

CABINET

3 DECEMBER 2014

RESPONSE TO WINTER 2013/14 FLOODING INCIDENT FURTHER UPDATE

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (POLICY AND PLANNING)

Contact Officer: Andy Hickman Tel No: 01962 848 105

RECENT REFERENCES:

CAB2571 - Flood Recovery Support Schemes, 19 March 2014

CAB2591 – Response to Winter 2013/14 Flooding Incident, 2 July 2014.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The report gives a further update following a report to Cabinet in July which summarised and commented upon the effectiveness of the response by the City Council to the flooding which affected parts of Winchester District between December 2013 and March 2014.

The report focusses on the areas which were subject to flooding and sets out how this has been considered and what actions are being planned and have been taken.

It also sets out what further work is required and what resources are needed in order to take these forward.

The report does not attempt to provide a detailed analysis of every aspect of the incident, as the Council has established an Informal Scrutiny Group to undertake this work and this is ongoing.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the content of the report relating to the Council's response to the recent flooding incident be noted.
2. That of the payment of £100,000 from the existing revenue budget be approved as the City Council's contribution towards Hampshire County Council's Hambledon Flood Alleviation Scheme.
3. That it be noted that a further capital requirement of £100,000 (to support flood relief measures as set out in paragraph 6.2 of the report) is included in the Capital budget proposals (considered elsewhere on the agenda) subject to approval of the budget by the Council in February 2015.
4. That a supplementary estimate of £50,000 be approved to support revenue-funded activities such as maintenance works associated with drainage and river management issues, as set out in the Report.

CABINET

3 DECEMBER 2014

RESPONSE TO WINTER 2013/14 FLOODING INCIDENT

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (POLICY AND PLANNING)

DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The flooding incident which occurred in the first three months of 2014 was the most severe to affect the District since 2000/01. Continuous heavy rainfall from the end of 2013 through the Christmas holiday season created exceptionally high ground water levels and over-charged water courses such as the River Itchen. A number of communities were affected by flooding during this period, some more severely than others. In order to try to prepare in the best way possible, should such severe weather and flooding occur again during this winter, the City Council has been working with the County Council, the Environment Agency, Water Companies and parish councils/ local flood action groups. This work has included visiting the worst-affected areas and drawing up multi-agency action plans. The City Council is also reviewing its emergency response arrangements with input from a Members Informal Scrutiny Group which will also be reported, verbally, to this meeting.
- 1.2 The City Council and other partner agencies are currently preparing for the winter including communication arrangements, advice on web sites, out of hours arrangements and having supplies to deal with an emergency should one occur.
- 1.3 Parish Councils and flood action groups are working hard with support from the City and County Council and the Environment Agency to ensure that plans are in place and the necessary preparations have been made. A seminar for parishes/ flood action groups was held on 24 November at Hampshire County Council offices in Winchester to advise on winter maintenance arrangements and 'self help' in local communities.
- 1.4 A programme of maintenance and clearance work has been under way for several months to make sure that drainage pipes, gullies and ditches have been cleared and therefore have maximum capacity available to deal with flood water.
- 1.5 The County Council, as the Strategic Flood Authority, has also initiated two Flood Risk Management Pilot Studies for the Itchen and Test catchment areas, working closely with the Environment Agency and Winchester City Council and Test Valley Borough Council. These were initiated earlier this year and are helping to inform plans for capital improvements and response to any future flooding incidents. The objectives of these pilots are set out below:

- Improved flood resilience in Hampshire.
- An improved evidence base to inform strategic priority actions, including a better understanding of sub catchment drainage patterns.
- Improved inter-operability between authorities delivering resource efficiencies.
- Locally sustainable actions at community and strategic level, including improved discipline among riparian owners in fulfilling their legal duties.
- Ability to predict triggers for serious flooding.
- Each flood risk management authority will be enabled to deliver their identified tasks utilising existing programmes of work.
- Strengthened position to secure funding for flood risk management schemes in Hampshire.
- Ability for the approach to be replicated to other priority areas in Hampshire.

Appendix 1 of this report sets out the areas which were affected by last winter's flooding and gives a summary of the work being undertaken in those areas. The City Council's role has been to identify areas which should be targeted for action and to help engage local communities in the process of preparing and improving drainage systems and to provide drainage/engineering advice and project management support.

