



**FLOOD AND DRAINAGE  
MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE  
23 SEPTEMBER 2016**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR C L STRANGE (CHAIRMAN)**

Councillors Mrs V C Ayling (Vice-Chairman), A M Austin, C J T H Brewis, A Bridges, R G Fairman, J R Marriott, C R Oxby, C Pain, D C Hoyes MBE and N I Jackson

District Councillors I G Fleetwood (West Lindsey District Council), Mrs F M Martin MBE (East Lindsey District Council), J Money (North Kesteven District Council) and M D Seymour (South Holland District Council)

Councillors C J Davie and W S Webb, attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Deborah Campbell (Environment Agency), David Hickman (Environment Commissioner), Andrew Jee (Senior Flood and Special Projects Officer), Andrew McGill (Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board), Eddy Poll (Chair of the Anglia (Northern) Regional Flood and Coastal Committee), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer), Mark Welsh (Flood Risk and Development Manager), Steve Willis (Chief Operating Officer, Development Services) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

**52 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Brookes, R A Renshaw, and District Councillors R Austin (Boston Borough Council) and P Vaughan (City of Lincoln Council).

The Chief Executive reported that, under Local Government (Committee and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, Councillors D C Hoyes MBE and N I Jackson had been appointed to the Flood and Drainage Management Scrutiny Committee to replace Councillors M Brookes and R A Renshaw respectively for this meeting only.

It was also noted that Councillor C Brotherton from Boston Borough Council was in attendance in place of Councillor R Austin.

**53 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest at this point in the meeting.

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## RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2016 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

55 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed members of the Committee, Officers and guests to the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed Adam Boucher from Severn Trent Water and requested that he attended the next meeting in December with a paper which outlined the current work being undertaken by Severn Trent Water in Lincolnshire.

It was reported that meeting of the Anglian Water Working Group had been arranged for the 14 October at 2.00pm to provide an opportunity for the working group to meet with officers and Alan Simpson from Anglian Water to explore the best approach of Anglian Water being consulted appropriately in the planning process, and to consider drafting a letter of support to Government in relation to the possibility of water companies being made statutory consultees in the planning process.

As agreed at the last meeting in May, a letter from the Committee, signed by both the Chairman and Councillor Davie as Executive Councillor had been sent to Rt Hon Andrea Leadsom MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs highlighting the concerns raised in relation to the impact of burrowing animals on river banks. The Committee agreed that the letter should also be passed onto all the relevant MP's as it was thought there was a need for the Government to develop a policy to deal with this issue. It was also requested that the letter be passed on to the Executive Director for Flooding Prevention at the Environment Agency.

The Chairman also took the opportunity to thank Councillor Brewis for his efforts in arranging and hosting the site visit in July when the Committee visited a number of sites. Councillor Brewis commented that he hoped members had found the visit interesting and expressed his thanks to those officers involved who had spent a lot of time preparing for the visit. He asked if the Chairman could write on behalf of the Committee to thank the staff at the Pumping Station, and Stafford Proctor for their time on the day.

56 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR DEVELOPMENT AND SENIOR OFFICERS (ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY)

The Executive Councillor for Economic Development, Environment, Planning and Tourism advised that the Committee had so far covered the River Steeping in great detail, and once the modelling data had been received, a working group would be arranged. It was important to ensure that there was continuity for the new Council.

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The Executive Councillor also advised that he had attended the launch of the LEP Water Management Plan, at which Andrea Leadsom MP was also in attendance. There was a need to ensure that the Government continued to think that the Greater Lincolnshire LEP was one of the best. It was also commented that there was a need to increase joint working. Overall, the event had been a very positive presentation.

The Committee agreed with the need for partners to continue working together, and it was commented that there were some very good examples of cross agency working in Lincolnshire, but there was a need to ensure that Lincolnshire's voice was heard effectively through the LGA.

There were no announcements from the senior officers.

57     PROPERTY LEVEL RESILIENCE

The Chairman welcomed Mary Dhonau, Specialist Independent Community Flood Consultant to the meeting who provided the Committee with a briefing and presentation on Property Level Resilience and also the Flood Re scheme.

