

REPORT TITLE: FLOODING INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP UPDATE AND ANNUAL EMERGENCY PLANNING REPORT

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12 DECEMBER 2016

PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR PEARSON (PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND WELLBEING).

REPORT OF HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

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WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

This Report provides an update on the recommendations of the Flooding Informal Scrutiny which reported to Cabinet on 3 December 2014 and The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 January 2015 (Report CAB2638 refers). An update on progress was presented to The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 January 2016 (Report OS134 refers).

The opportunity has also been taken to review the work undertaken by the Council in meeting its responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA) as a Category 1 responder. This follows publication of the Annual Emergency Planning Report for 2015/16 that has been prepared by the Emergency Planning Unit at the County Council who work closely with the City Council within the terms of an agreed Service Level Agreement. The Annual Emergency Planning Report provides an indication of the training held during the year along with the emergency incidents that occurred during the year.

For completeness, a summary update on the implementation of flood alleviation schemes is also included in Section 11 of the Report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the information provided in the update of the Flooding Informal Scrutiny Group recommendations, the Annual Emergency Planning Report summary and update of flood alleviation schemes be noted and any issues raised with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

IMPLICATIONS:1 COMMUNITY STRATEGY OUTCOME

- 1.1 Ensuring that the Council has adequate plans in place to respond to an emergency incident supports the Community Strategy outcome of being an efficient and effective Council as well as protecting the health and wellbeing of the residents of the District.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 There are no significant resource implications arising from this report.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None

6 CONSULTATION AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 This Report has been prepared in consultation with Hampshire County Council's Emergency Planning Unit. Councillor Pearson (Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Wellbeing has been consulted on the draft report.

7 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<i>Property</i>	Emergency incidents can cause disruption and damage to property. Comprehensive Emergency and Business Continuity Plans can help to mitigate this.	
<i>Community Support</i>	Community Emergency plans have been developed for 19 Parishes within the District, following pro active work by HCC and Hants Fire and Rescue.	Annual events are held to which all Parishes and other community groups are invited to help further develop community resilience.
<i>Timescales</i>	The District Emergency Response Plan is reviewed annually,	

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
	rewritten every 3 years and is exercised annually.	
<i>Project capacity</i>	There are approximately 70 members of staff that have a role within the Emergency Response Plan, and other staff are called upon in the event of a significant event, for example the flooding in 2013/14.	New staff are recruited and trained to join the Plan on a regular basis.
<i>Financial / VfM</i>	None	
<i>Legal</i>	None	
<i>Innovation</i>	The use of new technology is explored to help the integration of the responding agencies. Resilience Direct is an example of this.	The further roll-out of Resilience Direct to staff having a role within the Emergency Response Plan.
<i>Reputation</i>	Comprehensive Emergency and Business Continuity Plans and regular exercising of the Plans can help to mitigate reputational risk.	
<i>Other</i>	None	

8 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 8.1 This Report provides an update on the recommendations of the Flooding Informal Scrutiny Group that reported to Cabinet on 3 December 2014 and The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 January 2015 (Report CAB2638 refers). An update on progress was presented to The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 January 2016 (Report OS134 refers). The opportunity has also been taken to provide a summary of the key points contained in the Annual Emergency Planning Report for 2015/16 that has been prepared by the Emergency Planning Unit at the County Council as part of the Service Level agreement which supports the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 in providing a single framework for civil protection in the UK. A summary of the capital schemes for flood alleviation is included for the Committee's information in Section 11.
- 8.2 Part 1 of the Civil Contingencies Act establishes a clear set of roles and responsibilities for those involved in emergency preparation and response at local level. Organisations that are included as Category 1 responders are at the core of the response to most emergencies and include; the emergency services, local authorities and NHS bodies. Emergency planning should aim where possible to prevent emergencies occurring, and when they do occur, good planning should reduce, control or mitigate the effects of the emergency.

- 8.3 The Act requires the Council to assess the risk of emergencies occurring within the District and use this to inform contingency planning.
- 8.4 The Council has its own Emergency Response Plan and an allocated Emergency Control Centre that can be utilised at any time to co-ordinate its response to an emergency.
- 8.5 Hampshire County Council's Emergency Planning Unit provides expertise to support the emergency services and the City Council and arranges for external resources to be made available. It also has the contact for central government departments and public bodies which may be involved in an emergency.
- 8.6 This Report presents the latest position with regard to the implementation of the Flooding Informal Scrutiny Group's recommendations and 12 month review of the work the Council undertakes as part of its statutory duty to provide Emergency Planning.

9. Flooding Informal Scrutiny Group

The conclusions of the Flooding Informal Scrutiny Group are set out as follows in bold, with the current situation set out below the heading in italics.

9.1 **That the important benefits of local community emergency planning groups be promoted in parishes and the Winchester town area.**

The importance of local community emergency planning groups is recognised. Work is continuing to establish contact with local groups and to date 19 local plans have been prepared. The County Council holds annual workshops for Parishes to help them to develop their plans, with the last one held on 18 November 2016 and this was hosted by Ordnance Survey at their Headquarters building in Nursling. Within the Town area, the Ward Members play a significant role and a Member Briefing was held on 29 November 2016 which updated Councillors on the works that have been completed in the Town to improve flood defences and the role that Members can play in the event of an emergency.

