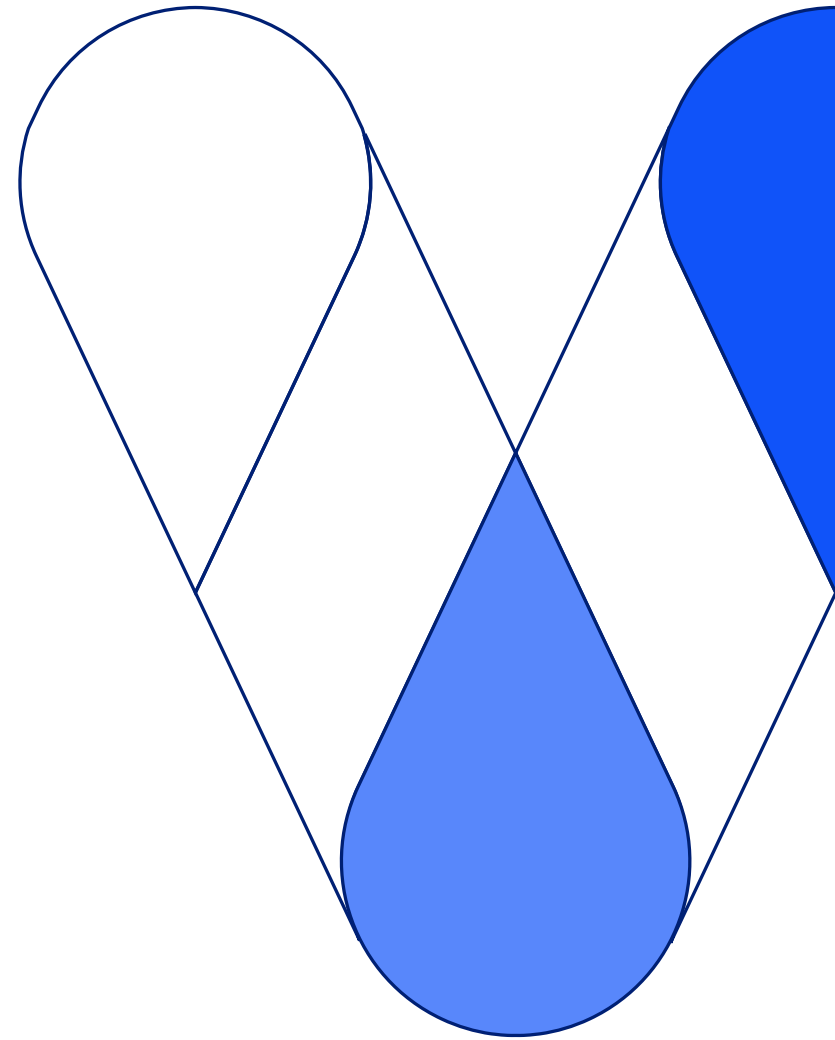


---

# Integrated water management governance for Greater Adelaide

A summary report  
October 2023



# Contents

---

Contents . . . . .	2
Executive summary . . . . .	3
The ‘push’ for IWM governance reform . . . . .	7
Insights from the national reform journey . . . . .	8
An independent approach and contribution . . . . .	9
What we heard - survey & interviews . . . . .	11
Conclusions from the survey & interviews . . . . .	18
What we heard - Executive Forum . . . . .	20
Conclusion & next steps . . . . .	28
References . . . . .	29



# Executive summary

---

## Background

The South Australian Government has committed to reform integrated water management (IWM) governance arrangements. To deliver on this commitment, SA Water is working with the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) and other stakeholders to develop a 50-year water strategy for Greater Adelaide through the Resilient Water Futures (RWF) project.

Watertrust Australia convened an independent process with key stakeholders from across the water sector to begin to explore future IWM governance options for Greater Adelaide. This was done by developing a shared understanding of stakeholders' perspectives of barriers and opportunities related to existing and future IWM governance arrangements.

Our work included a preliminary review of IWM governance reform across Australia, targeted surveys (20) and interviews (15) with a diverse set of stakeholders, and convening an Executive Forum, involving 44 executives and senior managers from 30 stakeholder organisations.

This report summarises key insights from our work and aims to provide a foundation for future work by SA Water, DEW, key stakeholders and Watertrust Australia.



*Photo of Adelaide Hills creek by Stephen Mabbs on unsplash.com*

# Executive summary

---

## Key findings

Our survey and interviews suggested that there is overwhelming support for IWM governance reform for Greater Adelaide, with progress towards IWM constrained by: (1) an uncoordinated approach to IWM decision-making; (2) insufficient funding and resources; and (3) a legislative framework and associated regulation that does not encourage IWM.

However, the survey and interviews also suggested that building on this broad support for reform and transforming it into effective change is complicated by the lack of agreement among stakeholders on a common definition of IWM, priorities for implementation and the most effective future IWM governance model. In addition, stakeholders appeared to have varying levels of ambition for reform of existing governance arrangements.

Experience elsewhere in Australia suggests that a shared understanding of key outcomes, a shared ambition for reform, and well-aligned institutional and organisational leadership are critical to the effective design and delivery of IWM outcomes.

Given this background, we designed the Executive Forum to focus on finding common ground across those areas where

the survey and interviews had revealed a diversity, and sometimes, conflicting perspectives. Participants worked through a series of activities to explore the level of agreement on key issues associated with IWM for Greater Adelaide.

The forum revealed agreement among stakeholders on:

- IWM outcomes related to drinking water and wastewater services, economic growth, healthy ecosystems, improved liveability and cultural values
- a set of attributes of ‘good governance’
- the need for more detailed analysis of the value of reform and various governance options
- the need for ongoing and broader engagement with stakeholders.

