



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Chris Weston

Chief Executive Officer
Thames Water Utilities Ltd
Vastern Road
Clearwater Court
Reading
RG1 8DB

Our Ref: SG03886

25 February 2025

Dear Mr Weston,

Thames Waters' Environmental Schemes in Wiltshire

I am writing to you as a Member of Parliament whose constituency is served by Thames Water.

The media has once again been full of stories concerning Thames Water and its' activities. I thought it would be prudent to get in touch with you regarding my concerns and those of my constituents. It is my understanding that your company is being investigated by OFCOM for reporting that you will be unable to complete more 100 Environmental Schemes you had committed to by the end of March. I have been trying to identify if any of these cancellations will impact my constituency of Chippenham.

I am conscious that your company is currently in an unstable financial situation which may be affecting your companies' ability to perform effectively. I would, however, be grateful to know if Thames Water is running any schemes affecting my constituency, cancelled or otherwise, including what they will provide for my constituents, their costings, environmental impact and their updated timelines to completion. My constituents and I are extremely concerned about the environmental and economic impact that these delays will have, and I believe that you owe us an explanation.

I would like to, if I may, detail exactly where these concerns come from and, in doing so, perhaps prompt you to reconsider the approach Thames Water takes to its' customers and business practises. Please correct me if I am wrong but as I see them these are the facts. Last year, Thames saw a 40% increase in pollution incidents in the 6 months to 30 September. In December you then decided that this performance warranted your leadership team to receive bonuses of £770,000, this is on top of the £195,000 that you were awarded following your first 3 months at the company. As of February, this year, your company was in around 19 billion pounds of debt. To save yourselves from nationalisation, which was estimated to cost the country 2 billion pounds a year, you received a 3 billion pound loan, with an interest rate of 9.75%, the costs of which will almost certainly be passed onto customers. OFCOM granted you the ability to vastly increase your bills by 35% but you were not satisfied with this and have instead been pushing to increase your fees by an eye watering 53% to "fund improvements and to meet environmental commitments."

In light of this, I would like to ask you Mr Weston, whether you think that your company can continue in this way? It seems to me that Thames Water has failed in almost every regard.

The environmental impact of your company seems to get worse by the week. You are in so much debt you are forced to resort to short term bailouts which in the long term will be passed onto customers. You consistently press to increase fees by eye-watering amounts and when you are given a concession you turn around and ask for more. To add insult to injury on top of all of this you continue to pay yourselves bonuses of hundreds of thousands of pounds paid for by my constituents, many of whom are struggle to make ends meet. If I had acted this way when I was running my own business I would, quite rightly, have gone into bankruptcy at the least and more than probably been prosecuted for negligence. You have failed to meet your environmental commitments, you have failed to improve your infrastructure, indeed it seems the only thing you have not failed to do is to pay yourselves exorbitant bonuses whilst you charge your customers more and more for a failed service.

This leaves me with very little faith in Thames Water to deliver on any of its commitments Mr Weston. I would therefore like to see the numbers for myself, which is why I am asking you for the costings, environmental impact and timelines of Thames Waters' environmental schemes in Wilshire. How can my constituents be sure that you will deliver on your promises to fund improvements and meet environmental commitments given that you appear to have already failed at this in every regard? Why should my constituents be forced to pay for the consequences of your failures whilst your team have been rewarded with bonuses of hundreds of thousands of pounds? What have they got to congratulate themselves for that warrants any type of bonus?

I find it very sad that I have had to write to you in this manner as I feel we have the right to expect a better service from you, and I look forward to your prompt update with the information requested.

Kind regards,



Sarah Gibson | Member of Parliament for Chippenham