

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

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

26 FEBRUARY 2018

PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR WARWICK (PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT).

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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) and the 16 December 2016 meeting (Report OS149 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. The Emergency Planning and Resilience Team at the County Council work closely with the City Council within the terms of an agreed Service Level Agreement and provide training held during the year and were also part of the response to 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 The Council is a Category 1 responder for the purposes of The Civil Contingencies Act 2004. This act places a duty on Category 1 responders to assess the risk of an emergency occurring and to maintain plans for the purposes of responding to an emergency.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

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

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 None

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 None

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<i>Property</i>	Emergency incidents can cause disruption and damage to property. Comprehensive Emergency and Business Continuity Plans can help to mitigate this.	

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<i>Community Support</i>	Community Emergency plans have been developed for 19 Parishes and community groups 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, rewritten every 3 years (review date 2018) 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	

## 10 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 10.1 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) and the 12 December 2016 meeting (Report OS149 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. The City Council works closely with Emergency Planning Unit at the County Council under the terms of a Service Level Agreement through which the County Council supports the City Council's emergency planning activities. This includes regular training during the year and wide ranging contacts to provide reassurance regarding the ability to respond to emergency incidents.

- 10.2 Part 1 of the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 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. The primary objective of all of those involved in emergency planning is try to ensure that emergencies do not occur in the first place, but when they do occur good planning should reduce, control and mitigate the immediate and long term effects.
- 10.3 The CCA requires the Council to assess the risk of emergencies occurring within the District and use this to inform contingency planning. The Council has its own Emergency Response Plan which sets out the mechanisms by which it will respond to incidents, and this includes provision for operating an Emergency Control Centre to co-ordinate its response to an emergency. Individual major organisations are expected to produce their own plans for how they will respond to major incidents or emergencies with which they are associated. The City Council does not produce plans on behalf of other organisations.
- 10.4 Hampshire County Council's Emergency Planning team has its own direct responsibilities on behalf of the County Council as a Cat 1 responder, and also provides expertise to support the wider emergency planning community. It is the contact for central government departments and public bodies which may be involved in an emergency.
- 10.5 This report also presents the latest position with regard to the implementation of the Flooding Informal Scrutiny Group's recommendations and 12 month review of the work that the Council undertakes as part of its statutory duty to provide Emergency Planning.
- 10.6 The Emergency Planning Function has recently (December 2017) been the subject of an internal audit review by the Southern Internal Audit Partnership. Their summary finding states that the function is:

"..working well and controls were effective as there was an up to date Service Level Agreement with Hampshire County Council for the provision of civil protection arrangements. The Council's Emergency Response Plan was also up to date and the Council's role was clearly documented and there was an appointed Liaison Officer. The plan was tested annually and staff had been provided with a range of training. The Multi Agency Flood Response Plan was also up to date and included current staff contacts. There were also up to date guidance notes for staff in the Local Flooding Handbook to supplement the Plan."

## 11 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.

### 11.1 **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. The next workshop will be held at Bishops Waltham in late spring 2018. Within the Town area, the Ward Members play a significant role and a Briefing for Executive Members was held on 3 November 2017 which updated Councillors on the role that Members can play in the event of an emergency. An all Member Briefing was to be held on 14 December 2017 to be hosted by the County Council but this was postponed, and this will be rearranged for 2018.*

*There are 19 communities wholly or partly within Winchester district which have a community emergency plan or flood management plan of some description.*

### 11.2 **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.*

### 11.3 **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. Works have been carried out in the North Walls area to protect property and 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*

**11.4 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 3 November 2017 for Cabinet and included an update on the capital works that had been completed to assist in flood defence and the role of Members. An all Member Briefing was to be held on 14 December 2017 to be hosted by the County Council was postponed, and this will be rearranged for 2018.*

**11.5 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 and an article has been published for Members in the Democratic Services Update 5 January 2018.*