The forum also established a shared, high-level of ambition for reform, with participants agreeing that multiple changes are likely to be required over time. Some of these changes will be limited and easy to implement, while others will be more complicated and will require considerable further analysis and agreement. Critical to the success of reform will be that new governance arrangements are designed to deliver the desired outcomes and that there is ‘buy-in’ from stakeholders into the reform process.

# Executive summary

---

## Next steps

Participants of the Executive Forum identified four focus areas for stakeholders to continue explore together:

1. Continuing to develop specific desired outcomes of IWM
2. Developing agreed principles for IWM governance
3. Building the case for reform, and
4. Exploring and assessing governance options.

Insights from stakeholders and interstate and international experience suggest that critical to the success of the reform will be the maintenance of an authorising environment to avoid a policy-deadlock. i.e. no decision being made due to competing interests.

As an initial next step we recommend that a charter for a decision about future IWM governance arrangements for Greater Adelaide be co-developed with stakeholders. A decision charter articulates the scope of the decision and the process by which a decision will be made, including responsibilities, inputs and stakeholder involvement. It ensures a shared understanding among stakeholders on the decision-making process and helps to build and maintain an authorising environment for the decision that needs to be made.



*Photo of River Torrens by Vlad Kutepov on unsplash.com*

# Background



# The ‘push’ for IWM governance reform

---

The National Water Initiative and South Australian Water for Good Plan (Government of South Australia, 2010) drove significant water reform across South Australia. Reforms improved the efficiency and performance of the water sector in delivering clean, reliable and affordable water and wastewater services (Productivity Commission, 2021).

The Australian water sector faces significant challenges over coming decades due to population growth and climate change (Productivity Commission, 2020). For Greater Adelaide, this includes having sufficient water to meet increasing demands in the context of likely climate change impacts, including a decline in water availability and an increase in extreme climatic events like droughts and floods. Community expectations have also changed and the water sector now needs to address a more diverse set of societal values underpinned by water (Productivity Commission, 2021).

The water sector in Greater Adelaide recognises that IWM offers an opportunity to address these challenges but that current governance arrangements are a limiting factor. For example, the South Australian Government’s Stormwater Expert Panel is considering the implications of governance shortcomings for stormwater management, an issue also explored by the Goyder Institute for Water Research (e.g. Myers et al., 2022).

In 2022, the South Australian Government released the Urban Water Directions Statement as a first step towards IWM (Government of South Australia, 2022). It proposed a range of actions through collaboration with local government, the planning sector, community organisations and the private sector. The Government subsequently committed to:

*“Ensure government structures are addressed to enable government, councils and other agencies and authorities to deliver true integrated water management (IWM) and stop treating recycled, stormwater and mains water in isolation”.*

SA Water is working with stakeholders to deliver this commitment through the development and delivery of RWF, a 50-year water strategy for Greater Adelaide. The RWF project has identified that an enabling governance environment is required for the delivery of effective IWM for Greater Adelaide, with SA Water and DEW leading the exploration of future governance arrangements. The OECD defines an enabling governance environment as:

*“The range of political, institutional and administrative rules, practices and processes (formal and informal) through which decisions are taken and implemented, stakeholders can articulate their interests and have their concerns considered, and decision makers are held accountable for water management” (OECD, 2015).*

# Insights from the national reform journey

---

Any future IWM governance arrangements for Greater Adelaide will need to be specific to the local context, with consideration of the historical and existing arrangements and major impediments to achieving the desired outcomes (as per advice in OECD, 2015). Nevertheless, experiences of recent reforms of IWM governance arrangements from other jurisdictions can provide important insights for Greater Adelaide, particularly given the early stages of the reform process.

A high-level review of experiences of IWM governance reform from across Australia (see Skinner and Satur, 2020 and Productivity Commission, 2020) identified the following key insights.

## **Specific outcomes sought from IWM need to be agreed among stakeholders**

- Agreement is required to determine the elements of governance to be addressed and the most appropriate governance model for achieving the desired outcomes. i.e. governance is a means to an end.
- Outcomes should be specific and quantified where possible to ensure that they have clear intent, are meaningful to stakeholders and drive the delivery of the desired outcomes.

## **There needs to be an enabling environment of institutional and organisational leadership**

- IWM and its governance is highly complex with many interrelated layers (e.g. legislation, roles and responsibilities, regulation, financing).
- Given the complexity, IWM must engage with multiple stakeholders to successfully deliver the desired outcomes, which requires capacity, capability, commitment to change, and leadership across all stakeholders.
- An ongoing authorising environment is required and must enable a genuine process of engagement with key stakeholders that allows for their consequential influence over outcomes. This helps build support for change from key stakeholders and helps avoid key stakeholders ‘walking away’.



# An independent approach and contribution

---

## About Watertrust Australia

Watertrust is an independent, not-for-profit organisation, with a mission to improve water and catchment policy and decision-making in Australia. We focus on people and process, not advocacy for predetermined outcomes.

## Aims

Preliminary discussions with stakeholders involved in water management across Greater Adelaide highlighted the complexity of existing governance arrangements. They also revealed the multiple, and sometimes competing, stakeholder interests that would need to be considered to develop and implement the enabling governance environment required for the effective delivery of IWM for Greater Adelaide.

Watertrust Australia agreed to convene an independent process with key stakeholders from the water sector to begin to explore future IWM governance options for Greater Adelaide. This initial work aimed to develop a shared understanding of stakeholders' perspectives of barriers and opportunities related to existing and future IWM governance arrangements and their concerns, needs and aspirations.

