

Update previously provided to the Committee by Councillor Jones, Lead Member for water quality on 2nd July 2024:

- Discussions with Torridge District Council were currently ongoing with regards to holding a joint meeting to discuss water quality across both the North Devon and Torridge areas and the outcomes that they would like to achieve.
- Had met with the Westcountry Rivers Trust to discuss promises which had been made at the special meeting. However, it would currently appear that these promises were not quite as they had been hoped.
- Water testing was ongoing in the Little Dart River where high levels of phosphates had been recorded at a pipe source. These findings had been reported to the Environment Agency who were responding very swiftly to try to identify issues.
- There was a requirement to work more closely with the Westcountry Rivers Trust or other routes such as South West Water (SWW) as active testing could identify problems.
- At MP level they were only focussed on what ended up on the beaches. However, the issues began further upstream and this was the area that they needed to focus on.
- A meeting would be scheduled with Torridge District Council following the General Election to discuss the approach to be taken with the MP.

The Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive advised that many of the issues mentioned regarding water quality could be addressed through the thematic working groups, which had been established as part of the Local Plan review.

Councillor Jones questioned which members were part of the thematic working groups and Councillor Bishop advised that he was.

Councillor Bulled, the Lead Member for agricultural working group questioned why the water quality testing only focussed on the testing of phosphates, where as if the water quality was tested for ammonia it would also pick up any phosphates.

Councillor Jones advised that the phosphate testing kits were less expensive and so that was what they had been provided with.

In response to a question regarding discussions with Exmoor National Park Authority, Councillor Jones advised that at the current time efforts were focussed on the Taw and Torridge catchment areas.

Councillor Bishop advised that he had been carrying out testing on three rivers, which were very clean and these were as follows:

- The River Bray.
- The River Yeo.
- The River Barle.