

Cabinet

12 January 2015

Flood Risk Management Strategy

Wards: All

Report Authorised by: Sue Foster, Strategic Director Delivery

Portfolio: Cllr Jennifer Brathwaite, Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability

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Report summary

Up to 46,000 properties have been identified as at risk of flooding in Lambeth. As Lead Local Flood Authority, Lambeth has a statutory duty to develop, apply, maintain and monitor a strategy for local flood risk management.

A strategy has been developed in co-production with citizens and URS Infrastructure & Environment UK Limited. There has been a two month consultation on the draft strategy with citizens, members, risk management agencies such as Thames Water and the Environment agency, and the Greater London Authority. The feedback received from the consultation has been incorporated into the strategy. During the consultation a number of residents requested an easy to read guide summarising the strategy; this document has now been produced.

The report recommends that the strategy is approved by Cabinet and is recognised as the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Lambeth

Finance summary

There is £290,976 of funding available in 2014-15 and a further £244,017 in 2015-16. As a result, there is sufficient funding to cover the activities detailed in the action plan for the next two years. After this period it is not envisaged that any funding will come from the Council. Instead applications will be made to DEFRA, the Environment Agency, and other relevant organisations for grants to continue to deliver strategy recommendations.

Recommendation

- (1) To approve and recognise the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy as the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Lambeth.

1. Context

- 1.1 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 defines Lambeth as a Lead Local Flood Authority. Our responsibility is to lead and co-ordinate local flood risk management, which includes risk from surface water run-off and flooding from groundwater and small watercourses.
- 1.2 Due to climate change, flooding is becoming a serious threat. As an inner London borough with underground rivers, such as the river Effra, there is a real risk Lambeth could experience increased flooding problems in the future.
- 1.3 The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy relates to the cleaner, greener streets aspects of the Community Plan 2013 -16 by encouraging people to lead environmentally sustainable lives and take greater responsibility for their neighbourhoods.
- 1.4 In August 2013 there was flooding in Herne Hill due to a burst water pipe, this was the responsibility of Thames Water.

2. Proposal and Reasons

- 2.1 It is proposed that the Lambeth Flood Risk Management Strategy is approved to ensure compliance with our legal obligation.
- 2.2 The strategy has been co-produced with citizens, URS Infrastructure & Environment UK Limited, which is a specialist in this field, and other risk management agencies. There has been a wide consultation with all key stakeholders regarding the strategy. Any feedback received has been incorporated into the document.
- 2.3 Further development of the strategy would further reduce council resources and there has been no feedback from any stakeholder that further development is needed.

3. Finance

- 3.1 The Lead Local Flood Authorities grant has been split into two elements since 2013/14. One part totalling £150,100 was rolled into the Settlement Funding Assessment (the equivalent of the old Revenue Support Grant) and is now treated as cash limit. This is now part of the base budget for the service. The other element of the grant is paid through the Local Services Support Grant. The allocations for this are £140,876 for 2014/15 and £93,917 for 2015/16 and, as an unringfenced grant, will be drawn down to Corporate Items with a temporary virement done in-year.
- 3.2 There is therefore £290,976 of funding available in 2014-15 and a further £244,017 in 2015-16. As a result, there is sufficient funding to cover the activities detailed in the action plan for the next two years. After this period, the service will apply for grants from DEFRA, the Environmental Agency and other relevant agencies and so it is not expected to cost the Council additional funds to enact this strategy.
- 3.3 It should be noted that the annual payment to the Environment Agency (in 2014-15, this was £212,440) is separate from the above and is an annual statutory payment for the Flood and Coastal Erosion Management Levy in the Thames area. The budget for this payment is within the council's cash limit.

- 3.4 The damage from flooding to property and disruption to citizens' lives could be a significant cost for the Council especially if it is argued that we have not fulfilled our statutory obligations under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

4. Legal and Democracy

- 4.1 It is a statutory obligation under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 that the strategy is produced.
- 4.2 The intention to make this key decision was entered onto the Forward Plan on 21 November 2014 so therefore the necessary 28 days notice has been given. In addition the report will be published five days before the Cabinet is due to make a decision and will be subject to call in for five days after the Cabinet's decision has been published.

5. Consultation and co-production

- 5.1 A workshop was held with citizens at the Oval in January 2014 to allow us to develop the strategy objectives and the format of the strategy. The evening consisted of an introduction to the strategy and local flood issues; followed by small discussion groups on strategy objectives and a series of interactive break-out sessions to generate suggestions and feedback. We also held two workshops with other risk management agencies.
- 5.2 After the strategy was designed, we held a second consultation to ensure that we had taken into account the feedback and comments received during the workshop. Details of the consultation were widely publicised on social media and featured in Lambeth Talk. In addition, we wrote to approximately 2,000 households and ward councillors in areas at high-risk of flooding.
- 5.3 Due to the technical nature of the main strategy document we commissioned a Residents' Guide. The 13 page guide, which was available to download from the consultation page on our website, provided an easy to read and concise alternative to the main Strategy document.
- 5.4 Hard copies of the documents were available as an alternative to digital copies and we provided a contact telephone number and email address.
- 5.5 We received a small number of responses to the consultation despite the level of communication. We received some negative comments regarding the inaccessibility of the main document, however, we had already commissioned the Residents' Guide and signposted to this where relevant. In addition, we have now produced an easy to read guide summarising the strategy.

6. Risk management

- 6.1 We have a legal obligation to implement this strategy. There are no risks arising from the implementation.

7. Equalities impact assessment

- 7.1 During the EIA it was identified that certain groups, such as older and younger citizens, pregnant women, and disabled citizens may be more at risk of flooding. There will therefore be a communication campaign to inform these citizens that the strategy exists and to highlight key information.

8. Community safety

- 8.1 None

9. Organisational implications

- 9.1 Environmental

The implementation of the strategy will benefit the environment through increasing green infrastructure with its associated benefits.

- 9.2 Staffing and accommodation

None

- 9.3 Procurement

None

- 9.4 Health

Green infrastructure will also have health benefits and there may be additional benefits from reducing damp caused by groundwater penetration of basements and other flooding.

10. Timetable for implementation

- 10.1 See Action Plan

Audit trail				
Consultation				
Name/Position	Lambeth cluster/division or partner	Date Sent	Date Received	Comments in para:
Sue Foster	Strategic Director	31/10/14	23/12/14	
Finance	Business Partnering	31/10/14	24/11/14	Finance Summary, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3
Carolyn Dwyer	Delivery Director Communities, Housing and Environment	31/10/14	31/12/14	
Raj Mistry	Programme Director Environment	31/10/14		
Kevin Crook	Delivery Lead Environmental Services	31/10/14	03/11/14	Throughout
Legal Services	Enabling: Integrated Support	31/10/14	31/10/14	None
Democratic Services	Enabling: Corporate Affairs	31/10/14	27/11/14	
Councillor Jennifer Brathwaite	Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability	31/10/14	26/11/14	

Report history	
Original discussion with Cabinet Member	31.10.14
Report deadline	02.01.15
Date final report sent	31.12.15
Report no.	124/14-15
Part II Exempt from Disclosure/confidential accompanying report?	No
Key decision report	Yes
Date first appeared on forward plan	21.11.14
Key decision reasons	Will amend Community Plan Outcomes Framework or Budget and Policy Framework Meets community impact test
Background information	The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents
Appendices	Lambeth Flood Risk Management Strategy Action Plan Easy to read Guide