## Approach

Over the last two months, Watertrust has:

- undertaken a high-level analysis of the experiences of IWM governance reform across Australia, including an interview with an national water utility leader involved in IWM implementation
- surveyed a broad range of stakeholders, with 20 surveys completed by respondents in leadership positions at SA state government agencies, water utilities, local governments and industry organisations
- interviewed leaders from 15 SA state government agencies, water utilities, local governments and industry organisations
- independently convened an Executive Forum, involving 44 sector leaders from across 30 organisations in Greater Adelaide.

This report provides a summary of our findings from this work. The report is presented in four parts: this background, findings from our surveys and interviews, findings from the Executive Forum, and our conclusion and recommended next steps.

# Findings - survey & interviews

# What we heard - survey & interviews

## Organisations across the sector are good at delivering against their legislated roles

Across the survey and interviews, stakeholders acknowledged that (see Figure 1 for survey responses):

- Current water management arrangements deliver safe and affordable drinking water and wastewater services efficiently and effectively, supported by prior legislative reform and current regulation.
- Successful delivery of services against health and environmental regulation is driven by clear roles and responsibilities, stable arrangements and personnel, informal and formal coordination forums, and trust across key organisations.
- Effective delivery of improved water management and on-ground outcomes at local scales through expertise in water allocation planning, flood management, stormwater management & harvesting and coastal protection.
- Long-standing relationships across the sector and approaches support collaborative work across organisations that have delivered outcomes with mutual benefits (e.g. Managed Aquifer Recharge User Group, Stormwater Management Plans).

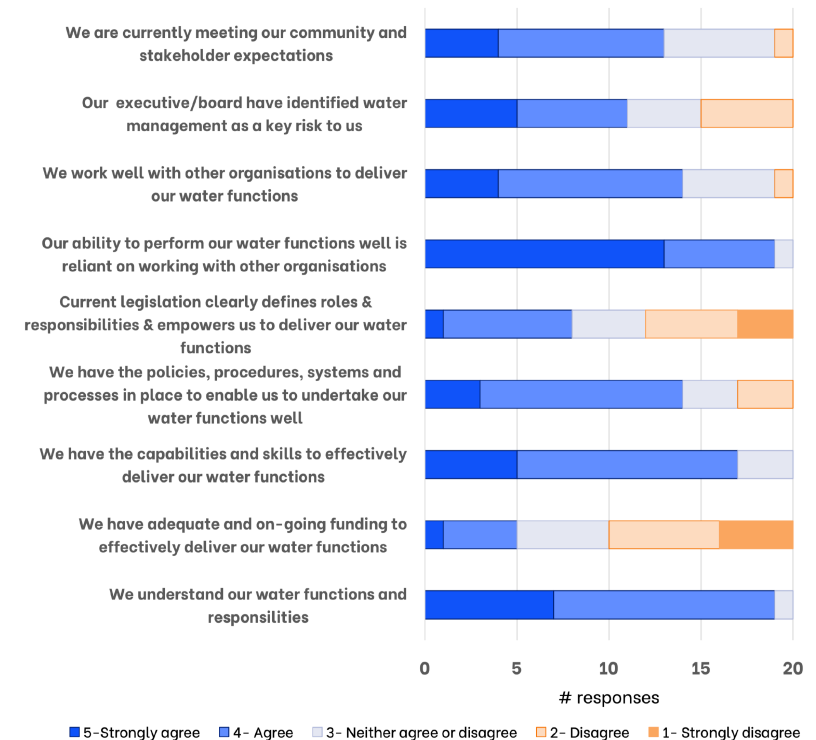


Figure 1: Stakeholder rating of statements in relation to existing water management (source: Watertrust survey)

# What we heard - survey & interviews

## Existing challenges will limit progress to IWM

Challenges to water management were identified through our survey (Figure 2) and interviews:

- *Climate change*, which will reduce water availability and have broad impacts through extreme events
- *Population growth and urban development*, which will increase water supply and wastewater service needs and is further complicated through a level of disconnection between the planning and water sectors
- *Aging infrastructure and funding limitations*, with the latter constraining investment, capacity, innovation and change
- *Existing legislation and regulation*, which limit organisations' capacity to meet changing community expectations
- *DEW's capacity and capability constraints* resulting from budget cuts, which limit effective policy leadership and coordination for addressing system-wide challenges
- *Many stakeholders, silos and conflicting incentives*, which make it difficult to resolve trade-offs or coordinate investments to maximise benefits across boundaries
- *Mismatches between water allocation and stormwater responsibilities and catchment and council boundaries*, which make it difficult to make whole of catchment decisions.

