



**Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

Tuesday November 7, 2023

Subject: Member Flood Working Group Update Report

Report by: Director of Commercial & Operational Services

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Purpose / Summary: To update Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the work undertaken by the Officer Flood and Drainage Working Party and the Member Flood and Drainage Working Group

RECOMMENDATION(S): Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcome the work of the Member Flood and Drainage Working Group and Officer Flood and Drainage Working Party.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: The report acknowledges the Council is fulfilling its statutory duties. The reported work should enable improvement in the identification and discharging of these duties, in collaboration with partners.

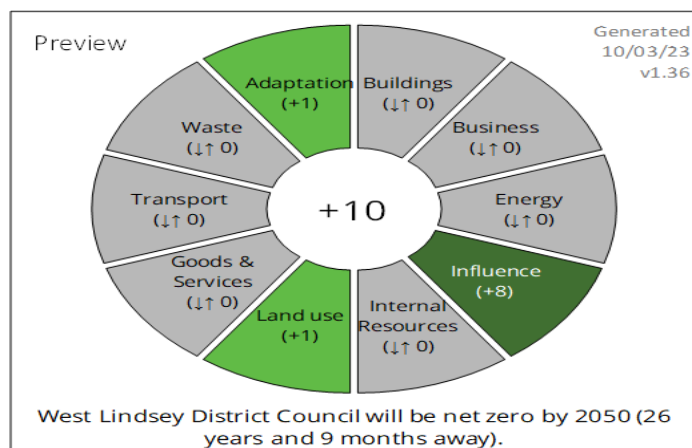
Financial : No financial implications arising from this report.

Staffing : None

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights : The impacts of the Flood Groups are considered to be positive. All residents in flood risk prone areas, including the vulnerable, benefit from improved knowledge about flood risk, efforts to involve communities in the process of identifying flood risk solutions and closer working between services and communities. The Groups help to ensure that those with protected characteristics are more fully considered during flood risk management.

Data Protection Implications : All data used in this area will be treated using the Council's established Data Protection Policy and relevant procedures.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities: It is well documented that future climate changes will increase flood risk in future years. Making preparations now, to pro-actively and strategically work with internal and external partners will better prepare the District for future events. The work of the Flood and Drainage Working Group has limited immediate direct impact, however its potential to communicate with and influence partners and communities will help increase resilience and mitigate the risk posed from future flooding.



Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations: None

Health Implications: There is strong evidence that stress levels and mental health are impacted by flooding issues and the perception of flooding issues. Ongoing work with partners to resolve flooding issues and risk could have a positive impact on resident's mental wellbeing.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report :

<https://democracy.west-lindsey.gov.uk/documents/s31579/Managing%20Flood%20Risk%20in%20West%20Lindsey.pdf>

Risk Assessment :

Failure to co-ordinate work in this area, both internally and with external partners, could result in increased impact from future flooding events. There is also a risk to the Council's reputation if it fails to demonstrate a pro-active approach in this work area.

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On 19 July 2022, Prosperous Communities Committee received a report regarding the increasing risk of flooding in West Lindsey. Having considered the report, Members resolved;
1. That Members approve the establishment of an Officer Flooding and Drainage Working Party
 2. That Members approve the establishment of a Member Flood and Drainage Working Group, the membership of which to be delegated to the Director of Commercial and Operational Services in consultation with the Chair of Prosperous Communities and the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
 3. Oversight of the work of the Member Flooding and Drainage Working Group and Officer Flooding and Drainage Working Party to be delegated to Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Prosperous Communities Committee will remain the parent Committee and will be responsible for any decisions recommended by Overview and Scrutiny Committee, approval of changes to Terms of Reference and membership of the Member Working Group.
 4. That Members approve Terms of Reference for both forums.
- 1.2 The purpose of these resolutions is to co-ordinate the work being undertaken in various areas of the Council by both officers and Members into synergised forums.
- 1.3 It is envisaged that this approach will enable officers and Members to be better informed when representing the Council on various flood and drainage boards.
- 1.4 It is also proposed this new approach will enable the Council to forge closer relationships with, and hence influence, other Flood Risk Management Authorities.

2. Officer and Member Working Groups

- 2.1 An Officer Working Party has been established, it ensures the Council is fulfilling its statutory responsibilities regarding its role as a Flood Risk Management Authority. Under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) the Council has a duty to fulfil a Warn and Informing role, arrange rest centres for displaced residents and provide temporary accommodation if required. The Party considers these responsibilities and receives updates from work areas related to flooding including Development Management, Enforcement, Operational Services and its link to the Environment Plan. The Party consists of the following officers;
- Director of Commercial and Operational Services (Chair and Lead on Emergency Planning)

- Director of Planning, Regeneration and Communities (Representative of vulnerable communities)
- Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager (Vice-Chair and Enforcement Lead)
- Development Management Team Manager (Planning Lead)
- Communications Manager (Comms Lead)
- Head of Policy and Strategy (Input from Central Lincs Local Plan and Humber 2100 Strategy work)
- Policy and Strategy Officer (Input from the Environment Plan)
- Street Cleansing and Markets Team Manager (Operational issues)

2.2 A Member Working Group has also been established, it receives oversight of the Officer Working Party and considers reports from Members who sit on Water Management and Internal Drainage Boards. Visting Members are permitted to attend and raise particular flooding issues in their wards at the discretion of the Chair. It consists of the following;

