

Scrutiny Inquiry Progress Update on Recommendations
Interim Progress Report (6 months on)

Select Committee Inquiry Report Completion Date: 7th December 2015

Date of this update: 12th July 2016

Lead Officer responsible for this response: Karen Fisher, Strategic Flood Management Team Leader

Cabinet Member that has signed-off this update: Warren Whyte, Cabinet Member for Planning & Environment

Accepted Recommendations	Original Response and Actions	Progress Update	Committee Assessment of Progress (RAG status)
<p>1. We recommend that the County Council should take the lead in working with other Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) to implement a system for sharing local intelligence before and during a flood event to ensure a prompt and co-ordinated response.</p>	<p>Agreed. The County Council will take a tactical lead with Category 1 responders in responding to flooding. The County Council already works in partnership with other risk management authorities and will continue to do so. The legislative and partnership responsibilities in regard to flooding are complex. BCC will work to ensure the sharing of intelligence in relation to all flooding events. In some operational circumstances it will be appropriate for other agencies such as the Emergency Services to take the lead. One of the principles of responding is that where an operational response is needed quickly then the respondent first on the flooding scene – emergency services or district councils will lead. We would not wish to slow down an operational response and in these cases the emergency services would co-ordinate and set up an incident control point. There are different categories used to assess the type of response required to flooding depending on severity and scale. 'Tactical C4' is the type of</p>	<p>As stated the Council already works with professional partners in accordance with the principles of Integrated Emergency Management, the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme and in accordance with statutory guidance in relation to the Civil Contingencies Act, all of which cover the process of emergency response and specifically all elements of command, control, coordination and communication.</p> <p>The specific requirement for BCC to lead the tactical response during certain emergencies was raised with professional partners – including the Emergency Services and District Councils - at the Buckinghamshire Resilience Group and although there may be the need for the County Council to lead at times, to prescribe that this <u>must</u> be the case removes the opportunity for flexibility. The partners unanimously agreed that the Community was better served with a more flexible and adaptable approach based on the specific</p>	

	<p>response category where there are potentially a number of scenes that need an oversight, resourcing and coordination to deliver at the operational level. Tactical is where the County Council has a role and potentially there is a gap.</p>	<p>emergency situation - an approach which is consistent with the national modus operandi. That said, the need to consider the Council's lead role in an emergency at the tactical level, has been included as an action in the County's Emergency Plan and the tactical multi-agency flood plan.</p>	
<p>2. We recommend that the County Council should lead on the development of a clear policy for the County as a whole, to ensure the supply and distribution of sandbags during a flood event.</p>	<p>Agreed. We agree that there is an important role for using sandbags in the event of flooding and that a key part of our role is supporting effective communications and co-ordination to ensure that residents can have access to sandbags or other appropriate flooding prevention measures. Buckinghamshire County Council recognises the need for provision of sandbags to reach those in need who had no previous awareness of flooding and when they are in imminent danger situations. The Council has no statutory responsibility to provide and pay for sandbags but recognises that there needs to be a clear position on sandbags for the public. Discussions are continuing between the County and District Councils and Transport For Buckinghamshire as to who holds resources, and supplies sandbags and ensuring that there is an operational procedure for storage and provision. The County Council encourages people to be prepared for flooding and be aware and more self-reliant if they live in a flood risk area. We will continue to promote awareness of what to do in the event of flooding, and how residents can get sandbags via different means including via the LAFs. BCC needs to reinforce this message through the website and Local Area Forums. The Council takes a strategic approach to flood management and as such is developing a local</p>	<p>There is a general agreement between all District Councils, bar Aylesbury Vale, that they will support the Community in the event of requests for sandbags. Where necessary and when requested, the County Council will support the District Councils.</p> <p>In the event of a multi-agency emergency response then coordination will take place at the appropriate levels – operational and tactical. This agreement has been confirmed in the multi-agency tactical flood plan.</p> <p>Aylesbury Vale DC have been trying to set up a specific mutual aid agreement with TfB / Bucks CC, requesting TfB to deliver sandbags in situations where, in other Districts, the District would deliver (i.e. responding to individual requests for support). TfB are currently considering how this will be implemented and anticipate a system to be in place in time for the winter.</p>	