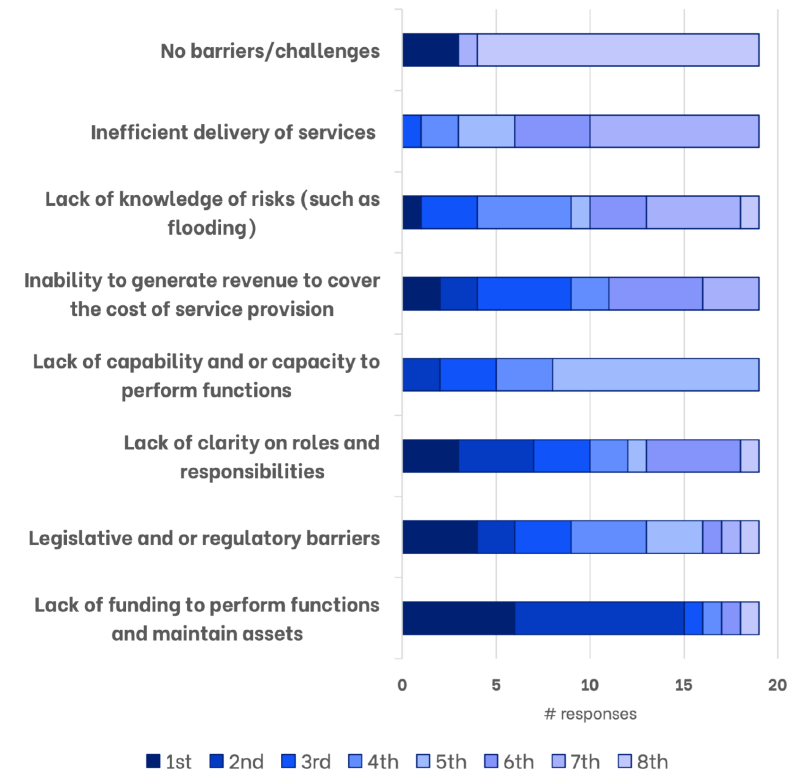


Figure 2: Stakeholder ranking of existing water management challenges, from greatest to least (source: Watertrust survey)

# What we heard - survey & interviews

## There is overwhelming support for IWM

IWM is seen as an essential mechanism for delivering improved outcomes and better processes, including:

- improved decision-making and increased efficiency and effectiveness of investments at the regional level
- improvements to individual organisations' abilities to deliver functions in a more effective and efficient manner
- a mechanism to provide increased and sustainable funding
- a shared vision, stakeholder 'buy-in' and improved decision-making for achieving it
- improved trust, collaboration, coordination and innovation amongst stakeholders
- increased efficiency of decision-making
- increased transparency of decision-making and roles and responsibilities.

The majority indicated that the scale of benefits is large but it was also suggested that the benefits are currently hypothetical. Some stakeholders identified risks arising from IWM, including stranded assets and 'unwieldy', inflexible governance arrangements that could constrain outcome delivery.

*“Better integration is necessary - if boundaries limit our thought processes, then we will have limited solutions and outcomes.”*

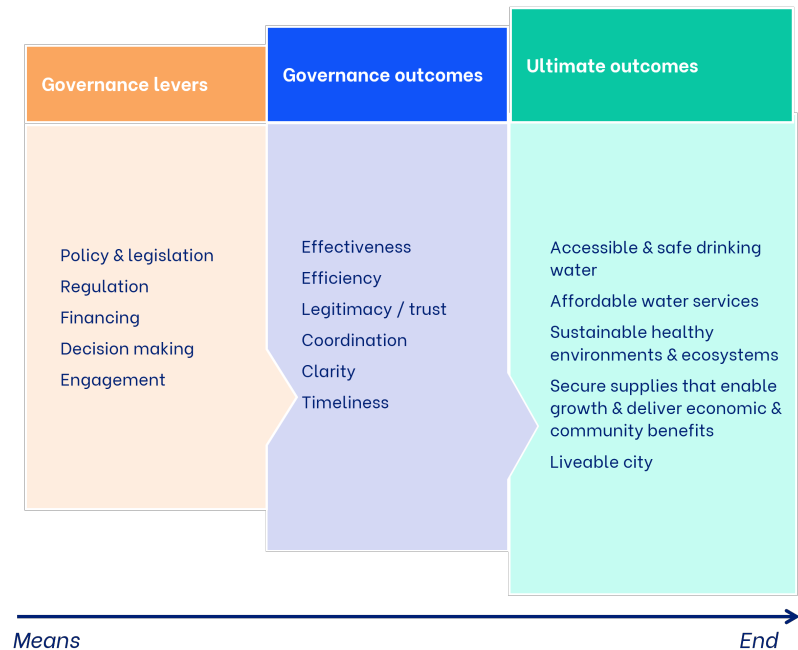


Figure 3: Governance - levers to outcomes (source: Watertrust)

# What we heard - survey & interviews

---

## Stakeholders saw IWM as enabling a range of outcomes, but there was not a shared common set of outcomes

Collectively, stakeholders saw IWM as enabling the sector to be able to respond more effectively to a range of community expectations, including addressing challenges associated with population growth and climate change and creating a more liveable city. Stakeholders believed IWM could help deliver:

- broad water security and resilience, with increased diversification of sources, including greater uptake of alternative sources
- safe and reliable drinking water
- improved liveability and amenity including greening, cooling and associated health and well-being of the community
- restoration and protection of water-dependent ecosystems and biodiversity
- coastal protection (improved water quality) and flood mitigation
- secure, reliable and affordable water supplies for agriculture and industry.

However, stakeholders tended to focus on the outcomes that related to their roles and responsibilities. e.g. stormwater management, urban greening or water security. There was not a shared view across the stakeholders regarding the set of outcomes sought from IWM.

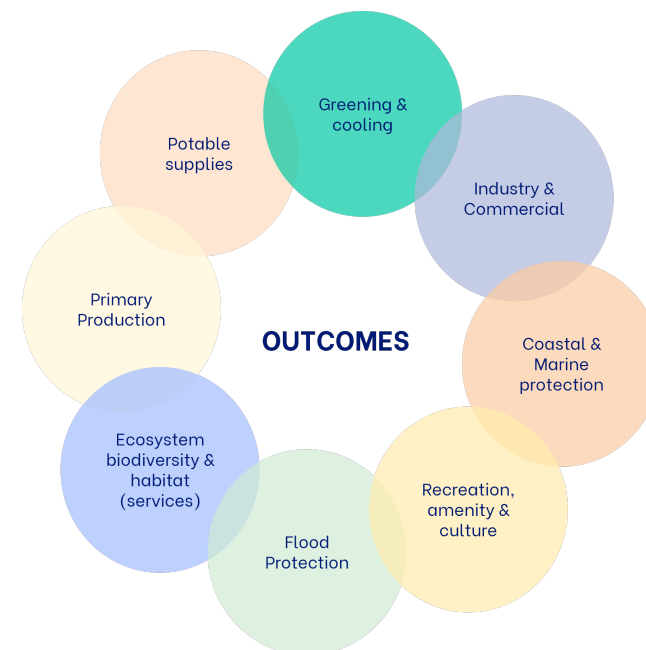


Figure 4: Outcomes identified by stakeholders (source: Watertrust survey and interviews)

