

Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills, Executive Director for Environment & Economy

Report to:	Flood and Drainage Management Scrutiny Committee
Date:	27 February 2015
Subject:	Lead Local Flood Authority Response to Surface Water and Local Flooding

Summary:

To update the Committee with progress on Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) working with partners to deliver a joint effective emergency response to surface water flooding and drainage incidents.

Actions Required:

The Committee are asked to consider and comment on the progress made with partners and support our continued work in developing the joint emergency incident response capability.

1. Background

- 1.1 Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) has a duty to plan for civil emergencies under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. In exercising this duty LCC, through its Emergency Planning Unit, plans and coordinates our response to major flood emergencies with other agencies through the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum (LRF). For declared multi agency flood emergencies, LCC works in accordance with county emergency procedures and agreed command and control protocols through multi-agency Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG) and Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG). However, whilst current operating procedures for these multi-agency emergency incidents are well established and practised, there is a requirement for greater clarity and co-ordination of Local Authority and LLFA operational emergency arrangements for more local flooding events, not requiring the full multi-agency response (i.e. "sub" SCG and "sub" TCG).
- 1.2 Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) was established as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 with responsibility for managing flood risk and flooding from "local sources" i.e. surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. Integral to this role, is the leadership and co-ordination of all designated Risk

Management authorities (RMAs) within the County (i.e. District Councils, Internal Drainage boards and water and sewerage companies), with respect to responding to local flooding emergency incidents. Since 2012 we have been developing our joint response and capability, with partner organisations, with the aim of ensuring a more simplified co-ordinated approach and improving public understanding and contact. The key progress activities are summarised below.

Emergency Incident Response Procedures

- 1.3 Recognising the need to respond effectively to flooding from surface water and local sources, new incident response procedures have been developed and two emergency exercises have been held to test them, which involved staff from Highways, LLFA and partners. Lincolnshire County Council staff has also received additional further training and awareness of emergency response requirements. As part of the implementation of the procedures and new ways of working, Network Emergency Incident Operations Rooms and a County emergency Incident Operations Room are being established and set up with the required systems and equipment, etc.

LLFA and District Response and Proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

- 1.4 Working with a partnership group; including all seven District Councils and the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum (LRF), the LLFA is developing guiding principles for leading a coordinated response to local flooding across the county. These guiding principles will clarify the key roles and activities of the partners and form the basis of a MoU.
- 1.5 Currently, each District Council has different adopted policies for its own flooding emergency response arrangements to meet specific local needs; for example in terms of sandbags (which whilst historically being ubiquitous may not always be the best form of response), policies vary from not providing, to providing on a prioritised needs basis and providing on customer request on a first come first served basis.
- 1.6 It is intended that recognising the lead role of the LLFA, there is agreement that the LLFA should lead a co-ordinated response to surface water and local flooding, whilst respecting and utilising the key roles and additional resources the District Councils have and will continue to bring.
- 1.7 As well as working with and coordinating the response of District Councils and other partners, Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) as LLFA will respond to surface water and local flooding using its Highways Maintenance Term Contractor. During normal working hours a workforce of up to 200 is available across the county with operatives who will be suitably trained and able to deploy specialist pumping and other equipment. However, outside of normal working hours, there are a small number of skeleton crews available for a first response; these can be

supplemented as part of a paid standby arrangement when sufficient warning is given for anticipated extreme weather.

- 1.8 The LLFA will initiate the most appropriate prioritised response to local flooding, (depending on the severity of the risk and event), which may include for example; deploying gully tankers, pumps or sandbags. However, resources are limited and therefore, the LLFA is unable to provide sandbags directly to the general public (other than as part of a LLFA direct response to flooding). The LLFA may deploy strategic stocks of sand and unfilled sandbags for public use during incidents of widespread/severe flooding and will work with District Councils and other RMAs to deploy sandbags in accordance with their respective individual policies.

Public Contact and New Telephone Number (including Out of Hours) 01522 782082

- 1.9 Whilst the public may continue to contact their local District Council for flood assistance, in recognising its role as LLFA, LCC has introduced a new telephone number (included on the LCC website under "Contact Us") for members of the public to communicate local flooding concerns and to report local flooding incidents to the LLFA. Callers using this number will have direct contact with the LCC Customer Services Centre (CSC) and be able to speak to an operative. Information provided will be logged and where necessary passed straight to highways staff or the highways Out of Hours Duty Officer (outside of normal hours) for action as appropriate. In instances where there is a risk to life from flooding, callers are advised via the LCC website and by the CSC operative to dial 999 in the usual way. An important principle, established by the Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Drainage Management Partnership, is that a customer should be dealt with at the "First Point of Contact" i.e. not passed around, even if the receiving organisation does not feel it is the right authority to provide the service request. This, together with general call protocol details are dealt with at Appendix A.

2. Conclusion

This important area of work continues, working in partnership with other RMAs and the LRF to establish the leadership and coordination role of the LLFA, with respect to responding to local flooding emergency incidents - working towards a MoU with District Councils.

3. Consultation

a) Policy Proofing Actions Required

n/a

4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Telephone Contact Protocol

5. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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