

## Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	<b>Planning Housing and Economic Development Scrutiny Panel</b>	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	<b>07 March 2017</b>	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:  <b>N/A</b>
TITLE:	<b>Flood Risk Management Update</b>	
WARD:	All	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b> Appendix A: Bath & North East Somerset Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy: Summary Appendix B: 'How to report flooding' poster Appendix C: Strategic Flood Board's Terms of Reference		

### **1 THE ISSUE**

- 1.1 As part of a Scrutiny Panel update on Flood Risk Management, the Chairman, Councillor Will Sandry submitted a number of specific questions in relation to flood risk management. This report has been written as a reply to those questions.

### **2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 No recommendations are sought but comments are welcome.

### **3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

- 3.1 No resource implications required.

### **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 No recommendations or approvals are required.

## 5 THE REPORT

5.1 Answers to the specific questions raised by Councillor Will Sandry on 3 February 2017 are set out below, however, by way of introduction, we believe it would be useful to give an overview of flood risk management in Bath and North East Somerset.

### 5.2 An introduction to Flood Risk Management in Bath and North East Somerset

5.3 No single organisation has responsibility to manage flood risk from all sources. Flood Risk Management is shared between a number of different organisations with individuals and communities having an important part to play.

5.4 Under the Flood and Water Management Act (2010), Bath & North East Somerset Council has been designated as a Lead Local Flood Authority. This means Bath & North East Somerset Council has a coordinating role for flood risk management across the region, and has an operational role for managing flooding from surface water, Ordinary Watercourses<sup>1</sup> and groundwater. These roles are in addition to the responsibilities Bath & North East Somerset Council already has for managing flooding and drainage from the highway network, and planning for emergencies.

5.5 Certain organisations were defined in the Flood and Water Management Act (2010) as Risk Management Authorities and given specific responsibilities around flooding. This includes both new responsibilities from the Flood and Water Management Act (2010), and longstanding ones from previous legislation such as the Highways Act (1980), and the Land Drainage Act (1991).

5.6 Within the Bath and North East Somerset region, Risk Management Authorities include:

Bath & North East Somerset Council;  
the Environment Agency;  
Highways England;  
Bristol Water; and  
Wessex Water.

5.7 Table 5.1 below lists the Risk Management Authorities and their responsibilities in terms of flood risk management. For more details see Bath & North East Somerset Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> An ordinary watercourse is any watercourse, ditch, or stream not classified as a Main River.  
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Table 5.1: Risk Management Authorities in the Bath and North East Somerset area

Flood Source	Responsible Risk Management Authority				
	Environment Agency	Bath & North East Somerset Council	Bristol Water	Wessex Water	Highways England
Main River <sup>2</sup>	✓				
Surface Water		✓ (as the Lead Local Flood Authority)			
Surface Water (on or coming from the highway)		✓ (as the Local Highways Authority)			✓ (for A4 and A36)
Sewer Flooding				✓	
Ordinary Watercourse		✓ (as the Lead Local Flood Authority)			
Ground Water		✓ (as the Lead Local Flood Authority)			
Reservoirs	✓		✓		

5.8 In terms of partnership working and co-ordination, Bath & North East Somerset Council administers a **Strategic Flood Board** that includes the above Risk Management Authorities as well as the emergency services.

5.9 The purpose of the Strategic Flood Board is set out in a statement agreed by the Risk Management Authorities that on the board. It is as follows:

*The Strategic Flood Board is made up of members from the following Risk Management Authorities:*

*Bath and North East Somerset Council (as the Lead Local Flood Authority)  
The Environment Agency  
Wessex Water  
Bristol Water*

*And also includes the following organisations:*

*Avon Fire and Rescue  
The Canal and Rivers Trust  
Avon and Somerset Police.*

<sup>2</sup> Main Rivers are defined on the Environment Agency's flooding maps on their website and in BANES include, amongst others, the Avon, the Chew, the Cam Brook, Wellow Brook.

