

## Appendix 5 - Scrutiny Review of flood preparation and response

### Terms of Reference

#### 1. Introduction

**The issue of managing and reducing the impact of flooding is important because it directly affects homes and businesses – particularly in those areas at highest risk.**

#### Definition

For this review the Government classification will be used when referring to the surface flooding events on 27 May 2018 in Wolverhampton – the incident is described as **a local flood – this is defined as - local flooding small scale evacuation; no risk to critical infrastructure.**

#### The role for scrutiny members

The City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) is responsible for leading efforts and preparing plans for local flood risk management across Wolverhampton.

Scrutiny has a role in representing the voice and concerns of the public. The Council by scrutinising the effectiveness of flood risk management plans and policies can offer reassurance to communities that it is taking steps to reflect on and respond to any concerns about how the forecast local flooding incident on Sunday 27 May 2018 that recently affected Wolverhampton was managed.

The review group will seek to scrutinise the performance and response of CWC and other relevant partners to the surface flooding and will consider issues relating to:

- flood risk management – policy and practice,
- emergency planning,
- public communication and information,
- preparation for the floods forecast in areas where there is history of surface flooding,
- understanding the underlying causes of surface flooding to better protect homes and businesses in high risk areas in the future.
- engage positively with and listen to the views of residents who have been affected by flooding incident.

#### 2. Working with and engaging external organisations involved in flood risk management

The review will positively engage with representatives of external organisations as there is a recognition that flooding does not conform to local authority boundaries and to deliver an effective flood risk management plan will require co-operation of a range of different organisations.

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 requires partner organisations with responsibilities in flood risk management to comply with requests from overview and scrutiny committees for information and response to reports. These partner organisations must also have regard to scrutiny panel reports and recommendations.

To help partners understand what to expect from a review process, so they can be more prepared, it is proposed to arrange informal meet-and-greet sessions with Councillors before the meeting starts. The aim of the meeting will be to help dispel any fears from partners about the role of elected members and answer questions about the scrutiny review process.

### 3. Key roles and responsibilities

CWC is the designated Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) for Wolverhampton. The role and responsibility of being LLFA is detailed in the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA). The PFRA document gives a high-level overview of flood risk management in Wolverhampton from local sources and details of past and future flood risk from the following sources:

- Surface water
- Groundwater
- Ordinary watercourses
- Canals

The final [report](#) was published in June 2011 and updated in 2017.

### 4. Overall review aims

The review will scrutinise the effectiveness of current policies and procedures in mitigating the effects of surface flooding, emergency planning arrangements and the use of intelligence about the weather before, during and after a flood.

The review will also consider how the public were informed and updated about the flooding on 27 May 2018 and where lessons could be learned to help minimise the risk to homes and businesses in the future.

The review will be supported by [Dr Chris Bradley](#), Birmingham University, who will provide specialist advice on flooding and respond to technical questions.

### 5. The key lines of enquiry for this scrutiny review are to:

1. Scrutinise the role and responsibilities of CWC and others in preparing for and mitigating the effects of local surface flooding.
2. Review effectiveness of flood risk management policies and emergency planning procedures.
3. Assess how coordinated all relevant agencies were in their attempts to prevent surface water and sewer flooding in known high-risk areas of Wolverhampton.
4. Explore the quality of follow-up activity by CWC and other responsible agencies, in relation to supporting affected communities before, during and after the floods.
5. Consider areas where improvements could be made in Wolverhampton's flood prevention policies and procedures and emergency planning arrangements.

### 6. The review outcomes

1. To evaluate emergency response to manage serious flooding in Wolverhampton on 27 May 2018 and assess performance against agreed standards;
2. To get a better understanding of the roles of CWC and other partners responsible for both flood response and alleviation solutions in response to a forecast local flood;

3. To assess the effectiveness of emergency planning to deal with flooding incidents and communication of the level of risk to the public and advice on action to take to mitigate the effects;
4. To consider if current resource levels, the CWC deploys to prepare and support communities when a severe flood is forecast, are sufficient;
5. To identify how CWC and other agencies can share learning and strengthen joint working to improve response to flooding.
6. To highlight the key lessons that can be learned from the response to the severe flooding on 27 May 2018.

### **Background References**

- Local Strategy for Flood Risk Management – The Black Country (October 2015)
- Wolverhampton City Council Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (June 2011)
- Preliminary flood risk assessment: Wolverhampton Council (addendum) (2017)
- Wolverhampton City Council - Emergency Communications Plan
- Department of Transport – Highway Flooding: Roles and Responsibilities
- Scrutiny of Flooding Toolkit -LGIU (2010)
- Flood and Water Management Act 2010
- Flood Risk Regulations 2009

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