Draft Water Resources Management Plan 2024

Technical Appendix W - Programme Appraisal Methods

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Introduction and Background

What's in this section?

This appendix contains further information relating to Section 10 of the Main Report on Programme Appraisal and Scenario Testing. It focusses on methods used and provides more technical detail in specific areas of the programme appraisal process.

Information on outputs can be found in Appendix X.

The appendix is intended to be read alongside the relevant sections of the Main Report. Please use the contents page to go to your specific area of interest.

The sections are as follows:

- W.1: Problem characterisation

- W.2: Best Value Planning method and tools

- W.3: Best Value Planning metrics

Problem Characterisation

Introduction

W.1 Problem characterisation is carried out to guide water resource planners towards the most appropriate method of assessment for the size and complexity of their supply demand planning problem. Analysis of the size and complexity of the planning problem also guides planners to the appropriate length of planning period for their plan, and therefore, as noted, both the adoption of the assessment methodology and the planning period for the plan are informed by outcomes of the problem characterisation.

W.2 UKWIR's WRMP 2019 Methods – Decision Making Process: Guidance[1] provides a decision-making framework for both defining the water resources planning problem and selecting the best method to address it using the full array of feasible techniques. We have followed this approach in drafting our plan.

W.3 For each WRZ, the UKWIR guidance requires planners to address a set of questions that can be used to define the risk in each WRZ. Scores are assigned for strategic need, demand complexity, supply complexity and investment complexity, which are then put in a matrix to define an overall high, moderate and low level of concern.

W.4 In Section 10 of the Main Report we explained that both our supply area and the WRSE region as a whole has been classified as being at high risk. Here we explain why this the case for Thames Water.

W.5 WRSE's combined assessment for the region is available on their website.

Characterising the planning problem for our supply area

W.6 Following the guidance, problem characterisation has been carried out separately for each WRZ. We operate six WRZs: London, Guildford, Henley, Kennet Valley, SWA and SWOX, as shown in Figure W - 1.

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[1] UK Water Industry Research WRMP 2019 Methods – Decision Making Process: Guidance Report Ref. No. 16/WR/02/10

Figure W - 1 WRZs in South East England
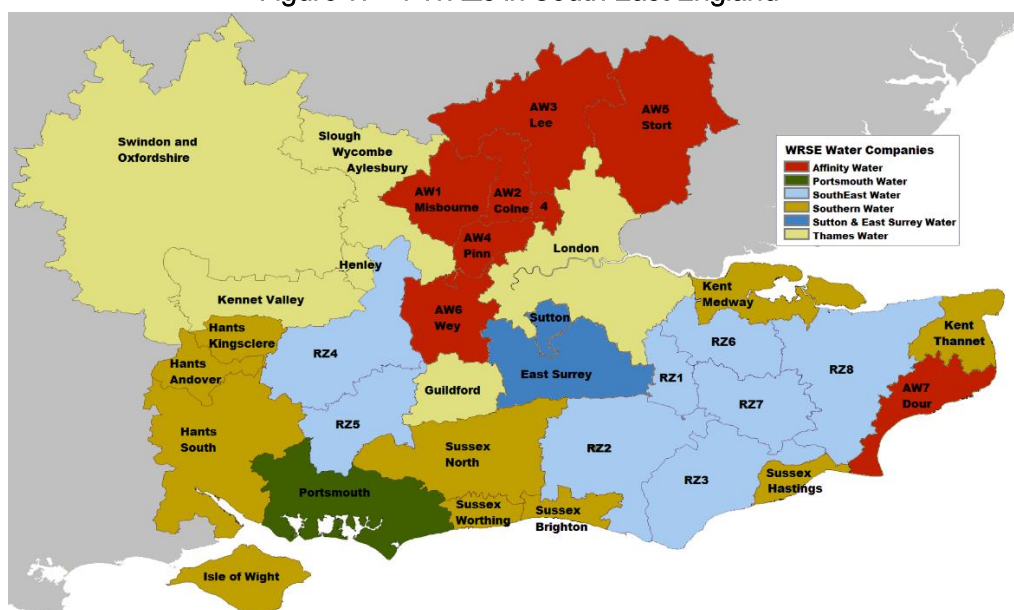
W.7   We have a number of existing raw and treated water transfers between our own WRZs and with neighbouring water companies. The majority of the transfers are historical, in perpetuity agreements. Most are relatively small and not large enough to affect the integrity of our WRZs. Further transfers are, however, anticipated in the future meaning it is increasingly important to consider risk at a company and regional level.

