



Zack Polanski AM
Chair of the Environment Committee

Ian Marchant
Thames Water Chair
Thames Water Utilities Limited

By email

21 February 2022

Dear Ian,

During the summer of 2021, the effects of increased rainfall and rising temperatures resulted in flooding that affected many parts of London. On 27 July 2021, the Mayor held a roundtable with stakeholders including London Councils and the Environment Agency to identify what more can be done to “urgently tackle flooding and the other impacts of climate change”, in the light of these and other flooding incidents in London, and considering the London Environment Strategy which reflects the adaptations needed in response to climate change.

An investigation into climate adaptation and climate risks in London was held by the Environment Committee on 30 September 2021, including a review of the summer flooding in London last year. One recommendation from this investigation was that Thames Water should provide the Committee with an assessment of its drainage network’s ability to deal with heavy rainfall events in London, and its plans to ensure its network keeps pace with the potentially increased risk of these events in the future.

In addition, on 21 October 2021, the Fire, Resilience, and Emergency Planning Committee held a meeting where the summer flooding was also discussed. At this meeting Alex Nickson mentioned that more is needed to help Londoners understand the increasing risk of sewer flooding.

The need for a long-term solution was also highlighted at the meeting. Alex Nickson suggested that a multi-agency collaboration was needed, including a tiered, multi-level resilience approach, starting with the sewers, then looking at surface permeability and the resilience of buildings to flooding, in order to come up with a better plan for dealing with situations of this kind in the future.

Thames Water kindly provided an initial response to this Committee on 13 January 2022, informing that the independent London Flood Review is expected to be completed in March 2022, and that it should establish to what extent the data provides insights about the floods in July. Thames Water also offered to put us in touch with the Review Team, which we would appreciate.

Moving forward, there is a common aim from both Committees (Environment, and Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning) to examine the flooding mechanism and the performance of drainage and sewerage systems, along with any other flood risk management measures that are relevant, in order to understand how London can become more resilient for future rainfall events of this type.

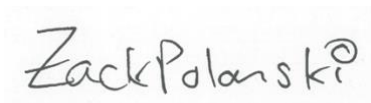
We would therefore appreciate it if you could confirm when you can provide us with the following:

1. The interim findings of the London Flood Review, and the final report once it is ready.
2. Details of the concrete actions that Thames Water are already undertaking (while waiting for the report) to strengthen London's flooding infrastructure against future flash flooding episodes.
3. The prevention and mitigation plan that Thames Water is considering for potential future events.
4. The work that Thames Water is undertaking to respond to sewer flooding risk.
5. The progress you are making with your Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP).
6. The contribution that you see sustainable drainage making to reductions in surface water flooding.
7. How Thames Water is working with partners to drive multi-agency collaboration to cope with flood events and how this will help deliver a long-term solution for London.

I would appreciate your response to this points by 18 March 2022.

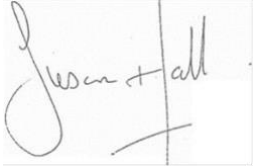
Thank you for your consideration.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Zack Polanski". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly informal style.

Zack Polanski AM

Chair of the Environment Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Hall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and a vertical line through the 'H'.

Susan Hall

Chairman of the Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee

CC: Alex Nickson, Wastewater Systems Strategy Manager, Thames Water.

Chris Shipway, Head of Public Affairs, Thames Water