



**FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
9 SEPTEMBER 2019**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR P A SKINNER (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors C Matthews (Vice-Chairman), W J Aron, T R Ashton, M Brookes, A G Hagues, Mrs C J Lawton, C R Oxby, C E Reid, R A Renshaw and Mrs A M Newton

District Councillors R Austin BEM (Boston Borough Council), Mrs F M Martin MBE (East Lindsey District Council), Mrs L Hagues (North Kesteven District Council), M D Seymour (South Holland District Council) and I G Fleetwood (West Lindsey District Council)

External Agencies – Jonathan Glerum (Anglian Water), Peter Riley and Morgan Wray (Environment Agency)

Councillors Mrs W Bowkett, C J Davie, D McNally and Eddy Poll (Anglian North Regional Flood and Coastal Committee), attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Paul Brookes (Flood Risk Manager), Matthew Harrison (Senior Commissioning Officer - Flood Risk), David Hickman (Head of Environment), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer) and Emily Wilcox (Democratic Services Officer)

11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs A M Austin.

It was reported that, under the Local Government (Committee and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, Councillor Mrs A M Newton had been appointed as replacement member for Councillor Mrs A M Newton, for this meeting only.

12 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

13 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 28 MAY 2019

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 May 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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14 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS
AND LEAD OFFICERS

The Chairman extended the committee's thanks to everyone involved for their determined and dedicated actions as part of the multi-agency partnership response in Wainfleet, Holbeach and other areas that were subject to flooding in July.

The Chairman thanked those Members for attending the site visit to Wainfleet on the 03 September which allowed members to understand key aspects of the flooding in the Wainfleet area. Thanks were extended to David Sisson (Lindsey March Internal Drainage Board), David Mould (Anglian Water), Morgan Wray (Environment Agency) and David Hickman for their support throughout the visit.

15 INVESTIGATIONS UNDER SECTION 19 OF THE FLOOD & WATER
MANAGEMENT ACT 2010 (FWMA)

Consideration was given to a report by the Flood Risk Manager, which set invited the committee to consider and comment on the investigations undertaken in the County under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

It was reported that there had been 32 new flood investigations started in the first quarter of 2019/20 due to a heavy rainfall throughout June 2019.

Members were referred to Appendix A to the report which detailed the record of current flood investigations in the County carried out in accordance with section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act (2010).

The Flood Risk Manager extended his sympathies to those affected by the heavy rainfall and flooding incidents which took place in June 2019.

Members were advised that the council were being supported by Norfolk County Council who were undertaking the Wainfleet Flooding Investigation on Lincolnshire County Council's behalf, and were engaging closely to ensure a timely resolution to the investigation. The outcome of the investigation would be reported to the scrutiny committee in due course.

Officers continued to work with partners to conclude investigations as soon as possible.

It was suggested that officers work with and encourage partners to resolve some of the long-standing cases.

It was noted that the flood alleviation scheme that had been adopted in Horncastle had helped significantly in the period of heavy rainfall in June 2019 and saved many properties from being flooded.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

16 ENVIRONMENT AGENCY UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report by Peter Reilly (Environment Agency), which provided an update on Environment Agency activities, including progress on key capital schemes.

Members were informed that there were now at least 5000 properties that were already protected to the highest standard as part of the on-going works to the Boston Barrier Scheme.

In response to a question, Members were informed that the Boston Haven Banks scheme had been slightly delayed but the Environment Agency were working with key partners to ensure that work continued to progress.

Consideration was then given to a presentation by Morgan Wray (Environment Agency), which provided Members with an insight into the flooding incident at Wainfleet in June 2019.

It was noted that a medium flood risk had been forecast for the week of the event, however rainfall proved to be much more significant than had been expected.

Members were advised that 134mm of rain had fallen between the 10 June 2019 and the 12 June 2019, which was over twice the usual monthly average of rainfall. A breach in the southern bank of the Wainfleet Relief Channel had led to significant flooding in the area of Wainfleet and Thorpe St Peter.

Members were informed that once a full investigation of the incident had been completed, the Environment Agency and partner authorities would implement an action plan to make any necessary improvements going forward.

Officers thanked the Gold Command and the Fire and Rescue services for their amazing work during the incident.

Members were invited to ask questions, in which the following points were noted:

- It was noted that the Gibraltar Point sluice gates operated a normal tidal outfall which was restricted for certain times of the day when the tide was high. Any future works would take this into consideration.
- The Environment Agency were looking at the outfall of each sluice for the channels leading down to the sea in Wainfleet and the surrounding areas to see if there was any way to make minor changes to help that system flow altogether.
- The sluices continued to discharge at the same rate at all stages of the tide during the flood.
- The Environment Agency was currently carrying out a survey of channel and embankments to give a better understanding of silt in the water courses. The

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results would be communicated to the Wainfleet community once the survey had been completed.

- It was noted that silt was removed in areas where it was considered that silt removal had a beneficial outcome.
- It was agreed that Environment Agency Officers would investigate whether there was any spare capacity for flood alleviation and circulate this to Members.
- Members were advised that the likelihood of a breach was increased when flows exceeded the design capacity of the channel. Exceedence creates a greater risk of erosion and breach.
- Officers advised that the river banks were made up of a poor quality material from an engineering perspective, but there had been no particular weak spots which had caused the issue.
- The defences had performed up to the standard that they were designed to but once the banks had been exceeded this increased the risk of flooding.
- Members were advised that the Environment Agency were looking at solutions to reduce the risk of a future incident.

As the elected representative for the Wainfleet Division, Councillor Mrs Wendy Bowkett reiterated the level of ongoing work by partners to help the Wainfleet residents, both during the incident and with ongoing recovery work.

RESOLVED:

That the report and comments made be noted.

17 REVIEWING THE DRAFT LINCOLNSHIRE FLOOD RISK & WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Consideration was given to a report by Senior Commissioning Officer – Flood Risk, which invited the committee to review and comment on the draft Joint Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Management Strategy 2019-2050.

It was explained that flood risk remained a key driver to the strategy, particularly with the increasing risks arising from the impacts of climate change. Members were advised that it was also an opportunity to look at the broader water agenda that could help support economic growth, the environment, tourism and agri-food.

Members were advised that the draft strategy had been out to public consultation and the responses received had been taken into consideration in the amended strategy, as set out in Appendix A to the report.

It was questioned whether the policy statement due to be released by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in December 2019 would affect the Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Management Strategy.

Officers advised that it would be unlikely that there would be anything in the Defra policy statement that would directly oppose the strategy set by Lincolnshire, but it may be beneficial to factor in time in the decision making process in case officers proposed further changes following the Defra policy statement.

The committee were in favour of maintaining the timelines set out in the report.

RESOLVED:

That the Draft Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Management Strategy be noted.

18 RESPONSE TO SALTFLEET TO GIBRALTAR POINT STRATEGY PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Environment, which provided an update on the response submitted by Lincolnshire County Council to the Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Strategy Public Consultation.

Members were referred to Appendix A to the report, which provided a non-technical summary of the strategy.

Members welcomed the approach that had been approached and acknowledged that going forward; the Lincolnshire Coast would be one of the biggest challenges in terms of climate change and investments needed to be made into this.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

19 FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Officer presented the committee's prospective work programme.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 11.30 am