



Responses to Scrutiny Review Recommendations

Report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Title of the review: **Surface Water Flooding Working Group**

Date Review Completed:

Date Presented to Cabinet: 20th May 2021

Portfolio Holder: Councillor John Clarke, Leader of the Council

Chair of the Review Group: Councillor Michael Adams

Officer Supporting the Review: Helen Lee

Response due to the Overview Committee: 5th July 2021

Guidance

The final report and recommendations from the above review have been considered by Cabinet and a written response to the recommendations from the responsible Cabinet Member to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee is required within twenty eight days of the date the review was presented to Cabinet. If you need any further assistance in completing this response please contact the Officer that supported the review.

Update

Gedling Borough Council takes its flooding responsibilities very seriously and has plans and arrangements in place to respond and coordinate all emergency responses. For example, the Council uses an Incident Management Team (IMT) structure for response and recovery coordination and assigning actions. These arrangements are robust and have been extensively tested in recent years, including the February 2020 storms of Ciara and Dennis.

Investment in flood mitigation schemes is also a prominent feature in the Council's budget process as follows:

2020/21 Capital Programme:

£39,000 Arnold Town Centre and Blatherwicks Yard car park flooding alleviation scheme - completed.

2021/22 Capital Programme:

£25,000 Flood Alleviation schemes

£25,000 Purchase of flood alleviation packs and secure storage units

These schemes, plus working with the County Council following receipt of the long-awaited Daybook Study, will ensure the Council's ongoing commitment towards addressing flooding problems within the borough.

Recommendation 1

Residents in areas prone to flooding are reminded annually of their flood risk, their responsibility to put in place measures to improve the resilience of their property and existing emergency plans. This could be included with the annual refuse collection calendar distribution.

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted Partly accepted Do not accept

Whilst the County Council is the defined Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and has a statutory duty under the Water Management Act 2010 to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a collective responsibility for all category 1 responders (this includes both the County and the Borough Councils) to risk assess emergencies, and one of the foreseeable risks in Gedling Borough is flooding. This results in extensive resource being committed to risk management, emergency planning, warning and informing, and information sharing with partners.

Information is already provided to the public on the Gedling Borough Council website, but further communication measures will be considered by utilising, for example, the Contacts magazine. Our communications will endeavour to include general reminders that property owners are responsible for protecting their own property, and they should take action before floods happen.

Notwithstanding this, the County Council could also be more proactive in this area.

Recommendation 2

New residents in flood risk areas are given information about their responsibilities, what to do, and who to contact, in the event of a flood emergency.

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted Partly accepted Do not accept

This will link into the Council's response to Recommendation 1.

Recommendation 3

A mechanism to enable Ward Councillors to directly report emerging flooding concerns to the Nottinghamshire County Council Highways and Emergency Planning Teams is established.

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted Partly accepted Do not accept

Gedling Borough Council already has well-established Emergency Plans and Flood Impact Assessment forms that are coordinated with Local Resilience Forum (LRF) partners. This includes a Communications Strategy which sets out how a flooding event is to be reported, and how actions undertaken by all agencies are communicated to the local residents via social media. Any deviation from this would be counter-productive, and the recommendation here would be for ward councillors to utilise the established process.

The Emergency Planning website pages provide a wealth of useful information, including:

- how flooding should be reported,
- how to prepare for flooding,
- how to register for the priority register service,
- frozen water guidance,
- business continuity advice,
- other periodic updates.

It is important that property owners report flooding through the appropriate channels, as legally permissible data can then be shared with partners such as the LLFA. This data builds a wider understanding of flood risk, and the LLFA can then assign funds that are proportionate and risk based to appropriate areas. Without locally completed Flood Impact Assessment form data, these local flood issues can remain under-reported.

Recommendation 4

Ward Councillors make use of social media platforms to disseminate information during flooding events.

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted Partly accepted Do not accept

A coordinated message from the LRF / Council is the preferred option as set out in Recommendation 3.

The relevant affected ward councillors are already briefed as part of the IMT communication arrangements.

Recommendation 5

Ward Councillors encourage local residents to develop a Community Emergency Plan and establish a Flood Warden Scheme. A short guidance leaflet to support Councillors to do this is developed.

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted Partly accepted Do not accept

To assist with the establishment of a Flood Warden Scheme, the County Council have the responsibility to provide the appropriate training. The Community Resilience Stores are historically established by Borough Councils supporting Parish Councils. Parish Councils can also utilise their precepts to fund such measures. As reported above, a budget of £25,000 for the purchase of flood alleviation packs and secure storage units has already been established.

Once a Flood Warden Scheme and Community Resilience Stores are established, a Community Flood Plan can then be developed by a Parish Council. The responsibility to produce this Plan sits with the Parish Council, however the Borough Council can provide reasonable assistance to ensure that it aligns with the Borough Council's Local Flood Plan.

The development of a leaflet is not accepted because it is a County Council function and not Gedling Borough Council, and any such leaflet should be developed by them as the LLFA as set out in their Flood Risk Management Strategy.

Recommendation 6

An article is included in the autumn edition of the Contacts magazine highlighting flooding related concerns including:

- The actions householders can take to mitigate flood damage to their property;
- The limitations of the sandbag policy and the householders' responsibility to take measures to protect their own property;
- Reminding householders' to dispose of garden waste responsibly to reduce the blocking of grids;
- Encouraging residents, if they are eligible, to sign up for the priority registration scheme;
- Encouraging householders to report flooding events and complete the Flood Impact Assessment form;
- Website addresses and signposting to websites for in-depth information;
- The reasons why roads are not open as soon as water levels have subsided.

(Please tick) Recommendation Accepted Partly accepted Do not accept

This will link into the Council's response to recommendation 1.

We will also include reminders about clearing fallen tree leaves in gardens as these are one of the main contributors to blocking drainage gullies in the autumn months.