

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

Report to:	<b>Flood &amp; Water Management Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>20 February 2023</b>
Subject:	<b>Flood and Water Team update (including Section 19 investigations)</b>

**Summary:**

To provide an update to Committee on the recent work of the Flood and Water team including informing the Committee of the status of all current flood investigations being undertaken in the County.

**Actions Required:**

Members are asked:

1. To view the current list of completed and active flood investigations online at <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/flood-risk-management/flood-investigations>
2. Inform Democratic Services in advance if they wish to raise any particular sites at the forthcoming Committee meeting.
3. To note and comment as required on updates provided on the work of the Flood Risk Team

## **1. Background**

A standing item to inform the Committee on the position of all current Section 19 investigations in the County. Whilst this report highlights the status of such investigations in the county, the opportunity is also being taken to update the committee on recent work and initiatives for which the Floods and Water Team are involved. This will hopefully provide members of the Committee with a much broader understanding on some of the recent work that has been undertaken in the County.

### **Investigations under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010**

The Committee will be aware that all such investigations are published on the County Council's website by means of an interactive map, whether the investigation is completed, actively under investigation or awaiting works to mitigate future flooding. When the Floods and Water Team are made aware of flooding that will trigger a S.19 investigation

the database is updated so information will show on the online system the same evening as this is updated on a daily basis at 7pm.

It is a duty under Section 19, Flood & Water Management Act 2010 (F&WMA) for the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) to carry out investigations to identify which Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) have a flood risk management function in connection with the flood and whether they have exercised, or intend to exercise, that function in response to the flood. To assist with this, Lincolnshire County Council as the LLFA makes recommendations for proportionate works to manage future flood risk, to be delivered by individual RMAs or in partnership as considered appropriate or expedient. Such recommendations are also published although this is over and above the requirements of the F&WMA; all recommendations for mitigation works and the RMA leading those works are available to view on the interactive mapping. If Members have any site-specific questions they are requested to contact the Flood and Water Manager in advance of the meeting.

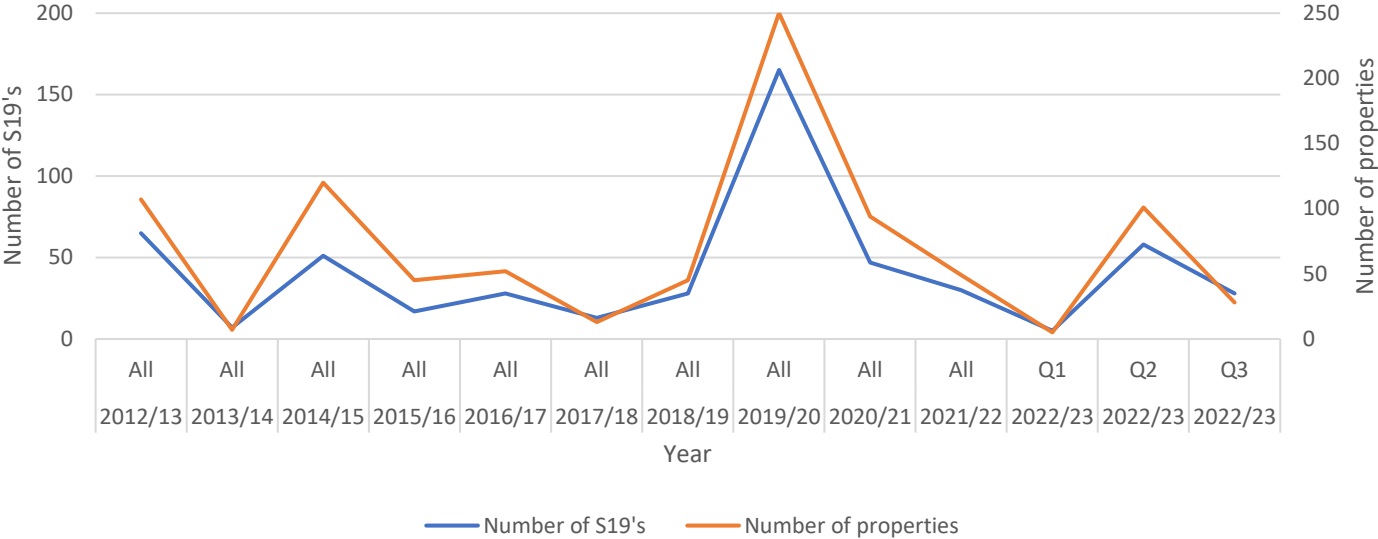
With regards to new flood investigations started in Quarter 3 of 2022/23 A total of 20 Section 19 Investigations were commenced during Q3 (October to December) which affected 23 properties (16 residential, 6 commercial and 1 Medical centre). This compares to 5 Section 19 Investigations which were commenced during Q3 of 2021/22 which affected 10 properties (1 residential and 9 commercial).