9.2 **That clear channels of communication be promoted, including telephone numbers for the public to contact the City Council and also to provide plain English advice in the City Council's outward facing publications, including its website.**

The public information bulletins from the 2013/14 floods have been saved and updated to provide information for example on the supply of sandbags, the use of water pumps and using washing machines and toilets during floods. In the event of an emergency, the Customer Service Centre will handle public calls for information, with calls for assistance being transferred to the Emergency Control Centre/ Tactical Coordination Group. A Flooding Handbook has been prepared for internal use learning on past experiences and includes a communications flow chart of key contacts for use by the Customer Services Centre. The Council's Communications Team are well prepared in the needs

to support an emergency through multiple media channels and are partners of the Local Resilience Forum Media Plan.

9.3 That the City Council review measures for the protection of its own property, including its housing stock.

There are plans for the Council to protect its own property through the Estates Department for “at risk” units such as the River Park Leisure Centre. A portable flood barrier has been purchased by the City Council to help defend the Park Avenue area from future flooding. The housing stock is maintained by Property Services who evaluate the risk of flooding and take appropriate measures. Actions to be taken to protect the Council’s own property are included within the Flooding Handbook

9.4 That a briefing be held for Members on emergency planning and flooding, so that Ward Members are best placed to help their parishes and town wards.

The latest Member briefing was held on 29 November 2016 and included an update on the capital works that had been completed to assist in flood defence and the role of Members.

9.5 That the benefits of emergency planning be promoted through the media, including details of where to obtain additional information.

There are national campaigns to prepare for winter weather, such as those jointly prepared by the MeteoGroup for the Met Office and the Environment Agency with regards to flooding, and reference to these is placed on the City and County’s Council’s websites as winter approaches. This winter’s “Get Ready for Winter” campaign has been launched, with the Communities Minister, Andrew Percy, writing to all Town and Parishes on 7 November 2016 to bring the campaign to their attention.

9.6 That the City Council prepares a model Community Emergency Plan that can be adapted for parish use using existing best practice.

The City Council uses the community plan that has been developed by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum and this has formed the basis of the 19 Community Plans that have been prepared for the District. As previously mentioned, annual workshops are held to assist communities in the development of their plans and members of the Emergency Planning staff regularly attend Parish meetings to give guidance.

9.7 That the local knowledge and expertise of the existing drainage engineers on the City Council staff be captured, and that consideration be given to appointing an apprentice drainage engineer.

The local knowledge and expertise of the existing drainage engineers has been captured by the Project Team and now forms part of a flooding handbook which can be used to respond to future flooding events. Personnel Committee, at its meeting held on 29 September 2015, approved proposals to build staff resilience in the then Streetcare and Drainage Sections of the

Council (Report PER276 refers). Darren Lewis has subsequently been appointed as Head of Special Maintenance and brings with him considerable experience of dealing with floods, including the response to the Hambledon floods of 2013/14.

9.8 That the trigger mechanisms be defined for when local communities operating their plans in response to a local incident need to involve the Tactical Coordination Group (TCG).

This remains a matter of judgement depending on the circumstances of the incident. For 999 calls the Police will contact the County Council and City Council when Local Authority support is required. The County and City hold contact details of the Community Plan leads and can establish dialogue at an early point to decide on the actions to take and what assistance is required. Where there is a longer lead-in to an event, such as flooding, the City would establish communication routes in advance so that a coordinated approach can be taken. The workshops with the community groups are helpful in establishing this understanding. The City uses discretion to bring to the attention of Parishes and Flood Coordinators impending severe weather alerts as supplied by the MeteoGroup for the Met Office.

9.9 That a copy of all local Flood Action Plans and Emergency Plans be held by the City Council.

Copies of the Plans are held on Resilience Direct, which is a web-based emergency planning aid and allows password protected access to all registered users. This system was explained to Members at the Emergency Planning training held on 29 November 2016.

9.10 That the TCG be properly equipped to deal with a Multi Agency Response, including robust communications equipment.

Work is continuing with the Council's IMT Section to improve the communications equipment in the TCG, including computer and telephone linkage. The creation of an alternative space to the Boardroom, West Wing, is being kept under review and recent alterations to the Guildhall building could provide an alternative Emergency Control Centre.

9.11 That consideration be given to making representations to Government to allow the County Council to raise additional funding through a one-off council tax levy, which could be used to resolve flooding problems.

The County Council did apply for additional funding from Central Government via the Environment Agency for further investigation and practical measures to alleviate flooding. It was therefore not necessary to pursue this suggestion.

9.12 That local communities be encouraged to hold an appropriate store of diversion road signs and fluorescent work wear together with a plan of potential road diversion routes so that they can self help when road closures were required.

This subject was taken up with the County Council. Hampshire Highways would normally only advocate this in an area such as Hambledon where known diversions are documented as this action could possibly put the public at risk otherwise.