W.8   For each WRZ, the guidance requires planners to evaluate potential issues on two levels: a high-level assessment of 'how big the problem is', i.e., the scale of need for a new water resource and/or demand management strategy, defined as the strategic need; and 'how difficult the problem is to solve', an assessment of the complexity of issues that affect investment in a particular area, defined as the complexity factor.

W.9   The assessment of strategic need and complexity can then be placed in a problem characterisation summary matrix, in order to define whether an area has an overall low (green), medium (yellow) or high (purple) risk.

W.10   Scoring of strategic need is based on how quickly a zone goes into deficit and how large that deficit becomes over the planning period. Complexity scores reflect the combined complexities of the supply-, demand- and investment-related problems within a given area. As such, the score may reflect the number and novelty of the solutions available, the number and types of solution that will be required and investment challenges this may cause.

W.11   Although the assessment of strategic needs and complexity factors are necessarily subjective, the guidance for the problem characterisation assessment provides detailed "scales of significance" to maximise consistency of problem characterisation between water companies.

W.12   The scores from the analysis are shown in Table W - 1 to Table W - 4, with the problem characterisation summary matrix as Table W - 5.

Table W - 1: Strategic risk

How big is the problem?			
	Strategic WRMP Risks (Score 0-2 each)		
Water Resource Zone	Level of concern that customer service could be significantly affected by current or future supply side risks, without investment	Level of concern that customer service could be significantly affected by current or future demand side risks, without investment	Level of concern over the Investment programme likely to be unacceptably costly or contain contentious options	Strategic Risk Score
London	2	2	2	6
SWOX	2	1	2	5
SWA	2	1	2	5
Kennet	2	1	1	4
Guildford	2	1	1	4
Henley	1	0	0	1

Table W - 2: Supply complexity

How complex is it to solve? (1)				
	Supply Side Complexity (Score 0-2 each)			
Water Resource Zone	Concerns about near term supply? (Reliable/ resilient to drought)	Concerns about future supply (climate change/ water quality)	Concerns about near/ medium term step changes to supply (sustainability reductions)	Concern DO may fail to represent resilience	Supply Complexity Score
London	2	2	2	1	7
SWOX	2	2	2	1	7
SWA	1	2	2	1	6
Kennet	0	1	2	1	4
Guildford	1	1	2	0	4
Henley	0	0	2	0	2

Table W - 3: Demand complexity

How complex is it to solve? (2)			
	Demand Side Complexity (Score 0-2 each)		
Water Resource Zone	Changes in current or near-term demand?	Forecast uncertainty?	Demand versus critical drought timing critical?	Demand Complexity Score
London	2	2	1	5
SWOX	2	2	0	4
SWA	1	2	0	3
Kennet	0	2	0	2
Guildford	0	2	0	2
Henley	0	2	0	2

Table W - 4: Investment complexity

Water Resource Zone	How complex is it to solve? (3)				
	Investment Programme Complexity (Score 0-2 each)				
	Does uncertainty around capital expenditure affect the investment decision?	Do factors such as lead time and promotability affect the decision?	Can wider non-monetisable considerations be properly considered?	Is the investment programme sensitive to assumptions about the utilisation of new resources?	Investment Complexity Score
London	2	2	2	2	8
SWOX	1	2	1	1	5
SWA	1	1	1	1	4
Kennet	1	1	1	1	4
Guildford	0	0	1	1	2
Henley	0	0	0	0	0

W.13 The above scores have been combined into the problem characterisation summary matrix, as advised in the guidance, to give an indication of the complexity per WRZ as presented in Table W - 5.

