water. There are options to help you pay your bill. Secondly, what we found with most people who are on lower incomes with smaller households in particular, is that they will benefit from moving off a rateable value-based bill onto a metering-based bill. We have promised these customers that we will not make them pay more in the first two years, whilst we establish that it is correct. We will also take them back onto a rateable value version of the bill and off the meter if it turns out to be incorrect*. We are working closely with customers. This is not the same situation as electricity meter. It is much more flexible, and we want to work with people to make sure that we can give them the right service. ***Clarification** The rates for the time spent on the meter are still payable however we do proactively reach out to customers to indicate that the metered charged do not seem to be benefiting them.
25.	**It is increasingly apparent that customers are not as well informed about as they may like to be about Yorkshire Water's plans, spending, the impact of discharges and abstractions etc. I am interested in what Yorkshire Water might offer to increase the level of understanding of these issues?** We are always looking for new ways to communicate. We have a team, for example, out in Sheffield and some of the communities that we work with there, literally knocking on doors to talk to people about what they can do to help us, and what we can do to help them (i.e. not putting wet wipes down the loo, or making sure that we can help them with the amount of water they consume, or how we can support them with bills). There are things we do on the internet and in the media to try and make sure we get our messages across positively in the media. It is

	quite hard to put positive messages out via the media, but we are looking to keep making sure we find ways of doing that. There is a lot in our social media and on our website about what we do, and we will keep looking for new ways to communicate with customers. If you have any ideas, let us have them, because we agree it would be great to be able to communicate more effectively

Supplementary questions and answers

The below section covers answers to the questions that were submitted by customers and stakeholders during our "Your water, your say" event which were not answered during the event, and questions that were submitted to CCW in advance of the event.

Please note that Yorkshire Water's business plan is still in development. All answers provided reflect the current status of the plan and are subject to change prior to submission in October 2023.

Question No.	Questions and Answers
Theme 1: High quality drinking water & resources	
1.	**Can Yorkshire Water (YW) update on the possibility of a Tees link being delivered?** With regard to the possibility of building the Tees Link, there have been quite a lot of changes since it was first proposed, and the need of this water link for us to move water around is not as much a priority as it was. Firstly, we have largely reduced water leakage from 500 megalitres per day down to 280 now since the 90's and we plan to get it further down to 250 by 2050. This big change, in addition to the legacy of the grid network which we have expanded and built over the last 25 years, have given us more flexibility to move water around. Secondly, business demand has dropped off considerably and finally, from an environmental perspective, the movement of water between rivers and associated import of invasive species is a major constraint when considering this project. We are not excluding this option however we are putting forward the most economic and environmentally sound solutions at the moment.

2.	**With the climate crisis deepening, prolonged dry weather in parts of the UK, it seems we cannot rely on rainfall alone to provide our fresh water supply. What steps are Yorkshire Water taking to have a supply of water in the event of no rainfall? For example, desalination plants.** Our Water Resource Management Plan and its associated models allows the business to plan supplying the customers of our region with reservoir, river and ground water sources for at least the next 50 years - inclusive of climate change and population growth. Those sources of water are the most reliable, in areas of demand and provide both cost effective and efficient long-term solutions. Other options such as desalination for example are also always available in our planning should it be required.
3.	**Why do we improve the quality of water to drinking water standard and then flush it down the toilet ?** We are addressing this issue within our water resource management plan. There is a high cost to treatment (chemical and electricity) and we do know that over 90% of that water is either flushed or used in commercial purposes. Within our water resource management plan we are looking at demand reduction as the first option and we have a target to 2050 to reduce our per capita consumption. We want to reduce the amount we use down to below 100 litres per head per day, from around 130. We have a number of options we will be utilising to reduce per capita consumption over the next 25 years, they start with smart metering, improved communications and awareness, new water labelling of household items along with the use of water efficiency home audits, education and leaky loo reductions. All of the above will be implemented whilst also working on longer term grey and effluent reuse solutions and technology.

	Regarding new developments, we are looking to see how as an industry we can target 80 litres per head per day by using grey water solutions. As well as this we are looking to work proactively within the business retailer market to increase water efficiency with our business customers, this would look to create incentives for business retailers to achieve water savings with customers, implement business water efficiency visits. Where a business is perhaps using drinking water for cooling or manufacturing, we help them by providing different solutions such as reuse of effluent or encourage the installation of water efficient infrastructure such as rainwater harvesting. In 2022/23 our customer communications campaign ran from May through till March across multiple channels which included advertising our key messages across TV, Radio, outdoor billboards, print, digital and social media. This was supported by customer events and media activity featuring key regional, national press and broadcast stories and interviews. We are starting a water efficiency home audit trial in 2023 which will work with customers to understand their water usage and provide them tips on how they can sustainability reduce their consumption to circa 100 litres per person per day.
4.	**What are YW doing to encourage people to reuse grey water for watering gardens, washing cars etc rather than wasting drinking water?** Please refer to the answer to Question 3
5.	**How are you engaging with customers to reduce water use, and use water more efficiently?** Please refer to the answer to Question 3

6.	**Instead of considering expensive reactive ways of moving water around what more can be done to reduce per capita water use as a more pro-active solution?** Please refer to the answer to Question 3
7.	**Do you plan to help customers who want to fit rainwater harvest solutions at their homes?** Yorkshire Water are happy to support customers who want to implement rainwater harvesting solutions in their home. We are planning to offer subsidised water butts to customers in 2023 to help them embrace rainwater harvesting to use in their homes and gardens to reduce dependency on potable water and help them reduce water consumption to circa 100 litres per head per day.
8.	**Like many in Yorkshire I am a keen gardener. What is Yorkshire water doing to increase the use of water butts and give advice on the changes gardeners can make to be more sustainable. Why is there not a scheme to discount and encourage the fitting of water butts and use rainfall? Could you use volunteer support to help people install them? Give advice?** Please refer to the answer to Question 7
9.	**Water is massively important to life yet is invariably taken for granted and likely to be increasingly scarce. Average water use is worrying high in this country. What are you and the other private water companies doing/will do to bring this down dramatically – hence the need to supply less, or does this not fit your business model and profitability?** Our Draft Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) addresses how we as a business are looking to address water usage efficiency over the next 25 years in terms of per capita consumption (PCC) in litres per head per day. The main avenues of this efficiency include installation of smart meters, water

	efficiency devices for both households and businesses, and targeted insight into customer usage habits. Smart metering will provide a platform from which customers can gather information in regard to their water habits and advice on how they might be able to reduce their usage. As well as this we are looking to work proactively within the business retailer market to increase water efficiency with our business customers, this would look to create incentives for business retailers to achieve water savings with customers, implement business water efficiency visits, and encourage installation of water efficient infrastructure such as rainwater harvesting.
10.	**What are your plans to deal with water leaks, so less water is wasted.** We do our best to repair leaks on our network as soon as possible. To help do this, we have increased resource in our networks, leakage, and repair teams and over the last 5 years we have invested around £500m in new technologies. In our 5-year plan, reducing leaks is an element of our programme of works to ensure resilience of our future water supply. £270m has been allocated to this programme which include initiatives to pro-actively detect leaks and reduce our current leakage by 11%. We are also putting in operational measures in place for a better control of our network using technology to obtain real-time information on leaks and also reducing our response time: we are aiming to reduce our leakage by 50% by 2050 through pressure management, new infrastructure and continued investment in network monitoring and management.

