



<u>Committee and Date</u>	<u>Item</u>
Communities Overview Committee 16 th July 2018	
	Public

Shropshire Council Response to Flooding and the Management of Local Flood Risk

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1 Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines Shropshire Council's general response to flooding. This is broken down into two sections. Firstly, how the council, alongside partner agencies, acts when people, properties and transport infrastructure are impacted when river levels rise or during an intense storm, like those experienced across the county at the end of May and June this year. Secondly the work the council does in protecting people, property and communities as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).
- 1.2 Shropshire Council has a number of statutory duties and powers with regard to the management of flood risk. As the LLFA under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the Council must take the lead in the management of local flood risk. As a unitary authority, Shropshire Council is also the Land Drainage Authority, with certain permissive powers under the Land Drainage Act 1991.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to explain how local flood risk is managed for the benefit of the people of Shropshire, and how it will be managed in the future.

2 Recommendations

- a) That members scrutinise the current approach in response to flooding and flood management;
- b) To note the support that is given to the continuing allocation of the element of Defra's revenue support grant that is allocated for local flood risk management activities.

3 Emergency Flood Response

- 3.1 Shropshire Council responds routinely to incidents of flooding alongside its partners. In locations where we know flooding is likely we have dedicated local flood response plans, such as that we have in Shrewsbury. These are agreed with partner agencies including the Environment Agency (EA) and Severn Trent, and exercised annually and deployed as and when required. A copy of the Welsh Bridge Gauge Board information sheet is included in Appendix A.
- 3.2 When communities are subjected to “one off” flooding incidents, such as those experienced in late May and June of this year. The emergency response is co-ordinated through the Emergency Planning Unit and often highway teams are deployed to jet gullies, manholes and pipes, provide sand bags and close roads as necessary. Following flood events where more than five residential properties or two businesses are flooded internally, in line with our Local Flood Risk Management Strategy we undertake detailed Section 19 investigations.

4 Approach to Flood Risk Management

4.1 Known flood risk sites

- 4.1.1 As a LLFA, Shropshire Council has a number of statutory duties to address local flood risk under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and the Land Drainage Act 1991.

The production of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy is one of these duties. The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 encourages collaborative working between Risk Management Authorities (RMAs). To this end, the service area Portfolio Holder and Responsible Officer attend the English Severn and Wye Regional Flood and Coastal Committee meetings which are attended by other LLFAs and RMAs.

The Strategy, published in Dec 2015, is a suite of documents and assessments that provide the overall strategic direction for the management of local flood risk in Shropshire.

The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy identified seven key objectives which are aligned with the EA’s National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) together with our corporate priorities. They are summarised below.

- Develop a strategic understanding of flood risk from all sources;
- Promote effective management of drainage and flood defence systems;
- Support communities to understand flood risk and become more resilient to flooding;

- Manage local flood risk and new development in a sustainable manner;
- Achieve results through partnership and collaboration;
- Be better prepared for flood events, and;
- Secure and manage funding for flood risk management in a challenging financial climate.

4.1.2 The objectives helped us to develop an action plan detailing how the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy will be delivered. The plan brings together the actions and priorities set out in the Strategy and plans for investment in flood alleviation from flood risk management partners such as the EA, water companies and Internal Drainage Boards.

4.1.3 It is not possible to deliver all potential flood risk management measures in the short term. We therefore take a proportionate and risk based approach to focus resources where they will be most effective. Activities are prioritised based on the following criteria:

- Where there is risk to life e.g. in rapidly reacting catchments;
- Historic and predicted flood risk (using flood mapping) to properties, communities, businesses and/or infrastructure. Where flooding is known to have happened before then priority will be increased;
- Where there are frequent flooding issues affecting the safety to road users, small number of properties or cutting off access to rural settlements;
- Availability of funding and external contributions, including local funding which could ‘unlock’ a project’s potential for moving forward by enabling national Flood and Coastal Risk Management Grant in Aid and / or regional Local Levy funding to be secured. As local funding from Shropshire Council is part of highways capital funding, there is considerable pressure on budgets;
- Where there are known failing assets or health and safety concerns (either through an asset failing or difficulties involved in its operation);

4.1.4 If we get to a position that all the highest risk sites have been addressed, which will not be for a number of years, then we would take into account the following when prioritising schemes;

- Where there is strong community engagement;
- Where there are opportunities to support economic growth;
- Where there are opportunities to work collaboratively with other RMAs, and;
- The delivery of multiple benefits, including wider environmental benefits.

- 4.1.5 In locations where there is a known flood risk, we have supported communities to understand flood risk and become more resilient to flooding. This has been achieved with the National Flood Forum who were commissioned to lead the Community Flood Resilience Project, enabling communities to take responsibility and raise awareness.

4.2 *Flood Risk Management Responsibilities for Riparian Landowners*

- 4.2.1 Under the Land Drainage Act 1991 Shropshire Council is the Land Drainage Authority and has permissive powers. These are used to ‘police’ the maintenance of ordinary watercourses where there is a risk of flooding due to the actions or inactions of landowners. The responsibility for the maintenance of a watercourse, whether open or culverted, rests with the owner of the land through which it passes.
- 4.2.2 Shropshire Council is also the consenting body for works affecting ordinary watercourses, and has consenting powers in this regard. The risk based approach that the council takes in using its permissive powers is covered in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.
- 4.2.3 As a Highway Authority we are the riparian owner of culverted watercourses which flow underneath the road. We also have a duty to maintain roads to ensure they are in a safe condition. To this end we have a routine maintenance programme of emptying highway gullies and inspecting culverts to ensure that there isn’t a blockage or build-up of silt.

4.3 *Flood Risk Management in place shaping and planning*

- 4.3.1 A well-established system of consultation exists with the Local Planning Authority (LPA). We comment and condition planning applications from a flood risk and Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) perspective. Where possible, we also consider opportunities to reduce flood risk elsewhere and as well as facilitating economic growth.
- 4.3.2 Work is nearly complete in producing a Local SuDS Handbook with seven other regional authorities. This will produce consistent local requirements for developers across the region and, in Shropshire, will sit beneath relevant planning policy. The Flood and Water Management team is a statutory consultee for all major developments.
- 4.3.3 As part of Shropshire Council’s Local Development Plan, we have been involved in the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) process, advising the Planning Policy team about flood risk and potential opportunities to reduce flood risk locally.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/environmental-maintenance-and-enforcement/drainage-and-flooding/local-flood-risk-management-strategy/>

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Cllr Steve Davenport, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transportation

Cllr Robert Macey, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing Development

Local Member

For Local Flood Risk Management:

This is a county wide function.

Appendices

A – Welsh Bridge Gauge Board Data