Table W - 5: Problem characterisation summary matrix

Draft WRMP24		Strategic risk score			
		0-1	2-3	4-5	6
Complexity factors score	Low <7	Henley			
	Med 7-11			Guildford Kennet Valley	
	High (11+)			SWA SWOX	London

Best Value Planning method and tools

W.14 Below is an abridged version of the WRSE Best Value Planning Method Statement that is available on their website.

W.15 We have included this in order to make our WRMP more standalone, but recognising that the programme appraisal process was developed and run via WRSE and endorsed by our Board as described in Section 10.

Method

W.16 The scale and complexity of water resources planning for the Thames Water supply area, and South East of England as a whole, supports the use of advanced decision-making methods to ensure that a robust solution is reached. A method been developed, including the use of a number of decision support tools, to assess and identify a best value, adaptive regional plan.

W.17 The approach was developed in line with key industry guidance and methodologies:

- Water Resources Planning Guideline (April 2022)

- UKWIR (2002) Economics of Balancing Supply and Demand (EBSD)

- UKWIR (2016) WRMP 2019 Methods – Decision Making Process Guidance

- UKWIR (2020) Deriving a Best Value Water Resources Management Plan

W.18 WRSE consulted with and took on board the comments of stakeholders and customers throughout the development of the BVP approach, including:

- Draft Method Statements consultation July-October 2020

- Best Value Planning consultation February-March 2021

W.19 The approach has seven stages, as stepped through in Section 10 of our dWRMP24, with the Overall BVP described in Section 11.

W.20 There are a number of key decision points throughout the BVP planning and delivery stages. They can be split into:

- Decisions made in developing the plan itself;

- Decision points relating to the delivery of the plan, such as confirming when key policy objectives will be delivered

- Timing of decisions required in the lead up to delivery.

W.21 These decisions were made by the WRSE Project Management Board and reviewed by the WRSE Stakeholder Advisory Board (SAB).

W.22 The WRSE Senior Leadership Team (SLT) approved the draft regional plan for consultation. Its decision making was informed by the technical modelling undertaken plus wider input from the member water companies and the views of customers and stakeholders.

W.23 Decision making at all levels is a balance of objectivity (things are objectively calculated) and subjectivity (expert judgement). It is not currently possible, or we would argue, desirable to programme a model (or models) to consider all the variables within water resources planning and have it make all the decisions for us. There is always a balance of evidence as provided by the

decision support tools alongside subjective assessment and judgement, taking the views of stakeholders in the round.

W.24   Sensitivity analysis was used to assess any areas of disagreement to understand the materiality of the decision. These areas are brought out as consultation questions in companies WRMPs.

W.25   Three Decision Support Tools (DSTs) are used throughout the process:

- Data Landing Platform (DLP)

- Investment Model (IVM)

- Visualisation Tool (VT)

Decision Support Tools
The Data Landing Platform (DLP)

W.26   The DLP is a data warehouse/integration tool developed in Microsoft Azure with a visualisation function built in Moata[2].

W.27   It was developed in two parts, to deal with input data to and output data from the BVP process:

- The DLP enables all data storage, transfer and transformation to and from the investment model (IVM) and visualisation tool (VT)

- The DLP enables reporting the final problem, options and selection in the Water Resources Planning (WRP) tables for each zone in the region

W.28   The DLP supports the quality assurance process, through either visual or automated verification or likely both. Metadata will be set up to ensure governance of inputs in terms of version control and input personnel, and to track any transformations carried out in the DLP.

W.29   This includes identifying gaps in data, outliers, values outside of set tolerances, and incorrect value types, using a combination of manual and automated verification.