To provide an update on the status of S.19 reports since the committee last met in November 2022 please see Table 1 below.

Number of Reports On-going	109 (12.8% decrease since last reported)
Number of completed investigations with considerations still on-going with regards recommendations	215(14.3% increase since last reported)
Number of reports commissioned in Q3 2022	0 (at the time of writing)
Number of reports commissioned in Q3 (2021 – 2022)	3
Number of reports commissioned in Q3 (2020 – 2021)	21
Number of Reports Circulated to RMAs for Endorsement	7 (at the time of writing)
Number of reports currently being reviewed / revised by Flood Risk Team	41
Reports Awaiting Sign-off	3

**Table 1: Status of S.19 investigations as 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022**

The total annual number of S.19 investigations and properties affected between 2012 and Q3 of 2022/23 can be seen in table 2 below.



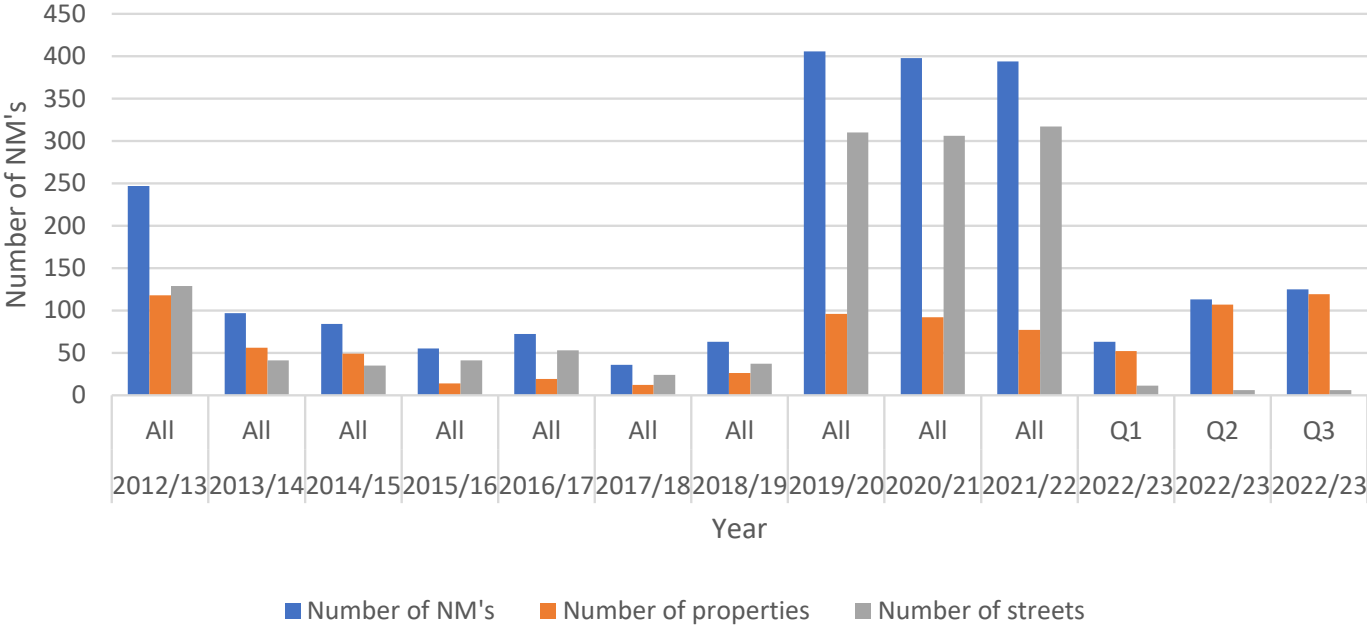
**Table 2: Annual totals of Number of S.19 Investigations and properties affected**

