



**ARTICLE NO: 2B**

**CORPORATE & ENVIRONMENTAL  
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MEMBERS UPDATE 2013/14  
ISSUE: 3**

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**Article of: Assistant Director Community Services**

**Relevant Head of Service: Managing Director (People and Places)**

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**SUBJECT: FLOODING - UPDATE**

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Wards affected: Borough wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF ARTICLE**

1.1 To update Members in relation to flooding related matters within the Borough.

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## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

2.1 A report was presented to Council on 19 December 2012 which outlined the various responsibilities of the key stakeholders in relation to flooding / drainage within West Lancashire.

2.2 At that meeting it was resolved:

- A. That the contents of the report be noted.
- B. That the Assistant Director Community Services further engages with our strategic partners and other bodies with a view to identifying any improvements which could be made to existing communication strategies to assist the public when reporting severe weather incidents, including the possibility of providing a single point of contact to be made known to all West Lancashire residents.

- C. That delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director Community Services, in consultation with the Leader and relevant Portfolio Holders, to commission the services of an appropriate body or bodies to engage with residents who have been or may be at risk of flooding and to provide the necessary assistance to form a Community Flood Action Group or Groups and to provide further advice and support to enable the Group or Groups to submit a bid to the Environment Agency via Lancashire County Council, as the designated lead local flood authority, for a property level flood resilience measures grant and that appropriate funding of up to £5,000 be made available from contingencies for this purpose.

### **3.0 CURRENT POSITION**

- 3.1 In relation to B above, the Council has been working closely with the EA and other major stakeholders to improve communications where possible. The Council has recently signed up to be part of the Environment Agency's new Extended Floodline Warning Service (Telephone number 0845 988 1188). This will enable a more co-ordinated approach between partners when dealing with flooding enquires from members of the public. As part of the service the EA staff at their Floodline contact centre will in the first instance deal with queries directly from the public and respond to them as per information / frequently asked questions that partners, including this Council have supplied, based on past experience.
- 3.2 The EA will only refer callers on to WLBC if the query is outside the content of the "script" or something we need to deal with directly ourselves i.e. flooding to Council housing stock, Council buildings, etc. This initiative will be a major improvement to the existing communication arrangements, and callers will be referred on in a way which reflects the statutory responsibilities of the various partners.
- 3.3 As part of the service WLBC will have direct access to a secure part of the EA's website where we can provide live updates to our own scripts and frequently asked questions, should the information change or need updating during the course of a severe weather event. The Technical Services Manager has also been working with Customer Services to further develop our own internal communications during flood events, and these will ensure that the new internal and external processes complement each other.
- 3.4 In relation to C above, we have been working closely with the EA on this and they have recently set up two Flood Action Groups (FAG's), in Dyers Lane and Halsall Lane, Ormskirk. The EA are also in discussions with interested residents in other parts of the Borough as to the possibility of setting up of further Flood Action Groups. The formation of these groups

has been fully funded by the EA and the Council has therefore not had to make any financial contribution to this process.

- 3.5 WLBC is also using consultants to carry out a flood study in relation to the “Pines” estate, off Burscough Road, Ormskirk (next to the Hattersleys site). This estate has a long standing history of flooding and the EA has provided WLBC with grant funding of £50,000 to complete this study. Upon completion of the study further grant funding will then be sought from the EA as appropriate to fund any identified engineering improvement works.
- 3.6 WLBC has also submitted an application to the EA for grant funding of £112,000 to carry out a flood study on the Hurlston Brook Catchment of West Ormskirk, which covers the Hurlston Brook and Sandy Brook watercourses. Specific areas of concern are identified as Alty’s Lane, Dyers Lane and Halsall Lane, Ormskirk. If the bid is successful, which should be known towards the end of this year, consultants will be appointed in line with Council procurement policies to carry out the study. Although the Flood Action Group initiative is being led by the EA, the Council will also be working with the FAG’s in helping to determine any flood prevention measures which may be built in to the outcomes of the above catchment study.

#### **4.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

- 4.1 The implementation of good asset management of the drainage /sewerage infrastructure across the Borough is key to the achievement of a sustainable long-term flood risk management strategy, particularly when dealing with both existing developments and future development proposals.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no significant financial or resource implications arising from this article.

#### **6.0 RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1 This item is for information only and makes no recommendations. It therefore does not require a formal risk assessment and no changes have been made to risk registers as a result of this article.

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### **Background Documents**

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Article.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

The Article is for information only and does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

### **Appendices**

None.