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11.	**What will YW do about farm run off into watercourses?** We work with landowners and farmers across Yorkshire to improve water quality. This partnership work includes investing in peatland restoration, tree planting as well as encouraging farmers to use less intensive and more conservation focused farming methods. We do the latter on the farms we own through our Beyond Nature Programme and through partnership working elsewhere.
12.	**Why is Gorpley Reservoir in Todmorden no longer used? Drinking water is pumped all the way up the valley from elsewhere.** Gorpley is no longer used for water supply as it was a vulnerable single source, and we agreed to use it for flood storage to help flood prevention. It is now operated on behalf of the Environment Agency (EA) to provide flood storage for the village of Todmorden. Gorpley reservoir was unable to reliably supply the minimum design flow to consistently run the treatment works at its designed capacity (5Ml/day). Running the treatment works at lower capacity (for example at 1.5Ml/day) is not economically viable. We therefore used to have to regularly shut down the treatment works to allow the reservoir to recharge and needed other routes of supply to keep the village of Todmorden supplied with water. We therefore decommissioned the treatment works and agreed to use the reservoir for flood storage. Yorkshire Water "lease" the top 25% of the reservoir to the EA who release any water above this flood storage level. In addition, Yorkshire Water release a compensation flow of 1.3Ml/d to the river at all times in order to protect the river environment
13.	**You have not mentioned new housing builds, so grey water can be built in and used. What are the plans to increase grey water usage?**

	This is an area where we continue to work with house builders as an industry and as a sector to encourage the increased use of grey water. We would like, perhaps greater legislation and statutory powers to be able to do it. What we will see is that smart metering will become compulsory in new housing. It has been the case that efficient use of water has had to be standard in-house building, and it is an area we need to remain focused on. Schedule 3 or the Flood and Water Management Act is planned to be enacted in 2024 which will mean all new developments must follow the SuDS (Sustainable Drainage System) Hierarchy and rainwater harvesting is the first solution in this hierarchy. We plan to work closely alongside developers to support them to implement the SuDS hierarchy across new build sites. Over the next two years we are also working with customers to retrofit water butts onto at least 2,000 properties for recycling rainwater which is part of our work to reduce storm overflows.
14.	**Not only should we consider water butts for homes but for farming, other industries and businesses.** As of 2025 we will have a new target to drive down the level of Non-Household (NHH) demand (i.e. farming and industries), with a targeted reduction of 9% by 2038 and 15% by 2050. We have a wide range of options that we will explore with the NHH sector to incentive and support their reduction in water consumption, they include grey water harvesting and storage, smart metering, water efficiency audits and incentive plans. Regarding the use of grey water, we are looking to work with businesses and developers. For new developments, we are looking to see how we can target 80 litres per head per day by using grey water solutions. For businesses which are perhaps using drinking water for cooling or manufacturing, we will see how we can help them by providing

	different solutions, such as reuse of effluent or using grey water solutions. This is a first step before we look to use new resources.
15.	**Are YW identifying the impact of water courses in their bathing water performance?** Our bathing water performance commitment for 2020 - 2025 focusses on Yorkshire's designated coastal bathing waters. We have a complex marine impact model that considers how various sources, including rivers, can impact on coastal bathing water quality. Looking forward into 2025 - 2030, our performance commitment will include both designated coastal and inland bathing waters. We are proposing to develop a model for the River Wharfe at Ilkley to understand the impacts to the bathing water quality. We are also proposing to extend our investigations to two non-designated areas where our communities have expressed interest in bathing water applications.
16.	**YW has a responsibility to improve moderate water quality rivers, especially those flowing through areas of natural beauty, and to not overly prioritise urban poor quality rivers. We all need an example of success to seek to emulate elsewhere! I am concerned that cost benefit analysis is based too much on number of people affected.** Cost benefit analysis is a methodology we are required to undertake through guidance provided by the Environment Agency (EA). This is submitted to the EA who then make decisions nationally on the size and scale of investment programmes.
Theme 2: Assets and services	
17.	**I live on Westbourne Grove in Otley, West Yorkshire and for decades now there has been a sewage flooding problem first in my garden then the residences behind my house and know it**

	even floods a busy road junction in front of my house and it will be only a matter of time before it floods down my driveway from the road. As I actually pay a sewage surcharge on my water bill can Yorkshire Water explain how this has been left for decades and if they actually have any intention in the future to actually sort it out once and for all. We are aware of the flooding at Westbourne Grove and have installed measures to reduce the impact of the hydraulically overloaded sewer issue. There have been some other cause incidents in the area too. It is logged on our decision-making framework for investment. We are also building a new model of the area which will help to identify costs and solutions to the problem.
18.	**What are your plans for reducing sewage emissions?** Pollution is something that we work very hard to minimise. We are in the process of investing £180m by 2025 in storm overflow improvements – as well as investigation and increased monitoring. This investment is part of a larger £790m investment into 640km of river improvement across the region. For the next 2 years we will tackle 190 of our combined sewer overflows. This is a process that will take time. There is then a planned investment in a further 211 CSOs in the 2025-2030 period focusing on bathing waters and areas of high priority. The reason we have these overflows in the first place is they act as pressure relief valves. We are planning to come away from them, but they are pressure relief for the combined sewerage. 'Combined' because it is a mix of wastewater and surface water; so when it rains, the system capacity fills up, needs to relieve pressure and releases that sewage to the environment. We know our tolerance of this is completely changing but this prevents it overflowing into gardens and homes.

	Our first step will be to make improvements on 211 overflows distributed across the Nidd, the Wharfe, the Ouse, and importantly in West Yorkshire on the Aire and the Calder, the Colne, the Holme but also in South Yorkshire on the Dearne and for those that love the coast we will be going to Scarborough too. The reason why they have been selected is because of their priority status. Either they are overflows discharging into a bathing water which are some of the most sensitive water environments or they are deemed a high priority water course because they are sites of scientific interest or a site where the overflow is impacting on ecological health. We also have plans to eliminate some overflows, where possible, to improve the situation.
19.	**What will you do to reduce sewage in our Rivers, lakes and streams in Yorkshire? Please give us specific actions with timelines, and how you plan to let customers know the outcomes?** Please refer to the answer to Question 18.
20.	**To address CSOs, you either have to store a lot of storm water in tanks or prevent getting into the sewer system. Shouldn't a major part of YW's strategy be to work with partners to implement large-scale NFM and SuDS projects to help prevent storm flow into the sewers? In particular, close partnership with Rivers Trusts (as other water companies do in other parts of UK)** We are implementing a combination of solutions to reduce the number of spills from our Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO's) which include new wetlands as well as below ground solutions. Each solution is designed for its specific circumstances and taking into account a large number of factors, such as the amount of land