2 Plans to address Flooding in specific areas

- 2.1 Inevitably, the first location to suffer was Hambledon, where ground water levels rose predictably but alarmingly. Hambledon has a well-structured and effective local flood response plan and this was put into effect by the Flood Action Group members with support from the County Council Emergency Planning team, Hampshire Fire and Rescue and the City Council. Once the measures were in place, tireless effort by local residents and the agencies which supported them, including the military, managed to prevent extensive property damage. Nevertheless, the consequences for everyday life were severe and following a successful bid to Central Government for funding, a major scheme of engineering works has now been established by the County Council and Environment Agency to provide a permanent flood alleviation scheme.
- 2.2 The flood alleviation scheme will be constructed in two phases as below and will cost in the order of £4.3m for both phases. The City Council has been asked to contribute £100,000 towards the cost of the project.
- Phase 1 (October to December 2014): Improvements to outfall and network of drainage ditches downstream of the village; and
 - Phase 2 (January 2015 to spring 2016): Provision of floodwater culverts along East Street, West Street and parts of Green Lane, and re-profiling and resurfacing the highway to enhance carrying capacity.

- 2.3 It is hoped that this scheme once completed will significantly improve the quality of life for residents in Hambledon. As such, it is felt the City Council should make a contribution of £100,000 towards the cost of the scheme. As set out above, the works will take some time to complete due to the scale and complexity of the engineering project. Therefore, emergency planning arrangements will need to be on stand-by over the coming months and advanced discussions are already under way with the Parish/ local flood action group in this regard.
- 2.4 Outside of Hambledon, the areas affected or threatened most seriously by flooding in one way or another were Winchester town, Sutton Scotney, Littleton, Twyford, Hursley, Bramdean, Kings Worthy and Headbourne Worthy. Each of these locations was affected for slightly different reasons or in different ways. In Winchester Town, River Park and Park Avenue flooded and through the use of high volume pumps and barriers/sand bag walls, water was prevented crossing North Walls. Water Lane was at risk for some time from the river and sandbag walls were constructed which prevented flooding of houses.
- 2.5 Over the summer, on-site meetings have been undertaken with local flood action groups/ parish councils and the relevant agencies in the areas which experienced the worst flooding to co-ordinate efforts, identify and deal with maintenance issues, such as ditch and drain clearance, and to identify potential improvement schemes, which would help to increase resilience in the future. This is summarised in Appendix 1 of this report. It has not been possible to visit all the areas which experienced moderate flooding problems but advice and support on local resilience and self help is being offered.
- 2.6 For Winchester Town, a multi-agency action plan has been drawn up as set out in Appendix 2 of this report. Much good progress has been made in relation to working with land owners and sluice operators to make the necessary repairs and agree ongoing maintenance regimes. There are some dredging works which will need to be undertaken over the summer when River levels fall. Consent is currently being sought for this and the City Council has been asked to contribute towards the costs of undertaking such works. It is considered that a supplementary estimate of £50,000 would help support dredging and other revenue expenditure items such as important ditch clearance works, which is a key component in flood alleviation schemes.
- 2.7 As the lead local authority, the County Council is seeking funds jointly with the Environment Agency for funding towards capital improvements to improve local resilience – including the major scheme in Hambledon as set out above.
- 2.8 There is some uncertainty over when or how much funding might be available over coming years although some initial allocations have been made to HCC/EA to support local flood alleviation measures for which the City Council can bid to help implement identified and agreed schemes. Cabinet agreed in July 2014 to allocate funding to allow design and feasibility work to be undertaken for a small number of schemes on which it might usefully take the

lead. This has enabled survey, exploratory work and feasibility/ design work to be undertaken at a number of places including:

- Water Lane, Winchester
- Headbourne Worthy
- Park Avenue, Winchester
- North/South Drive/Pitter Close, Littleton
- Sutton Scotney

