



**Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

Tuesday 15th April 2025

Subject: Flood Working Group Update

Report by:

Chief Executive

Contact Officer:

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Purpose / Summary:

To provide committee with an update on the work undertaken by the flood working group.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

Committee are asked to:

- a) Note the report
- b) Request that a further update is brought to overview and scrutiny committee in 24 months' time, around April 2027.

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.

The district council are defined by Section 6 (13) of the Flood and Water Management Act 2024 as a “flood risk management authority”. Along with the districts, the following are also flood risk management authorities; the Environment Agency; Anglian Water and Internal Drainage Boards.

Lincolnshire County Council are the lead local flood authority.

Non- statutory guidance also provides that district councils; manage flood risk from ordinary watercourses and operate and maintain existing sea defences and carry out other work to manage flood risk from the sea (with the consent of the Environment Agency). West Lindsey does not have a sea boundary, but other districts in Lincolnshire do and there may be asked to assist from a mutual aid perspective.

Financial :

There are no financial implications as a result of this report. No fin ref needed as it is an O & S report.

Staffing :

The work undertaken on flooding and flood related issues is largely delivered as an additional duty or an add on to existing officers roles. This matter is referred to within the report.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

The work undertaken via the flood group is believed to be providing a positive impact for the Council’s communities and the groups within it.

Data Protection Implications :

None noted.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

Flooding and its impacts are intrinsically linked to climate change and the risks that this presents to our residents and the Council.

The working group and associated work, along with the links to key partners and projects helps to ensure that the Council is proactively seeking to address and respond to the issues that flooding presents.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

None noted.

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 :

Overview and Scrutiny Committee report, Tuesday 7th November 2023

<https://democracy.west-lindsey.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=386&MId=3489&Ver=4>

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. In 2022, Prosperous Communities Committee approved the creation of a officer flooding and drainage working party; a member flood and drainage working group; and that oversight of this group be delegated to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

1.2. This report provides Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the progress made by both the officer and member working groups and sets out some of the key issues that the groups are seeking to address on behalf of West Lindsey.

2. Officer and Member Working Groups

2.1. The member working group is made up of the following members.

- Councillor Paul Howitt – Cowan (Chairman)
- Councillor Ian Fleetwood
- Councillor Peter Morris
- Councillor Mrs Lesley Rollings
- Councillor John Barrett
- Councillor Stephen Bunney

2.2. The officer working group is made up of the following members

- Chief Executive (Chair)
- Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager (Vice Chair and enforcement lead)
- Director – Planning, Regeneration and Communities
- Communications Manager
- Development Management Team Leader (Planning lead)
- Head of Policy and Strategy
- Street Cleansing and Markets Team Manager
- Enterprising Communities Manager
- Policy and Strategy Officer – Climate and Sustainable Environment

2.3. Both groups meet on a quarterly basis and have an approved terms of reference. Democratic services support the group through agenda creation and minute taking. The Officer group usually meets after the member group to review actions from the member meeting and to plan for the agenda for the next meeting.

2.4. The agendas for the meeting contain standing items, as well as one off matters that need consideration. The standing agenda is usually as follows;

- Update on recent flood incidents
- Humber 2100 Strategy Update
- Fen 2100 Project
- LRF Resilient Communities Programme
- Update from Meetings with the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)
- Update from Officer Working Group
- Member Updates

2.5. The original lead officer for the working group was the Director – Commercial and Operational Services. This officer left the Council in the Autumn of 2024 and since their departure interim arrangements have been in place to ensure that the working of both the officer and member working groups can continue.

3. Flooding Incidents

3.1. Since the inception of the working group there have been three major flooding incidents that have impacted upon West Lindsey.

- Storm Babet (October 2023)
- Storm Henk (January 2024)
- 6th January 2025 (no storm was named during this incident)

**There have also been a number of minor surface water flooding issues, which generally occur during periods of isolated heavy rainfall.*

3.2. The impact of these incidents was varied in terms of the number of properties and persons affected, however during all of the incident's homes were flooded internally within the district.

3.3. The Council, as a partner within the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum (LRF) responded to these incidents and provided support to residents and businesses. This support came as part of the operational response, but also as part of the operational recovery.

3.4. Where a property is internally flooded the County Council (as the LLFA) carry out a section 19 report to look at the incident and consider any ways in which the situation can be improved in the future.

3.5. Community meetings have also been attended by the Council, with partners, in areas where flooding has occurred.

4. Boards and Other Flood and Drainage Forums

4.1. A variety of elected Members attend internal drainage board meetings that fall within their ward area. There are also members of the Council's working group who are members of the County Council's Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee.