The Committee was provided with the opportunity to ask questions in relation to the information contained within the presentation and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- Members strongly supported the view that sandbags should no longer be used as a flood prevention tool as they were ineffective and disposal after the water receded was often problematic, but it was thought there was still work to do to persuade residents of this.
- There were often requests from residents to bring back flood sirens, however, again, these were often ineffective as people chose to ignore them, or did not realise what they were.
- In the Boston floods of 2013, many of those affected lived in rented accommodation, and there were also many eastern European workers with many who would probably not have insurance. Members commented that there was a duty to encourage land lords to install flood resilient equipment. There was uncertainty about how to tackle the insurance issue when it was the least well off in the community that would be affected the most.
- It was reported that many people in Boston had said that they chose to ignore the flood warnings.
- The Environment Agency had worked hard to raise awareness of flooding, but it was queried whether more could be done. It was suggested that social housing in flood risk areas could be leafletted reminding residents they were in a flood risk area and they should ensure that they had insurance.
- Following the Boston flood, members commented that the community was overwhelmed by the support of the various agencies, and it should be used as an example for other areas.
- Members supported the need all new houses to be flood resilient. For example the living accommodation in some properties would be raised above the water level.

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- It was commented that one issue to be tackled was misapprehension, as some residents would not sign up to Floodline as they thought that it would 'tempt fate' and they would then be flooded.
- One councillor reported that they had been flooded in 2002, and had since moved into a new house which had every flood protection measure he could think of installed. The house next door had been flooded, but his remained dry, but he still found it very difficult to get insurance. It was reported that there was an insurance company which called floodexcess.com which would insure a homeowners excess on their insurance policy against flooding damage.
- It was commented that a lot of parish councils still believed sand bags were essential in the event of a flood, and actively promoted their use within the community. It was queried whether there was any sort of information pack which could be sent to parish councils explaining why sand bags were no longer an appropriate solution.
- Work was ongoing to persuade CLG to change building regulations to make the inclusion of flood protection measures mandatory, but this was proving difficult.
- It was commented that one problem in East Lindsey was that in the villages where there was a reduced flood risk, there was often strong opposition to planning applications from residents. This meant that more houses were being built in higher flood risk areas.
- The importance of emergency plans was emphasised.
- It was noted that flood alleviation schemes did not take away the flood risk, they just reduced the risk.
- The Committee was advised that the government would be bringing forward a document regarding the quality of design of new houses, so it was hoped that this would include reference to flood protection measures.
- There was a need to encourage the economic growth agenda, but the economy could not grow without housing, but there was a need to get the balance right.

The Chairman thanked Mary Dhonau for her presentation and attending the meeting.

**RESOLVED**

That the presentation be noted.

**58 ENVIRONMENT AGENCY UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update on a number of Environment Agency projects including:

Key flood risk facts for Greater Lincolnshire

- Boston Tidal Barrier
- Louth and Horncastle Flood Alleviation Schemes
- Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Strategy
- Steeping River and Wainfleet Relief Channel

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- Exercise Certus

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- The issue of the River Steeping was raised.
- The modelling had been previously done on flood defence grounds, and silt levels did not have significant influence on flood risk. However, new modelling was being undertaken to take account of interaction with Land drainage systems. This issue would require everyone to work together, but there was a keenness to resolve this issue.
- It was requested whether the Committee could have a report on Exercise Certus after it had taken place.
- It was commented that there was good work going on in Louth and Horncastle, and this was supported.
- It was reported that a meeting with Anglian Water had been arranged for 14 October at 2.00pm to provide an opportunity for the working group to meet with officer and Alan Simpson from Anglian water to explore the best approach of Anglian Water being consulted appropriately in the planning process.
- The view that water companies should be statutory consultees was fully supported by the Executive Councillor and the Committee.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the update provided be noted.
2. That the Committee receive a report on the outcome of Exercise Certus.

