

BARNSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is not a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has not been included in the relevant Forward Plan

Report of the Executive Directors – Place and Core Services

Response to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Task and Finish Group (TFG) Report on Flooding

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To report to Cabinet the proposed actions as well as actions taken in response to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Task and Finish Group report on flooding.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 In response to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's report on flooding, this report seeks to support the recommendations made to Cabinet on 5th April 2017 and inform Cabinet of the proposed actions to implement the recommendations made.

3. Introduction/background

- 3.1 In their report the Overview and Scrutiny Committee outline that:

Following the Pitt Review ['Learning lessons from the 2007 floods', June 2008], Scrutiny was given powers to investigate activities in relation to flood risk management; this includes information outlined in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. Given the devastation that recent flooding events have caused, the impact of climate change and the increase in incidents of flooding, [the Task and Finish Group] was established to consider Barnsley's position in relation to this. Specifically to investigate: what has been learnt since the 2007 floods including what preventative measures are in place; the emergency response; and how we have assisted communities to be prepared, particularly those in high risk areas.

- 3.2 The Overview and Scrutiny report concluded with seven recommendations. These are stated below along with responses.

4. Recommendations

The following recommendations were made in the Overview and Scrutiny Report:

- 4.1 **Recommendation 1: An all-member information brief (AMIB) is held so that ALL Members are aware of and are updated in relation to key flood risk management issues including supporting community resilience**

In order to undertake this recommendation it is first necessary to consider the

recommendation 5. Once the proposed action in relation to recommendation 5 has been implemented appropriate All Member Information Briefings can be undertaken with a view to informing Members of the agreed arrangements for responding to forecast/actual flooding incidents.

4.2 Recommendation 2: Barnsley Leadership Team (BLT) to engage in Emergency Planning to ensure all departments are prepared

In order to clarify the role and realistic capability of Business Units in responding to emergency incidents, Business Units are in the process of developing Business Unit Emergency Response Plans. These Plans are concerned with:

- The Business Unit's role in response to incidents (ostensibly based on the emergency planning adage of '*doing their normal role in extraordinary circumstances*')
- What the Business Unit would or could do based on the resources realistically expected to be available (highlighting where there would be a difference during and outside normal office hours)
- How the resources of the Business Unit would be mustered, marshalled, deployed and managed
- Action plans for the implementation of the response
- Rota(s) for deployment of resources

The Plans, which are aimed to be completed in/by summer 2017, will form the basis of any emergency response by Business Units and guidance for the staff implementing the response. The overall response is co-ordinated through the Council's recently revised Corporate Emergency Response Plan.

4.3 Recommendation 3: Emergency contact information card to go into the New Members Induction Pack

Members' Services have a supply of the cards and can include them in the induction pack for any new Members. Since the introduction of the emergency contact information card/sheet a recent Court ruling in relation to highways issues has highlighted the need for a review of contact arrangements for highways matters (which could include flooding). The Case, *Lee Crawley v BMBC* has placed an onus upon all authorities to review standby arrangements with regard to the investigation of complaints out of hours. Therefore, whilst the telephone numbers on the card are current, they may need to be reviewed and the card reissued as necessary.

4.4 Recommendation 4: Intelligence regarding culverts, trash screens and flood risk spots should be shared with Ward Alliances, enabling them to monitor and report issues

This information is proposed to be included in Local Flood Plans (that will be developed in conjunction with Ward Alliances) and the reporting procedure clarified in-line with the response to Recommendation 3 re contact arrangements. Any reports received would be actioned with existing resources and processes and expectations regarding response would need to be reasonable considering this caveat. In addition the information will be included on the Council's GIS mapping as 'hazard layer' which identifies potential risk locations.

4.5 Recommendation 5: Agree Council-wide principles regarding the response in a flooding event

The Council's Senior Management Team as part of a wider review of emergency arrangements has approved a review of the Council's response arrangements for flooding. The review will aim to conclude a flood response strategy that can be agreed by both officers and Members, thus setting and managing expectations in relation to flooding response be it related to rivers and/or surface water.

The aim of this strategic review will be to seek to clarify the many different interpretations that people make about what the Council can and cannot offer to residents and businesses in response to flooding. The expected output from this will be a clear and unambiguous frequently asked questions document in addition to a published strategy.