# What we heard - survey & interviews

---

## Current governance arrangements rated poorly for enabling IWM

Overwhelmingly, those we interviewed and surveyed considered existing governance arrangements inadequate for enabling IWM. Existing arrangements were described as ‘piecemeal’, ‘fragmented’, ‘absent’ and ‘loose’. As a result, important decisions are not being made explicitly, transparently or in a timely fashion, resulting in no ‘voice’ for stakeholders and limited accountability for decisions.

Stakeholders interviewed identified the lack of coordinated decision-making as a primary challenge resulting in:

- no clear decision-making processes for system-wide decisions or trade-offs
- no organisation leading/coordinating/overseeing a strategic, whole-of-system approach
- unclear roles and responsibilities for IWM.

Survey respondents and some of those we interviewed also identified a lack of funding and financing as another major challenge, including:

- no processes for system wide financing and investment decisions to assess options and agree on who and how to pay

for investments, resulting in inefficiencies and poor prioritisation

- assessment of investments being limited to direct costs and benefits without consideration of broader public costs and benefits, resulting in options often not ‘stacking up’ and under-investment
- smaller providers not being able to compete with SA Water prices and discouraging alternative water sources.

Stakeholders we interviewed characterised the current legislative framework as an overarching limiting factor with:

- the *Water Industry Act* not enabling the consideration of the full benefits of investments, and pricing decisions being limited to financial returns and efficiency
- the *Landscape Act* and components of *Local Government Act* not encouraging integrated catchment management or collaboration/investment across catchment or council boundaries.

**“The biggest issue is the lack of clarity within SA about roles and responsibilities across the numerous organisations with segmented and siloed responsibilities for water management, and as a follow on, funding. I don’t think any of us are capable of meeting community expectations while this is the case.”**

# What we heard - survey & interviews

---

## Attributes of good governance arrangements for IWM

Stakeholders identified that any new IWM governance arrangements should:

- support the delivery of desired, long-term IWM outcomes with appropriate regulation
- encompass a whole-of-system approach to managing water
- provide for effective resolution of difficult trade-offs across outcomes, interventions, catchment and council boundaries
- delineate clear roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders and organisations
- have sufficient and sustainable sources of funding
- allow for effective, independent, long-term, evidence-informed decision-making, decoupled from the 'hydro-illogical' pressures of election cycles
- deliver the transparency and allocation of decision-making power required to build trust and respect among stakeholders.

## A successful governance model must engage stakeholders across the decision cycle

Stakeholders emphasised the importance of an IWM governance model capable of genuinely involving stakeholders in:

- identifying and defining long-term and short-term goals and outcomes
- providing relevant expertise and local knowledge
- resolving trade-offs across outcomes and boundaries.

An effective governance model must institutionalise processes that allow for:

- regular opportunities for stakeholders to have meaningful input through agreed approaches
- transparent decision-making
- broad representation of both government and non government stakeholders and customers
- decision-makers being able to 'tap into' stakeholder and independent knowledge, values and views.



# What we heard - survey & interviews

---

## There are different levels of ambition for reform

The interviews and survey revealed different levels of ambition for IWM governance reform among stakeholders:

- While most stakeholders indicated that a major overhaul of governance was required to achieve desired outcomes, some stakeholders believed less extensive change was needed. Governance options proposed varied from 'tweaking' to 'overhauling'.
- Most governance options identified related to structural changes, with one central authority often identified as an option. However, little detail or clarity was provided on any options.
- Where ambition for change was limited, this appeared to be driven by limited capacity to address whole-of-system objectives.
- Some stakeholders identified the need for transition planning to bridge long-term ambition and existing arrangements, funding and capacity.
- A number of stakeholders cited the importance of clearly articulating the benefits of IWM governance reform to create 'buy-in' across the sector.

## Some governance options were suggested but none had broad support

Some potential IWM governance reform options included:

- Structural (not in priority order)
  - an independent, government or representative authority with responsibility for whole-of-system IWM decisions
  - an independent authority that sets, monitors and reports on the performance of stakeholders against IWM targets
  - an independent advisory group to advise the Minister on investment decisions for achieving IWM outcomes
  - Greater Adelaide-wide, issue-based or geographically focused stakeholder forums for consultative/ collaborative IWM decision-making.
- Process (not in priority order)
  - clarification of IWM roles and responsibilities
  - redefinition of IWM roles and responsibilities through legislative change
  - an overarching, long-term IWM strategy that clearly articulates goals, targets and responsibilities
  - an overarching IWM governance framework to monitor and report on progress and ensure accountability.

# Conclusions from the survey & interviews

---

Stakeholders' insights through the survey and interviews combined with lessons learnt elsewhere in Australia suggest that achieving governance reform for Greater Adelaide to enable IWM requires some important agreements among stakeholders.

## **An agreed set of clearly specified IWM outcomes**

Agreeing on IWM outcomes among stakeholders will provide the foundational context for identifying and prioritising governance reforms. One way to progress this would be to independently convene stakeholder forums to identify and develop a set of agreed IWM outcomes.

