



CABINET: 13 MARCH 2018

Report of: Borough Solicitor

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor J Hodson

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**SUBJECT: ITEM REFERRED FROM THE CORPORATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – FLOODING IN THE
BOROUGH**

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To advise on the decision of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting held on 4 January 2018, during consideration of the presentation from United Utilities 'Flooding in the Borough'.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the recommendation from the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to 'Flooding in the Borough', as detailed at paragraph 3.1 (B) below, be considered together with the comments of the Director Development and Regeneration as set out in paragraph 4 below.

2.2 That Call In is not appropriate as it relates to an item already considered by the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 Minute 48 below provides details of the presentation, discussion and decision of the Corporate & Environmental Overview & Scrutiny Committee and sets out the recommendation to Cabinet in relation to Flooding in the Borough. Should Cabinet agree with the recommendation, a report will be submitted to Council on 25 April 2018.

"48. FLOODING IN THE BOROUGH (STILL DRAFT)

The Committee received a presentation from Mr Steve Howell, Asset Manager, United Utilities, in relation to flooding and the wastewater network operations and services in the Borough, requested by the Committee to attend following consideration of a Members Item raised on Hurlston Brook Flood Risk study. The presentation referred to the following:

1. The waste water network – managing flood risk and who is responsible for what:
 - Lancashire County Council – Developing, maintaining and applying a strategy for local flood risk management; managing the risk of flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses; and providing and maintaining highway drainage such as road gullies/grids
 - Environment Agency – Responsible for taking a strategic overview of all sources of flooding and managing the risk of flooding from main rivers
 - West Lancashire Borough Council – Managing the risk of flooding on its land and approving planning applications and ensuring it's drained in a sustainable way
 - United Utilities – Managing the risk of flooding from surface water, foul and combined sewer systems that provide drainage from buildings and yards
2. An overview of the wastewater system, including the sewers, pumping stations and treatment works.
3. West Lancashire drainage area, including inspections, planned maintenance visits and cleaning of sewers.
4. Performance statistics in relation to customer satisfaction, internal flooding and pollution incidents and spend on operating, maintaining and enhancing the wastewater network
5. Sewer flooding strategies and the calculation for ongoing risk analysis
6. Developers and development and the pressure on existing sewerage infrastructure, given their legal right to connect to both foul and surface water and to choose the point of connection
7. Partnership working:
 - Attendance at the Lead Local Flood Authority Making Space for Water meetings
 - Working closely with Local Authority Planning Departments and developers
 - Meet with Flood Action Groups such as ARRCCHS
 - Meetings with Councillors and MPs
8. Problems associated with flushing oil/fats, wipes and cotton buds
9. Reactive resolution units availability

Comments and questions were raised in respect of the following:

- The size of the sewerage pipes
- Closure of pumping stations
- The amount spent on improvements in the West Lancs area

- The programme or works for cleaning pipes
- Surface water outlets
- Problems associated with flushing oil/fats, wipes and cotton buds and campaigns to reduce this
- Hurlston Brook Flood Risk study
- Disruption to footpaths/surfaces during works

Steve Howell gave an undertaking to find out:

- (i) What the level of investment is in the West Lancs area
- (ii) If a programme of work for cleaning sewerage pipes is available to circulate to members

RESOLVED: A. That Steve Howell from United Utilities be thanked for his informative presentation and be asked to return once the report on Hurlston Brook Flood Risk study had been published.

B. That in view of the pressure placed on local authorities to meet government house building targets and the right of developers to connect to the sewerage system, Cabinet be asked to consider lobbying the government in relation to the reduction in funding for statutory services, in particular the general under investment in improving the waste sewerage systems."

3.2 In view of the Councils executive arrangements if members consider there is a need to lobby, as recommended by Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it would be a matter that would be for the full Council to determine (as given the comments of the Director of Development and Regeneration (below) it doesn't relate to this Council's particular functions, but those of other responsible bodies operating in the Borough).

4.0 COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

4.1 As set out in 3.1 above the Borough Council has limited responsibilities relating to flood risk management and drainage infrastructure, consequently whilst the Borough may benefit from increased funding, such funding and decisions relating to its expenditure would be for Lancashire County Council and/or United Utilities as the responsible bodies.

Background Documents

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

Equality Impact Assessment

The decision 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.