Whilst the strategy review, which is aimed to be completed in summer 2017, is yet to be undertaken and without pre-empting its conclusions/recommendations, the revised response strategy is likely to be implemented using Business Unit resources with the tactical issues arising from this built into Business Unit Emergency Response Plans which Business Units are currently developing. In addition the review is likely, as part of the '*Barnsley Deal*' (which aims to make clear exactly what the Council offers and set out what support is needed from people living and working in Barnsley), to require communities to play a greater role in developing and implementing Community Resilience Plans and Local Flood Plans (see also response to Recommendation 6).

4.6 Recommendation 6: Ensure local flood plans are finalised

One Local Flood Plan for Darton (including Low Barugh) has been issued in February 2017 with the support of local members and residents. Highways, Engineering and Transportation have assigned specific resources to drainage and flooding and will progress the remaining plans in 2017 with the support of the Health, Safety and Emergency Resilience Service. These plans will reflect the review of flooding response discussed in response to Recommendation 1 and the '*Barnsley Deal*' in relation to residents and communities themselves being prepared for flooding. The flood plans will consider areas both at risk of river (fluvial) flooding and key hotspots in relation to surface water (pluvial) flooding.

4.7 Recommendation 7: Investigation regarding the residents' flooding concerns in the Dearne to be followed up

It is understood that this concern relates to a location where permitted development has/is taking place. The owner of the site has co-operated with officers from the Council and has taken some voluntary steps towards mitigating concerns however, acknowledging the concerns of residents, the alteration of the land concerned is permitted.

4.8 Given that the role of Lead Local Flood Authority sits within the Business Unit it is proposed that the recommendations are managed by the Environment and Transport Business Unit and report into the Directorate Management Team for Place.

5. Implications for local people/service users

- 5.1 The issue of flooding may affect any area of the borough, therefore improvements in this area have implications across the borough. Residents are being involved in work in their local communities and by them being increasingly aware of flooding and the Council's response to incidents, not least of which via the *Barnsley Deal*, they can make themselves better prepared for and more resilient to incidents of flooding.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no specific financial implications, although in responding to the recommendations in the report, the financial implications of these would need to be fully assessed by the appropriate services responding which may be the Council or other agencies.

7. Employee implications

- 7.1 There are no specific employee implications, although in responding to the recommendations in the report, the employee implications of these would need to be fully assessed by the appropriate services responding which may be the Council or partnership agencies.

8. Communications implications

- 8.1 A key focus for increasing resilience to flooding is managing the expectations of residents on the Council and raising awareness of flooding issues so that residents can themselves become more resilient to flooding. Key messages will be included in the *Barnsley Deal*.

9. Consultations

- 9.1 The following officers have been consulted on this report:
- Executive Director – Place
 - Executive Director – Core Services
 - Service Director – Environment and Transportation
 - Head of Service – Highways, Engineering and Transportation

10. The Corporate Plan and the Council's Performance Management Framework

- 10.1 One of the Council's strategic priorities is to have 'Strong and Resilient Communities', which includes resilience to emergency incidents such as flooding. This requires encouraging residents and communities to prepare for flooding not only to reduce and mitigate the impacts of flooding but to minimise associated costs to the Council and protect money for other important services.

11. Risk management issues

- 11.1 The response to emergency incidents is logged in the Council's Strategic Risk Register and specifically includes reference to the completion of local flood plans.

It is envisaged that completion of recommendation 6 of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will significantly contribute to the mitigation of this risk.

12. Health, safety and emergency resilience issues

- 12.1 Flooding may by its nature be an emergency issue and the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee support efforts to increase both the Council's and communities' resilience to flooding.

13. Promoting equality, diversity and social inclusion

- 13.1 To ensure an appropriate response to flooding it is essential that all our communities understand the Council's response to flooding and the expectations of residents and communities. In undertaking any campaigns to highlight the issue of flooding a variety of methods will be used including social media and printed text so that the information is accessible to all our communities.

14. Reduction of crime and disorder

- 14.1 There are no anticipated impacts of this report.

15. Glossary

- 15.1 All terms are explained in the text of the report.

16. Background papers

- 16.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group Report on Flooding
<https://barnsleymbcintranet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s19004/Task%20and%20Finish%20Group%20-%20Flooding.pdf>

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