**Near Miss Data**

In addition to formal S.19 investigation data is collected by the floods and water team for the number of near miss reports received. When a report of flooding is received into the Council confirmation is sought from those making the report if water has entered the property. If it is identified water did not enter the property the occurrence would be reported as a near miss if:

- Water is approaching the property or is against the property but has not gone internal.
- The reporter has requested sandbags
- Internal flooding to a garage (detached or joined)
- Internal flooding to outbuildings
- Internal flooding to conservatories

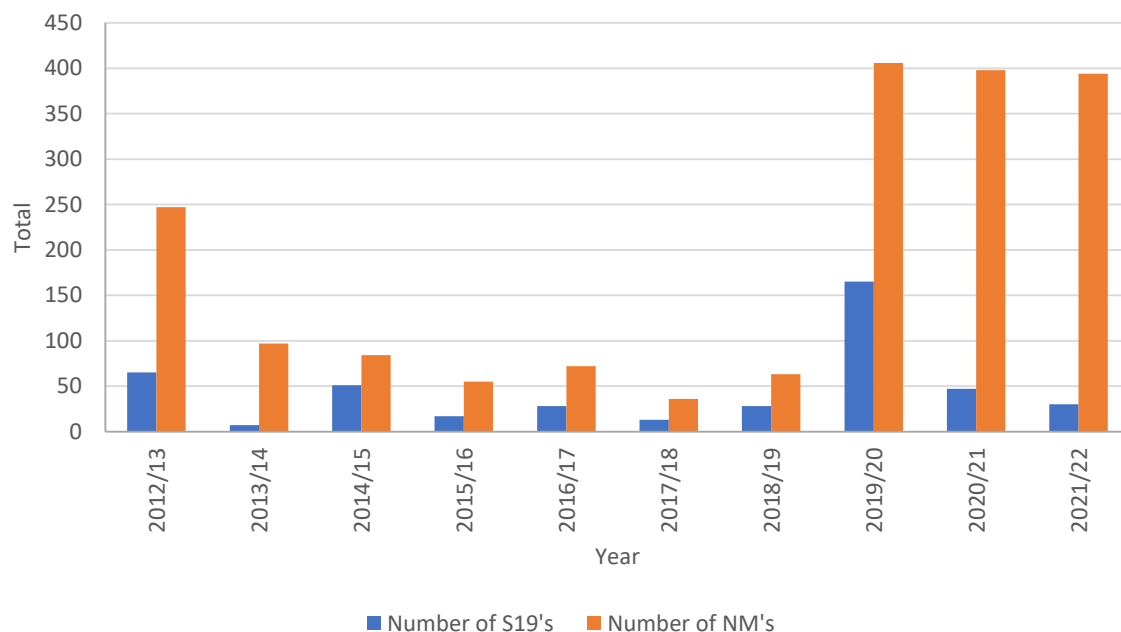
An exercise has been undertaken within the Floods and Water Team to interrogate records received by the authority back to when the role of Lead Local Flood Authority came into effect in 2012. All reports received as *Flooding – Risk to property/life* were reviewed to see if the above near miss criteria had been met. This process was completed in 2021 and a summary of the near miss data collected is summarised in table 3 below.