	available, ground conditions, treatment works capacity, the wider network and the amount of storage required. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are a major part of our plans to deliver the improvements to storm overflows, alongside traditional engineering solutions. By slowing the flow of rainwater or complete disconnection of rainwater from the combined sewer we can reduce the spills from overflows. We are increasing the number of nature-based solutions we are constructing in recognition of the wider benefits they bring to slowing the flow, sustainability, and biodiversity. We partner with organisations on schemes to manage surface water flows in our networks, for example we have strategic partnerships like 'Living with Water' in Hull, 'Connected by Water' in Sheffield and project specific partnerships such as 'Roundhay SuDS'. Developing partnerships to unlock SuDS will be important for us to deliver the best value and climate resilient solutions for the storm overflow reduction programme.
21.	**Old infrastructure is costing you and us a fortune to maintain, when will you upgrade the whole network?** Replacing infrastructure for both the clean and wastewater networks is very expensive, which would have a large impact on customer bills. Therefore we must consider how expenditure is phased over time to ensure we do not incur cost too early, but also take into account the social impact of widescale replacement programmes (open excavations, traffic lights etc). There are no plans to replace the entirety of our network immediately, but we will work with our regulator to agree replacement rates based on asset health and service impact of observed failures.
22.	**When is it ever going to be safe to go wild swimming? How are you going to resolve this mess you created? Are you going to let**

	everyone know that the rivers, and beaches are going to be safe to swim in? Pollution is something that we work very hard to minimise. We are in the process of investing £180m by 2025 in storm overflow improvements – as well as investigation and increased monitoring. This investment is part of a larger £790m investment into 640km of river improvement across the region. Our first step is to make improvements on 211 overflows distributed across the Nidd, the Wharfe, the Ouse, and importantly in West Yorkshire on the Aire and the Calder, the Colne, the Holme but also in South Yorkshire on the Dearne as well as Scarborough. The reason why they have been selected is because of their priority status. Either they are overflows discharging into a bathing water which are some of the most sensitive water environments or they are deemed a high priority water course because they are sites of scientific interest or a site where the overflow is impacting on ecological health. Bathing water quality at designated bathing water sites in England is assessed and publicly reported on by the EA. Information on bathing water quality can be accessed by visiting https://environment.data.gov.uk/bwq/profiles/
23.	**There are two key components to sewage flooding, particularly from CSOs. 1. Surface water flows and 2. capacity of the combined sewers. There has been precious little funding to upgrade No 2's and even if increased, it will take time, but there is scope for considerable reduction in 1. from 'Slowing the Flow', NFM etc, including soil quality etc. How much funding are you willing to commit to no 1, considering the cost-benefit analysis and that so much can be achieved with relatively limited funding.**

	On funding: Specific allocated funding - approximately 20% of our planned investment in addressing sewer spills is targeted on non-traditional interventions, this amounts to around £150m between 2025 and 2030 in our draft plan. On cost-efficient way to reduce spills - We want to do the nature-based solutions: blue, green infrastructure. And if we take the investment program that we have got on reducing spills in this 5-year period, i.e. to reduce spills by 20% by April 2025, already we are getting solutions that deal with surface water. Hence out of the total solutions that we deliver, 48% of those will be either nature based or surface water removal. We want to do more of those. We have a huge investment program ahead of us and everyone at Yorkshire Water wants to do the right thing for the environment and get multiple natural capital wins like the scheme as suggested.
24.	**What are Yorkshire Water plans for the treatment of wastewater, so less is contaminating the environment?** We are investing c.£1,072m in enhanced environmental standards a part of the Water Industry National Environmental Programme. This will create continued improvement in the effluent quality being discharged into our river systems. We are investing £790m to improve about 640 km of Yorkshire's rivers. Key to removing 56% of phosphorus to reach a target of 80% in the long-term are some of our large wastewater treatment works at Keighley and at Shipley and at Bradford. We are investing in those now and the compliance dates for those are the turn of the year 2024/2025. That is when we should see the improvements as we have construction activities on those sites now.
25.	**How did the pandemic prevent Yorkshire Water from providing a better service?**

	During the pandemic where non-essential our colleagues worked from home, this involved a significant change in the use of technology and how we work together, including with our essential contract partners. Some of our large projects were put on hold during the peak of the pandemic to ensure colleagues were focused on our urgent projects, and ensuring we adhered to government guidelines. We see real benefits in collaborative working with our contract partners and the pandemic certainly made this more difficult and slowed us down during its peak in 2020.
26.	**We know that drainage risk management is siloed in the country, with highways responsible for highway drainage, lead local authorities responsible for surface water drainage, and water companies responsible for drainage of buildings and yards appurtenant buildings. However, we also know that surface water flood risk in urban areas is the biggest flood risk and it is difficult to do source apportionment to work out how much of the problem each risk authority owns. The DWMPs encourage a collaborative and partnership approach to dealing with drainage. We know that managing surface water will also have a positive impact on storm overflows. How will Yorkshire Water work with all the drainage risk management authorities on developing joined up approaches to surface water management that also deliver on the social and natural capital? (i.e. develop surface water management solutions that also improve the public realm by creating nice places for people to live and work in, create habitats to address the ecological crisis and are adaptive and resilient to changing climate change rainfall patterns)** Yorkshire Water regularly engages with local authorities across its operating region to discuss tactical solutions to local issues. In some cases, such as in Sheffield, this has led to Yorkshire Water part funding the installation of Sustainable Urban Drainage. In

	areas with flood mitigation partnerships involving Yorkshire Water, local authorities and the EA, there have been ambitious schemes such as the installation of permeable paving in Rosmead Street, Hull. Wider strategic work has taken place with the Yorkshire Leaders Board, which has seen all local authorities in Yorkshire invited to sessions to discuss Yorkshire Water's emerging Drainage Water Management Plan.
27.	**How can sewage discharges be explained if there was a drought?** Drought and sewer discharges are two very separate issues. Whilst drought brings with it lower flows generally within the sewer network due to less surface water discharges the base levels of flow are still present. We still had rainfall and storms. When it does rain then because the surfaces it rains on are drier this causes surface water to run off faster and to enter the sewer network faster and our sewer network responds the same as it does when it rains normally, our storm overflows will operate at the same flow levels (regardless of drought conditions) to protect flooding of properties.
28.	**You mentioned 211 overflow developments for water and sewage problems, can the CEO provide information about priorities and specifics about this?** We are targeting 211 overflows in the first 5-year period of this massive environmental improvement program. They are prioritised either because they are overflows discharging into a bathing water which are some of the most sensitive water environments, or they are deemed a high priority water course because they are sites of scientific interest or a site where the overflow is impacting on ecological health. Abandoning overflows is a priority in our decision making. The investigations for the larger program of work are still underway

	therefore we do not have the precise number of where we are looking to abandon the overflows. The number of overflows does change from year to year as we go through a process of abandoning overflows wherever we can.
29.	**What preventative measures are being considered to minimise the level of flow from heavy rainfall? are you working with government, LA's and the public to understand what can be done to store water and prevent unnecessary run off into the sewer system?** We are working across the region to slow the flow using SuDS and this includes trialling the installation of soakaways in customers gardens to disconnect property from the sewer network and installing water butts across Yorkshire to both reduce water demand and reduce the flows entering the sewer network. Yorkshire Water regularly engages with local authorities across its operating region to identify opportunities work in partnership to slow the flow across both urban and rural catchments.
30.	**In rural areas, Farmers and Landowners must work with YW to provide nature-based solutions to replace CSOs that discharge directly into our rivers. Is there really a need for expensive concrete boxes?** There is an opportunity for landowners and farmers to use our land differently and potentially open up different revenue streams in line with overall interests of the environment. We do not want to be pouring huge amounts of concrete as net zero is important to us. We are trying to do nature-based solutions as part of this overflow program. The first is to make sure that we slow the flow to stop the water getting into the service network, and so working in partnership with the upland farmers on all sorts of things and partnership to help with that. The second is natural solutions: working to improve the extent to which we really keep the

