

## BRIEFING NOTE

### To: Strategic Place making Scrutiny Committee Flooding Update– 26 July 2018



#### 1. PURPOSE

To provide an overview of the incident and an update on the Council's response following the recent floods.

#### 2. CONTEXT

Heavy rainfall was experienced on the evening of 27 May 2018. Early indications are that the flooding was as a result of a short intensive storm event. Ground conditions were very dry on the night of the event contributing to the speed of the run-off rates from green areas. Maximum rain within a 1 hour period in May 2017 was 6.7mm, and the highest in May 2018 was 40.5mm as measured at the Civic Offices. Higher figures may well have been experienced at other locations.

A detailed report (Section 19) under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 will be published following an investigation. The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) has been commissioned to undertake this with the Environment Agency and consultants AECOM.

#### 3. ISSUES

The adverse weather conditions affected in excess of 700 residential properties, and more than 300 properties were flooded. The primary focal points for flooding were Beanhill, Netherfield and Coffee Hall. The second most impacted areas were Oldbrook, Fishermead, Eaglestone and the Lakes Estate. There were further lower numbers within Furzton, Neath Hill, Downs Barn, Pennyland, Statonbury, Newport Pagnell, Heelands and Stoke Goldington. There was also flooding to commercial buildings including MK Hospital, Urgent Care Centre, Saxon Clinic, CentreMK, StadiumMK and Winterhill which includes Carpet Right, SCS, Furniture Village and Oak Furniture Land.

#### 4. PRACTICALITIES

A number of rest centres offering support and advice were immediately set up in Coffee Hall, and further centres were opened in Beanhill, Netherfield, Tinkers Bridge and Oldbrook. Council officers were deployed into the affected areas to make contact with residents, identify and assist vulnerable people and to provide follow up support.

30 households were originally placed into emergency accommodation and 18 remain in temporary accommodation. YourMK continue to prioritise repairs to properties for displaced households

Highways deployed additional resources to clear drains, provide sand bags and repair network damage. In addition they provided officers at the various rest centres to assist with residents' concerns and hand delivered sand bags to vulnerable residents.

A free bulky waste collection was offered to all residents impacted by the flooding removing over 9 tonnes of rubbish. A mechanical street sweeping operation was undertaken and Ringway undertook additional gulley sucking and drainage works.

## **5. RESOURCES AND RISK**

The Council has put in place a number of emergency measures to support local residents in the aftermath of the flooding. It was agreed at cabinet on 5 June that an Emergency Hardship Grant of £200 will be immediately available to any household that has suffered flooding and is in immediate financial need. The aim is to cover additional costs incurred in meeting immediate humanitarian needs such as food, clothing and laundry, and other additional burdens. There will also be additional consideration for those not insured following an assessment of their needs and this would include items such as white goods and flooring. This scheme is open to all residents regardless of rental or ownership status of the property they live.

It was also agreed that Council Tax enforcement action will be suspended immediately for those properties impacted by the flooding and that there will be an automatic waiver or its equivalent, of Council Rent for two months for those who have suffered significant flooding. In addition no council tenant will incur any additional rent burden due to this incident e.g. no additional Council charge will be made for temporary accommodation.

## **6. RECOVERY**

The council will commission an expert review into issues such as drainage, cleaning, repairs and maintenance to address public concern; in addition a Recovery Co-ordination Group has been formed and is responsible for ensuring delivery of the recommendations noted above and additional broader themes including:

- Environmental and Infrastructure Group overseeing the investigation of the floods and the response to damaged or disrupted properties and infrastructure
- Health and Welfare Group that will consider the overall welfare needs of individuals effected and ongoing practical support needed
- Community Advisory Group to assess and reflect upon the impact and subsequent concerns of communities and businesses
- Communications Group – Media strategy & Public Consultation
- Finance & Legal Group - Assess & monitor financial & legal implications for recovery / Deal with benefits, council tax & rates issues

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## **7. FEEDBACK**

The following issues have been highlighted by the process and are being worked on by the subgroups mentioned above. These include feedback captured from resident representatives from Town & Parish Councils and local councillors who attended the Community Advisory Subgroup.

- Capturing the full extent of the flooding so as to assist the investigation
- Ensuring that owner occupiers and rented properties affected are documented, commercial properties and infrastructure
- Ensuring that the occupants of reported affected properties are followed up and any necessary help and advice provided.
- The complexity and multiple ownership of drainage systems on affected estates.
- Insurance issues. Claims honoured but renewals affected, cover where tenants have undertaken improvements, future affordable new cover
- Sandbag policy and provision.
- Routine gully cleaning arrangements
- Drainage design and capacity
- Guttering and downpipe maintenance
- Impact on Regeneration proposals
- Community resilience – identification of and help to vulnerable people – involving the resources and local knowledge of T&PCs
- Administrative details associated with hardship fund payments.
- Long term health impacts

## **8. LEARNING**

Planning for a comprehensive debrief is underway to include all staff who were involved in dealing with the flooding and externally with statutory responders – fire, police, ambulance, health, Environment Agency, utilities etc.

### **AUTHOR**

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