## **An agreed level of ambition for reform among stakeholders and sufficient leadership, capacity and capability across stakeholders to deliver it**

Agreeing on a level of reform ambition is critical for enabling any further reform. Testing the level of ambition among stakeholders for reform of IWM governance is a valuable step to

avoid conflict or misunderstandings that might arise from different expectations and goals. In parallel, work should be undertaken to identify stakeholder leaders alongside capacity and strengths and gaps across stakeholder organisations and groups.

## **An established authorising environment**

An agreed process for stakeholders to have meaningful input into the exploration of future governance arrangements would assist in establishing the authorising environment for the design and implementation of future reforms and in doing so avoid policy-deadlocks.

The three critical issues identified through insights from the survey and interviews and national reform journey formed the basis for our design of the Executive Forum.

# Findings - Executive Forum

# What we heard - Executive Forum

---

## **Forum participants agreed that outcomes sought from IWM should encompass the range of benefits that water provides**

The high-level outcomes identified from the survey and interviews resonated with forum participants. Participants agreed that that outcomes sought from IWM should encompass the range of societal benefits that water provides: safe, secure, affordable drinking water and wastewater services, water enabling growth, healthy ecosystems, liveable cities (including protection from flooding) and water for culture.

Participants also identified a set of enabling outcomes. These included: an educated community, integrated governance and management, and science and knowledge to enable informed decisions about trade-offs to be made.

Figure 5 outlines the high-level, intermediate and enabling outcomes identified by forum participants.

## **There is value in continuing to collaboratively refine IWM outcomes**

While participants were able to identify some tangible intermediate outcomes at the forum, it was acknowledged that further work and engagement is required. For example, intermediate outcomes associated with water for culture were highlighted as being important, but requiring further work and leadership from First Nations representatives.

The forum also revealed the need to continue to collaboratively develop a set of specific, intermediate outcomes to support these high-level outcomes. The intermediate outcomes should be tangible, implementable over shorter timeframes and include clearly identified shorter-term benefits. This work should systematically unpack a set of key outcomes and show what would specifically be required over the near- and long-term to plan and implement actions to deliver them.

Specific and clearly articulated actions with timeframes, accountability and budgets would enable stakeholders to agree on the scope and purpose of IWM in Greater Adelaide and identify and evaluate appropriate governance options.

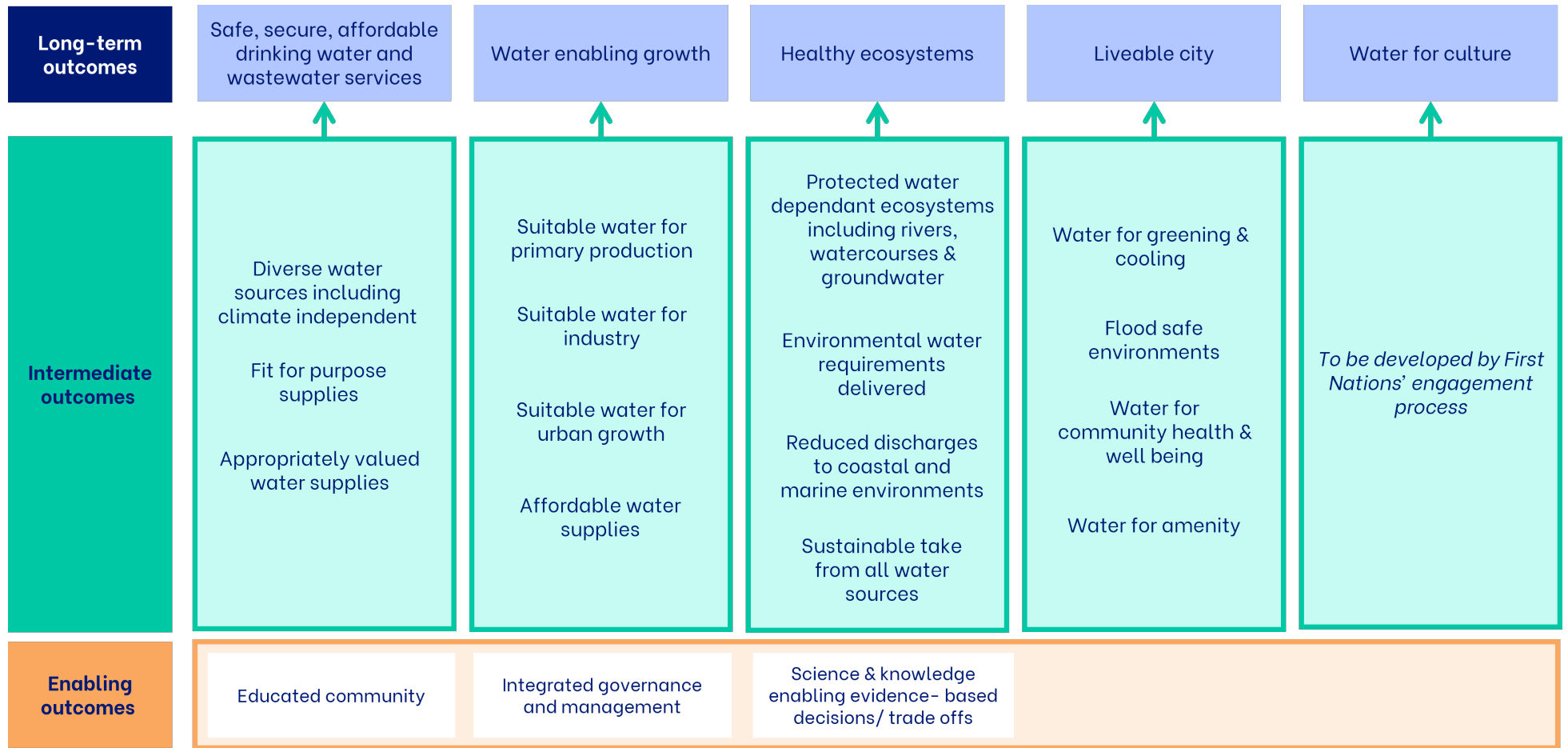


Figure 5: Outcomes framework collated from the outputs of the Executive Forum

# Attributes of future IWM governance

---

## There is good agreement on the attributes of IWM governance, which can be used to develop principles for assessing future IWM governance options

Forum participants agreed with the attributes of ‘good governance’ identified in the survey and interviews. Participants also identified additional attributes, with a particular focus on engagement and culture. The attributes of ‘good governance’ identified are outlined in Figure 7.