	water and treat the wastewater naturally. Over the next 2 years, 48% of our overflow solutions will be nature-based or surface water removed. We would be happy to continue the conversation about the Esk and that beautiful part of Yorkshire but working with others is a key part of our plan moving forward.
31.	**I think the Don is a great success story. When will YW supply real-time data on CSO Discharges? For example, in respect of ammonia and phosphate impacts on fish, we know that CSO discharges are happening following a storm, in peak summer, when rivers are below normal summer level and oxygen levels low.** Citizen-science based monitoring of Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) greatly helps. We are proud of our levels of monitoring on the sewer network which is one of the highest in the industry. We have achieved about 98% of the event duration, monitoring of overflows and we will get to a 100% by the end of this financial year. We do agree that we should be transparent with our reporting and our data. By the end of this calendar year we will have all of our overflows in near real-time on an interactive website for every customer to be able to access. We have led the way in terms of monitoring deployment in Yorkshire. With regards to river health, the water industry is assessed by the EA with what is called the Water Framework Directive. The overflow bit actually contributes quite a small amount - about 7% overall – to not achieving good in terms of ecological health. The bigger issue for Yorkshire Water has been that of the nutrient pollution from continuous discharges from our wastewater treatment works, and that is because we have ammonia and phosphorus in our sewage, and we need to reduce and treat it before its returned.

32.	**All the plans sound very positive - I just despair that ethically and morally YW needed strong public concern to put this plan together re sewerage spillage - yet YW felt it was OK in the past.** Yorkshire Water provides a wide range of services which benefit the region's environment, economy and population. By consistently seeking to deliver high quality services and wider societal benefits where possible, Yorkshire Water can demonstrate its commitment to the long-term health of the region. We have been working on CSO management and sewage removal, improvement of river health, reducing leaks, expanding smart-metering to new housing development, collaborating with stakeholders to work on nature-based solutions, improvement in customer experience, bigger ambition in increasing the people in need to support, etc. And we are going to go further on that. We are proposing £6.9bn of investment to keep doing better in the above aspects.
33.	**Taking it for granted that the eventual solution to 'the CSO problem' is capital investment and that such action may take years, what additional actions do you plan to recover your reputation with customers and other stakeholders?** Yorkshire Water provides a wide range of services which benefit the region's environment, economy and population. By consistently seeking to deliver high quality services and wider societal benefits where possible, Yorkshire Water can demonstrate its commitment to the long-term health of the region. When designing and delivering schemes, engagement with local stakeholders, from councils to environmental groups, leads to strong working relationships within the region. Yorkshire Water already has strategic partnerships with multiple locally based organisations and will continue to develop these partnerships with the ambition of maximising outcomes for the region. On the topic

	of overflows, Yorkshire Water is engaging with local campaigns for bathing water status, as well as increasing transparency of our performance through the introduction of near-to live reporting by the end of 2023.
34.	**I am a trustee of Slow The Flow, a Yorkshire-based charity advocating nature-based solutions to water management. Reductions in Combined Sewer Overflow issues are one of the many benefits of managing water using green infrastructure solutions; which also contribute to improvements in biodiversity, amenity value, air quality and surface water quality, as well as quantity. What commitment is Yorkshire Water making to prioritising investments in green infrastructure and nature-based solutions, rather than grey infrastructure, as part of the storm overflow reduction programme?** We do not want to be pouring huge amounts of concrete as net zero is important to us. We are trying to do nature-based solutions as part of this overflow program. The first is to make sure that we slow the flow to stop the water getting into the service network, and so working in partnership with the upland farmers on all sorts of things and partnership to help with that. The second is natural solutions: working to improve the extent to which we really keep the water and treat the wastewater naturally. Over the next 2 years, 48% of our overflow solutions will be nature-based or surface water removed. We are big supporters of the work undertaken by Slow the Flow and we would be happy to continue the conversation and collaboration with stakeholders to move forward with nature-based solutions.
Theme 3: Protect and improve the natural environment	
35.	**What are your plans for responding to more erratic and extreme rainfall?**

	There are two ways to deal with rainwater: The first is to make sure that we slow the flow to stop the water getting into the service network, and so working in partnership with the upland farmers on all sorts of things and partnership to help with that. The second is natural solutions: working to improve the extent to which we really keep the water and treat the wastewater naturally. All of those things are in the plan, and they take a bit more time to deliver because we have to work hard to work with our colleagues in different areas of the sector and in different places in the local area. We are putting £180m into a plan for the next 2 years to invest in 190 of our combined sewer overflows. When there is a storm, we let sewage and water from the storm into rivers and we are taking action on those immediately to get significant reduction by 2025 and then the next bit of our plan is from 2025-30 to focus on places where people want to swim, and on places of real high priority. We have got investment planned for another 200 places to reduce the impact we are having on the environment.
36.	**What impact do you think climate change will have on aquifers?** Groundwater - water stored in aquifers - is by far the largest store of freshwater in Yorkshire (and the world). Aquifers are similar to huge reservoirs, but the water is stored in narrow fissures and between grains in the rock. This water is derived from autumn and winter rainfall when the soil is wet and plants are not growing and taking up water. This allows rainfall to pass through the soil and into the aquifer. Except for exceptional events such as in summer of 2007 aquifers rarely refill (or recharge) in summer. The latest climate change forecasts are for wetter winters and dryer summers. This is good for groundwater as the recharge comes in the winter and it is normal for no recharge in the summer. So

	climate change may have a positive benefit for our aquifers. As a result we may become more reliant on groundwater in the future.
37.	**Aire & Calder had 32,000 hours of untreated sewage dumping in 2022 according to 'Top of the Poops'. What are YW doing to reduce this environmental vandalism in 2023 and in the future? And how can we be assured that executives won't be rewarded for future failings?** Pollution is something that we work very hard to minimize. We are in the process of investing £180m by 2025 in storm overflow improvements – as well as investigation and increased monitoring. This investment is part of a larger £790m investment into 640km of river improvement across the region. For the next 2 years we will tackle 190 of our combined sewer overflows. The reason we have these overflows in the first place is they act as pressure relief valves. We are planning to come away from them, but they are pressure relief for the combined sewerage. 'Combined' because it is a mix of wastewater and surface water; so when it rains, the system capacity fills up, needs to relieve pressure and releases that sewage to the environment. We know our tolerance of this is completely changing but this prevents it overflowing into gardens and homes. In the previous 5 years, the payment of bonus has varied significantly based on a number of different business performance measures. Indeed, these payments reflect how the business has performed, overall, in the year and will reflect areas of good performance as well as areas of low performance. Therefore, where there are aspects that the business hasn't been performing well in, this has been reflected in the overall bonus payment. As an example, for the previous performance year, the resultant business performance (43% of maximum opportunity)

