

**COUNCIL
21 NOVEMBER 2019**

PUBLIC DOCUMENT

TITLE OF REPORT: NOTICE OF MOTIONS

The following motion has been submitted, due notice of which has been given in accordance with Standing Order 4.8.12.

A. River Ivel

To be moved by Councillor Tom Tyson and seconded by Councillor Paul Clark:

“This Council expresses its concern about the perilous state of the upper reaches of the River Ivel and other local chalk streams, including the Rivers Purwell and Hiz and St Ippolyts Brook.

Council notes that the River Ivel has been continuously dry in an area extending from the Ivel Springs Local Nature Reserve downstream to Radwell for a period of well over a year.

Council further notes that there has been no flow in the upper Ivel during half the months of the previous four years.

The River Ivel is one of the rare and ecologically important chalk streams of the Chiltern Chalk Aquifer. According to the Ivel Springs Greenspace Action Plan for 2010–2015, “Chalk rivers are extremely rare and included in the Herts Biodiversity Action Plan. The river and its wetlands are important habitats for a wide range of species”. This is a resource we should cherish and protect. Instead, the watercourses are dry, the fish are dead and other associated wildlife is gone.

Council is therefore determined to ensure that a healthy year-round water flow be restored and maintained in the upper reaches of the river from the area known as Ivel Springs down to Radwell Lake and beyond.

Furthermore, Council recognises that the disaster of the Ivel is not an isolated instance among the chalk streams of the Chiltern Chalk Aquifer: many others are suffering dangerously low levels and consequent environmental harm.

Council therefore undertakes to implement the following actions:

1. Elicit information from Affinity Water regarding their plans for reducing abstraction rates from the chalk aquifer:
 - (i) at Baldock specifically and
 - (ii) from the aquifer as a whole.

2. Elicit plans from Affinity Water with regard to use of AMP7 (2015–2020 Asset Management Plan) money to invest in effective measures to conserve and enhance the Ivel specifically and other local chalk streams generally.
3. Seek a pledge from Affinity Water that it will take the steps necessary to ensure that a specified minimum water flow is maintained in the upper Ivel throughout the year.
4. Seek assurance from the Environment Agency that it will monitor the impact of water abstraction from the aquifer on our local environment and take appropriate action where Affinity Water allows its activities to harm the environment.
5. Support and work with local interest groups, including the RevIvel Association in Radwell.
6. Support the establishment of an integrated, overarching partnership to enable all relevant agencies and organisations to collaborate with the aim of protecting the chalk streams of the aquifer in its entirety.
7. Lobby our constituency MPs for active support in all of the above.”