The ‘good governance’ attributes identified provide a useful basis to develop a consolidated set of principles for future IWM governance reform. We recommend the governance attributes agreed at the forum be reviewed alongside best practice principles (e.g. the OECD principles for water governance) to create a tailored and specific set of principles that can be used to identify, assess and compare governance options for IWM for Greater Adelaide.



Figure 6: Workshop activities during the Executive Forum

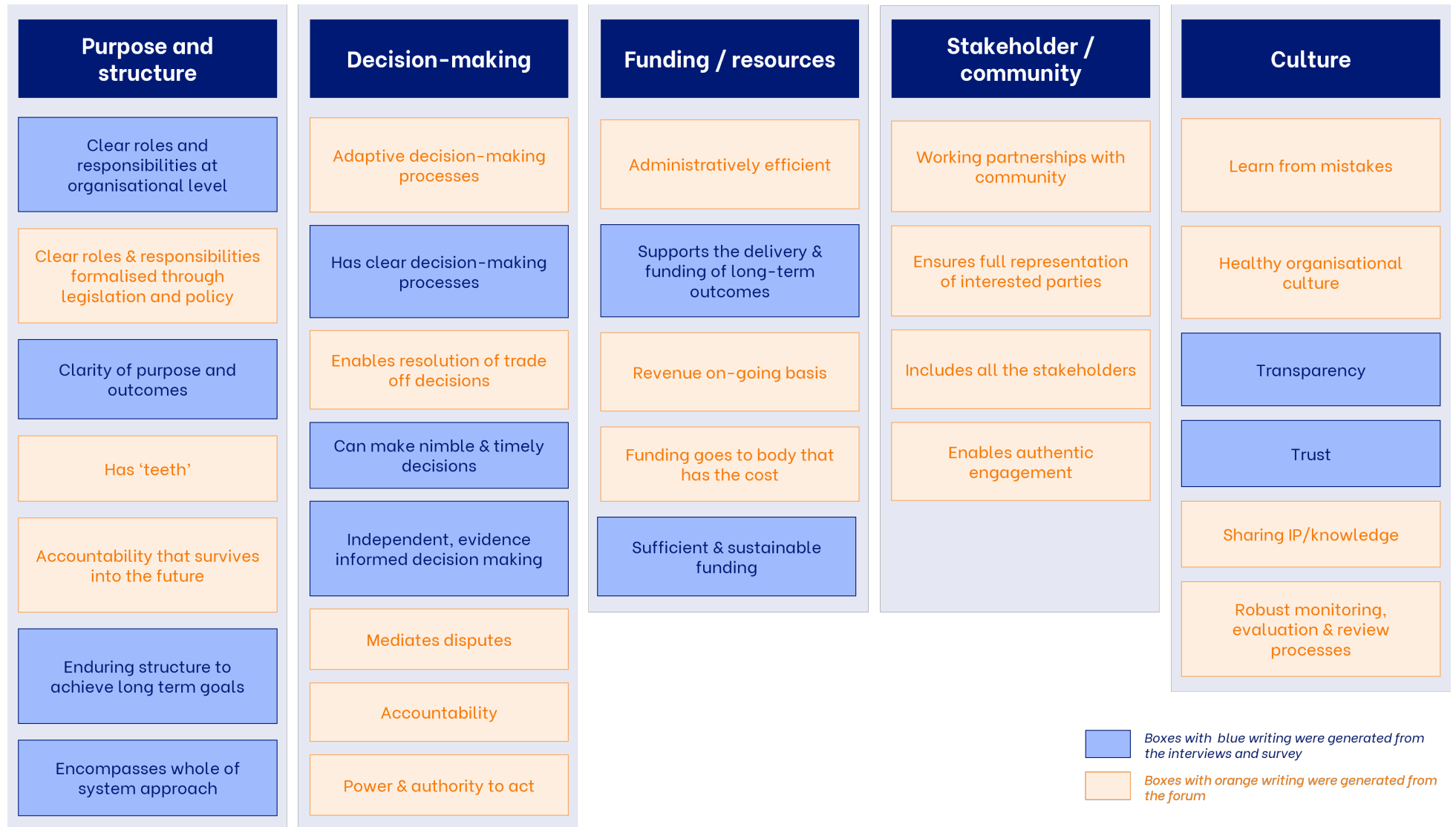


Figure 7: Attributes of 'good governance' identified in interviews and during the workshop

# Shared ambition, but more work required

---

## **There is a shared high-level of ambition for governance reform**

The forum revealed that to make the changes required to deliver IWM outcomes, significant and complicated governance reform is required, which was supported by the participants. There was broad agreement on the need to consider and explore more ambitious levels of reform such as those that include major structural changes, such as the creation of a leading IWM Authority, and associated legislative changes.

## **Further work is required to agree on a particular governance model**

While forum participants broadly agreed ambitious reform is required, there was no agreement at the forum on the preferred governance model. This is not surprising given that the forum was one of the first opportunities for stakeholders to consider, discuss and contribute to explore these complex issues.