	<p>flood risk management strategy. This will reinforce the need for good operational procedures on sandbag distribution but as part of a much wider strategy on responding to flooding.</p>		
<p>3. We recommend that all County Councillors should be aware of the County Emergency Plan and should attend Emergency Planning training to assist them in building community resilience in their own divisions.</p>	<p>Agreed. All Councillors should consider it a requirement to understand how the Council responds to emergencies. There is a training programme on the learning hub with dates of such training and bespoke sessions are always available to be arranged. Training and an exercise was offered following the 2014 flooding for those Councillors (approx. 30) with significant stretches of water / potential flooding – again about 6 attended. Further training will be offered to Members in 2016 via face-to-face training and online information.</p>	<p>The Emergency Plan and Resilience Guidance documents are on the Resilience Team pages of the Intranet and available to all Members.</p> <p>‘Introduction to the Emergency Plan’ training takes place approximately every month and is available to all Members via the Learning Hub.</p> <p>The Community Safety & Resilience Team have approached Members Services to organise another training session specifically for Members.</p>	
<p>4. In view of the County Council’s current financial situation, we recommend that Cabinet consider delivering this aim of building community resilience by empowering existing staff who already have established community links, such as the Community Link Officers or Locality Managers, with technical support provided by the Strategic Flood Risk Management and Resilience teams.</p>	<p>Agreed. This will be carried out subject to what can be achieved within existing staffing resources. The Strategic Flood Management Team are working closely with the localities team to promote awareness in those communities at the highest risk of flooding. Flood action plans will be developed through this work but it is very resource intensive so can only do a small number at any one time and will focus on those communities which are most at risk.</p>	<p>The Strategic Flood Management team has been involved in a number of locations to encourage community resilience. This includes: Willows, Aylesbury; Willowbank, New Denham and Buckingham where discussions with residents around community resilience have been in co-operation with the Environment Agency. This is a time consuming exercise and the current resources of the Strategic Flood Management team do not routinely stretch to being able to undertake these activities on a routine basis, so it will continue on an ad hoc basis where the need arises and based on a risk assessment of the flooding.</p> <p>Money secured for a project to look at a number of small communities, where flooding is an issue, allowed the Strategic Flood Management Team</p>	

		<p>the opportunity to engage the help of the Community Liaison team within BCC and pay for their help in setting up engagement with communities through the Parish Council. This was undertaken in Chesham, Monks Risborough, Saunderton, Hughenden Valley and Bishopstone. Having this dedicated resource to call on has helped with initial engagement and smoothed that process, but the current success rate of getting communities to develop their own Flood Resilience plans has not been good. Efforts will continue but a lack of resources for doing this work may hamper the effectiveness.</p>	
<p>5. We recommend that the County Council should instigate a proactive Communications and Media campaign to promote the development of Community Emergency Plans.</p>	<p>Agreed. The strategic flood management team are already working with the localities teams to promote community resilience, including flood planning, with those communities at the highest risk of flooding. In principle, this recommendation is fully supported and will be carried out within existing resources. There are approximately 250 parish & town councils and as such to ensure value for money the Council will utilize promoting online toolkits. The details of the communications campaign will be discussed and taken forward in conjunction with advice from the HQ Customer & Communities Team.</p>	<p>Opportunities for promotion of flood risk, and associated issues, have been undertaken at Willows, Chesham, Aston Clinton, Leckhamstead, Buckingham LAF. A pro-active communication campaign would need to be instigated more widely to be effective and would need more resource than is currently available within the Strategic Flood Management and Resilience teams. It would be useful to make use of the Communications and Media team to promote this type of campaign.</p>	
<p>6. We recommend that the Local Area Forums (LAFs) be used to highlight flood risks, raise public awareness of who to contact in a flood event and most importantly, to encourage riparian owners to take their maintenance duties</p>	<p>Agreed. This will be taken forward with all LAFs held in the Spring.</p>	<p>This has been done at Buckingham LAF to raise public awareness around flooding in Buckingham and Leckhamstead. The Strategic Flood Management team would need the input/help from the Community Liaison team to take this forward with the LAFs. Parishes have been contacted to publicise the consultation period for the Local Flood</p>	

<p>seriously. (To support this aim, the Strategic Flood Management team can produce flood risk maps for communities at high risk and would work in partnership with the local communities to identify land owners.)</p>		<p>Management Strategy. The Strategic Flood Management team respond to opportunities which present themselves, with landowners, to encourage them in taking responsibilities seriously. A leaflet to support this activity, explaining responsibilities has been produced by the Strategic Flood Management team.</p>	
<p>7. We recommend that in addition to the detailed Section 19 Flood Investigation reports which the Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority are required to produce, the Strategic Flood Management Team should maintain an incident log to encompass all flood events.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Strategic Flood Management team already keep a log of any incidents of flooding and investigations that we undertake. The numbers of investigations, both statutory and non, and how quickly they are responded to, are recorded in the Information and Intelligence Pack on a monthly basis. Map of flood incidents and flood risk areas is available through SFRM team</p>	<p>Log of Flood incidents is kept on a spreadsheet and reported on to the Senior Management team through the Information and Intelligence Pack. These incidents of flooding are also placed onto a GIS layer for access by other internal users.</p> <p>The flooding in March 2016 in and around Buckingham have triggered an official Section 19 Flood Investigation report for Buckingham and Leckhamstead.</p> <p>Very heavy rain in June 2016 caused flooding of over 20 properties in Amersham and an official Section 19 Flood Investigation will be undertaken.</p>	

RAG Status Guidance (For the Select Committee's Assessment)

	<p><i>Recommendation implemented to the satisfaction of the committee.</i></p>		<p><i>Committee have concerns the recommendation may not be fully delivered to its satisfaction</i></p>
	<p><i>Recommendation on track to be completed to the satisfaction of the committee.</i></p>		<p><i>Committee consider the recommendation to have not been delivered/implemented</i></p>