

**Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson,  
Executive Director – Place**

Report to:	<b>Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>24 February 2020</b>
Subject:	<b>To report on the outcome of the investigation into the flooding at Wainfleet in June 2019 in accordance with S.19 Flood &amp; Water Management Act 2010</b>

**Summary:**

Following a prolonged period of heavy rainfall in June 2019 there was widespread flooding across Lincolnshire. The eastern side of the county was particularly affected, especially Wainfleet, Holbeach, Spalding and Great Steeping. Most notably, a significant number of properties in Wainfleet were flooded from a variety of sources, initially surface water compounded by a breach in the embanked Wainfleet Relief Channel.

**Actions Required:**

The Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee are requested to:

- a) Review the flood investigation report (Appendix A) and consider the outcomes and recommendations made therein;
- b) Endorse Lincolnshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority to lead on the partnership approach in delivering the recommendations as set out below and in Appendix A;
- c) Highlight any additional actions for consideration.

**1. Background**

Following a prolonged period of heavy rainfall in June 2019 there was widespread flooding across Lincolnshire. The eastern side of the county was particularly affected, especially Wainfleet (All Saints), Holbeach, Spalding and Great Steeping. Most notably, a significant number of properties in Wainfleet were flooded from at least two sources, initially surface water compounded by a breach in the embanked Wainfleet Relief Channel.

Over the period 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019 around 62 properties were flooded in Wainfleet, Thorpe St.Peter and Thorpe Culvert, with further significant flooding elsewhere in East Lindsey District which falls outside the scope of this Scrutiny Committee report.

The consequences of the breach at Wainfleet were severe enough to trigger a multi-agency response in order that military aid could be called upon.

As Lead Local Flood Authority, Lincolnshire County Council has a duty under S.19 of the Flood & Water Management Act 2010 to investigate flooding as follows:

- (1) On becoming aware of a flood in its area, a lead local flood authority must, to the extent that it considers it necessary or appropriate, investigate—
  - (a) which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions, and
  - (b) whether each of those risk management authorities has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood.
- (2) Where an authority carries out an investigation under subsection (1) it must—
  - (a) publish the results of its investigation, and
  - (b) notify any relevant risk management authorities.

The events at Wainfleet (and elsewhere) met the requirement to carry out a flood investigation. Due to the increased pressure on resources as a result of the widespread flooding, Norfolk County Council were approached to carry out the flood investigation on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council in order to help it meet its duties under S.19 of the Flood & Water Management Act, which allows for one risk management authority to carry out flood risk management activities on behalf of another risk management authority.

Norfolk County Council were engaged to undertake the flood investigation to:

- i. Determine the cause(s) of the flooding, including limitations or failures, if any, in the current infrastructure etc.;
- ii. Determine which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions;
- iii. Determine if any or each of those risk management authorities has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood; and
- iv. Provide one or more possible strategic level options, if appropriate, to remove or reduce the risk of future flooding, or, if not appropriate, indicate the next steps that might be taken to identify and appraise the options.

**The final report is attached at Appendix A.**

## **2. Conclusion**

The conclusions of the flood investigation report are that the most significant flooding was caused by the Relief Channel overtopping as a result of prolonged and heavy rainfall within the Steeping catchment, exacerbated by the bank eroding at the point of overtopping leading to a breach.

Before the breach occurred, there was surface water flooding affecting 14 properties as a result of the capacity of the surface water drainage systems being exceeded. The systems became surcharged, meaning water could not enter the systems, instead flowing over the surface.

The investigation report concludes that the various risk management authorities identified as having a flood risk management function have exercised, or intend to exercise, their responsibilities in response to the flood.

In accordance with the requirements of S.19 Flood & Water Management Act, the results of the investigation will be published and the full investigation report made available on the County Council's website.

The various risk management authorities identified in the report as having a flood risk management function have been notified, as required by S.19 Flood & Water Management Act.

As required, Norfolk County Council have made a number of strategic level options, if appropriate, to remove or reduce the risk of future flooding, or, if not appropriate, indicate the next steps that might be taken to identify and appraise the options. For ease of reference these are summarised below together with some commentary on how the recommendation might be delivered; the full recommendations are in Appendix A.