**Table 3: Summary of near miss data collated between 2012 and Q3 of 2022/23**

The collation of the near miss data can help inform decision making for future programmes of works by taking a proactive, rather than reactive approach to addressing flood risk and drainage issues which have not been identified through the formal Section 19 investigation process. It should be noted however that recommendations and actions will still be undertaken in response to a near miss incident and can be directed to the appropriate department or Risk Management Authority to take appropriate measures, therefore dealing with such incidents in a timely and proportionate manner which does not incur the resource and time pressures of a formal investigation.

A comparison of the annual number of S.19 reports versus the number of near miss reports received is shown in table 4 below.



**Table : Annual totals of Section 19 and near miss data**

## Other workstreams

### An update on the Greater Lincolnshire Groundwater Project

It is pleasing to report that the Outline Business Case for the Greater Lincolnshire Groundwater Project has been formally approved by the Environment Agency National Assurance Team and the project is now progressing to the delivery phase.

The project, part of the national Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation (FCRI) programme, has been successful in bidding for a total of £7,551,000 of capital funding to be delivered by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027. The FCRI Programme provides the opportunity to develop understanding of a broad range of groundwater risks and opportunities across the Greater Lincolnshire area and working towards a range of practical actions delivered in partnership. It is intended that these actions should incorporate multiple benefits, such that environmental and social resilience is built into the approaches developed.

Work will shortly be commencing on reviewing and improving monitoring and modelling across the existing Lincolnshire Chalk and Limestone groundwater areas to better understand the risk and where opportunities may lie to utilise existing groundwater areas as a resource. The project has also engaged with the University of Lincoln to investigate the impacts of salinisation from groundwater in Fenland areas and how that may affect food production. Work has also commenced on exploring opportunities for above ground

storage and wetland creation utilising local groundwater conditions. Through the project grant the team have been successful in recruiting two full time project officers as well as a community engagement officer through the National Flood Forum. Whilst led by Lincolnshire County Council this is a collaborative partnership project with a large numbers of partners and stakeholders involved.

### **An update on the Lincolnshire Riparian Project**

The Lincolnshire Riparian Project continue to take a partnership approach across Greater Lincolnshire to develop guidance and engagement linked to responsibilities for riparian owners and watercourse maintenance. Two key documents that have been developed and recently endorsed by the Flood and Water Management Partnership are:

- Enforcement Document – Best Practice Guide
- National Community of Best Practice

In addition, targeted community engagement is currently being undertaken within 4 parish areas in the county to discuss riparian roles and responsibilities and to see how communities can be supported. The 4 areas who agreed to participate are:

- Billingham Parish Council
- Digby Parish Council
- Horncastle Town Council
- Sturton by Stow Parish Council

Initial meetings have taken place with each, and further engagement is being arranged including wider public meetings and drop in sessions supported by officers from the project.

### **Long Bennington Flood Alleviation Scheme**

It is pleasing to report that confirmation has been received from the Environment Agency that the Outline Business Case for the Long Bennington Flood Alleviation scheme has been sent for final approval and allocation of grant monies. Running parallel to this the tender for the scheme has gone 'live' and will run until 7<sup>th</sup> March and it is still the intention to commence the main site works in May 2023. The Long Bennington Flood Alleviation scheme forms part of the Councils 6 year capital flood risk programme and will contribute to addressing surface water flooding issues previously experienced in the village.

## **2. Conclusion**

The Flood and Water team will continue to prioritise work on Section 19 investigations, however it should be noted that there is always likely to be great variance in the number and complexity of investigations undertaken which are influenced by weather events. In addition, progress continues to be made on key initiatives such as the Greater Lincolnshire Groundwater Project, the Lincolnshire Riparian Project and the development of pipeline flood alleviation schemes through the capital flood risk programme as well as more local partnership works. The Flood and Water Team will continue to build on the excellent working relationships it has with other service areas within Lincolnshire County Council, and with other Lincolnshire Risk Management Authorities to deliver partnership projects for the benefit of residents and communities across the county. Further updates will be presented to future meetings of this committee.

## **3. Consultation**

### **a) Risks and Impact Analysis**

N/A

## **4. Appendices**

N/A

## **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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