

TITLE	Flood Risk Management End of Year Update
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 September 2018
WARD	None specific
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR	Josie Wragg, Director of Environment
LEAD MEMBER	Norman Jorgenson, Executive Member for the Environment

OUTCOME/BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

To inform Members of the progress made with the Lead Local Flood Authority's (LLFA) duties under the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010 during 2017/18.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to note the update on flooding and drainage during the financial year 2017/18.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Flood and water management is a key responsibility of Wokingham Borough Council in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) following the introduction of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) in 2010. The LLFA has been progressing with the implementation of its new responsibilities whilst continuing to deliver existing related services. This report provides an update to Members of the progress made during 2017/18. The next 12 months will see further progress following the creation of a dedicated Drainage team covering flood risk management, land drainage, reactive drainage, capital drainage and planning application reviews.

BACKGROUND

During 2017/18, the Flooding and Drainage officers made progress with fulfilling Wokingham Borough Council's (WBC) statutory obligations as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) under the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010, whilst continuing to carry out its responsibilities to maintain the boroughs highway drainage system. It is expected that progress leading into 2019 and beyond will improve even further following the appointment of another drainage officer to the team, who will be tasked with helping the Authority to fulfill its role as LLFA.

ANALYSIS OF ISSUE

Key elements that have been addressed by WBC over the last 12 months have included:

1. The completion of a Surface Water Management Plan for Shinfield;
2. Production of Section 19 Flood Investigation Reports following the July 2017 surface water flooding;
3. Progression with the development of the Flood Asset Register under Section 21 of the FWMA;
4. Progression with the implementation of Land Drainage Byelaws;
5. Adoption of the Wokingham specific SuDS Strategy;
6. Community engagement;
7. Reactive and capital drainage works.

1. Completion of a Surface Water Management Plan for Shinfield

WBC's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (available under the Flooding & Drainage section of the WBC website) states that the LLFA will carry out Surface Water Management Plans (SWMP's) in areas at risk of flooding in the borough. In 2017, officers commissioned Peter Brett Associates to carry out an SWMP for Shinfield, following various reports from residents of highway flooding in the area. The SWMP involved conducting workshops, with various different stakeholders, where information about historic flooding was gathered and analysed. Stakeholders included Shinfield Parish Council, the Borough Councillors, Thames Water, and Wokingham Borough Council. The report recommends various measures to help reduce flood risk in the parish, some of which have already been carried out. For example, additional highways drainage pipes have been added in Church Lane and Basingstoke Road to help alleviate flooding on the highway. Furthermore, officers are currently in the process of applying to Defra and the Environment Agency for funding to develop a flood alleviation scheme which is recommended in the plan to reduce flood risk in the parish. The final plan has been issued by the consultant and will be published on the Council's website imminently. Officers will continue to carry out SWMPs for other parishes at risk in the borough over the coming months.

2. Section 19 Flood Investigation Reports

On becoming aware of a flood in its area, Section 19 of the FWMA requires LLFA's to investigate which Risk Management Authorities (RMA's) have relevant flood risk management functions, and whether each of these RMA's have exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to a flood.

In February 2013, WBC's Flood Investigations Policy was agreed via an Individual Executive Member Decision (IEMD) which set the threshold at which a formal investigation of a flooding incident is undertaken by WBC.

Following the heavy rains in July 2017, where over 75 residents reported internal flooding to their properties in Wokingham, WBC in-house consultants, WSP, conducted parish based flood investigations to determine the cause of flooding. The reports made various recommendations for RMA's and all RMA's have been notified of these recommendations and given the opportunity to comment on the final reports. Since the flooding, WBC, RMA's and residents have been implementing various measures recommended by the reports in order to reduce the risk of flooding in the future.

A summary report of the July 2018 flooding is held by WBC officers and is available on request by emailing the flooding@wokingham.gov.uk.

3. Section 21 Asset Register

Under Section 21 of the FWMA the LLFA has a duty to maintain a register of features or structures within the borough that, in the opinion of the Authority, could affect flood risk. The LLFA must also maintain a record, linked to the register, of information regarding the ownership and state of repair of each feature or structure. The register and record helps WBC officers to develop more informed maintenance regimes which can take account of assets important for managing flood risk. It also helps to establish where the borough's drainage and watercourse systems are, allowing for quicker identification of the responsible authority in incidences of flooding.

Similarly to other LLFA's, it has been decided that WBC will put this information together in the form of a Geographical Information System (GIS) map layer that can be viewed on community maps by staff and residents. This work is on-going.

