

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at LB31-32 - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 4 February 2015 from 14.03 - 15.47

Membership

Present

Councillor Glyn Jenkins (Vice Chair)
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan
Councillor Neghat Nawaz Khan
Councillor Ginny Klein
Councillor Thulani Molife
Councillor Anne Peach
Councillor Roger Steel
Councillor Carole-Ann Jones (Chair)

Absent

Councillor Brian Parbutt
Councillor Azad Choudhry
Councillor Georgina Culley
Councillor Mohammed Saghir
Councillor Marcia Watson
Councillor Pat Ferguson
Beverley Denby

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Fay Bull - Flood Mitigation Manager
Adam Boucher - Networks Manager, Severn Trent Water
Chris Capewell - Team Leader, Highway Design
Andrew Disney - Flood and Coastal Risk Management Advisor,
Environment Agency
Rav Kalsi - Senior Governance Officer
Phil Wye - Governance Officer
Tanith Davis - Governance Officer

51 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Georgina Culley – Non Council business
Councillor Pat Ferguson – Other Council business
Councillor Brian Parbutt – Non Council business
Councillor Mohammed Saghir – Other Council business
Councillor Marcia Watson – Other Council business
Beverley Denby – Non Council business

52 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

53 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 January 2015 were confirmed and signed by the chair.

54 NOTTINGHAM LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Fay Bull, Flood Mitigation Manager at Nottingham City Council, delivered a presentation on the Nottingham Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (NLFRMS).

In the presentation the following points were highlighted:

- (a) Nottingham City Council (NCC) is a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, and has a statutory duty to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for local flood risk management;
- (b) in Nottingham there are many organisations that deal with water management. The principal partners are NCC (surface water, ground water and minor watercourses), the Environment Agency (EA) (larger watercourses such as the rivers Trent and Leen), Severn Trent Water (STW) (sewers) and the Canal and River Trust (canals). These agencies all work in partnership and meet quarterly;
- (c) the NLFRMS aims not to repeat the many existing national policies on flooding but to provide a clear plan for appropriate flood risk prevention. Data such as GIS information, historical flood records and data from the EA is used to determine the areas that are most at risk from flooding;
- (d) 17 priority areas have been identified within the NLFRMS, including Top Valley Way in Bulwell Forest, Mansfield Road in Mapperley, Sherwood and Berridge wards. The Strategy proposes a range of measures aimed at mitigating flood risk in the city referencing organisations' involvement and an estimated cost of risk management;
- (e) the 7 primary objectives of the NLFRMS are:
 - work collaboratively with partners;
 - sustainable new developments;
 - economically sustainable activities;
 - community engagement & engagement;
 - multiple benefits (such as enhancing infrastructure or promoting biodiversity);
 - catchment based approach;
 - local flood risk information.
- (f) NCC has a statutory duty to ensure that any new development is appropriate in terms of avoiding flood risk sustainably. It also maintains drainage and cleans gullies, as well as engaging with communities through a targeted communication strategy;
- (g) NCC aims to improve the resilience of existing properties within the city by supplying low-cost flood-prevention measures to citizens at competitive rates, such as aqua-sacs and groundwater level indicators;
- (h) the action plan contained within the NLFRMS contains a list of proposed capital schemes, which are all subject to funding. Bids have been submitted to central government to fund all of these. Each scheme will also require partnership funding from other sources, the amount of which will vary from scheme to scheme;
- (i) the River Leen and Day Brook schemes are future schemes which may be looked at in conjunction with prospective developers. There are further locations where other schemes may be considered, however may be more difficult and expensive to complete in the short-term. Citizens and businesses in these areas can be aided for now through

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community engagement;

- (j) a public consultation has been undertaken which was a statutory duty for NCC, as well as further consultation with stakeholders and the Local Resilience Forum. Additionally, an article was published in the Nottingham Arrow, vulnerable citizens were directly mailed, and further consultation in libraries, leisure centres and with community groups and Area Committee chairs was carried out. 33 responses were received, the outcomes of which were that a succinct action plan was important, all 7 objectives were essential, the NLFRRMS was easy to understand, and the responsibilities of different agencies were clear;
- (k) the next steps for the NLFRRMS, following feedback from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, will be agreement at Executive Board in February 2015 and then at Full Council in March 2015.