Risk Management Authority and recommendations	How recommendations will be achieved
<p><b>Lincolnshire County Council – Lead Local Flood Authority:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate the review; dissemination and implementation of the findings and recommendations contained within this Section 19 investigation;</li> <li>• Review current roles and partnership working arrangements of Lincolnshire RMA's and make recommendations where improvements are identified.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report the outcomes and recommendations of the flood investigation report to Flood &amp; Water Management Scrutiny;</li> <li>• Ensure RMAs are notified of the outcomes;</li> <li>• Publish the findings of the investigation and the full report;</li> <li>• Be a partner in the Steeping Catchment Working Group, contributing to the development of the Action Plan;</li> <li>• Work through the Emergency Planning &amp; Business Continuity unit to support local communities to develop flood plans to become more resilient to flooding.</li> <li>• As Lead Local Flood Authority, assess local flood risk to develop and implement feasible and value for money flood risk management schemes.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Environment Agency:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out and appraisal of existing flood defences and options to improve the level of protection and resilience of the assets.</li> <li>• Identify funding for flood mitigation measures.</li> <li>• Review the operational strategy for the River Steeping and Relief Channel, appraising the respective roles of both in managing flood risks;</li> <li>• Review maintenance regime for the River Steeping and Relief Channel.</li> <li>• Work in partnership with local landowners to improve land management practices in the River Steeping catchment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the Steeping Catchment Working Group, contributing to the development of the Steeping Action Plan;</li> <li>• Utilise the latest asset data acquired through the Creating Asset Management Capacity (CAMC) to target the most appropriate work to the right place, as reflected in the Steeping Action Plan.</li> <li>• Work with Regional Flood &amp; Coastal Committees to plan flood risk management in each region, gain consent for Environment Agency investment programmes and to provide a link between the Environment Agency, LLFAs and local communities.</li> </ul>

Risk Management Authority and recommendations	How recommendations will be achieved
<p><b>Internal Drainage Board (IDB):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In conjunction with other RMA's review the operational performance (e.g. resilience) of existing pumping stations and IDB assets that interact with the River Steeping and relief channel and establish the benefits that operational changes could provide.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the Steeping Catchment Working Group, contributing to the development of the Steeping Action Plan;</li> <li>Continue to be an active and contributing partner in the Joint Flood Risk Management Framework.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Anglian Water (AW):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In conjunction with other RMA's review the operational performance (e.g. resilience) of existing AW assets in the River Steeping catchment and establish the benefits that operational changes could provide; to reduce surface water flood risk for example.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to be an active and contributing partner in the Joint Flood Risk Management Framework.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Partner Organisations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work in partnership with RMA's, landowners and residents in the development and implementation of flood mitigation measures and plans to manage flood risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage and work with the Steeping Catchment Working Groups.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landowners:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work in partnership with RMA's to adopt best practice land management in the River Steeping catchment, including: limiting the amount of sediment from adjacent farmland entering land drains and watercourses; controlling cattle access to river banks and provision of alternative drinking stations; and managing the effects of burrowing animals on the river embankments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk management authorities continue to support the existing engagement through the Steeping Catchment Working Group, and continue to liaise with the National Farmers' Union.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Residents:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to work in partnership with RMA's, partner organisations and landowners in the development and implementation of flood mitigation measures, including adopting best practice in property flood resilience, to manage flood risk;</li> <li>Continue to work in partnership with RMA's, partner organisations and landowners in the development of an Emergency Plan for Wainfleet and the surrounding villages.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner organisations will work with individuals and community groups to raise awareness of riparian rights and responsibilities, what options there might be for property flood resilience and what opportunities there might be to take advantage of such options.</li> </ul>

### 3. Consultation

**a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?**

N/A

**b) Risks and Impact Analysis**

N/A

### 4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Final flood investigation report in accordance with S.19 Flood & Water Management Act 2010

### 5. Background Papers

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

This report was written by Paul Brookes, County Flood Risk Manager, who can be contacted on (01522) 782070 or [paul.brookes@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:paul.brookes@lincolnshire.gov.uk).