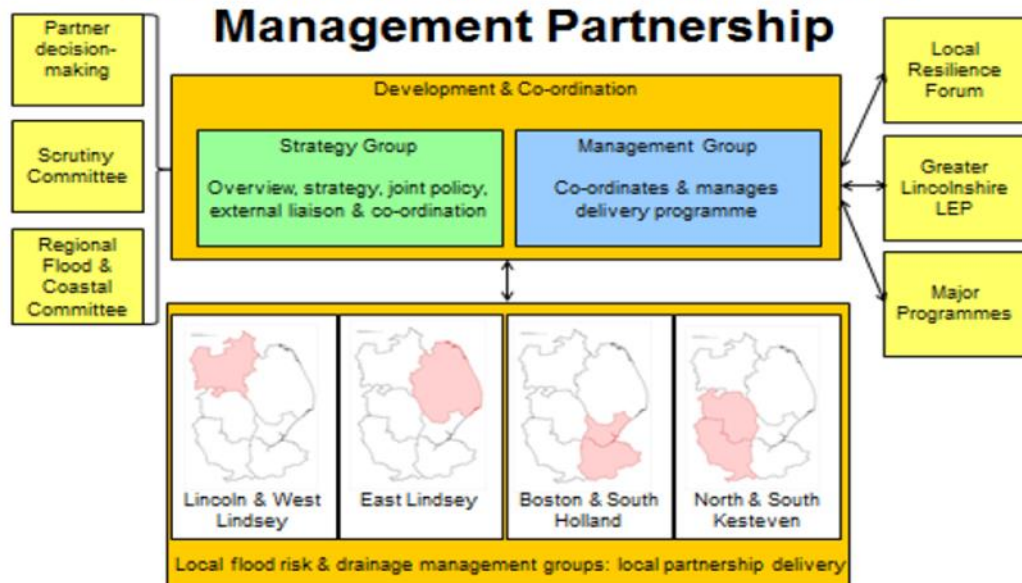
4.2. The working groups ensure that information discussed within the local flood and drainage meetings and forums is fed back and understood.

4.3. Officers also engage within the structure shown below, which makes up the Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Management Partnership

Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Management Partnership

Governance and Functions April 2018

Lincolnshire Flood Risk & Water Management Partnership



4.4. Councillors also engage in the work that relates to the Humber 2100 Strategy (see section 5).

5. Humber 2100

5.1. This is a partnership consisting of 11 local authorities from around the Humber and the Environment Agency looking at how flood risk is managed in the Humber over the long term. The work is seeking to develop a new adaptive strategy to manage tidal flood risk and increase resilience the next 100 years.

5.2. A report on this matter was determined by the Councils Prosperous Communities Committee in March 2025 and sought agreement for the Council to engage in the next phase of work and support the preferred approaches to flood management.

6. Update on Flood and Drainage Work

6.1. Officers of the working group meet on a six-weekly basis with colleagues from the LFA to review the current situation regarding active flooding issues where properties have been flooded or flooding has caused concerns.

6.2. The Section 19 investigations carried out within the district can be found here <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/flood-risk-management/flood-investigations>

6.3. Since October 2023 (Storm Babet) there have been 35 investigations have been completed and 11 investigations are ongoing. The 11 ongoing investigations all relate to the January 2025 incident.

6.4. 20 other flooding matters have been closed where partners have worked to find a resolution.

6.5. Locally, a number of planning and enforcement issues relating to drainage and flooding have been considered and discussed within the group. Whilst the group does not determine the outcome for any specific enforcement or planning decisions, it has been able to look at opportunities where it can lobby certain agencies or bodies to act on specific issues to seek a resolution.

7. Resilient Communities

7.1. The work undertaken within the group and with the LRF is working towards a programme to make our communities more resilient when faced with major incidents such as flooding. Officers from the Council are working with the LRF and with a number of our Parish Councils to support them to introduce their own initial responses to emergencies to assist in the respond to incidents such as flooding. This work is initially being focussed on the communities that have been impacted by major incidents in the last few years.

7.2. The LRF are in the process of appointing a community resilience officer on a two year fixed term contract to accelerate and support some of this work and this post has been funded by the LLFA. A number of communities in West Lindsey will benefit from this work.

7.3. As part of this work the working group commissioned and delivered a flooding leaflet to all West Lindsey residents which is shown in appendix 1. This leaflet was aimed at informing residents on what to do if they are faced with a potential flooding issue or a flood itself. The feedback on this has been that the leaflet was well received, and it appears to have had an immediate impact in the January 2025 incident. Most phone calls during this incident went directly to the County Council flood line, which is the appropriate number.

8. Summary

8.1. It is believed that the member and officer working groups continue to add value to the Council regarding its role on flooding. There is good engagement across all of the relevant partnerships and governance groups/

8.2. Both the member and officer groups are scheduled to continue to meet during the remainder of 2025 and beyond. The key matters that the group will seek to address are as follows:

- Ensuring that officer roles and responsibilities in regards to flooding and the flood working groups are agreed as part of the broader management structure.
- Review the effectiveness of the flood leaflet distributed and consider whether the activity needs to recur again at the end of 2025.
- Continue to deliver the resilient communities programme in partnership with the LRF.
- Respond accordingly and report back on any flooding incidents that occur.
- Continue to engage in and influence groups attended by Councillors such as the Internal Drainage Boards and the Humber 2100.

END