	was lower than it had been for many years, in part, reflecting the fact that the business was not performing as well as it would like to in certain areas. Across the last 5 years, the average payment has been 68% of maximum opportunity, again, reflecting the point that it reflects an overall business performance and, included within that, aspects of good and bad performance. The final award is assessed and approved by the Company's People and Remuneration Committee which is a sub-Committee of the Board of Directors.
38.	**What are you going to do about pumping sewage into our beautiful rivers?** Pollution is something that we work very hard to minimize. We are in the process of investing £180m by 2025 in storm overflow improvements – as well as investigation and increased monitoring. This investment is part of a larger £790m investment into 640km of river improvement across the region. Our first step is to make improvements on 211 overflows distributed across the Nidd, the Wharfe, the Ouse, and importantly in West Yorkshire on the Aire and the Calder, the Colne, the Holme but also in South Yorkshire on the Dearne and for those that love the coast we will be going to Scarborough too. The reason why they have been selected is because of their priority status. Either they are overflows discharging into a bathing water which are some of the most sensitive water environments or they are deemed a high priority water course because they are sites of scientific interest or a site where the overflow is impacting on ecological health.
39.	**I would like to add an additional consideration of these issues in regard to environmental management - You currently maintain that banning swimming is effective and appropriate for managing water safety. However, this is not in line with national**

	best practice in regards to improving water safety and does not allow for the rise of popularity of swimming and paddleboarding - thousands access reservoirs in Yorkshire safely each year, ignoring your policy, and are helping to generate a positive, safer swimming culture - in line with your duties to allow public amenity use of the land you manage, what plans do you have to open up public access to reservoirs for informal swimming and paddling? We do not believe that open water swimming in our reservoirs is a safe activity for several reasons, which include, the very low temperatures of water all year round and the machinery and currents associated with a functioning reservoir. In addition, many of our reservoirs are in remote locations and it is unlikely emergency services will be able to respond quickly if needed. We understand open water swimming is growing in popularity however it is not established how the activity can be carried out safely at our sites, and for that reason we have no plans to open up public access to our reservoirs for informal swimming.
40.	**I am a daily open water swimmer in Yorkshire Water Reservoirs and I continue to be dismayed at the misinformation that Yorkshire Water display. And the denial of access they to their reservoirs/resources, primarily offering this only to those who pay - sailing clubs, angling clubs and outdoor pursuits companies.** **When will Yorkshire Water accept that people are swimming in their reservoirs, the majority of which do so after careful consideration of their own personal safety and swimming ability?** We understand open water swimming is growing in popularity. However, it is not established how the activity can be carried out

	safely at our sites, and for that reason we have no plans to open up public access to our reservoirs for informal swimming. Only certain professionally run sailing and angling clubs, with appropriate safety equipment, supervision and standards in place are permitted to use our reservoirs.
41.	**Do the new on-site wardens have a role in reducing local fires - there is a lot of concern about loss of habitats with recent wildfires, what can the public do to help, and how would we contact the wardens to work with them ?** The new Yorkshire Water ranger team is here to engage with visitors to ensure they have a safe and enjoyable visit, and to ensure that YW's sites are safe, well presented, and well maintained for our visitors and visiting customers. They will engage with visitors, wherever feasible and practicable, around all things countryside safety related, including those who may wish to light BBQ's and/or fires. Engaging with such individuals should hopefully reduce the impact of associated wildfires and the impact from these. They can also work in partnership with other organisations and stakeholders wherever possible (e.g. fire and rescue services) to reduce such issues and impacts and to help engage and educate visitors, or potential visitors, to the countryside and Yorkshire Water's sites.
42.	**What are the policies YW has around access to green spaces that YW is responsible for and the policy and thoughts YW have for these areas of countryside?** About 65% of our land is designated "Open Access" under the Countryside Rights of Way Act and we have about 50 recreational sites across Yorkshire where we support public access for recreational purposes. In April 2023 we introduced a ranger team to ensure public safety at the recreation sites and support general wildlife management. We also have a number of designated

	wildlife sites, such as Tophill Low and Rodley Nature Reserves, where we have a dedicated team (internal or in partnership with a local wildlife trust) managing the wildlife and public access. We work with our farming tenants via our Beyond Nature programme and with other stakeholders (i.e. National Trust, Natural England, Forestry Commission, local authorities) to improve outcomes for wildlife across our land through partnership working. We are currently undertaking woodland creation and peatland restoration programmes, which will benefit public access, wildlife and water quality.
43.	**Invasive non-native species: what are you going to do about the tsunami of squirrel pox from the grey squirrels on your land. Your stance at present is not to engage with volunteers. So your 70,000 acres are effectively a protected breeding ground. You are therefore undermining the work of charities working to protect our iconic red squirrels.** This is a complex issue unfortunately and we have had discussions with tenants and stakeholders about what we can do. As a large landowner, there's a large variety of interests we need to consider when managing our land holding and we are happy to work together with volunteers to see what can be done on this complex issue.
44.	**You are custodians of 70,000 acres of land, so are a major influencer in your region.** **We see slick posts about what you do as a responsible company yet attempts to engage with you on Nature Recovery around controlling Non-Native American Grey Squirrels on your land to help our iconic native Red Squirrel are met with a brick wall.** **Excuses for protecting an Invasive Species allowing your land to be a breeding ground include:-** **• Fear of negative PR.**

	• Lack of car parking for people that would want to see Red Squirrels. **• Amazingly that your customers do not want Grey Squirrels Controlled.** **Given that** **• The Forestry Commission are paying £50/ hectare/ year, to control Grey Squirrels,** **• The creation of the Northern Forest.** **• The stance hampers efforts by volunteers and charities further north to striving to stem the tide of Greys expanding their range and taking with them the deadly Squirrel Pox Virus that is wiping out our Reds.** **How does your stance help recovery of our Red Squirrels and are you going to change your stance and work with volunteers to help ?** Please refer to the answer to Question 43.
45.	**How do we notify YW of any pollutants we observe? Both domestic and industrial?** If you have spotted a pollution, pls call us on 08001383484. Please ensure that you submit location details and that you give us as much information about the site and the type of pollution as possible.
46.	**For businesses promoting reduction in water wastage and more environmentally friendly practices in communities, what is the best way to engage with YW in providing joint incentives and funding for meaningful environmental projects to fast-track some of these initiatives?** Yorkshire Water is committed to working with communities to promote schemes to conserve water and improve overall environmental health. All proposals are reviewed on merit and

	signposted within the organisation to the most appropriate expertise, such as the Innovation or Partnerships teams. Joint applications for funding will be considered and supported if an appropriate source can be identified.
Theme 4: Customer service and company	
47.	**What response have you planned to cope with the increased pressure brought on all by the cost-of-living pressures?** We have mechanisms to support people in need. There are a number of financial support schemes in place to support low-income households, customers who need to use more water due to larger families or medical needs and are unable to afford this need, as well as debt schemes to offer support for customers who find themselves in arrears with their water bill. These include payment matching schemes to get customers out of debt; one off hardship payments; and capped bill values regardless of the water used when customers are low income and/or need the additional usage. We already have in place a process to identify and offer support to customers in need through our core processes. We recognise that we also need help with our reach and have an extensive network of partners across our region. We will enable more partners/external organisations (such as debt charities; councils) to provide customers with water bill reductions on our behalf. This reduces customer effort, increases our operational efficiency, and reaches customers wherever they are. Currently more than c12,000 customers access bill reductions this way – with a customer benefit of approx. £2m per year. We want to double this customer reach through our partners. We are one of the few companies that currently contribute £2m per year to the scheme and we have added £15m on top of that for the last 2.5