W.30   The table and figure below summarise the input data to the DLP and the data flows:

Table W - 6: Problem characterisation summary matrix

Data	Provided by	ID[3]
Baseline supply forecasts	Simulation model (RSS)	M
Baseline demand forecasts	Demand forecasting models via simulation model	H→M
Forecast uncertainties	Simulation & demand forecasting models	F&J
Existing transfers	Options appraisal	N
New supply options and transfers	Options appraisal	N
Demand reduction strategies	Demand strategies via Options appraisal	C→N

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[2] https://www.mottmac.com/digital/moata
[3] Data IDs relate to the Data Landing Platform flow chart

Figure W - 2: Flow of information through the DLP
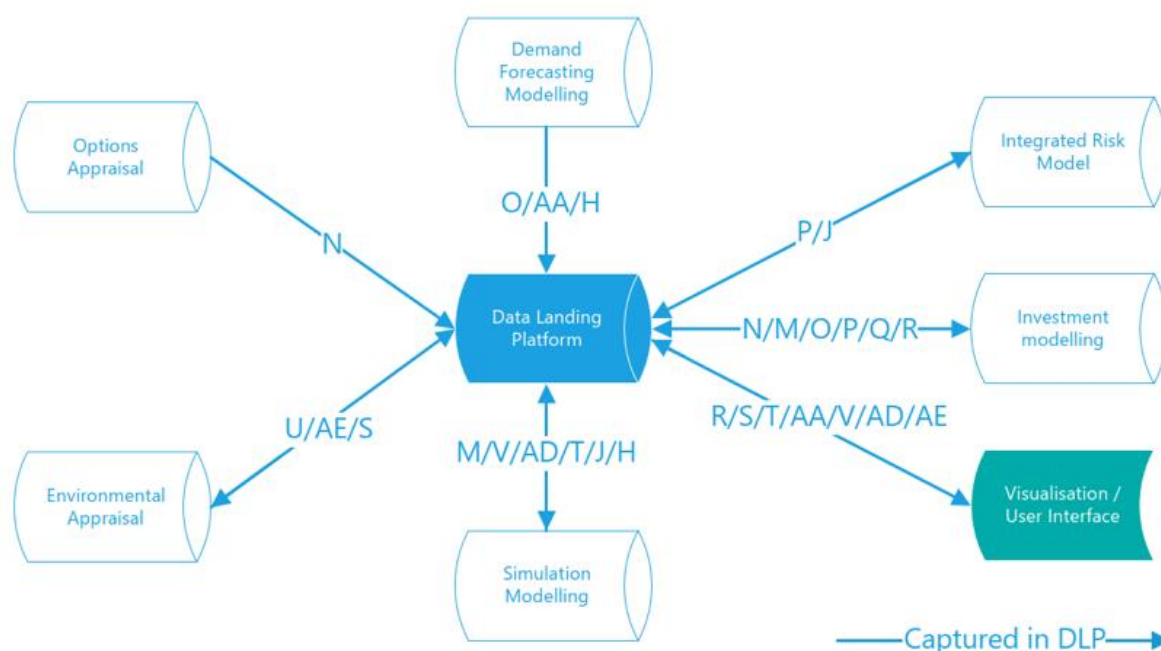
The Investment Model (IVM)

W.31 The WRSE IVM is a mathematical model for decision support which optimises selection and utilisation of programmes of options to prevent supply-demand deficits within the region over the planning period.

W.32 Planning for future water management requires predictions of water available for use, affected by climate, weather, option operation and legislative drivers, and water demand, also affected by weather, legislative drivers, and population and behavioural change. It is not yet feasible to model all potential futures that may occur across a suitable length of planning horizon in real time, so the IVM uses aggregates of time, space and system performance to reduce the problem to situations that can be solved within a feasible runtime.

W.33 However, the deep uncertainties affecting supply and demand listed above make a solution based on a single future vulnerable to change, and so the IVM has also been developed to explore multiple potential situations that diverge from the 'most likely' path and build programmes that can bridge from one future to another as time unfolds.

W.34 Using branched situations to optimise against a range of futures has encouraged the development of modular options that can more readily adapt from one situation to another.

