
To: ENVIRONMENT POLICY BOARD

On: 16 MARCH 2016

Report by: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES

**Heading: STRATEGIC OVERVIEW OF FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES
IN RENFREWSHIRE**

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on strategic flood risk management and is presented against the backdrop of recent significant flooding in many parts of the UK. Whilst flooding events in Renfrewshire have been comparatively localised, the situation nationally has emphasised the importance of assessing the impact of more severe weather and putting in place mitigation strategies.
- 1.2 There are two aspects to the management of flooding across Renfrewshire and the development of long term sustainable solutions. At a strategic level, Renfrewshire is a partner in the Clyde and Loch Lomond Flood Risk Management Area. This partnership involves 10 Councils working together and in partnership with SEPA and Scottish Water. It is governed by a Joint Committee. Potentially Vulnerable Areas (areas potentially at risk from flooding) have been identified across the 10 Councils and a Local Flood Risk Management Plan will be published in June 2016. This plan will set out how flood risk will be tackled along with the priority ranking order in which solutions will be actioned. In Renfrewshire's case, all of the actions are in respect of the progression of studies rather than physical schemes.
- 1.3 It is anticipated that the studies will, in turn, identify solutions to flood risk, potentially involving some engineering works, sustainable land management

strategies and local property protection. It is significant to note in this respect that the Renfrew Flood Scheme, which is a traditional flood prevention capital project of national scale, is nearly complete and already operational.

- 1.4 The Council also responds at an operational level through maintaining existing flood defences and culvert trash screens which are inspected and cleaned when flood warnings are received. The Council assists property owners through sand bagging, pumping water and clearing gullies where this is possible.
- 1.5 In the recent heavy rainfall events Renfrewshire has recorded only three instances of internal property flooding (namely at Brierie-Hill Rd, Crosslee and Darvel Crescent, Paisley).
- 1.6 A number of other locations have flooded only to the extent that land and roads have been affected. It is significant that flooding that is occurring routinely is correlating with the areas of flood risk identified through study.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Environment Policy Board:-

- 2.1 Notes the work ongoing within the Clyde and Loch Lomond Flood Risk Management Area Joint Committee and the proposed publishing of a Flood Risk Management Plan for the Area in June this year; and
- 2.2 Approves a contribution of £125k towards a £600k study being led by Scottish Water into the Erskine catchment area.

3 Strategic Context

- 3.1 In 2009, the Flood Risk Management Act was commenced in Scotland and set a strategic context for flood risk evaluation and management amongst Scottish Local Authorities, SEPA and Scottish Water. Significantly it required SEPA, Scottish Water and Local Authorities to work in partnership and each party's duties and responsibilities are covered in the Act.
- 3.2 In consequence of the Act and as reported in previous reports, Renfrewshire Council is obliged to:

- Participate in the Clyde & Loch Lomond Flood Risk Management District to produce a Local Flood Risk Management Plan by June 2016 which assesses risk from flooding across the whole area, identifies primary locations for detailed investigation, reports on the investigations and presents proposals for mitigation;
- Create a schedule of water courses and inspect them on a cyclical basis;
- Record all flood events and hold them within a database;
- Record all existing flood defences and maintain an asset register.

3.3 The Clyde & Loch Lomond Flood Risk Management District has a governance structure which includes a joint committee of local Member representatives from the 10 Councils within the Flood Risk Management area. Reporting to the joint committee is an officer's working group which maintains close relationships with SEPA and Scottish Water.

3.4 Clyde and Loch Lomond (CaLL) Local Plan District (LPD) is one of the 14 created across Scotland. It extends from Loch Lomond in the north to Leadhills in the south, and includes part of the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.

3.5 This district has a total area of approximately 4,800 km² and a population of over 1.9 million people. There are many population centres within the district, some of the main centres are Airdrie/Coatbridge, Cambuslang, Milngavie, Cumbernauld, Dumbarton, East Kilbride, Greenock, Motherwell/Wishaw, Hamilton, Paisley, Rutherglen and Glasgow City.

3.6 Twenty potentially vulnerable areas (PVAs) have been identified in the CaLL LPD, as shown in Appendix A. These are locations where flood risk mapping identifies that there is flood risk from river overflow, tidal intrusion or overland water flow arising from heavy rainfall. These are priority areas where the risk and impacts of flooding are agreed to be nationally significant and where the focus of identifying new actions to manage risk will be greatest.

3.7 The PVAs across Scotland within each LPD were identified and consulted upon at a national level by SEPA in 2011.

3.8 In 2015, SEPA published Flood Risk Management Strategies for Scotland. These strategies set out a priority listing of locations where actions are required based on the impact of flooding on property, the environment, cultural heritage and infrastructure. Renfrewshire has several Potentially Vulnerable Areas, where actions in the form of studies are proposed around

Erskine, Inchinnan, Johnstone, Kilbarchan, Linwood, Paisley, Lochwinnoch and Renfrew.

