

Decision Maker: Executive

Date: 9th September 2015

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: **LEAD LOCAL FLOOD AUTHORITY UPDATE AND GRANT DRAW-DOWN**

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Chief Officer: Nigel Davies, Executive Director of Environment & Community Services

Ward: All

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report updates Members on the Council's role as the Lead Local Flood Authority, including the latest changes in responsibilities;
 - 1.2 Seeks approval of Local Flood Risk Strategy and Action Plan;
 - 1.3 Reviews the authorities response to the 2014 groundwater flooding issue, and;
 - 1.4 Seeks agreement from the Executive to release dedicated Central Contingency funding to ensure the Council meets its statutory duties as the Lead Local Flood Authority.
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2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Executive agrees to:

- 2.1 **Release a sum of £213k from the 2015/16 Central Contingency budget to implement the proposals detailed in this report.**
- 2.2 **Approves the Local Flood Risk Strategy and associated Action Plan,**
- 2.3 **Approves the LLFA future works programme.**

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Quality Environment
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated Cost: £213k
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost:
 3. Budget head/performance centre: DEFRA grant held in Central Contingency for implementation of the Flooding & Water Management Act 2010
 4. Total current budget for this head: £213k
 5. Source of funding: £139k through the settlement funding assessment (SFA) and £74k from Local Services Support Grant (LSSG) from DEFRA.
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 2
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: 2 fte
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement
 2. Call-in: Applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Boroughwide
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Yes – Councillors have been consulted on the draft Local Strategy
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: have been included within Appendix C of the Local Strategy

3. COMMENTARY

Background

- 3.1 The Flooding and Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA) requires the London Borough of Bromley, as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for local flood risk management in its area.
- 3.2 The LLFA has a duty to identify the causes of surface water flooding, including groundwater, and determine those organisations or authorities that have a role in mitigating the flood risk. Having identified those parties the LLFA must provide a forum where such parties can be brought together to produce a considered and coordinated response to flood risk in the borough.
- 3.3 This report reviews the Council's progress in the role of LLFA, and considers its responsibilities and activities for the coming year.
- 3.4 The impact of the flooding experienced across the borough during the 'groundwater emergency 2014 is also considered.

Progress

- 3.5 During the last year good progress has been made on implementing the FWMA, including;
 - The groundwater recovery and response phases, including cooperation with the Environment Agency option studies on the Ravensbourne South and East Branches.
 - Implementation of highway drainage schemes that augment local surface water drainage systems, including clearance of highway ponds.
 - Support for the Chislehurst Commons Conservators with vital surface water drainage connections between the Chislehurst ponds.
 - Surveys and improvements to ordinary watercourses.
 - Engagement with developers, to promote and where appropriate, require the use of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS).
 - Production of the Local Flood Risk Strategy – As 3.11 below.
- 3.6 In February 2012 a report was considered by the Environment Portfolio Holder and Development Control Committee to adopt the role of SUDS Approving Body (SAB) to approve Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) submitted by developers. After consultation the requirement to adopt SUDS has been dropped by the Government and the responsibility for development control with regard to surface water management has been left with planners rather than a SAB taking an enforceable lead in the process.
- 3.7 Bromley has been part of the South East London Flood Risk Group (SELFRG), working in partnership with the boroughs of Bexley, Lewisham and Greenwich. The SELFRG provides a forum at which officers and elected Members from each authority come together to exchange information and identify opportunities for partnership working. Representatives from the Environment Agency and Thames Water Utilities regularly attend quarterly meetings, together with any other authority or organisation that has an interest in flood risk within its catchment area. The Partnership has met regularly throughout the year.

- 3.8 Flood Reporting: A flood register has been established and populated with historic data on known flooding incidences. This will be used to record all future reports of flooding across the borough to use in subsequent investigations. Over the last 12 months the weather has been relatively benign, hence few new entries but historic flood incidents are still being added.
- 3.9 Flood Asset Register: Our knowledge of assets in the borough with the potential to contribute to flooding continues to develop as a result of condition surveys and ad hoc investigations.
- 3.10 Condition Surveys: The condition of surface water drainage assets determine their effectiveness during storm conditions. For the coming year surveys of Ordinary Watercourses in the borough will be a priority to quantify any issues and raise awareness with land owners of their responsibilities as Riparian Owners.

Local Flood Risk Strategy

- 3.11 A Local Flood Risk Strategy (LFRS) has been drafted as part of the joint procurement approach with SELFRG, including dedicated appendices for each authority for which borough-specific actions and priorities are detailed. There is a statutory requirement for public consultation on the LFRS, which must be concluded by mid June 2015 to be included in the Environment Agency's Thames Catchment Flood Risk Management Plan.
- 3.12 Councillors and key stakeholders have been consulted on the proposed LFRS, as Appendix 'A'. A record of comments received is now included within Appendix C of the strategy and the LFRS document has been amended as appropriate. It is therefore proposed that the LFRS and action plans are approved.

