

Appendix A: Detailed update on recommendations

- a) **The Panel supports a refresh of the Flood Risk Management Strategy in September 2021 and asks that the comments and recommendations of the Panel are taken on board.**

The update to the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy is making good progress and is currently scheduled for public consultation in Summer 2023 (subject to resource availability). This represents a delay from the original target of publication in Winter 2022 due to the size of the project and the resources available to complete it. The update to the Strategy will be supported by a more interactive website which will aim to provide improved information visibility for the residents and businesses of Leicestershire.

- b) **That communication of the County Council's role and responsibilities as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) be reviewed to clarify that whilst it does have limited powers under the Land Drainage Act 1991 it does not have powers to force other authorities to carry out works to help alleviate flooding issues. It is therefore limited in its ability to implement solutions to flood issues or enforce other agencies and riparian owners to undertake works, even when identified as being necessary following a Section 19 investigation. This is important to help residents understand the Council's position and manage expectations.**

The Council has guidance notes which are routinely released to the public and Members to help clarify roles and responsibilities. The update to the Strategy is to be supported by a more interactive website which will aim to provide improved information visibility including a revised version of the guidance notes.

The Council has reignited the Flood Risk Management Board which has been well attended and supported by all partner bodies. A key action of the Board over the past year has been a focus on communication and how all responsible bodies can communicate roles and duties more effectively and consistently. The Board have produced a Communications Plan that all bodies will utilise to ensure a consistent message is issued to the public and businesses of Leicestershire at specific targeted points of the year. The Board is scheduled to meet at set times of the year to coincide with these periods of targeted communications. The first Board meeting was held on 6 July 2021 and it was agreed that the Board would meet three times per year.

- c) **That a protocol be created and set out on any agenda for public meetings created following flooding events that clarifies the role of all that attend and how it would be conducted.**

As a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004, the Council attends all emergency response meetings including Strategic

Coordinating Group (SCG) and Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) meetings. During a flood event, where there is a need for a Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG), the Council is likely to chair and lead the multi-agency recovery process for communities and residents and will take the lead on numerous recovery sub-cell meetings. It is anticipated that the Council will coordinate and agree the lead body for recovery and public meetings. The Local Resilience Forum (LRF) recovery process and recovery cell group structure has been agreed by all LLR Category 1 organisations.

- d) That refreshed information be provided to riparian owners on their responsibilities generally, following a Section 19 investigation, and where to seek further advice when they are required to undertake work.**

The LLFA commonly incorporate an action relating to reminding riparian landowners of their responsibilities in Section 19 reports.

- e) That the County Council continues to closely engage with communities and residents as part of Section 19 investigations in setting realistic timescales and expectations.**

The LLFA now incorporates agreed timescales with responsible bodies within published Section 19 reports. Actions are tracked and monitored by the LLFA to understand progress to allow for updating affected communities. Any actions listed by other Risk Management Authorities (RMAs), including water companies and the Environment Agency, are discussed at regular partnership catch up meetings. All actions are agreed with responsible bodies before publication of reports, however, the LLFA has no jurisdiction over their successful implementation.

- f) The Panel supports ongoing work to continue to recruit to the Flood Risk Management Team to ensure the County Council meets its statutory duties and continues to respond to and provide support to residents affected by flooding without the need to rely on consultants which often prove more costly.**

At the time of writing the LLFA is currently fully resourced and all posts are occupied.

- g) That the County Council continues to assist Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and responds to planning applications that present flooding concerns including for smaller applications where there was no statutory requirement, if resource allowed.**

The LLFA continues to deliver this service and provides support to LPAs where possible on minor planning applications. The LLFA delivered a workshop to all LPAs in September 2021 to help them understand where flooding issues may

be of a concern in an attempt to reduce unnecessary consultations on minor applications that have no relevant flood concerns. This has proved to be beneficial as the number of minor applications received has noticeably reduced.

h) That the Council continues to develop a comprehensive asset map to record assets and maintenance records.

The Highway Authority updates asset data and keeps maintenance records for routine and reactive gully emptying embedded as part of the service. A project has been completed to investigate the feasibility of mapping unknown underground assets (pipework) over the highway network, funded by an additional £250,000 investment in the 2021/22 financial year. Findings were reported to the Asset Programme Board. The Council will encourage communication between departments to ensure the sharing of different mapped information. The GIS team will work with LRF to map above ground assets.

i) That the use of the ‘Report It’ website continues to be promoted widely.

Customers are directed to the “Report it” website via the Council webpages for flooding. The Customer Services Centre is also widely promoted by the Authority as a single point of contact.

j) That as part of the upcoming review of the asset classification review of the Gully Emptying Contract in February 2021 include an examination of the backlog of gully and drainage defects and general customer enquiries and whether it was cost effective in reducing outstanding queries.

The checking of data provided by the gully emptying contractor continues to deliver efficiencies and reduce the amount of duplicate reactive works undertaken. However, the increase in the number of gullies attended in any year is reflected in an increased number of reports sent back by the contractor. Customer enquiries are heavily influenced by adverse weather.

k) That the good partnership work undertaken is noted and welcomed and that it is further explored how good practice can be evidenced and shared across organisations.