W.35 The IVM does not determine the best investment programme for the future, but explores a wide variety of pros and cons in terms of investment and carbon costs, environmental impacts, resilience to current and future challenges and customer preference across all the programmes it develops. The programme outputs report metrics representing all of the values of interest together with dates of selection and utilisation volumes for the programmes of options, to aid decision support in selecting a best value plan.

W.36 The IVM is coded in Python[4], and calls specialist routines both from Python and Pyomo[5] libraries and a third-party optimiser, Gurobi[6]. Python is a flexible, open-source programming language with a wide library of established routines. Pyomo is a Python-based open-source software package that supports structuring of a diverse set of optimisation capabilities. Gurobi is a fast, accurate optimisation solver for linear and quadratic programming.

W.37 The primary objective of the model is to select a programme of options and transfers that can ensure supply is not less than demand (total demand plus headroom) in all zones across the region, across all years and planning scenarios for the problem set.

W.38 The IVM does this simultaneously across four planning scenarios:

- **Normal Year Annual Average (NYAA)**: combines 1:2 year annual average water available for use (WAFU), normal year annual average demand, and target headroom. Level of Service and drought options (TUBs, NEUBs, orders, permits) provide zero deployable output (DO) in the normal year scenario

- **Dry Year Annual Average (DYAA) (at 1:100 drought resilience)**: combines 1 in 100 or worst historic drought annual average WAFU, dry year annual average demand, and target headroom. Around 70% of options provide DO in this scenario; for example 15-20% of the drought interventions provide zero DO in 100a-dyaa (i.e. are only available in more severe droughts)

- **DYAA (hybrid drought resilience profile)**: combines an annual average WAFU profile for the maximum drought resilience target. For Thames Water, this means a scenario of 1:100-year drought initially, moving to 1:200 and then 1:500 by 2040, dry year annual average demand, and target headroom. Around 75% of options provide DO in this scenario; the remainder generally have no DO in any scenario.

- **Dry Year Critical Period (DYCP) (hybrid drought resilience profile)**: combines a critical period WAFU profile for the maximum drought resilience target (with the drought resilience target aligning with that of the DYAA scenario), dry year critical peak demand, and target headroom. Around 75% of options provide DO in this scenario; the remainder generally have no DO in any scenario. One percent of options provide water only in peak, mainly AR/ASR or groundwater schemes

W.39 The IVM solver uses Mixed Integer Linear Programming (MILP) to optimise both capacity of options across all planning scenarios, and utilisation of options over a frequency-weighted combination of the four planning scenarios, for each year and zone across the planning horizon.

Table W - 7: Planning scenario frequency weightings for utilisation

Scenario	Weighting
NYAA	0.5
DYAA (1:100)	0.4
DYAA (hybrid)	0.092
DYCP (hybrid)	0.008

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[4] www.python.org
[5] www.pyomo.org
[6] www.gurobi.com

W.40 There are two types of problem that can be presented to the IVM:

- A baseline problem, with a single future pathway defined by four average and peak planning scenarios that may occur under the same combination of environmental, behavioural and legislative drivers, for each zone and year across the planning horizon

- An adaptive problem, where the initial single pathway divides at key points in the future, and each subsequent pathway, defined by four average and peak planning scenarios, represents a different future due to a different combination of environmental, behavioural and legislative drivers, for each zone and year across the planning horizon

W.41 The IVM seeks an optimal investment programme to either of these types of problem, to ensure that the SDBs for each of the four planning scenarios for that situation is satisfied for each year in the planning horizon, in each zone, while minimising or maximising a single objective function, or multiple objective functions.

W.42 The objective functions (i.e. modellable metrics) are listed in Section 10 and comprise cost, environmental and social and resilience metrics. Further information on the calculation of these metrics can be found in WRSE method statements

W.43 Optimisation works by looking for solutions, calculating the objective function for each, and finding the difference between the best and next best in terms of the objective function. For this type of optimisation this difference is the mixed integer program gap (MIPgap). Optimisation continues, with the solver looking for better and better solutions around the best ones while the objective function values converge, until the best are within the declared MIPgap tolerance. The best is then declared optimal. For a least cost optimisation with a MIPgap of 0.1% and solution costing £15 billion, the optimal solution would be within ±£15 million tolerance.