*The overall aim of the Strategic Flood Board is to incrementally reduce the risk of, and improve the response to, flooding in the Bath and North East Somerset area.*

*Working in cooperation, the Board member organisations will manage areas at risk of flooding across the authority. This work will help to prioritise future flood risk management objectives and measures.*

*Good communication and cooperation between partners and members of the public to help improve understanding of flood risk and best practice on how to respond to and mitigate flooding is the key to successfully fulfilling the aim of the Strategic Flood Board.*

5.10 Details of the Strategic Flood Board's objectives can be found in the Strategic Flood Board's Terms of Reference (**Appendix C**).

5.11 Officers from Bath & North East Somerset Council, Wessex Water and the Environment Agency also meet quarterly to discuss operational matters as part of an **Operational Flood Working Group**.

5.12 In terms of liaison with the public, Bath & North East Somerset Council now has 30 **Local Flood Representatives** in Parishes and City of Bath Wards. Local Flood Representatives are individuals nominated by their local community to act as a direct point of contact between the community and Bath and North East Somerset Council. They provide first-hand information on drainage and flooding issues that affect the community and relate these to the Council's Drainage and Flooding Team who can then escalate information to the Operational Flood Working Group.

5.13 There are more details below about Local Flood Representatives (within the Community resilience section).

5.14 **The Lead Local Flood Authority has a duty to record and investigate significant flooding events** (regardless of source) under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act (2010). Any of the following reports of flooding will trigger an investigation and be classified as significant:

- five or more dwellings at an urban location experience internal property flooding;
- two or more dwellings at a rural location experience internal property flooding;
- where the event resulted in a loss of life, or;
- where critical infrastructure (e.g. power station, pump station, electricity supply, critical transport route) was affected by flooding for a significant period of time.

5.15 The investigations will identify which Risk Management Authority is responsible for the flood incident. The relevant Risk Management Authority will then be required to prepare a report detailing the cause of flooding, the consequences of the flood event and the actions taken to deal with the event during and after the flooding.

5.16 Since 2010, significant flooding has taken place, and formal flood investigations have been produced for Chew Magna and Chew Stoke (2012), Broadmead Lane Industrial Estate, Keynsham (2014), Farmborough and Timsbury (2016), and Farrington Gurney (2016). These reports can be found at:

<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/environment/lead-local-flood-authority/flood-risk-management-bath-north-east-somerset/what>

5.17 It is important to note that all instances of internal property flooding are investigated even if they do not constitute a formal Section 19 report. The Lead Local Flood Authority scrutinises flood reports from as many sources as possible including Council Connect enquiries, highway enquiries and directly from members of the public.

5.18 Flooding incidents are scored on an impact and health and safety basis and schemes of work are prioritised accordingly.

#### **5.19 Answers to specific questions raised by Councillor Will Sandry**

#### **5.20 Question 01: Clarification of future schemes for Pulteney Weir / Radial Gate**

5.21 See complementary Scrutiny Panel Report *Update Report: WaterSpace Study and Strategic Flood Project (Twerton & Pulteney Flood Gates project)* paragraphs 5.8 to 5.14.

#### **5.22 Question 02: Clarification of Cabinet member responsibilities and accountabilities.**

5.23 Cllr Liz Richardson performs a number of roles in relation to Flood Risk Management:

Cllr Liz Richardson is Chair of the Strategic Flood Board (see previous).

Cllr Liz Richardson attends the Wessex Regional Flood and Coastal Committee on behalf of Bath & North East Somerset Council.

The Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) is a committee established by the Environment Agency under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 that brings together members appointed by Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) and independent members with relevant experience for 3 purposes:

1. to ensure there are coherent plans for identifying, communicating and managing flood and coastal erosion risks across catchments and shorelines
2. to encourage efficient, targeted and risk-based investment in flood and coastal erosion risk management that represents value for money and benefits local communities
3. to provide a link between the Environment Agency, LLFAs, other risk management authorities, and other relevant bodies to build understanding of flood and coastal erosion risks in its area

5.24 Cllr Anthony Clarke, Cabinet Member for Transport, whose portfolio includes Highway Maintenance and Drainage from which the Lead Local Flood Authority operates. Cllr Anthony Clarke attends the Communities, Transport and Environment Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.