- 2.9 Following these investigations, detailed action plans are being drawn up and it will be for the appropriate agencies to deliver the individual elements depending upon responsibilities and may include both longer term engineering schemes and short term maintenance works such as ditch and drain clearance. In some cases these require a multi-agency approach. In other locations such as Bramdean and Cheriton, the City Council has been working with Hampshire County Council, which will be the lead agency as the works relate mainly to the highway.
- 2.10 It is recommended that a further allocation of £100,000 is made available to support the implementation of the above projects. It is not clear at this stage which schemes will require City Council funding and at what level but it is felt that £100k will provide a sensible amount in order to help progress schemes in the above areas. It should be noted that the City Council will be a contributor to all of the above schemes rather than the lead authority but it will obviously have a particular interest where the schemes will be wholly or partly on its land such as at Water Lane and at North Walls Park (Park Avenue Scheme).
- 2.11 The Water Lane flood wall is at the most advanced stage. This will be subject to discussions with ward Members and then with the residents of Water Lane. It is likely to cost in the order of £45,000. This will entail building a small brick wall along most of the length of the river which fronts Water Lane. Consent is required from the Environment Agency and an application has been submitted in this regard. Planning approval is not required. The next stage will be to consult local residents.
- 2.12 In Littleton, residents have submitted a collaborative scheme for a surface water sewer to be constructed through the gardens of properties in Pitter Close and have submitted a Repair and Renewal Grant bid to cover the cost of providing such a scheme. Approval has been given to residents to progress the design of this, which will be assessed by City and County Council Officers.
- 2.13 At Sutton Scotney, a review of the drainage measures in the village has been undertaken and an action plan is being drawn up to address the problems identified. This will involve fairly significant ditch/ river clearance works which the City Council has been asked to contribute towards.
- 2.14 A study is being undertaken, led by the County Council, in Wickham looking at flooding and infrastructure issues which will hopefully identify solutions to the

existing problems. Local Ward members are engaged with this process and a local consultation is currently underway.

- 2.15 Under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, Hampshire County Council is the “Lead Local Flood Authority”. Under the same Act, the City Council is a Risk Management Authority, and both authorities are required to co-operate under the 2010 Act in the exercise of flood risk management. In addition, the City Council has powers under the Land Drainage Act 1991 to carry out flood risk work (which would include the power to contribute to such work carried out by others, such as the County Council. There are duties under the 1991 Act on the Council in respect of watercourses which flow through or adjacent to land owned by the Council (e.g. at River Park). Finally, in the absence of any specific prohibitions, the general power of competence in the Localism Act Section 1 authorises the proposals which are set out in this Report.

3 Managing Flood Recovery Measures

- 3.1 During and after the floods, the Government announced a number of schemes to assist residents and businesses who have been adversely affected by flooding. These were detailed in report CAB 2571 and the details will not be repeated here. The City Council organised 8 drop-in sessions around the District to provide information and advice on what assistance is available and how to apply for it. Full information is also available on the Council’s website. City Council officers have actively sought to engage with business in order to encourage them to apply for grants and support in order to make their businesses more resilient. The figure below represents the actual number of awards and it should be noted that 7 additional business support schemes and 23 further repair and renewal grant applications have been submitted and are currently being processed.
- 3.2 So far, the number of awards of assistance made with each scheme are:

Business Rates Flooding Relief	13
Repair and Renew Grant	44
Business Support Scheme	10
WCC Hardship Rate Relief	5
Council Tax Discount Scheme	258
Village Halls and not-for-profit organisations	1
TOTAL	331

- 3.3 Members will be aware that statements in the media by Government ministers about the help that people can expect have not necessarily been aligned with the actual terms of the schemes that local authorities have been asked to administer. This is particularly true of the Repair and Renewal Grant Scheme which provides grants of up to £5,000 for flood mitigation measures. Because of the specific wording of the Government regulations, this can only be offered to households which have actually suffered flooding to internal spaces and/or to those who lost use of their private foul systems, not to those which took measures which prevented flooding taking place. The City Council is being as flexible as it can in interpretation but it cannot simply ignore the regulations that the Government has set, whatever the prevailing view of how fair these are. The Leader of the Council has written directly to the Minister responsible raising concerns on this issue but no response has yet been received.

4 Emergency Control Arrangements

- 4.1 During the flooding last winter the Winchester Tactical Control Group (TCG) was located in the Boardroom of the Guildhall. City Council staff filled key roles within the operating structure in accordance with the Council's emergency plan. Full time support was provided by the Environment Agency and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HRFS), both of whom located staff at the TCG from the outset, and a little later by military personnel who joined in with their command structures for the area. Hampshire Police and the County Council provided a presence as needed. The TCG was the centre for all incoming requests for assistance, for processing and assessing those requests, tasking a response and for tactical and strategic planning.
- 4.2 During the most intense period of response, the TCG operated 24 hours a day. The TCG kept in close contact with the Hampshire-wide response through the Response Working Group (RWG) and through a local command structure. These procedures and associated emergency plans are being reviewed with the ISG's input.
- 4.3 It is felt that these arrangements worked well: however, in light of the work of the Member's Informal Scrutiny Group, they are being reviewed and some small changes considered in order to improve overall communications and operations and also the comfort of those working in the centre.