	years so that we can help customer who struggle with the cost-of-living crisis. We will expand data sharing to enable us to verify customer eligibility for financial support schemes on their behalf. We currently use data-sharing to verify when customers apply for help – we aim to use it proactively to reach customers who are struggling with their bill but have not reached out for help. To meet the level of customer need we also need to increase the funding through customer contribution by £2 (increasing the cross-subsidy to £6 per customer from £4) This is supported by our Willingness to Pay (WtP) Research. This equates to c13m cross-subsidy per year. The AMP7 business plan included £1.75 WtP per customers = c£3.5m. In 2020, additional WtP research was undertaken in response to Covid increased this to £4 max per customer = c£8m
48.	**What is your biggest business risk?** Our biggest business risks over the long term are climate change and population growth which both have material impacts on the day to day running of the business, in terms of volatile weather patterns and customer demand during peak periods, but also in respect of longer-term trends to mitigate our impacts on the environment while meeting rising customer expectations while keeping bills affordable.
49.	**Do you prioritise your shareholders over your paying customers?** We do not prioritise shareholders over our customers. What is important to us in the long-term is to continue to provide safe,

	clean water supplies – ensuring we maintain our high standards, to focus on providing a first-class customer service and bills everyone can afford. What is also important to us, is to work towards a more modern and sustainable infrastructure, and in line with government targets and customer priorities reach net zero emissions and look after the natural environment. Delivering our performance commitments to our customers is our primary focus, and our dividend policy is explicitly linked to the performance delivered to our customers. In December 2022 Ofwat noted that our dividend policy and its application met their expectations. It is also worth noting that our shareholders have not received a dividend in the last six years.
50.	**Will you be asking for more public money to develop your plans?** Our plan for 2025-2030 is not based on needing public money and assumes that services and ongoing investment in the maintenance and improvements of assets is funded by customer bills.
51.	**Why has it been proposed that the public pay for improvements to the expected standard? YW serves 2.3 million households. The DEFRA proposed increase of £12 per household will generate £138 million over 5 years which is the same as YW profit from 2013-2017. YW assured Ofwat that they could deliver their services over that time, so we have already paid for the services we expected.** Regarding the first point on inter-company loans, this is something we have been in discussion with Ofwat and our shareholders about. We are in the middle of making sure that we are taking out any of those legacy arrangements with respect to intercompany

	loans. It is a complex area of corporate finance however the good news is that those inter-company loans are being taken out. Regarding increased bills – looking at the broader context - the industry was privatised on the assumption that it would be better able to access much needed investment. The water authorities at the time had been significantly underfunded for decades and that was really the basis of why the government took the decision to privatise the industry in order to access the finance that was needed to make those investments over time. Since privatisation, the priorities and what we have needed to invest in have shifted and changed in response to new pressures and challenges.
52.	**How will you fund this investment? How much of this cash will go to shareholders?** Our draft plan is proposing around £6.9bn of investment for 2025-2030. Much of this is financed over the long term, this means between today's consumers and those who will have the benefit of the asset over many years. That financing requires a level of interest and the amount that investors are allowed to earn which is set by Ofwat, which is set at 4%. Profits for shareholders only arise thereafter and only if the company performs really well, at which point consumers are also benefiting because they share the outperformance with shareholders reducing consumers bills too. Our shareholders are continuing to support the business with the recent announcement that £940m will be invested into Yorkshire Water over the four-year period to March 2027. Shareholders are not expected to receive any dividends during this period. Delivering our performance commitments to our customers is our primary focus, and our dividend policy is explicitly linked to the performance delivered to our customers. In December 2022 Ofwat noted that our dividend policy and its application met their

	expectations. It is also worth noting that our shareholders have not received a dividend in the last six years.
53.	**What are plans for customers on water meters, when the water is discoloured and water has to be run until water is clear, which is at the cost of the customer. Customer on low income will not be able to afford the extra cost.** The cost of running off water following any discolouration event is likely to be minimal, e.g. if you ran a tap for 1 hour and 25 minutes, the cost would be less than £1.50. However, if a customer is concerned about the cost of running off water following discolouration, they can contact our Operations team, who will check for any impacting incidents that may have caused this and we may apply a small credit to cover the cost. Discolouration events are rare, but we appreciate the impact they have on customers. We don't want anyone to worry about paying for the water they need, and we have a number of schemes to support low-income households, that meet certain criteria. These schemes effectively 'cap' water charges so that customers need not worry about excessive charges. Customers may also cut their metered bills by conserving water, and we offer free water saving packs to help them do this. We also provide support for customers who require a little extra help through our free 'Priority Services Scheme'."
54.	**Why do you propose letting customers know of any YW works in their area? This already happens that's not a new initiative.** Whilst we currently issue written notifications regarding upcoming planned work, in the future we will provide customers with even more proactive, real-time communications, through more

	channels based on customer preferences, and for both planned and unplanned work.
55.	**How much of the additional cost comes out of profit? is it all going on our bills?** Our draft plan is proposing around £6.9bn of investment for 2025-2030. Much of this is financed over the long term, this means between today's consumers and those who will have the benefit of the asset over many years. That financing requires a level of interest and the amount that investors are allowed to earn which is set by Ofwat, which is set at 4%. Profits for shareholders only arise thereafter and only if the company performs really well, at which point consumers are also benefiting because they share the outperformance with shareholders reducing consumers bills too.
56.	**Can you please provide data about the following? How much has been spent on infrastructure improvements and annual investment has been over the last five years? And how much investment spending is planned for the next five years? How much has been paid to shareholders in the last five years? And how much will be paid to shareholders in the next five? How much does the CEO earn as a regular pay package? Does the CEO receive a bonus? If so, how much has this bonus been annually over the last five years? How is the bonus calculated and by whom?** In the last financial determination we were allowed to spend £5.3bn under comparable price base to the £6.9bn we are quoting below. The increase is due to the additional enhancement expenditure that we are proposing. This is to satisfy additional regulatory requirements for this coming period. Our draft plan is proposing around £6.9bn of investment for 2025-2030. Much of this is financed over the long term, this means

	between today's consumers and those who will have the benefit of the asset over many years. That financing requires a level of interest and the amount that investors are allowed to earn which is set by Ofwat at 4%. Profits for shareholders only arise thereafter and only if the company performs really well, at which point consumers are also benefiting because they share the outperformance with shareholders reducing consumers bills too. Our shareholders have not received a dividend in the last six years. Dividends paid in the last six years have all been used to fund other group costs, with a significant portion being immediately returned to YW through intercompany interest and used to support the delivery of services. Our shareholders are continuing to support the business with the recent announcement that £940m will be invested into Yorkshire Water over the four-year period to March 2027. Shareholders are not expected to receive any dividends during this period. The CEOs regular base pay (i.e. salary) for the 2022/23 year was £574,000. In addition, our CEO receives benefits, including pension, worth £72,000. Like all colleagues in the business, the CEO, subject to company performance is eligible to receive a bonus. For the bonus for the performance year ending 31 March 2023, our CEO has already said that she will forgo her bonus for that year. In the previous 5 years, the payment of bonus has varied significantly based on a number of different business performance measures. Indeed, these payments reflect how the business has performed, overall, in the year and will reflect areas of good performance as well as areas of low performance. Therefore, where there are aspects that the business hasn't been performing well in, this has been reflected in the overall bonus payment. As an example, for the previous performance year, the resultant business performance (43% of maximum opportunity)