W.44 The search space for optimisation is partially defined by the size of the objective function values. In order to reduce the search space and decrease optimisation runtime, a scaling factor reduces the size of the search space without reducing the relative variation between solutions.

W.45 Confidence interval and precision are both further model configuration parameters which have been included in the user settings for testing to improve the trade-off between runtimes and optimality.

W.46 The tolerance gap and the objective function(s) are set by the user for each run.

W.47 The first optimisation of any new problem (baseline or adaptive) is always run to find the least cost solution; this run identifies the limits for all best value objectives, allowing best value (pareto) optimisation. Baseline least cost runs form the backbone for problem and option development and testing, with the reasoning for model selection of single-situation outputs easier to trace, providing assurance on model and option behaviour before both are moved into the full adaptive optimisation.

W.48 After the least cost run a single-situation problem can be solved against any of the other objective functions (pareto optimisation); this type of run is usually carried out for testing purposes, either of data or of specific programmes, and is not included in the main steps of best value planning. The first step after single-stage least cost planning is adaptive least cost planning.

W.49 Adaptive optimisation progresses in three stages, each stage is separated by the branch points in the input adaptive problem.

- Stage 1 - The IVM configures and initialises an adaptive run similarly to a baseline EBSD run, except that instead of a single pathway, it solves multiple (nine for the draft plan) in turn at the beginning of stage one, and stores solutions from all nine. The IVM then initialises progressive hedging (PH) to find a common solution up to the first branch point from all the individual pathway solutions; it iteratively solves all nine situations again and again in turn across this time period looking for a common solution, decreasing the MIPgap for each iteration to reduce the gap between all nine solutions for the first stage until the convergence threshold is reached. The stage 1 solution for the first branch is then fixed and stored.

- Stage 2 - The IVM generates nine new pathways at the beginning of stage 2, each with the stage 1 solution fixed, and the problem for stages 2 and 3 continuing from that fixed start. It solves each iteratively then initialises PH to find an optimal solution for each of the 3 branches in stage 2. Once solutions are found for each of the stage 2 branches they are fixed and stored.

- Stage 3 - The model solves stage 3 as the final stage for each pathway in a simple baseline run with the solution fixed to the second branch point for each situation.

W.50 The adaptive least cost solution optimises against the cost objective function, but calculates and stored values for all other parameters including the other objective functions available for optimisation.

The Visualisation Tool (VT)

W.51 The visualisation tool will be the primary decision support tool to allow appraisal, comparison, selection, communication and refinement of the baseline SDB pathways and trees and final planning investment programme outputs and metrics.

W.52 As such the visualisation tool has to perform two key functions:

- To summarise and simplify, considering the complexity of problem and option combinations that may be output from the IVM

- Support decision making in a way that is accessible to all audiences

W.53 The types of visualisation are covered in Section 10 and run dossiers using the outputs from the VT are available in Appendix X.

Best Value Planning metrics

Cost

W.54   The DLP provides the IVM with cost data for each option for capital, fixed operational and variable operational expenditure calculation. All costs are in GBP except for electricity in kWh, and carbon in tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO2e) for monetisation.

Table W - 8: Option cost data types

Capital cost inputs	Fixed operational cost inputs (per year)	Variable operational cost inputs (per Ml)	Total cost inputs and conversion factors
Asset categories	Fixed opex	Variable opex	Price base year
Asset life per category			Option lead time
Capex per category	Fixed grid electricity	Variable grid electricity	Grid electricity cost conversion factor
Weighted average cost of capital (WACC)	Fixed REGO[7] electricity	Variable REGO electricity	REGO electricity cost conversion factor
Optimism bias	Fixed generated electricity	Variable generated electricity	Generated electricity cost conversion factor
Embedded carbon per category	Fixed operational carbon	Variable operational carbon	Carbon cost conversion factor

W.55   There are several steps to cost calculation for an investment programme in the IVM:

- Option cost indexing

- Capital option cost annuitization (both capex and embedded carbon)

- Calculation of total option cost per year.