The LLFA continues to work collaboratively with all partner bodies, particularly through attending meetings such as the East Midlands LLFA Networking Group, Regional Flood and Coastal Committee meetings, Anglian LLFA Networking meetings. The LLFA is also the chair of the Flood Risk Management Midlands Highways Alliance Plus Group and holds frequent meetings with Severn Trent Water/Anglian Water and the Council’s Highways Team to discuss flood enquiries. In addition to the above, the LLFA chairs the Flood Risk Management Board which is well attended by all partner bodies.

One of the key objectives of this Board is to share good practice and work more collaboratively.

- l) That the Terms of Reference of the Flood Risk Management Board be revised for the next Board Meeting (expected April 2021) taking into account the views and recommendations put forward by the Panel.**

The Terms of Reference for the Flood Risk Management Board has now been agreed, confirmed and implemented.

- m) That lessons be learnt from the successful completion of the Lubbethorpe Brook, property level protection for Sharnford, and Cossington Sluices schemes.**

The LLFA continues to work closely with all partner bodies including the Environment Agency to share and incorporate lessons learnt into all projects.

- n) That the County Council works with the Environment Agency to encourage contributions to flood risk schemes from private landowners and local businesses.**

The LLFA continues to consider the appropriateness of encouraging contributions from private landowners and local businesses on all projects within the Flood Risk Management Project Programme.

- o) That as part of the County Council's Flood Information it advertises the Environment Agency's Flood Incident Hotline and its Flood Warning Alert System.**

The Council routinely advertises the Flood Incident Hotline and Flood Warning Alert System particularly during a flood event. Links to both are also available on the LLR Prepared website <https://www.llrprepared.org.uk/prepared-residents/> and County Councils website <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/flooding-and-drainage/emergency-flood-advice>

A key action of the Flood Risk Management Board is to deliver communications in a more coordinated manner and a Communications Plan has been drafted which details specific key points throughout the year (in addition to those issued during a flood event) whereby the public will be signposted to all information such as the Flood Incident Hotline and Flood Warning Alert System.

- p) That the County Council works with the Local Resilience Forum to ensure that communities and residents be made aware of actions that they can take to mitigate the potential impact of flooding and increase their resilience.**

As mentioned above, it is a key objective of the Flood Risk Management Board to develop consistent communications messages in partnership with all LLR Category 1 responders and agree when and how the messages are released.

- q) That communication messages are refreshed to ensure:**
- i. Those 'at risk' are signposted to the appropriate agencies.**
 - ii. Residents understand what to do before, during and following a flood.**
 - iii. Advice is provided regarding dealing with insurance claims and signposts to Flood Re and other useful organisations.**

The update to the Strategy will be supported by a more interactive website which will aim to provide improved information visibility for the residents and businesses of Leicestershire.

As 'p' above.

- r) That all residents are encouraged to sign up for the Environment Agency's flood alert system.**

As 'p' above.

- s) That new communication messages are created to address those who have never experienced a flooding event to highlight the risks in light of the increasing risk of climate change.**

As 'p' above.

LLR Prepared has published a new Multi-Agency Flood Plan which identifies target audiences and types of information required to be communicated for different scenarios.

- t) That appropriate methods of communication are considered and utilised to disseminate such messages such as, but not limited to leaflets, Leicestershire Matters, Twitter and Parish communications.**

As 'p' above.

- u) That alternatives to sandbags, such as door board gates, one-way toilet flows and other types of property level protection are promoted to residents to look at simple cost-effective ways of reducing their own flood risk.**

The LLFA has draft Guidance Notes which are released to the public and Members to raise the profile of alternative methods of Property Level Protection.

The update to the Strategy will be supported by a more interactive website which will aim to provide improved information visibility for the residents and businesses of Leicestershire.

As mentioned above, it is a key objective of the Flood Risk Management Board to develop consistent communications messages and agree when and how the messages are released. Incorporated within these agreed communications messages are links to websites that specifically reference Property Level Protection.

- v) **That the LRF and the County Council communicate to parishes and local communities the need to create community flood plans and provide them with information to enable them to play a role in providing advice to residents to better help prepare for flooding incidents.**

District and Borough Resilience Officers (D&B ROs) targeted different parishes/communities with a £600 stores scheme incentive a few years ago. The D&B ROs now test their plans and go through updating them when necessary. In 2021, for example, in Kibworth they activated their community response plan in the July flooding. This was then reviewed, and the relevant RO also did a de-brief with the community.

- w) **That fresh publicity is given to the importance of the role of Flood Warden to promote uptake in areas without them, which the Flood Risk Management Board will oversee.**

Flood Warden training is provided throughout the year by group and individual provision, as dictated by natural turnover and the identification of areas at risk. This is undertaken locally by Resilience Officers linked to boroughs and districts as part of the Resilience Partnership of all 10 Local Authorities in LLR. They communicate directly with boroughs and districts, parishes and community groups to promote the role, recruit and train Flood Wardens as required.

- x) **That this report is circulated to all members of the County Council and that their role as Community Champions to promote such recommendations within their communities is highlighted.**

The report has been circulated to all Members of the County Council.

- y) **That the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as the Council's Flood Risk Management Committee receive an annual**

report providing an update on progress made and work undertaken towards approved recommendations.

Since then, the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been split to the Highways and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Environment and the Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This report is the second report on progress and annual updates that will be provided to the Highways and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee as requested.

The committee is asked to consider it appropriate that this be the last annual update report now that all actions arising from the report of January 2021 have been completed, or are ongoing and thus form part of business as usual for the Flood Risk Management, Highway Drainage and Local Resilience Forum teams. The Highways and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be consulted separately on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

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