	was lower than it had been for many years, in part, reflecting the fact that the business was not performing as well as it would like to in certain areas. Across the last 5 years, the average payment has been 68% of maximum opportunity, again, reflecting the point that it reflects an overall business performance and, included within that, aspects of good and bad performance. As already noted, the bonus is based on an overall assessment of business performance as assessed through a number of different business measures. The final award is assessed and approved by the Company's People and Remuneration Committee which is a sub-Committee of the Board of Directors.
57.	**What is the predicted value of any efficiency savings you may be planning to implement?** Our plan for 2025-2030 will include efficiency savings from our modernisation programme and will be subject to ongoing efficiency challenges from the regulator as part of the price review. While we don't know the full scale of this challenge, the regulatory regime works to incentivise companies to outperform their plans, and this is enables investors to achieve greater returns than the base level set by the regulator of 4%.
58.	**Do you plan to improve your smart meters so customers can see their usage in real time just like we can see it with gas and electricity?** Over the next 5 years, it is really going to be about increasing our level of meters, moving to smart meters to help with demand reduction, driving our leakage down, but also looking at expanding and enhancing a couple of key water

	treatment works, to be able to move water around the region. We will start doing some planning and investigation work to ensure that the longer-term engineering solutions are being considered. We will make sure we have done all the feasibility and design work so that we can get those in a timely manner, because some of them are 5 to 7 year-engineering solutions to complete.
59.	**Are our bills going up to pay for all of these changes? Do your shareholders expect to reap the same dividends?** Our draft plan is proposing around £6.9bn of investment for 2025-2030. Much of this is financed over the long term, this means between today's consumers and those who will have the benefit of the asset over many years. That financing requires a level of interest -- and the amount that investors are allowed to earn is set by Ofwat, which is set at 4%, and certainly over the last few years our returns have been significantly below that. Profits for shareholders only arise thereafter and only if the company performs really well, at which point consumers are also benefiting because they share the outperformance with shareholders reducing consumers bills too. Yorkshire Water have not paid a dividend to our investors in the last 6 years. Dividends paid in the last six years have all been used to fund other group costs, with a significant portion being immediately returned to YW through intercompany interest. Our dividend yield over the last 3 years has averaged 2.5%, below Ofwat's base yield of 4.0%.

	Our shareholders are continuing to support the business with the recent announcement that £940m will be invested into Yorkshire Water over the four-year period to March 2027. Shareholders are not expected to receive any dividends during this period.
60.	**Will we get compensation if the services are not delivered?** Re compensation for future underperformance - this is what the regulatory framework via Performance Commitments does. We are able to collect more revenue from customers if we beat our performance targets and are penalised if we underperform. So when we do not provide the services we should, bills do get reduced. We also have a scheme in place called Guaranteed Standards of Service (GSS) which automatically entitles customers to refunds for a range of service-related failures.
61.	**Why does Yorkshire Water charges me the same amount as the Chairman for taking the rain that falls on my property. It should be related to consumption to be equitable.** Over time we are gradually moving more and more customers onto a measured charge that reflects the level of consumption. To do this we have to have meters installed and as and industry water is still some way behind gas and electricity. But we have plans to install more meters and to encourage more customers to move onto measured charges. This will be important in incentivising customers to become more efficiency with consumption and in the majority of cases a measured charge, i.e. paying for what you use actually reduces water bills for most.

62.	**Are there incentives for consumers being considered or tied to reduction in usage?** We are supportive of the recent changes to Ofwat's charging rules giving more scope for companies to consider charging trials. We anticipate running a trial in a pilot area where we are installing smart meters. This may assist in developing future charging innovation if we are able to significantly increase our coverage of smart meters over the 2025 to 2030 period.
63.	**Please can we have a financial % of the pot commitment to NFM and SuDS circulated to all?** In our plan we are targeting at least 20% of our storm overflow reduction interventions will be blue/green schemes for the period 2025-2030. We are also planning to invest further in large scale SuDS to address flood risks. Over time we deliver greater levels of natural flood management as we have longer lead times to develop the partnership arrangements to deliver interventions at the scale needed to make a material impact on sewage treatment works.
64.	**Given you discharge sewage over 54,000 times last year do you believe you are complying with the Water Industry Act which requires water companies to only discharge sewage in 'periods of extreme heavy rainfall'? Given this, and your environmental performance rating of 2/4 by the environment agency, how do you justify paying out over £1.5m to your CEO last year and £52m in dividends to shareholders?**

	The CEO remuneration for the 2021/22 year amounted to just over £1.4M. Within this it's important to note that it included payments in respect of the previous CEO to the business (i.e. who was in post in 2021/22) and, specifically included payments related to her retirement from the business in May 2022. The bonus for the year paid out at 43% of maximum which reflected how the business had performed, overall, in that year and also reflected areas of good performance as well as areas of low performance. Therefore, the aspects of the business that hadn't been performing well were reflected in the overall bonus payment for that year. This payment was the lowest it had been for a number of years, again, reflecting overall business performance. Also, in a general sense, whilst bonus payments are considered on an ongoing basis in the context of business performance, the business also has to remain competitive in the external labour market. If we are not able to be competitive, through how we pay colleagues at all levels, including the CEO, it significantly restricts our ability to recruit and retain the good people we need to do the work to improve the current situation.
65.	**The cost of our payments is due to rise, to cover, amongst other things, sewage problem and all the horrible stuff getting into our rivers and thereafter the sea. How can Yorkshire Water justify increasing our bills when you make so much profit. It's common knowledge, internet, that you give your shareholders millions of pounds in dividends, and in bosses in bonuses and only a small amount in maintenance work, future proofing. What is happening now is your mistake/error and we should not be penalised**

	in having to pay you more for this misappropriation of funds. We are putting £180m into a plan for the next 2 years to invest in 190 of our combined sewer overflows. When there is a storm, we let sewage and water from the storm into rivers and we are taking action on those immediately to get significant reduction by 2025 and then the next bit of our plan is from 2025-30 to focus on places where people want to swim, and on places of real high priority. We have got investment planned for another 200 places to reduce the impact we are having on the environment. The reason we have these overflows in the first place is they act as pressure relief valves. We are planning to come away from them, but they are pressure relief for the combined sewerage. 'Combined' because it is a mix of wastewater and surface water; so when it rains, the system capacity fills up, needs to relieve pressure and releases that sewage to the environment. We know our tolerance of this is completely changing but this prevents it overflowing into gardens and homes. We are committed to our biggest ever environmental improvement programme and our first step will be to make improvements on 211 overflows which will cost an approximate £700m, distributed across the Nidd, the Wharfe, the Ouse, and importantly in West Yorkshire on the Aire and the Calder, the Colne, the Holme but also in South Yorkshire on the Dearne as well as Scarborough. These sites are deemed a high priority water course because they are sites of scientific interest or where the overflow is impacting on