**59      DEVELOPMENT ROAD AND SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SPECIFICATION AND CONSTRUCTION**

Consideration was given to a report which informed the Committee of the new Lincolnshire County Council Development Road and Sustainable Drainage Specification and Construction document, which had been produced to take account of the changes introduced by government legislation, from April 2015 – requiring Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems on all major developments.

It was reported that the national planning policy had been amended by government, and all major developments (10+ properties) now needed to be sustainably drained. The County Council also became a statutory consultee on drainage and surface water flood risk as the Lead Local Flood Authority, and so had a responsibility to assess the surface water flood risk for all proposed developments. 80% of the run off in developments was from highways, and it was therefore important the authority regulated how development roads were to be constructed sustainably.

Members of the Committee were provided with an opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

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- It was reported that in terms of building major infrastructure, the Highways Agency were also expected to ensure that roads were sustainably drained.
- The government guidance was clear that for developments of 10 dwellings or above that there was a need for the local authority to ensure sustainable drainage was employed and consider surface water flood risk. However, in Lincolnshire, the authority would also consider the surface water flood risk to a planned development of one dwelling. If a surface water flood risk was evident then the authority would ask for a flood risk assessment or statement.
- Anglian Water praised Lincolnshire for the work that was done in relation to SuDS, and was pleased to work very closely with the county on this. It was commented that a lot of authorities were not as advanced as Lincolnshire.
- It was clarified that the authority was only responsible for surface water flooding, fluvial and coastal was the responsibility of the Environment Agency.
- In terms of surface water flooding, there were flood maps available, and there was a need to look at where the water would flow, and work with it not against it.

**RESOLVED**

That the Development Road and Sustainable Drainage Specification and Construction (DRS 2016) document be noted.

**60 INVESTIGATIONS UNDERTAKEN IN THE COUNTY UNDER SECTION 19 OF THE FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT ACT 2010 (FWMA)**

Consideration was given to a report which was a standing item to inform the Committee on the position of all current Section 19 investigations in the County. It was reported that during April to September 2016, 36 individual Section 19 investigations were commenced involving flooding to 48 properties and one carriageway. Of the 36 incidents, 17 occurred in June alone. This compared with 12 investigations affecting 39 properties in the same period last year, although it was noted that 8 of those investigations related to a single event in Long Bennington during August which caused flooding to 23 properties.

Appendix A to the report provided the Committee with a spreadsheet summarising investigations under Section 19. Members requested updates on the following investigations:

- Billingborough – suffered surface water flooding in 2012 and 2014 where 2 properties were affected. Highways officers were looking into the possibility of increasing the level of the kerb, and were also working with a nearby developer to reduce surface water coming off the existing site. The plan was to reduce the amount of hard standing. Good progress was underway and this work should reduce the flood risk to the local properties.
- Long Bennington – it was queried when the report into the flooding would be released to the public. It was important to understand the legislative requirements, as the county council did not have any jurisdiction to force other agencies to undertake work, but it could provide recommendations. It was

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noted that it was a complex situation in Long Bennington. Officers offered to update Councillor Wood outside of the meeting.

- Bourne - Beech Avenue
- Station Road, Sibsey – it was queried whether this was too recent to be included in this list.
- The representative from Boston Borough Council requested that when the report on Kirton was ready if it could be sent to him as well.
- Members were reminded that if there were any specific requests on updates, if they could be submitted prior to the meeting to ensure that officers had the relevant information prepared.
- It was emphasised that all occurrences of sewer flooding, even if water did not enter a property, should be reported to Anglian Water as they would investigate all internal and external flooding.
- It was noted that the County Council's responsibilities did not extend to foul sewer systems.

RESOLVED

That the Section 19 spreadsheet as attached as Appendix A to the report be noted.

61     FLOOD AND DRAINAGE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report which enabled members to consider and comment on the content of its work programme for the coming year to ensure that scrutiny activity was focused where it could be of greatest benefit.

Members were reminded that the October meeting of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee would be held at the Energy from Waste Facility in North Hykeham.

RESOLVED

That the work programme as presented be agreed.

The meeting closed at 12.10 pm

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