- Calculation of total programme cost

W.56   The first two steps are carried out prior to optimisation. The second two steps are part of the cost optimisation.

W.57   All costs are input with a price base year, and the base year may vary depending on when the option costs were last updated. Indexing is carried out to align all option costs to the programme cost base (currently 2024-25) using HMSO's published RPI for operational costs and COPI for capex costs.

W.58   Capital costs are profiled in the input data, across a range of asset categories with different asset lives and levels of risk. The EBSD method recommends annuitizing capex to reduce bias due to varying asset life lengths in relation to assessment horizon. Annuitisation requires averaging of the initial capital expenditure and the debt service cost of an option across each asset life, and assumes capex costs are repeated at the end of the life of each asset required to build an option. For the example below, if a pump costs £5 million and requires replacement every 5 years (heavy use), then the annuitized cost of that pump is £1.06 million per year to include the cost of borrowing to purchase it, and its replacements, from the installation year until the end of the

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[7] Renewable Energy of Guaranteed Origin

assessment period. A pump is only one of several assets that together can make up an option; within the model, the capital costs of all assets of the same asset life within an option are combined and annuitized to give the total annuitised capex for that option.

W.59 Before annuitisation, optimism bias is applied to those capex categories where it is applicable.

Figure W - 3: Capital cost annuitisation example

Capex annuitization example						
Asset Life	5 years		WACC 2.92%			
Capital expenditure	5,000,000					

Year of asset life	0	1	2	3	4	5
Capital Depreciation		1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Net Book Value	5,000,000	4,000,000	3,000,000	2,000,000	1,000,000	-
Debt Service		116,800	87,600	58,400	29,200	-
Annualised Capex	1,058,400					

W.60 For any year, the total option cost depends on whether the option is selected, commissioned and/or utilised. An option may be selected in year X. Commissioning occurs in year X + lead time. Utilisation can occur in any planning scenario in any year from year X + lead time depending on whether the option is required; utilisation is optimised for all selected assets by cost minimisation.

- Selected: annuitized capex and monetised embedded carbon

- Commissioned: Capex plus fixed operational (fopex) including monetised electricity and carbon costs

- Utilised: Capex plus fopex plus variable operational (vopex) including monetised electricity and carbon costs per Ml

W.61 Electricity costs are calculated by multiplying the kWh by conversion factor depending on generation type.

W.62 Carbon costs are calculated by multiplying the tCO_2e by the carbon conversion factor.

W.63 The annual option costs are summed for each year and discounted using the applicable declining discount rate (STPR, LTDR and IGEQ) to give the net present value (NPV) of an investment programme for any situation. These situation NPVs are minimised for the cost, intergenerational equity and long-term optimisations.

Environmental metrics

W.64 There are four environmental metrics: SEA benefit and dis-benefit, natural capital and biodiversity net gain. Section 9 of the WRMP describes these metrics and assessments used to calculate them in more detail.

W.65 In each case, to develop a programme-level value for each metric, the option-level metric values (of all selected options) are cumulatively summed per year.

Social metric

W.66   Our social metric (beyond those in the SEA assessment) is based on customer research into the relative preference for option type (CUPR).