	ecological health. We also have plans to abandon overflows to improve the situation. If we think about our own homes and mortgages, we are never in a position to pay for our home within the year: we have to borrow to invest over the long term and we pay that back over time. This is the same for a water company. To deliver the level of investment in our plan we need to raise that money. We need to make sure that we are able to perform as a business so that people that ultimately are prepared to lend us the money we need to invest and so they can earn a return. Yorkshire Water have not paid a dividend to our investors in the last 6 years. Ofwat within its price review assumes that we should be able to earn about 4% return on the money that gets invested, and certainly over the last few years our returns have been significantly below that. This is a measure of the fact that it has been a really challenging time for us as a company. We have got a lot to do particularly following the last 12 to 18 months. We have all been impacted by Covid, we have seen a lot of the macroeconomic events impacting the business such as the inflation that everybody is feeling. There are a lot of challenges in this area. We want to dispel some of the myths that there are huge amounts of dividends being paid to our investors. What we are aiming to do is to provide them with a fair return, which Ofwat regulates. We need to perform well, to ensure that those returns are earned for solid, good, reliable, underlying performance.
66.	**Some of the questions demonstrate how little understanding exists about your activities, your plans, the impact of abstraction and discharges on rivers etc. How can**

	you help educate a wider cross-section of your customers about these issues? We are always looking for new ways to communicate. We have a team, for example, out in Sheffield and some of the communities that we work with there, literally knocking on doors to talk to people about what they can do to help us, and what we can do to help them (i.e. not putting wet wipes down the loo, or making sure that we can help them with the amount of water they consume, or how we can support them with bills). There are things we do on the internet and in the media to try and make sure we get our messages across positively in the media. It is quite hard to put positive messages out via the media, but we are looking to keep making sure we find ways of doing that. There is a lot in our social media and on our website about what we do, and we will keep looking for new ways to communicate with customers. If you have any ideas, let us have them, because we agree it would be great to be able to communicate more effectively.
67.	**There are many local environmental and river interest groups in the Yorkshire region (Friends of Bradfords Becks, Slow the Flow Calderdale, West Wolds Slow the Flow, Sheffield Waterways Strategy Group, Friends of Lea Brook Valley, Ilkley Clean Rivers Group to name but a few). All these groups are made up of volunteers from the local community that want to make a positive impact to their local environment. How can local interest groups influence the issues that Yorkshire Water focusses on in the future? How can local interest groups get access to and contribute**

	to the evidence base that drives Yorkshire Water investment? Yorkshire Water already has ongoing engagement with several of the groups mentioned in the question, and regional stakeholders can contact the corporate affairs team on publicaffairsteam@yorkshirewater.co.uk to request specific data. It is also possible to subject a request for information under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. Additionally, Yorkshire Water publishes a significant amount of information on our website at: https://www.yorkshirewater.com/about-us/reports/
68.	**How much is AI (artificial intelligence) going to be used now and in the future?** Artificial intelligence (AI) is already being widely used in various industries, and its adoption is expected to increase significantly in the future. At YWS we currently have some areas using basic automation but moving forward it will be a main feature in our technology roadmaps helping our back office, customer service and even cyber security functions from an efficiency, decision-making, and overall user experience perspective. However, the extent of AI's future at YWS will depend on several factors, including technological advancements, ethical considerations, regulatory frameworks, and customer/societal acceptance.

69.	**Is it still YW policy to introduce car parking charges at the following reservoirs Fewston, Swinsty and Thruscross in North Yorkshire and Langsett ?** We are going to be trailing parking charges in these reservoirs to make these sites safer and more enjoyable for people and more wildlife friendly. It is expected the payment meters will be installed in Thurscross/Fewstone/Swinsty in autumn 2023 with those in Langsett following soon after. We are hoping the parking-charging trials will encourage people to consider travelling via public transport, cycling paths and walking routes.
70.	**Can I add the following question to those submitted tonight, Could YW explain how a water bill is made up and each charge is calculated for metered and non-metered customers?** **In particular the impact of the capital programme. Some people believe they have paid for things that have not been done yet. E.g. Ilkley transfer scheme** Your average bill is currently £477 per year. This is an average cost of £1.22 per day. Here is how is £1.22 spent on - 9p on Energy - 9p on Tax and licences - 49p on Running our business: people costs, material costs – the things we need to deliver services everyday - 23p on maintaining our equipment: looking after our pipes, pumping stations and reservoirs - 9p on making improvements: investment in new projects and technology

	- 23p on investing to improve our services: funding our borrowing debt that allows us money for investment As you will see from the above, the build of the cost of the bill is spent on investing to improve our services, on maintaining our assets and on running our business.
71.	**Thank you for the meeting yesterday. I'm just following up on the questions. When I asked the question about funding the proposed work I didn't mean just for Ilkley but for all of the proposals. We feel very strongly that the public have already paid for the maintenance and management of our sewage system. We cannot understand how water companies have been paying high salaries, dividends and inter-company interest payments rather than maintaining and upgrading a largely Victorian system. We also note that Ofwat identified that between 2020 and 2022 YW only spent 20% of their wastewater enhancement allowance. Finally I would like to add an additional question please: Will we be compensated in future if YW does not provide the services we pay for as happens with e.g. broadband delivery?** There are probably lots of examples like Ilkley, where a particular scheme theoretically should have been paid for. The reality is that over time the areas we need to focus on keep changing. Regulations have changed. Customer expectations have changed. Societal attitudes have shifted and changed. We are recognising and understanding these changes and responding as quickly and as swiftly as we can and developing our plans. That does mean we will need additional investment to be able to realise the improvements

	needed and to deliver the outcomes that everybody is looking for. For example, issues with Combined Sewage Overflows were not very much customers' priority previously as they are now. We have been working to improve that in recent years and are in the process of investing £180m by 2025 in storm overflow improvements – as well as investigation and increased monitoring. This investment is part of a larger £790m investment into 640km of river improvement across the region. Inter-company loan is a complex area of corporate finance which we have been in discussion with Ofwat and our shareholders about. We are in the progress of taking out any of those legacy arrangements. On increase in bills – if we look at the broader context – the industry was privatised on the assumption that it would be better able to access much needed investment. The water authorities at the time had been significantly underfunded for decades and that was the basis of why the government took the decision to privatise the industry in order to access the finance that was needed to make those investments over time. Re compensation for future underperformance - this is what the regulatory framework via Performance Commitments does. We are able to collect more revenue from customers when we hit our performance targets and are penalised if we underperform. So when we do not provide the services we should, bills do get reduced.

72.	**Unfortunately I missed this event.** **Was the session recorded and/or will the answers to customers questions be available somewhere?** An email was sent to all attendees with the link to our presentation and the minutes of our Your water your say session. The presentation and the answers to questions from our customers and stakeholders can be found on our website at https://www.yorkshirewater.com/about-us/your-water-your-say/
73.	**I was part of the Zoom meeting this evening and was finding it VERY interesting. Unfortunately I had to leave the meeting early. Will you be releasing a recording of the event including questions and responses? I was quite upset to have to leave early.** An email was sent to all attendees with the link to our presentation and the minutes of our Your water your say session. The presentation and the answers to questions from our customers and stakeholders can be found on our website at https://www.yorkshirewater.com/about-us/your-water-your-say/