- 3.9 Glasgow City Council as the lead Authority for the Clyde and Loch Lomond Local Plan District is now collating information from Renfrewshire and other local authorities to draft the Clyde and Loch Lomond Local Flood Risk Management Plan (a six year plan of prioritised actions from 2016 to 2021), due for publication in June 2016. The specific areas of flood risk in Renfrewshire and potential actions have been posted onto the Council's web site as part of wider awareness raising and informal consultation in advance of publication of the plan.
- 3.10 The actions attributed to Renfrewshire which will be incorporated in the Local Flood Risk Management Plan include the maintenance of existing flood protection measures, Flood Protection Studies, Natural Flood Management Studies and Surface Water Management Plans. Some of these studies may be combined together where it is shown that this approach would be more cost effective. Significantly, there are no new physical flood protection measures proposed within Renfrewshire at this time. Renfrewshire led in the field of flood risk studies in comparison with most other Councils due to the specific risk at Renfrew where overtopping by high tides occurred on a regular basis. Consequently the most significant flood prevention scheme which has been progressed in Renfrewshire between 2006 and now has been the delivery of the Renfrew Flood scheme at a total cost of approximately £10.5m. This scheme is substantially complete and is operational.
- 3.11 Through progression of the studies referred to above we would anticipate that specific flood risk alleviation measures will emerge. These will potentially involve local engineering measures such as increased size of water outfall pipes, land management of water catchment areas and/or property protection. There is no indication at this stage that a major capital project on the scale of the Renfrew Flood Scheme will emerge from studies. The Clyde and Loch Lomond Local Flood Risk Management Plan, when published, will set indicative timescales for progressing with the studies referred to above.
- 3.12 An 'early action' study proposed by Scottish Water involves hydraulic studies into the Erskine catchment area. This area includes locations such as Kilbarchan and parts of Johnstone where Scottish Water are aware that sewer capacity is restricted. In line with the requirements of the Flood Risk Management Act for cooperation, Scottish Water has requested a contribution of £125k from Renfrewshire to the overall estimated costs of £600k for this study. This study will inform the development of proposals to address sewer and storm water capacity, potentially addressing long standing flood risk issues across the area of study. In view of the potential benefits to the Council

which will be derived from a long term strategy for surface water management, It is recommended that Renfrewshire contribute to this study as requested.

4 Operational Context

- 4.1 The strategic approach referred to above has laid the foundations for future flood risk alleviation measures within a context which can be compared across the Clyde and Loch Lomond Flood Risk Management Area and indeed across Scotland, for the purpose of setting priorities for future funding. However, it is the case that localised flooding is occurring routinely. Significantly, localised flooding is conforming to the areas of risk identified through study to date. Our actions in response to localised flooding are at an operational level and include assisting property owners keep water from their premises where possible through deploying sand bags, clearing gullies, removing water with pumps etc. The Council also maintains existing flood defences and culvert trash screens which are inspected and cleaned in advance when flood warnings are received.
- 4.2 The Council will continue to offer support at an operational level so far as possible to assist householders and property owners. Advice can be give to home owners on preventative actions which can be taken where a flood risk exists.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – Funding to support the implementation of the Flood Risk Management Act will come from the general revenue budget. Funding to support the joint study with Scottish Water will come from the existing resources in 2016/17.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
3. **Community Planning**

Greener -.Actions resulting from the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 promote sustainable flood risk management which minimises the amount of impermeable areas for new build projects and considers Sustainable Urban Drainage Options to reduce existing flood risk. Such options include the creation of open green / blue spaces to improve

community amenity value of land and reduce flood risk whilst increasing the quality of urban runoff before entering watercourses.

Safer and Stronger – Actions resulting from the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 will ensure that the community and environment is safer, whilst ensuring business activity, transport infrastructure and utility service provision remains strong during and after potential flood events.

Traditionally, deprived areas are at greater flood risk. Actions required under the legislation take cognisance of social flood vulnerability and the resulting lower flood resilience with prioritisation of actions taking this into account, rather than simply based on the cost of flood management works versus the direct flood impact costs of building repair.

4. **Legal** – A Scheme of Delegated Powers has been arrived at to enable the delegation of statutory duties and is in place. Furthermore all council officers must, in exercising any functions so far as affecting the Clyde and Loch Lomond Local Plan District, have regard to the approved Clyde and Loch Lomond Local Flood Risk Management Plan.
5. **Property/Assets** – Flood maps produced through the legislation are used to ensure that there is no increase in the number of assets at risk of flooding, or indeed the extent or depth of existing asset flooding; through the development control process. Existing commercial and residential buildings are all separately assessed for flood risk from all sources through the legislation every 6 years, along with roads, railways, airports, agricultural land, environmentally sensitive sites, utility installations and cultural heritage sites. The most sustainable combination of actions to reduce flood risk to all such assets are then prioritised based on a plan led, catchment based approach. Housing and land management internal strategies, and any other related council plans must take into account the approved Local Flood Risk Management Plan for the area, as do the actions of all officers as detailed within the Legal Implications Section. The flood maps generated by the legislation are also useful for the Civil Contingencies Service to inform the Corporate Flood Response Plan in relation to emergency centre locations and access / egress thereof and to enable as robust as possible a response protocol based on available resources. The Scrutiny Board recommended such Actions, all of which are in place.
6. **Information Technology** – Information technology systems will be reviewed and updated during the term of the plan.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for

infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety** – Any new activities will be assessed in regard to potential need for new risk assessments and / or safe systems of work.
9. **Procurement** – Contracts associated with the implementation of the Flood Risk Management Act are tendered via CPU.
10. **Risk** – All actions to mitigate flood risk will have the effect of general risk reduction to the community, business's, people, the environment and cultural heritage.
11. **Privacy Impact** – None.

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List of Background Papers: None.

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Appendix A – Potentially Vulnerable Areas