- Cllr Howitt-Cowan as Chair (Chair of O+S)
- Cllr Fleetwood as Vice Chair (Lincolnshire Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee + Scunthorpe and Gainsborough Water Level Management Board + Witham Third IDB)
- Cllr Rollings (Lincolnshire Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee, Scunthorpe and Gainsborough Water Level Management Board, Humber 2100 Elected Member Forum)
- Cllr Morris (Upper Witham IDB and Witham Third IDB)
- Cllr Barratt (Witham Third IDB)
- Cllr Bunney (Ancholme IDB)
- Ady Selby and Andy Gray (as Chair and Vice Chair of the Officer Group)

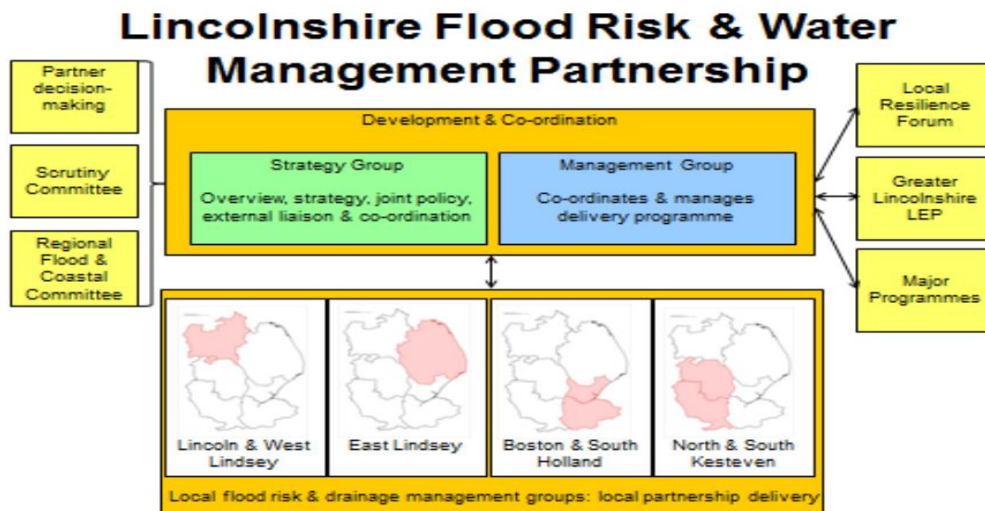
2.4 Both groups have reviewed Terms of Reference and these will go on to Prosperous Communities Committee for approval.

2.5 The Member Group did not meet between March and October due to elections and numerous training and induction sessions for new and existing Members. The first meeting, including refreshed Member representation, did take place on October 31. The Officer Group ToR specifies it should meet after the Member Group, therefore it has not met again to date.

3. Boards and other Flood and Drainage Forums

3.1 Members and Officers continue to represent the Council in various forums as part of Lincolnshire's Flood Risk and Water Management Partnership as demonstrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Management Partnership



3.2 Members also represent the Council on relevant Internal Drainage Boards.

4. Update on Flood and Drainage work

4.1 The Director of Commercial and Operational Services meets with the Lead Local Flood Authority and LCC Highways representatives on a six weekly basis to review the current situation regarding those properties which have suffered internal flooding or had a near miss.

4.2 At the current time there are;

- 21 properties or areas of concern where work is ongoing with partners to minimise future risk, this is an increase of five since the last report.
- 10 completed Section 19 investigations with actions for the Risk Management Authorities, this is an increase of four since the last report.
- 16 closed items where either partners have worked to find a resolution or no further progress is possible. This is an increase of three since the last report.

4.3 The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan which considers flood and drainage risks was formally approved in April 2023.

4.4 Officers have completed work with the Environment Agency and other partners on collating base data which will be used for scenario planning for the Humber 2100 Strategy. The Humber 2100 Strategy Programme Board has now 'endorsed' this first part of a long programme of works considering mitigations on and around the Humber which could mitigate long term flood risk resulting from sea level rises. Representatives from the Environment Agency presented the latest position on the Strategy at a Member workshop in early October and a report will be presented to Prosperous Communities Committee in December.

4.5 From an operational perspective, Storm Babet hit the region on October 20th and caused considerable impacts across Lincolnshire. A Lincolnshire Resilience Forum (LRF) multi-agency response was initiated with

numerous Strategic (SCG) and Tactical (TCG) Coordination Group meetings taking place over the following ten days. At one point, a major incident was declared at Fiskerton, with around 100 properties being evacuated from the village and nearby Short Ferry Caravan Park. The Council supported residents by initially establishing a rest centre and consequently arranging hotel accommodation for those that needed it. An Information Centre was also established at Fiskerton Village Hall which was operated by multi-agency partners. Whilst a risk around the stability of the River Witham bank still remains, mitigating actions have been taken which has allowed residents to return to their homes.

Flooding also occurred in other parts of the District and the Council supported community responses in Middle and Market Rasen, Scotter and Langworth amongst others. Further support is being offered to vulnerable residents and those who may not have had active insurance in place.

The Government has announced a package of financial support for residents and businesses impacted by Storm Babet. At the time of writing, it is not clear which organisation will manage the distribution of this funding, however the Council does have experience in this area having managed a similar scheme following flooding in 2019.

- 4.6 One longstanding issue is the lack of sign off of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Lincolnshire Districts and the Lead Local Flood Authority regarding the immediate operational support offered to residents in the event of low-level flooding incidents. Officers continue to work with the LRF to deliver a final document which could be signed off by all partners.

5. Summary

- 5.1 The Officer and Member Working Groups were established in order to improve communication across previously isolated work areas. To date, this is starting to be achieved with strong links being forged between strategic and operational functions.
- 5.2 Stronger links are being established with other Flood Risk Management Authorities, increasing Member and Officer knowledge of the current situation and future risks will help Council representatives influence these partners.
- 5.3 A further report is due to be presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2024.