5 Situation Report for Winter 2014/15

- 5.1 Information received from the Environment Agency indicates that In Hampshire, rainfall totals from 1 January to 31 October 2014 are the highest on record. Following a dry September, October was wet with approximately 160% of the long term average rainfall recorded.
- 5.2 For the period 1 to 17 November 2014, double the amount of average rain has been recorded. In most locations, groundwater levels are currently above normal for the time of year when compared to the long term average, particularly at Oakley and Preston Candover (North of Winchester)..

Monitoring at Hambledon also shows that ground water levels are high and preparations are being made to make sure that should they continue to rise that all agencies are ready to respond.

- 5.3 Although most groundwater levels are above normal for the time of year, levels are not unprecedented and in many locations they are broadly similar to those recorded in November 2012, when the District experienced isolated groundwater flooding issues during the winter period of 2012/2013 rather than the widespread flooding seen in 2014.
- 5.4 In terms of the forecast risk of flooding, in most locations groundwater levels are now starting to rise in response to the current rainfall. Whether it floods this winter is completely dependent upon the volume and intensity of rainfall. From October 2014 to March 2015 if average winter rainfall is recorded and its spread evenly across Hampshire then limited groundwater flooding to property is expected.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The ISG which has looked at the flooding incident and response has considered, in detail, particular issues which will be reported to this meeting and will be considered and taken into account in the planning of arrangements for this winter. Cabinet are also aware that the response has already been reviewed by the agencies involved and no major deficiencies identified; in fact, the response was judged to have been well-organised and delivered. The City Council is now administering the Government's recovery schemes efficiently, but it is not responsible for the qualification criteria and has lobbied Government because it considers some aspects of this are not realistic or fair to residents who spent significant time and money avoiding being flooded, only to find that they are ineligible or cannot deliver schemes in time to meet the Government's end date for payments. .
- 6.2 The multi-agency approach to preparing for possible future flooding and to help prevent it is working well and good progress is being made as set out in this report. There are some flood prevention schemes being developed which will not be in place for the coming winter due to the time it takes to design, consult, and achieve the necessary consents and funding to deliver them. These will continue to be developed and, where possible, implemented in the spring.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

7 COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND PORTFOLIO PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

- 7.1 Providing an effective response in an emergency is a statutory duty of the City Council as a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Communities look to the City Council as a source of effective support in times of crisis and in the recovery operation. The Council's support and partnership working, as set out in this report, with local parishes/ flood action groups and other partners including the County Council and the Environment Agency

aligns with the objective of being an efficient and effective Council, as set out in the Community Strategy.

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 This report seeks confirmation to make a contribution towards the County Council's flood alleviation scheme in Hambledon of £100,000 and a further request for £100,000 to support schemes listed in paragraph 6.2 above, subject to approval of the budget by Council in February 2015. If included in the Capital programme, further approval will be sought to release this funding once it is more certain how it will need to be spent following further design work and confirmation of partner funding availability.
- 8.2 The funding of particular schemes will depend on the resources available via the County Council's bid for Environment Agency/Government capital funding and any partnership funding available locally.
- 8.3 The Council received £75,715 towards the costs incurred in the emergency through the long-standing Bellwin Scheme, by which local authorities can seek reimbursement of costs incurred in an emergency response from central government funds.
- 8.4 Officers have considered the impact of the proposed expenditure on the prudential indicators and found it to be negligible.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 9.1 There is a high risk of future flooding events in the District in future years, as the ability of infrastructure to deal with inundation from high volumes of rainfall over a short period and/or high levels of ground water becomes overstretched. Although planning to eliminate the effects of flooding is not a practical proposition, where there is a reasonable cost/benefit in doing so then it is sensible to consider action. Future insurance claims and support from Government schemes are likely to expect that local authorities have taken some proactive measures in high risk or high impact locations.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

APPENDICES:

