



Committee report

Committee	CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date	9 MAY 2023
Title	FLOOD RISK MANGEMENT
Report of	SCRUTINY OFFICER

PURPOSE

1. The committee last formally looked at flooding in September 2021 when representatives from Southern Water attended a meeting to discuss the roles and responsibilities of Southern Water in dealing with flooding.

BACKGROUND

2. The Isle of Wight Local Flood Risk Management Strategy was implemented in 2016. The strategy stated that it would be subject to a five yearly review process, including full public involvement, to ensure it is kept up-to-date; takes account of objectives achieved, and continues to maintain a focused forward programme at strategic and operational levels across all risk management authorities on the Island. This was programmed for review by 31 July 2021; however, an updated strategy has not been developed. This was due to a lack of resources available to undertake this work at that time.
3. Flash floods in July and August 2021 led to blocked roads and submerged properties after the Island was hit by spells of torrential rain. The IWC undertook three investigations into the flooding that took place at Bembridge, Binstead and Monktonmead, the reports following on from the investigations were [published](#) in June 2022.
4. The chairman agreed that an informal briefing should be arranged to enable key issues to be discussed before considering what further actions required the attention of the committee. The basis of the informal briefing was as follows:
 - When is the Isle of Wight Local Flood Risk Management Strategy going to be reviewed and updated?
 - Has the council considered all the recommendations from the reports, taking into account how many can be delivered and in what timescales given the resource and cost implications?
 - How are the Isle of Wight Council, Southern Water, Island Roads, and the Environment Agency working together to prevent future flooding on the Isle of Wight?

FINDINGS

5. Cllrs Quirk, Spink and Lever attended an informal briefing on Wednesday, 22 March 2023 and received a presentation from James Brewer from Planning and Keith Herbert from Southern Water. This addressed the three questions highlighted by the committee:
 - The Flood Risk Management Strategy was in the process of being reviewed and was due to go out to consultation in the next couple of months.
 - Section 19 investigation follow work was taking place with regards to Binstead, Monktonmead and Bembridge.
 - The IWC as the Lead Local Flood Authority were working closely with a number of other 'risk management' authorities including:
 - **Environment Agency** (main rivers, coastal defences)
 - **Southern Water** (storm overflows, combined sewer system, WwTWs)
 - **Island Roads / Highway Authority** (road gullies, highway drainage)
 - **Landowners across the island** (watercourse management)
6. Southern Water provided information on the Pathfinder Project, the key message was highlighted on slowing or reducing the flow of surface water during a storm – with plans for water butts at every property, planters, installing soakaways, roadside swales, rain gardens in schools etc.
7. The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 places a requirement on all new builds to have sustainable drainage from 2024 onwards. The Government are planning on carrying out a public consultation later this year on how this requirement will be implemented in practice. One way of doing this whilst waiting for the Island Planning Strategy to be completed could be a Supplementary Planning Document, but the council will need to see what Government put out in the first instance following the consultation.

Arising from the informal briefing it is recommended that:

8. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Enforcement ensures that:
 - Once Government have released consultation information a Design Code should be created and put forward as soon as possible as a Supplementary Planning Document to include sustainable drainage requirements for all new builds whilst the Island Planning Strategy continues to be discussed.
 - Local Flood Groups be created as part of place plans.
9. The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment, Heritage, Human Resources and Legal and Democratic Services ensures that:
 - a greater level of communication is put out to the public about what they can do to help slow and reduce the flow of storm waters.

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