- 9.13 That shared IT, such as Google Docs, be used so that the City Council's plans and Community Plans can be visible to all parties and updates shared.**

Resilience Direct now provides this functionality.

- 9.14 That detailed Met Office information be shared with Parish Councils and Flood Action Groups.**

This action will take place in the event of repeat flooding. The Met Office and the Environment Agency have jointly developed methods to disseminate weather information including mobile phone apps. The Met Office operate a web-based system called Hazard Manager for emergency planning users and this information can be shared with community groups as required. The City Council uses discretion to bring to the attention of Parishes and Flood Coordinators impending severe weather alerts as supplied by the Met Office.

- 9.15 That representatives of the emergency services, villages and other contributors be thanked for their input into the work of the ISG.**

Noted.

- 10 Annual Emergency Planning Report 2015/16

Annual Exercise

- 10.1 The Annual Report provides a summary of the Annual Exercise which was carried out on 10 September 2015. The Council carries out an exercise each year which is designed to test:

- a) The suitability of the Emergency Control Centre and the correct use of all available staff and facilities at the council offices,
- b) The Interaction staff who have been trained for specific roles in the event of an emergency.

- 10.2 An exercise to test resilience of the recently updated IT Business Continuity Plan was carried out on 9 November 2016 and focussed on a business disruption at the City Offices, which resulted in the relocation of certain core services to operate out of the Council's reserve site at Hyde Lodge, Winchester.

- 10.3 The exercise focussed on the recovery of three business critical applications including those used by Housing, Finance and Revenues. All three systems were successfully restored and data recovered within a few hours and staff able to work 'normally' from Hyde Lodge.

Training

- 10.4 Regular training for staff is carried out during the year for the specific roles that are highlighted in the Council's Emergency Plan. A summary of the attendance at Emergency Planning training events held during 2015/16 is provided within the Report.

Incidents

- 10.5 The Report highlights that there were five incidents within the Winchester District during 2015/16 that required the involvement of the Hampshire Emergency Planning Unit.
- 10.6 These incidents included:
- a) A gas leak in Otterbourne on 4 June 2015
 - b) Localised flooding in Durley on 3 January 2016
 - c) Localised flooding in Hambledon on 3 January 2016
 - d) A telecoms outage within the District on 19 December 2015
 - e) Individual occurrences of storm damage during Storm Imogen on 7 February 2016.

Since publication of the Annual Report, the following incident has occurred within the District:

- f) Power outage at Old Alresford during electrical storm 15 September 2016
- 10.7 The Report concludes with a number of recommendations for the Council in partnership with the HCC Emergency Planning Unit to progress. Regular meetings take place between the Council's Emergency Planning Officer and the Hampshire Emergency Planning Unit's officer with responsibility for the Winchester District to monitor progress.

11 Update on Flood Alleviation Works

- 11.1 The work at North Walls Park/ Park Avenue, Winchester, builds on the measures implemented during summer 2015 at Water Lane. The flood alleviation measures at North Walls Park/ Park Avenue are being jointly managed by Hampshire County Council, Winchester City Council, Southampton University and the Environment Agency. It includes a low brick flood wall and other defence measures that will help reduce the risk of flooding to not only to St Bede's School and the School of Art, but to also to some 17 residential and thirty business properties in the locality. This in addition to the 52 properties already better protected by the new measures the Water Lane. Works are progressing on the North Walls Park/ Park Avenue scheme with completion due in early 2017.
- 11.2 The Water Lane and Park Avenue schemes, together with other measures such as temporary flood barriers (the Council has also purchased a

demountable flood barrier, which is stored at the Bar End Depot, and can be deployed to this location, or any other location as required), and a protocol with the owners and operators of sluices to co-ordinate and regulate flows through the City will now help to reduce the risk of flooding within the City.

- 11.3 In addition, the issues at Headbourne Worthy, Kings Worthy and Littleton are being considered by the County Council and a report on this is expected shortly.
- 11.4 On the B3420 Andover Road, in the vicinity of Sir John Moore Barracks, works were also completed by early in 2016 to improve the drainage beneath the highway. This will reduce the likelihood of a repeat of the flooding which resulted in the creation of a temporary causeway in winter 2014.
- 11.5 At Pitt (Enmill Lane), the County Council is continuing to explore options to protect properties in this area. Some onsite explorations have recently been completed which will help inform the identification of potential solutions. The use of Government funding in this area could be difficult to justify as this is assessed based on the number of properties affected.
- 11.6 The major scheme to install a pipe at Hambledon will be completed by the end of December, with peripheral works, such as finishing kerbs, now being brought to a close. This will reduce significantly the risk of major flooding in that area.

12 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

12.1 None

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

Flooding Informal Scrutiny Group recommendations - (CAB2638) Cabinet on 3 December 2014 and The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 January 2015.

Update on Progress – (OS134) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 January 2016.

Other Background Documents:-

Winchester City Council Annual Emergency Planning Report 2015/16

APPENDICES: None