Fay Bull, Adam Boucher, Chris Capewell and Andrew Disney responded to members' questions as follows:

- (l) highways repairs to manhole covers etc. are undertaken jointly between the highways department of NCC and STW. Where a problem is found, a Section 81 Notice can be served and STW must liaise with the highways department within 2 hours to investigate the work that needs to be undertaken. Pipes or sewers that are most at risk are monitored by CCTV and there is also a regular programme of monitoring for each area;
- (m) the EA is a statutory consultee on all planning applications, and if a new development were to demonstrate a high risk of flooding they would be likely to object. The EA also promotes sustainable drainage solutions such as ponds, swales and wetland around new developments. Surface water is the responsibility of NCC and they will also become a statutory consultee from 6 April 2015 to make sure flooding is avoided, and also to promote sustainable drainage solutions;
- (n) some areas do not come under the remit of the NLFRRMS as they are on larger rivers such as the River Leen and so would be the responsibility of the EA. In these areas much wider investigation would be needed as schemes on one part of a river may have an impact further upstream or downstream. As a result these types of scheme can cost many millions of pounds. Cheaper solutions can sometimes be found such as raising buildings on stilts but these may be more expensive for potential developers;
- (o) removal of the culverts along the River Leen would be desirable as this would help return the river to a more natural state, as preferred by the European Water Framework Directive. These improvements would be within the remit of the EA and NCC would be in support;
- (p) further work is required to increase the number of consultees to the Strategy document. Information will be made clearer on the City Council website and community engagement meetings with the EA can be set up to reassure citizens, particularly in areas where they have had difficulty setting these up previously;
- (q) drainage from the new housing development of 300 new houses in the Rushcliffe area will feed into the water systems of Clifton, but the EA has been consulted and a series of ponds have been proposed to promote sustainable drainage. This could even be an opportunity to improve the current drainage systems;

- (r) flood defences along the river Trent in Wilford vary in height as they were constructed at different times but the EA always runs tests and they are all within tolerance levels. All culverts are also given routine maintenance and kept within tolerance levels;
- (s) none of the major flood management partners (NCFC, STW, EA etc.) police each other but work in partnership. As the LLFA, NCC has the responsibility to determine which partner has responsibility for individual incidents or risks, and this can sometimes be complex as different water systems affect each other. Although STW is policed by a regulator, NCC is regulated by the Secretary of State and elected members, such as those on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- (t) prevention is always the preferred option to repair. To help with this, STW uses camera technology and alarm sensors to monitor sewers and pipes, and to prevent blockages and 'fatbergs'. The EA uses flood risk management to monitor any changes in risk, and promotes the use of sustainable drainage as this is cheaper than building heavy infrastructure such as flood walls;
- (u) there has been an annual fall in funding nationally for flood management, however more funding has recently been made available which must be spent in 6 year programmes. £170m is available for the region of Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire over the next 6 years. This funding model is difficult to compare to the old funding system given that funding is no longer fixed over a single year period, however it still represents a substantial amount of money. Higher-risk areas are looked at first when determining funding levels;
- (v) STW are now penalised for every flood they cause which is helping to promote more partnership working. Perceptions are also changing as feedback shows that customers now consider all flooding, including external flooding, to be the fault of STW;
- (w) data can be ascertained by NCC to show recorded blockages at all highway gullies and drains. STW can also provide data as they live-map all blockages and repairs. This data can be provided to members of the Committee at a future meeting;
- (x) unfortunately, it is not possible to provide a walkthrough of sewers as requested by some councillors, as there are no new major projects being constructed in the area soon. However, photographs can be provided and any future opportunities to do this will be communicated to Committee members.

RESOLVED to

- (1) thank Fay Bull, Adam Boucher, Chris Capewell and Andrew Disney for the presentation and responses to questions, and to request a further meeting in 12 months to report on updates on Strategy objectives such as community engagement and asset management;**
- (2) recommend that feedback from the Committee is used in the submission to Executive Board and Full Council in February and March 2015;**
- (3) recommend a list of useful contacts and responsibilities of key agencies in flood risk management be promoted;**
- (4) recommend that all flood risk management partners should continue to meet and engage with members of the public and community groups where necessary, to give reassurance around flood risk.**

55 PROGRAMME FOR SCRUTINY

Rav Kalsi, Senior Governance Officer, introduced a report of the Head of Democratic Services setting out the overall programme and timetable for scrutiny activity during the remainder of 2014/15.

RESOLVED to

- (1) note the items scheduled on the work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Review Panels for 2014/15;**
- (2) notify the Head of Democratic Services of topics for consideration during the workshop session scheduled for 4 March 2015.**