Forum participants had the opportunity to explore a range of models. Key findings from the dialogues on potential models

were that a range of reforms will be required to deliver effective IWM governance. These range from relatively simple changes and improvements through to more complex legislative and structural changes. Participants generally agreed that:

- A leading IWM Authority should be seriously considered because of its potential to drive significant change. However, participants acknowledged the complexity and challenges of establishing a new organisation.
- Stakeholder forums would provide an important vehicle to ensure engagement across a wide range of stakeholders and would be relatively easy to establish. Participants acknowledged that appropriate resourcing to ensure continuity of forums over time would be critical.
- Co-designing an overarching IWM governance delivery strategy would be a foundational activity that requires involvement of a wide range of stakeholders.
- An annual conference and developing an overarching governance framework were less likely to be effective in driving the necessary change.



# Co-design and ongoing engagement

---

## More work is required to co-design next steps

Participants agreed that the forum provided a valuable beginning to a long reform ‘journey’. For many, the forum was the first time that they have had an opportunity to provide input and come together to consider the complex issues related to IWM governance for Greater Adelaide. It was evident that further work is required in order to co-design and agree a set of pragmatic next steps to maintain momentum. This could include the preparation of a draft plan for a co-development process and build the foundations for a longer reform ‘journey’.

## Focus areas for future work

Forum participants identified several areas of potential work for progressing IWM governance reform. These include those identified above as well as the following additional areas of focus:

1. Continuing to develop and refine high-level and intermediate outcomes of IWM
2. Develop a consolidated set of principles to underpin the reform journey that can be used as a guide for assessing governance options

3. Build a business case for reform that articulates its value and importance and use this to seek Cabinet support
4. Engage the community in better understanding water’s value, IWM principles and the importance of governance reform
5. Further explore governance options, including assessing local (e.g. Stormwater Management Authority, Water for Good, Office of Water Security), interstate, national (e.g. National Water Initiative/Commission) and international models to provide insights for future arrangements.

## There is a desire to continue reform together

Forum participants noted the critical importance of stakeholders remaining involved in the reform ‘journey’. A stakeholder engagement plan should be co-developed to create widely-shared authorising environment for reform.

Participants identified additional stakeholders (e.g. First Nations, Primary Producers SA, SACOME, general public) who should be included in the process and highlighted the importance of local government involvement. The need for “hard conversations” was also identified, in particular those related to the trade-offs involved in deciding among different governance models.



Figure 8: Discussion and dialogue at the Executive Forum

# Conclusion & next steps

# Conclusion & next steps

---

There is broad agreement on the critical importance of IWM to support Greater Adelaide's societal values into the future. Interstate and international experience demonstrates that reform of IWM governance is complex. Multiple important values compete for a finite resource; there are many, sometimes competing, stakeholders; the interrelated elements of governance (e.g. legislation, regulation, roles and responsibilities, financing) need to be integrated; and risks resulting from reform (e.g. stranded assets) need to be carefully managed.

Watertrust initiated an independent process to develop a shared understanding of the different perspectives of stakeholders regarding IWM governance arrangements and lay the foundations for future reform. The engagement with stakeholders through the survey, interviews and forum revealed:

- broad agreement on the need for IWM governance reform
- a shared understanding of the broad definition of IWM
- a high level of ambition for IWM governance reform
- several future governance options that warrant further analysis and investigation.

The Executive Forum identified that stakeholders have a strong desire to continue the reform journey together across four main areas:

1. Continuing to refine desired IWM outcomes
2. Developing agreed IWM governance principles
3. Building the case for governance reform, and
4. Exploring and assessing governance options.

Stakeholders insights and national experience confirms that an authorising environment for governance reform will be critical to avoid policy-deadlocks. i.e. no decision being made due to competing interests. Work on complex water management issues undertaken by Watertrust's international collaborator, Compass Resource Management, across North America has shown that policy deadlocks can be avoided by developing an agreed and transparent decision-making process.

As an initial next step we **recommend that a charter for a decision about future IWM governance arrangements for Greater Adelaide be co-developed with stakeholders.** A decision charter is a plan for making a decision and in this case could incorporate the identified focus areas of work. It articulates the scope of the decision and the process by which it will be made, including the inputs, roles and responsibilities, resource requirements and timing. A decision charter ensures a shared understanding among stakeholders on the decision-making process and helps build and maintain an authorising environment for the decision that needs to be made.

# References

---

OECD, 2015. OECD Principles on Water Governance, [www.oecd.org/governance/oecd-principles-onwater-governance.htm](http://www.oecd.org/governance/oecd-principles-onwater-governance.htm); OECD Publishing, Paris.

Government of South Australia, 2010. Water for Good – A plan to ensure our water future to 2050. Office of Water Security, Government of South Australia.

Government of South Australia, 2022. Urban Water Directions Statement – Smart water management in our towns and cities. Department of Environment and Water, Government of South Australia.

Myers B, Ahammed F, Barratt R, Bradley M, Chesterfield C, Crase L, Doody T, Fallowfield H, Guan H, Lambert M, Muster T, Jane Nursey-Bray M, Shanafield M, 2022. Future urban water management options for a vibrant and resilient Adelaide. Goyder Institute for Water Research Technical Report Series No. 22/16.

Productivity Commission 2020. Integrated Urban Water Management – Why a good idea seems hard to implement, Commission Research Paper, Canberra.

Productivity Commission 2021. National Water Reform 2020, Inquiry Report no. 96, Canberra.

Skinner, R and Satur, P, 2020. Integrated Water Management: Principles and best practice for water utilities, prepared for the Water Services Association of Australia, Monash Sustainable Development Institute, Monash University, Melbourne.



Watertrust  
Australia Ltd