Groundwater Flood Events of 2013/14

- 3.13 In February 2014 significant flooding occurred nationally, and groundwater flooding returned Borkwood Court in Sevenoaks Road, Orpington and the Addington Road area of West Wickham.
- 3.14 As a LLFA Bromley has a responsibility for the strategic management of flood risk including that from groundwater, and as a category one responder under the Civil Contingencies act Bromley has a mandate to engage in an emergency. It was on the basis of our Emergency Planning role that Bromley spent contingency funds on protecting homes and vital infrastructure.
- 3.15 Following the flooding event the Government allocated funding to residents through the Repair and Renewal Grant to improve flood resilience to domestic properties. This grant has been administered by the Council, with funding provided to the six flats in Borkwood Court and three properties in Courtfield Rise.
- 3.16 In July 2014 Members approved the allocation of £30k to supplement the R&R grants provided by the Governments in order to provide mitigation/flood protection measures to reduce the risk of the Council being involved in any future ground water flooding event. A control chamber has been constructed at the head of main river in Corkscrew Hill which will allow any future groundwater flooding on the Sparrows Den playing to be drained in a controlled manner to the main river culvert as capacity becomes available within that pipe. While this measure may not directly prevent future groundwater flooding within the back gardens of properties in Courtfield Rise and Addington Road, the flow from these springs will be reduced by the improved lake drain down capability.
- 3.17 In West Wickham the Environment Agency has repaired the significant blockage in the piped main river culvert and improved the open channel to the rear of Addington Road. They have also engaged consultants to undertake an options study on the Ravensbourne South branch which includes the effects of significant GW emergence at Sparrows Den.

Future Responsibilities and Work Streams

- 3.18 It is proposed that the following tasks are completed during the coming year, funded by LLFA grants.
- 3.19 Publish LFRS and commence works detailed within the Action Plan, including publication of Flood Risk Management Plans: Submit LBB LS and Action plan to EA for inclusion in their Catchment Basin Flood Risk Management Plan - £60k.
- 3.20 Review of impounded water bodies: The FWMA introduced new standards for the management of reservoirs, and the Council is required to assess the risk associated with failure of the reservoir structure. There are 18 sites within the borough that may require regular statutory inspections under the FWMA, half of which are within Council-owned land - £15k.
- 3.21 Complete the review and update LBB Strategic Flood Risk Assessment - £15k.
- 3.22 Work with the Environment Agency to investigate and improve main rivers, which are a vital part of surface water drainage across the borough's catchments - The EA currently have 4 option studies underway within the borough – Ravensbourne East , Ravensbourne South, Kydbrook and Beck. These studies are likely to identify flood risk reduction measures that will require local contributions in order to go ahead - £60k.
- 3.23 Enhancements to highway drainage schemes - £8k.
- 3.24 During the last three years local residents have been encouraged to retro-fit sustainable rainwater drainage to existing residential properties, through the installation of subsidised water butts. Whilst the physical impact of this is negligible it helps raise awareness of flooding issues and encourages residents to take some responsibility for minimising the impact of their own activity. This initiative will be continued this year - £5k.
- 3.25 CCTV and condition surveys on open water courses and other integrated urban surface water drainage - £45k.
- 3.26 Development of Flood Risk Management pages on the LBB web site to include enhanced links to EA data and other informative sites explaining the principles of sustainability in urban surface water drainage - £5k.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The draft Environment Portfolio Plan 2015/17 includes the following Aim and Objectives:

Aim	Minimise the risk of flooding
In 2014/15 we will:	
4.9: Increase flood risk awareness and develop resilience through our Lead Local Flood Authority role	
4.10: Adopt the role of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems Approval Body through the Planning / Building Control process to ensure that surface water drainage is properly considered in the development process and that suitable plans are in place to maintain sustainable drainage assets into the future	

4.11: Consult on, publish, adopt and act upon the Local Flood Risk Strategy for Bromley.

4.2 In order for the Council to fulfil its statutory requirements under the FWMA, the Director of Environment and Community Services has been given delegated responsibility for co-ordinating the tasks with other Council departments, including the introduction of the additional responsibilities from the revised schedule 3 . It is proposed that this arrangement continues.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Since 2011/12, DEFRA has provided grant funding to the Council to carry out its new responsibilities under the FWMA.

5.2 As an LLFA, Bromley has been allocated £213k for local flood risk management during 2015/16. £139k is provided through the settlement funding assessment (SFA) and the remaining £74k paid via the Local Services Support Grant (LSSG).

Activity	2015/16 £'000
Review and update LBB Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	15
CCTV condition survey, maintenance & improvement of surface water drainage assets. Enhancement of HD infiltration schemes	53
Impounded water body review	15
Contribution to Environment Agency Flood catchment initiatives / internal surface water flood risk management works & other internal surface water / flood management projects	60
Contribution to retro-fitted SUDS to existing residential properties (water butts)	5
LFRS Action plan	60
Website development	5
Total	213

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The London Borough of Bromley has a statutory duty under the Flooding and Water Management Act 2010, as the Lead Local Flood Authority, to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for local flood risk management within the borough.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	LBB Local Flood Risk Strategy DRAFT and Action Plan