#### **5.25 Question 03: Role of Strategic Rivers Board.**

5.26 We believe there may be some confusion between the Strategic Flood Board and the Strategic River Group.

5.27 The *Strategic Flood Board* has been established as a direct response to requirements in the Flood and Water Management Act to enable partnership working between the (flood) Risk Management Authorities. Details about the Strategic Flood Board can be found above.

5.28 The *Strategic River Group* has been set up with Senior Officers from Bath & North East Somerset Council and senior representatives from Environment Agency, Wessex Water, Canal & Rivers Trust and The River Regeneration Trust who are empowered to make strategic decisions. It is a multi-agency advisory group.

5.29 The aims of the Strategic River Group are:

- To bring together decision makers into a single forum to tackle common water issues concerning the River Avon between Dundas Aqueduct and Hanham Lock. This area is Phase I.
- To explore options to develop synergy across policies, plans and produce an overarching Action Plan for delivery
- To identify the relevant delivery partners, roles and timescales required to deliver improvements
- To monitor and evaluate projects as they progress
- To advise on future strategic direction.

**5.30 Question 04: Future risks of flooding upstream from Pulteney Bridge**

5.31 See complementary Scrutiny Panel Report *Update Report: WaterSpace Study and Strategic Flood Project (Twerton & Pulteney Flood Gates project)* paragraphs 5.9 and 5.10

**5.32 Question 05: Future Risks of flooding between Pulteney Bridge and Windsor Bridge. Can data be provided on a number of people basis rather than per property basis?**

5.33 No, this data is not held. The Environment Agency only has number of properties.

**5.34 Question 06: Criteria for assessing effectiveness of Flood mitigation schemes after completion (e.g. those at Victoria Bridge and those currently underway at Bath Quays) – and any existing reports resulting from an assessment.**

5.35 The Environment Agency carries out compliance checking of Flood Risk Activity Permits and the Local Planning Authority enforce planning conditions. Where appropriate, as-built information is added to Environment Agency data sets, including flood models, which are calibrated against real flood events to check their accuracy. The EA also carry out flood reconnaissance when flood warnings are issued and data is used to improve our understanding of flood events. We also carry out asset inspections and have enforcement powers.

**5.36 Question 07: Current risk mitigation measures to ensure the Twerton Radial Gate does not fail in the closed position.**

5.37 See complementary Scrutiny Panel Report *Update Report: WaterSpace Study and Strategic Flood Project (Twerton & Pulteney Flood Gates project)* paragraphs 5.8 to 5.14.

**5.38 Question 08: Somer Valley flooding issues (Is the 1970's re-routing still effective with respect to climate change)?**

5.39 A hydraulic model is currently being undertaken. Results are expected later this year.

**5.40 Question 09: Chew Valley flooding issues of note**

5.41 Following extensive flooding in the Chew Valley in 2012, a formal Flood and Water Management Act Section 19 investigation was carried out for Chew Magna and Chew Stoke (published September 2013). The investigations set out a number of recommendations. Please see Chew Stoke and Chew Magna Flood Investigation Reports available from:  
<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/environment/lead-local-flood-authority/flood-risk-management-bath-north-east-somerset/what>

5.42 The majority of the recommendations have been progressed.

5.43 Particular achievements include:

- A Bath & North East Somerset Council funded Property Level Protection scheme was completed to provide an improved level of resilience for 69 homes in Chew Magna.
- Chew Magna Parish Council, with support from the Chew Valley Flood Forum and many others have produced a comprehensive community flood plan (see below).
- In Chew Stoke a number of surface water issues were highlighted and investigations and schemes have been carried out. High-strength bollards have been installed at Chew Stoke Ford to stop vehicles being swept away.

5.44 Significant surface water drainage improvements have also been made in West Harptree since 2012.

**5.45 Question 10: Emergency Planning Team evacuation plan for worst case flood including when last tested.**

5.46 Bath & North East Somerset Council's Emergency Planning Team and the Environment Agency are in consultation to organise an emergency flood scenario workshop/ simulation.

