



**ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE - 14 JANUARY 2021**

**FINAL REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL ON FLOODING  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Purpose of the Report

1. The appended report sets out the conclusions and recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Review Panel on Flooding.

Scope of the review

2. The Environment and Transport Scrutiny Committee requested that a Scrutiny Review Panel be set up on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020 following significant flooding in October and November 2019. The purpose of the panel was to consider the role of the council as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and its links with other risk management authorities (RMA).
3. While the Council has a good relationship with partners involved in responding to flooding, there was an interest amongst Members regarding accountability, engagement and the effectiveness of existing structures and how the LLFA co-ordinates and effects action from those partners. The lack of influence the County Council has as LLFA over recommendations arising from its Section-19 Investigations and its influence with other RMAs was identified as a specific area of concern.

Report Recommendations

4. The recommendations of the Panel are located within the body of the appended report. For ease of reference, they are also set out below:
  - a) **The Panel supports a refresh of the Flood Risk Management Strategy in September 2021 and asks that the comments and recommendations of the Panel are taken on board.**
  - b) **That communication of the County Council's role and responsibilities as the LLFA be reviewed to clarify that whilst it does have limited powers under the Land Drainage Act 1991 it does not have powers to force other authorities to carry out works to help alleviate flooding issues. It is therefore limited in its ability to implement solutions to flood issues or enforce other agencies and riparian owners to undertake works, even when identified as being necessary following a Section 19 investigation.**

**This is important to help residents understand the Council's position and manage expectations.**

- c) That a protocol be created and set out on any agenda for public meetings created following flooding events that clarifies the role of all that attend and how it would be conducted.**
- d) That refreshed information be provided to riparian owners on their responsibilities generally, following a Section 19 investigation, and where to seek further advice when they are required to undertake work.**
- e) That the County Council continue to closely engage with communities and residents as part of Section 19 investigations in setting realistic timescales and expectations.**
- f) The Panel supports ongoing work to continue to recruit to the Flood Risk Management Team to ensure the County Council meets its statutory duties and continues to respond to and provide support to residents affected by flooding without the need to rely on consultants which often prove more costly.**
- g) That the County Council continue to assist LPA's and respond to planning applications that present flooding concerns including for smaller applications where there was no statutory requirement, if resource allowed.**
- h) That the Council continue to develop a comprehensive asset map to record assets and maintenance records.**
- i) That the use of the 'Report It' website continued to be promoted widely.**
- j) That as part of the upcoming review of the asset classification review of the Gully Emptying Contract in February 2021 include an examination of the backlog of gully and drainage defects and general customer enquiries and whether it was cost effective in reducing outstanding queries.**
- k) That the good partnership work undertaken is noted and welcomed and that it is further explored how good practice can be evidenced and shared across organisations.**
- l) That the Terms of Reference of the Flood Risk Management Board be revised for the next Board Meeting (expected April 2021) taking into account the views and recommendations put forward by the Panel.**
- m) That lessons be learnt from the successful completion of the Lubbethorpe Brook, property level protection for Sharnford, and Cossington Sluices schemes.**

- n) That the County Council work with the Environment Agency to encourage contributions to flood risk schemes from private landowners and local businesses.**
- o) That as part of the County Council's Flood Information it advertises the Environment Agency's Flood Incident Hotline and its Flood Warning Alert System**
- p) That the County Council work with the Local Resilience Forum to ensure that communities and residents be made aware of actions that they can take to mitigate the potential impact of flooding and increase their resilience.**
- q) That communication messages are refreshed to ensure:
  - those 'at risk' are signposted to the appropriate agencies.
  - Residents understand what to do before, during and following a flood.
  - Advice is provided regarding dealing with insurance claims and signposts to Flood Re and other useful organisations.**
- r) That all residents are encouraged to sign up for the Environment Agency's flood alert system.**
- s) That new communication messages are created to address those who have never experienced a flooding event to highlight the risks in light of the increasing risk of climate change.**
- t) That appropriate methods of communication are considered and utilised to disseminate such messages such as, but not limited to leaflets, Leicestershire Matters, Twitter and Parish communications.**
- u) That alternatives to sandbags, such as door board gates, one-way toilet flows and other types of property level protection are promoted to residents to look at simple cost effective ways of reducing their own flood risk.**
- v) That the LRF and the County Council communicate to parishes and local communities the need to create community flood plans and provide them with information to enable them to play a role in providing advice to residents to better help prepare for flooding incidents.**
- w) That fresh publicity is given to the importance of the role of Flood Warden to promote uptake in areas without them, which the Flood Risk Management Board will oversee.**
- x) That this report is circulated to all members of the County Council and that their role as Community Champions to promote such recommendations within their communities is highlighted.**

- y) That the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as Flood Risk Management Committee, receive an annual report providing an update on progress made and work undertaken towards approved recommendations.**

#### Recommendation

5. The Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to support the findings of the Panel and refer the recommended actions to the Cabinet for its consideration.

#### Appendix

Final Report of the Scrutiny Review Panel on Flooding

#### Resource Implications

6. The level of demand and therefore the work generated within the Council's Flood Risk Management Team is increasing and this pattern is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. If not carefully managed this will continue to put pressure on existing resources within the Department. In light of this the Panel's recommendations may need to be prioritised if they cannot all be implemented within existing budgetary provisions. External growth bids will be made where possible to support these improvements and the Department will continue to bid with partners for funding for appropriate flood management schemes that will best support communities affected or likely to be affected by flooding.

#### Circulation under the Local Issues Alerts Procedure

7. None.

#### Background Papers

8. File containing the reports submitted to the Scrutiny Review Panel on Flooding.