1. Actions in individual settlements/ areas
2. Winchester Town Action Plan

FLOODING ALLEVIATION AND PREVENTION - SUMMARY TABLE

Community	WCC flooding statistics (Domestic and Business properties flooded) - as at 20.02.14	EA flooding statistics - no. of properties flooded	Emergency flood plan in existence? (as per information from HCC Emergency Planning)	Flood Action Group in existence?	Lead authority identified?	Any community engagement/ issue identification yet?	Are there any works planned?	Summary of latest position
Bishops Sutton	11	5	No - but liaison has taken place	Yes	HCC	Yes	Yes	HCC to deploy CCTV unit to look at the pipe under the road to ascertain why it isn't operating as it should and then take action accordingly
Bishops Waltham	0	Not available	No		HCC		Yes	HCC have plans to install a pipe below 'B3035' road to allow water to cross beneath near Hazelholt; also possibility of enlarging Beeches Hill pipe, resurfacing Dean Lane (completed) and digging out ditch parallel to Dean Lane but no confirmed dates yet
Bramdean & Hinton Ampner	3	13	No - Flood Action Group in place but no definitive plan	Yes	HCC	Yes	Some immediate highway drainage works planned by HCC a.s.a.p.	Action plan devised by HCC (including highway works) and circulated - no actions for WCC. Funding committed/requested for these works from a combination of sources
Cheriton	0	6	Yes	Yes	HCC	Yes	Yes	HCC have removed aggregate/dredging under Admirals Bridge and plan to check existing pipe near Admirals Bridge. This revealed build up of gravel restricting flow in Cheriton Cottage garden. Also install 300mm dia pipe from new gully to a catchpit and two 225mm dia pipes to the outfall at the watercourse at Hill Houses Lane by the end of December
Colden Common	1	2	No					HCC have undertaken some drainage repairs
Corhampton & Meonstoke	1	Not available	No		Parish Council (EA supporting)	Yes		EA have met with Hampshire Highways and are supporting the parish council to try and achieve better flow management
Denmead	6	Not available	No - Community Emergency Plan in place but not specific to flooding					HCC have dug out Kings Pond and approach ditches on Anmore Road
Droxford	0	Not available	No					
Exton	0	Not available	No					
Hambledon	14	Not available	Yes	Yes	HCC	Yes	Yes, HCC schemes with phase 1 2014/15 and phase 2 2014/15 and 2015/16	Public event held 13/10/14 - report to WCC Cabinet due in December 2014 to release £100k of WCC funding towards phase 2
Headbourne Worthy	2	2	No	Yes	EA	Yes	Yes	EA have drafted action plan (yet to be sent to Flood Action Group); still some gaps in land ownership knowledge; river bed clearance to be arranged
Hursley	12	12	Yes	Yes	Southern Water / HCC		Yes	Ditches on Poles Lane to be cleared by HCC; EA to check route water takes
Itchen Stoke & Ovington	1	Not available	No					
Itchen Valley	1	Not available	No					
Kings Worthy	0	1	No	Yes	HCC	Yes	Yes	HCC to rectify resurfacing errors and broken pipe at Springvale Road and explore possibilities for bigger pipe; also arrange ditch clearance and investigate whether existing grille should remain
Littleton & Harestock	0	2	No - but draft plan is being produced by Parish Council	Yes	WCC	Yes		Residents advised to progress detailed design for their solution and for dwarf wall around pumping station and that RRG can meet these costs; RPF Associates commissioned to produce drawings and costs for complementary scheme to tackle highway water. Initial liaison with MOD arranged
Micheldever	0	Not available	No					HCC have re-engineered drainage across Duke Street and are hopeful of improvement
Northington	1	Not available	No					
Owslebury	0	Not available	Yes					HCC have cleared existing drainage but it hasn't been replaced
Soberton	3	Not available	No					
Sutton Scotney	0	9		Yes	HCC/WCC	Yes		Situation now assessed and follow up meeting due on site 19/11/14
Tichborne	0	Not available	No					HCC have thickly resurfaced Riverside Lane which should lift it above the level of the River Itchen
Twyford	1	24	Yes	Yes	HCC/EA	Yes	Yes	HCC to check surface water sewer and broken wall. EA to undertake recovery/repair works of breaches on the navigation
Upham	1	Not available	No					
Wickham	0	Not available	No - Community Emergency Plan in place but not specific to flooding	Yes	HCC	Yes	Yes	HCC also re-constructing pipe across the A32 and have also commissioned an investigation in to flooding problems with a view to identifying potential improvement schemes - next meeting is due 19/11/14
Winchester Town	15	22	No - multi agency Flood Plan (Draft) in place		WCC		Water Lane by WCC and Park Avenue by HCC/WCC/EA	Detailed design for Water Lane now complete and HCC have advised Local Levy Funding is available for the cost. HCC are now going to be progressing work in the Park Avenue area but may require a financial contribution from WCC
Wonston	5	Not available	No	Yes	HCC/WCC	Yes		Situation now assessed and follow up meeting due on site 19/11/14