W.67   This research, for WRSE, provided preference scores for each option type as below:

Figure W - 4: Relative customer preference by option type
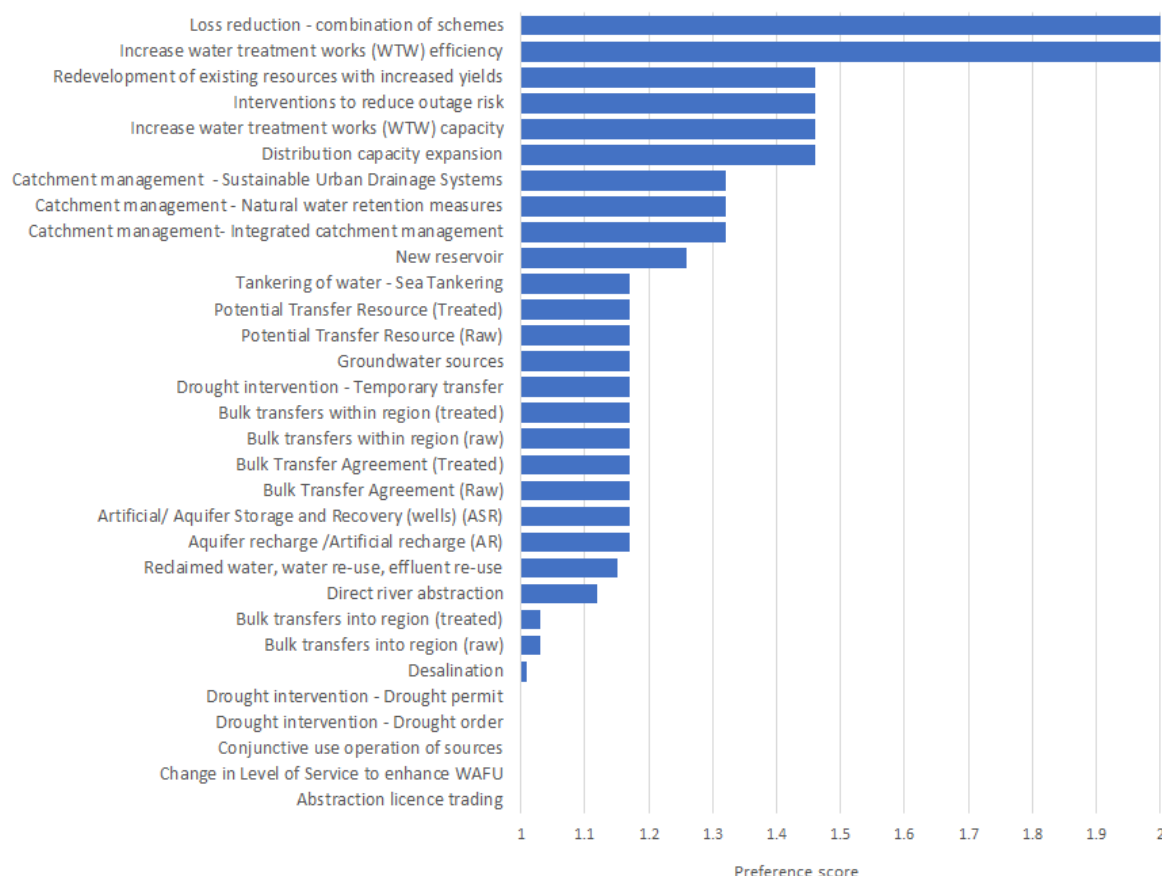
W.68   The overall programme CUPR score is calculated as the sum of scores of all commissioned options per year for each pathway, and CUPR can be maximised or set to reach a target when required.

W.69   Further information on the research is available in the WRSE Method Statement on Customer Engagement.

Resilience metrics

W.70   The IVM contains three resilience metrics (Reliability, Adaptability and Evolvability). All three, at plan-level are the sum of scores from a number of sub-metrics.

$$Reliability = (R1 + R3 + R4 + R5 + R6 + R7 + R8) - BaselineScore_r$$

$$Adaptability = (A3 + A4 + A5 + A7) - BaselineScore_a$$

$$Evolvability = (E1 + E2 + E3 + E5) - BaselineScore_e$$

W.71   The baseline score referred to in the formula above in the draft regional plan are zero.

W.72   The overall sub-metrics are each calculated as the sum of scores of all selected options per year for each, weighted by the proportion of deficit to 2050 satisfied.

W.73   Further detail on resilience metrics considered can be found in the WRSE Resilience Framework document.