**11.6 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.*

**11.7 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. Staff resilience in the Streetcare and Drainage Sections of the Council has been strengthened, which is headed by Darren Lewis who has considerable experience of dealing with floods, including the response to the Hambledon floods of 2013/14.*

**11.8 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.*

**11.9 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. Copies of the plan are also available to view on the Council's intranet – Emergency Response Plan.*

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

*Work has taken place 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 kept under review.*

**11.11 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.*

**11.12 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 where known diversions are documented as this action could possibly put the public at risk otherwise.*

**11.13 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.*

**11.14 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.*

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

*This was done.*

**12 Emergency Planning Annual Update**

*Annual Exercise*

12.1 The annual exercise was carried out on 22 May 2017 and was a desk top exercise based on a disruptive event in the town area. A full scale exercise will be undertaken in 2018. 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 familiarity of staff who have been trained for specific roles with processes in the event of an emergency.
- c) whether new equipment or resources are required

*Training*

12.2 Regular training for staff is carried out during the year for the specific roles that are highlighted in the Council's Emergency Plan. In the past year (2017) training and briefings have included:

- Tactical Control Group - 29 March
- Strategic Coordinating Group - 16 May
- Exercise Training - 22 May
- New staff Roles - 28 June
- Project Griffin (national counter terrorism awareness initiative for business produced by NaCTSO to protect our cities and communities from the threat of terrorism) – 2 August
- Emergency Planning awareness - 13 September
- Loggist training - 13 September

- Member Training (Cabinet) - 3 November
- Winter Preparedness 2017 – 19 December
- Top Team Decision Making - 20 December

#### *Incidents*

- 12.3 There have been 24 incidents within the Winchester District during 2017/18 that required the involvement of the Hampshire Emergency Planning Unit. Not all of them required any large scale response from the City Council.
- 12.4 These incidents included:
- a) acetylene cylinder fire, Thickets Farmhouse, Bishops Waltham
  - b) pollution incident, Attwoods Drove Farm, Compton
  - c) burst water main, Hursley
  - d) water shortage, Boomtown Fair
  - e) a major road closure on the M3 following a police incident
- 12.5 Regular meetings take place between the Council's Emergency Planning Officer and the Hampshire Emergency Planning Unit's link officer with responsibility for the Winchester District to monitor progress.

#### *Central Winchester security measures*

- 12.6 The City Council and County Council worked together with other agencies to plan and install security measures on the High Street in Winchester to provide reassurance to town centre visitors. The existing concrete blocks were sourced at short notice and it is hoped to replace these in the near future with more attractive and less visually intrusive alternative measures. In the long term security measures will be fully integrated into public realm and highway improvements.

### 13 Update on Flood Alleviation Works

- 13.1 The initial phases of the flood alleviation works have been completed in the town area of Winchester at North Walls Park and at Water Lane and the remaining flood protection scheme at Durngate is planned to start in spring 2019 after a programme of ecological survey work has been completed. The assembly of the flood barrier was demonstrated on 23 August 2017.
- 13.2 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.

- 13.3 In addition, Hampshire County Council is investigating further flood alleviation works for Littleton/ Headbourne Worthy and Kings Worthy and these were recently subject to local engagement.
- 13.4 On the B3420 Andover Road, in the vicinity of Sir John Moore Barracks, works were also completed 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.
- 13.5 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.
- 13.6 The major scheme to install a pipe at Hambledon has been completed in 2017 and will reduce significantly the risk of major flooding in that area.
- 13.7 The Head of Drainage and Special Maintenance has instigated and will chair a new Winchester River Maintenance Group which will improve liaison between all the riparian owners in the flood risk area by bringing them together on a regular basis to foster good working relationships. In the autumn a specific winter maintenance group will address issues, problems, planned works and point out problems on land where owners may not be aware of hazards such as unstable trees and brash piles that could wash into the sluice gates, to prepare for the stresses of winter.

#### 14 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

14.1 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.

Update on Progress – (OS149) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 December 2016.

##### Other Background Documents:-

Winchester City Council Annual Emergency Planning Report 2015/16

APPENDICES: None