4. Land Drainage Byelaws

As a LLFA WBC are able to make byelaws to ensure the effective operation of the land drainage across the Borough. Wokingham specific Byelaws give the Council control over a wider area outside of the ditch line and extending up to 8m from the top of the bank. Not only does this have clear benefits in terms of protecting the natural floodplain of smaller watercourses and ditches but it would also assist with providing a 'buffer zone' for biodiversity. In 2017 WBC's land drainage byelaws were approved by Central Government and are available to view on the WBC website. Officers continue to use the byelaws to help deter residents and developers from carrying out inappropriate activities such as blocking an ordinary watercourse or culverting a ditch without permission from the local authority.

5. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Government consulted on the implementation of Schedule 3 of the FWMA between December 2012 and March 2013. Prior to the consultation, WBC was expecting to become a SuDS Approving Body (SAB) which would have placed responsibility on the Council for approval, adoption, and maintenance of SuDS on new developments. However, as a result of the consultation, in September 2014 Government proposed making better use of the planning system to secure SuDS in new development. It was confirmed in December 2014 that this approach would be taken forward and this was implemented as of 6th April 2015. It was also proposed that to support local planning authorities (LPAs) in assessing the provision of SuDS in new development, LLFAs would be made statutory consultees on all major planning applications with surface water drainage implications.

To deliver this enhanced planning system, planning guidance has been strengthened to give increased weight to the provision and maintenance of SuDS in the determination of planning applications. Non statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems have been published by DEFRA and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) – Flood Risk and Coastal Change has been updated to provide further clarification on managing flood risk and securing the use of SuDS.

Officers have developed a standard Pre-Application Drainage Advice Note which sets out the requirements in terms of SuDS to support the various types of Planning Application. This is being issued to developers to inform them of our requirements at the Pre-Application stage. WBC has had a long standing commitment to consider adopting SuDS within the Borough and a

Wokingham specific SuDS Strategy has also been developed to ensure the SuDS are designed appropriately. This document sets out WBCs local requirements for sustainable drainage in the borough and provides guidance on the suitability of the various SuDS options in different areas of the Borough. The document, intended for use by developers and their consultants, was formally adopted in February 2017 and is being used by various stakeholders when designing and delivering and retrofitting drainage infrastructure in Wokingham.

6. Community Engagement

The Borough has a duty to engage with the public and representative bodies and share information with them.

Quarterly meetings are held with the Loddon Valley Residents Association. These meetings are used by local residents groups to voice their concerns. Thames Water, National Flood Forum and Environment Agency also attend these meetings. Officers also regularly attend the meetings of the Swallowfield Flood Action Group and are engaging with students and lecturers at the University of Reading to develop flood related research projects that aim to improve information sharing and knowledge of flooding within the borough.

Progress is being made with the setting up of Flood Action Groups and the recruitment of flood wardens in parishes at flood risk. Officers have been at various events to raise awareness of the benefits of Flood Action Groups and flood wardens. Information about

this has also been shared through social media, the WBC website, and borough and parish newsletters.

7. Reactive and Capital Drainage Works

Capital Works

In the financial year 2017/18 various capital schemes were completed including:

- Emmbrook Road capital drainage scheme, which involved the installation of approximately 100 metres of additional drainage pipe to alleviate flooding under the railway bridge on Emmbrook Road;
- Mole Road capital drainage scheme, which involved the installation of a new culvert underneath the road as well as ditch clearance to reduce the risk of future highway floods on this road;
- Basingstoke Road capital drainage scheme, which involved the installation of approximately 180 metres of additional drainage pipe and the installation of a number of acco drains outside residents properties to reduce the risk of flooding to the highway and to resident properties;
- Thames Street and High Street Sonning, capital drainage scheme which involved manhole lid replacements, gully lid replacements, the replacement of existing pipes, jetting and CCTVing of the existing system. This was combined with other highways works such as resurfacing and road sweeping in order to ensure collaborative working during the road closure;
- Grovelands Avenue Capital drainage scheme, which involved the installation of approximately 80 metres of filter drain to intercept surface water runoff during heavy rains;
- Reading Road phase 1 capital drainage scheme, which involved the replacement of an existing drainage pipe as well as CCTVing and jetting;
- Barkham Road capital drainage scheme, which involved various works including gully lid replacement, manhole lid replacement, ditch clearance, CCTVing and jetting. This will be followed by further drainage works as part of the Barkham Bridge replacement scheme;
- Wilderness Road phase 1 capital drainage scheme, which involved the replacement of a collapsed drainage pipe as well as CCTVing, root cutting and jetting.

Revenue Works

Throughout the financial year 2017/18 numerous reactive works were carried out to repair the drainage infrastructure in the borough including the emptying of 31,002 gullies, 9100 of which were cleared twice. Furthermore, over 1000 works orders were issued to the contractor to carry out repair works on the boroughs highway drainage.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	n/a	n/a	n/a

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
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n/a

Cross-Council Implications

n/a

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

n/a

List of Background Papers

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 Wokingham SuDS Strategy 2017 Wokingham Land Drainage Byelaws
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