



guardians of drinking water quality

## **Drinking Water Inspectorate Statement to the Competition & Markets Authority for the Pennon Group/Bournemouth Water Investments merger inquiry**

1. The Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) is the independent regulator of drinking water quality in England and Wales. We protect public health and maintain confidence in public water supplies by ensuring water companies supply safe clean drinking water that is wholesome, and that they meet all related statutory requirements. Where standards or other requirements are not met, we have statutory powers to require water supply arrangements to be improved.
2. We publish information about drinking water quality and provide technical advice to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, and to Welsh Ministers.
3. We are grateful for the invitation to comment on this matter.
4. Any change in ownership or operational arrangements made under the proposed merger will not change the duties and responsibilities on the new licenced entity in respect of drinking water quality requirements. In the transfer of those duties from the existing licence holders to the new entity, we consider that it is unlikely that the proposed merger will increase the risk of default or deterioration in drinking water quality or in the protection of consumers.
5. We will continue to ensure that statutory responsibilities are discharged and that consumers are protected.
6. Information is available on our website on the past performance of both Bournemouth Water and South West Water in discharging their statutory duties, in protecting public health, and in managing their drinking water quality issues, and relevant performance information is routinely shared with Ofwat on these matters. These processes will continue for the new entity.

7. Any queries on this matter can be addressed to Milo Purcell at [milo.purcell@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:milo.purcell@defra.gsi.gov.uk) .

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