**5.47 Question 11: Community Resilience – What is the best “flood organised” local community in B&NES and what could other communities learn from this?**

## **5.48 Local Flood Representatives**

5.49 Over the last two years BANES has established a network of 30 Local Flood Reps in Parishes throughout the area. Local Flood Reps are the eyes-and-ears on the ground in terms of reporting long standing flooding and drainage issues. There have been some great examples of Local Flood Reps coming up with simple and smart ways to manage flood risk in their community and many Local Flood Reps have provided detailed reports that can be used by the Lead Local Flood Authority to investigate further and take action. Local Flood Reps are now sharing these ideas with each other and each autumn we get together to share ideas and suggestions about how to prepare for the winter and report flooding.

## **5.50 Chew Magna – an exemplar flood resilient community**

5.51 Chew Magna Parish Council, with support from Bath & North East Somerset Council, the Environment Agency, Groundwork and Avon Fire and Rescue has established a robust and tested Community Flood Plan. This is a comprehensive piece of work that includes the establishment and training of 'Flood Wardens' and a structured protocol based around the flood mechanisms in the town and the different neighbourhood zones and vulnerable users.

5.52 The Flood Plan is managed by the Flood Wardens who have built in monitoring and improvement measures that include Practice Days and continued training. The Plan was put into practice on 21 November when parts of the town were flooded. Whilst areas of the town flooded, the impact was relatively small and the town was able to quickly recover.

5.53 An important point to note. Chew Magna Parish Council has not received any direct funding (grants or otherwise) for their flood planning. Instead BANES the Environment Agency, Groundwork and Avon Fire and Rescue (and others) have each contributed time and expertise to help train and support Flood Wardens. For example BANES has purchased PPE equipment for Flood Wardens and Avon Fire and Rescue have provided water safety training and general support. The learning point here is that if a community can show the desire and impetus to form a plan, then (Flood) Risk Management Authorities will support their work, but ultimately the drive must come from the community themselves otherwise the Plan will not be sustainable.

5.54 Lynne Easton, is the Lead Flood Warden in Chew Magna, and is also a Local Flood Representative. She has attended Local Flood Rep meetings organised by BANES to tell her story and encourage other communities to think about managing their risk. She has also spoken at the Chew Valley Connecting Communities Forums.

5.55 The work in Chew Magna is exemplar and has recently been acknowledged with a nomination in the 'Building Resilience' category for the national Flood and Coast Awards 2017.

5.56 We would strongly encourage any community (even if only a few houses) that feels that they need to get themselves organised in order to manage local flood risks to engage with Chew Magna Parish Council and see what they can learn.

## 5.57 Chew Stoke and Broadmead Lane Industrial Estate

5.58 With support from the Environment Agency and BANES, the charity Groundwork is now working with people living in Chew Stoke, and working at Broadmead Lane Industrial Estate in Keynsham, to provide Flood Warden training and assist in creating Flood Plans.

## 6 RATIONALE

No recommendations are sought but comments welcome.

## 7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 N/A no other options considered

## 8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Consultation has taken place between Bath and North East Somerset Council's Drainage and Flooding team, the Environment Agency, relevant Councillors, and the River Avon Project Coordinator.

## 9 RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

<b>Contact person</b>	<i>Jim Collings</i> <i>Flood Authority Manager</i>
<b>Background papers</b>	<i>A ten year plan for the management of flooding from local sources: Bath &amp; North East Somerset's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2015 – 2025. Available from:</i> <a href="http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/environment/lead-local-flood-authority/flood-risk-management-bath-north-east-somerset/what">http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/environment/lead-local-flood-authority/flood-risk-management-bath-north-east-somerset/what</a>  Chew Stoke Flood Investigation Final Report (2013)  And  Chew Magna Flood Investigation Final Report (2013)  Both available from: <a href="http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/environment/lead-local-flood-">http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/environment/lead-local-flood-</a>

	<a href="#">authority/flood-risk-management-bath-north-east-somerset/what</a>
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