

Wards Affected: Bletchley East, Bradwell, Campbell Park & Old Woughton, Central Milton Keynes, Newport Pagnell North and Hanslope, Newport Pagnell South, Olney, Shenley Brook End, Stantonbury, Olney and Woughton and Fishermead

**URGENT ITEM
CABINET
TUESDAY 5 JUNE 2018**

FLOODING UPDATE

Responsible Cabinet Member: Councillor Marland (Leader of the Council)
Report Sponsor: Michael Kelleher (Service Director Housing and Regeneration)
Author and contact: Jane Harrison (Head of Communities) - Tel: 01908 253281

Executive Summary:

Heavy rainfall was experienced overnight between 27 and 28 May 2018. Early indications are that the flooding was as a result of a short intensive storm duration event – 52mm of rain fell (based on the Civic Offices Weather Station data). Ground conditions were very dry on the night of the event contributing to the speed of the run-off rates from green areas.

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.

This Cabinet report will give an overview of the incident, the Council's response, and recommendations to assist those residents significantly impacted by the events and how to learn from the event to improve any future response.

Councillor Peter Marland, Leader

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That Cabinet notes:

- (a) The impact of the adverse weather between 27 and 28 May 2018 and damage caused to property as a result.
- (b) The initial response and recovery work initiated by Council officers.

1.2 That Cabinet approves:

- (a) Hardship Fund
 - (i) An Emergency Hardship Grant of £200 to be made available to any household that has suffered flooding in the event over 27-28 May 2018, 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.

- (ii) Additional consideration for those not insured following an assessment of their needs this would include items such as white goods and flooring.
 - (iii) This scheme is open to all residents regardless of rental or ownership status of the property they live in.
 - (b) Council Tax Enforcement Suspension

Council Tax enforcement action is suspended immediately for those properties impacted by the event over 27-28 May 2018.
 - (c) Council Rent Exemption
 - (i) An automatic waiver or its equivalent, of Council Rent for two months for those who have a suffered significant flooding impact due to the event over 27-28 May 2018.
 - (ii) That 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.
 - (d) Emergency Response

That the Council will review the emergency response to the floods with partners and the local community in order to understand what worked well and what issues arose, and make recommendations of any changes and improvements necessary for future events.
 - (e) Review of Issues

That the Council commission an expert review into issues such as drainage, cleaning, repairs and maintenance to address public concern about the issue and make any recommendations as required.
 - (f) Thank you to staff and public

Cabinet would like to thank and praise members of staff of the Council for their response to the flooding. Cabinet would also like to thank all partners and staff, including parish and town councils, fire and rescue services, and the people of the communities affected who worked tirelessly to help people at a difficult time.
- 1.3 That, noting the agreement of the Chair of the Scrutiny Management Committee, the call-in process as set out in Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16 shall not apply due to the urgency this decision, due to the likely prejudice to the public interest if implementation of the decision was to be delayed.
2. **Issues**
- 2.1 Heavy rainfall was experienced overnight between 27 and 28 May 2018. Early indications are that the flooding was as a result of a short intensive storm duration event – 52mm of rain fell (based on the Civic Offices Weather Station data). 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 (mm) in May 2017 was 6.7mm, and the highest in May 2018 was 40.5mm.

- 2.2 These adverse weather conditions resulted in over 150 flooded residential properties across Milton Keynes. The primary focal points for flooding were Beanhill, Netherfield, Coffee Hall. The second most impacted areas were Oldbrook, Fishermead, Eaglestone and the Lakes Estate. There were further low numbers within Furzton, Neath Hill, Downs Barn, Pennyland, Stantonbury, Newport Pagnell and Heelands.
- 2.3 The Council has provided information, support and help to all residents where their properties were flooded.
- 2.4 Council Officers have been out on the estates impacted, making contact with those households flooded internally as a priority.
- 2.5 We have encouraged contact from all those impacted and have provided follow-up support.
- 2.6 Respite Centres at the Moorlands Family Centre in Beanhill and the Community Centre in Coffee Hall have been open to all residents and will be open for as long as needed. We have also responded to community requests to support an informal Respite Centre in Netherfield.
- 2.7 30 households were originally placed into emergency accommodation, 20 remain in temporary accommodation, 10 households have been able to return to their properties following property assessments or have found themselves alternative accommodation.
- 2.8 Over 850 calls were taken by the repairs service, 157 properties are currently being dealt with and 34 of those are currently undergoing works.
- 2.9 Free bulky waste collections have been offered to all residents impacted by the flooding. A mechanical street sweeping vehicle has been sweeping up areas across the borough. Ringway have undertaken gulley sucking / drainage works. 'Dig out' crews have dug mud out of parking bays and roads and pathways in Coffee Hall. A 'rapid vehicle' has also been deployed due to an increase in the volume of waste (including bulky waste).
- 2.10 The Council's response to this emergency has been a key priority across all service areas.
- 2.11 Regular updates have and will continue to be posted to the [MK Council website](#) and on social media ([Facebook – @MK Council1](#), [Twitter – @MKCouncil](#)). Local media outlets have also been kept up to date.
- 2.12 A detailed report (Section 19) under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 will be published following a formal investigation. The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) has been commissioned to undertake this alongside the Environment Agency and consultants AECOM.

2.13 The Chair of the Scrutiny Management Committee has agreed that the call-in process as set out in Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16 shall not apply due to the urgency this decision, due to the likely prejudice to the public interest if implementation of the decision was to be delayed.

3. Options

- (a) Do nothing – this is not the recommended option as there would be a significant reputational risk to the Council, and it would not be considered a satisfactory response to this incident and to the victims impacted by this event.
- (b) Approve the recommendations – this is the recommended option and has been assessed as an appropriate response to support the community following this major incident.

4. Implications

4.1 Policy

The Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum Recovery Plan sets out the principles of providing recovery support to assist the affected community. It is recognised that where a community experiences a major incident, there is a need to supplement the individuals, families and communities that have been disrupted.

4.2 Resources and Risk

- (a) The Council has put in place a number of emergency measures to support local residents in the aftermath of the flooding. These measures are set out in the report, and many of them will have a financial impact on the Council’s resources. Events such as this are thankfully rare but it is for circumstances such as this, that the Council maintains reserves in both its General Fund and Housing Revenue Account. The exact costs of the proposed support arrangements cannot be accurately quantified at this time, but appropriate arrangements have been put in place to accurately capture the associated costs. That said, the table below sets out an estimate of the potential costs, using a prudent set of assumptions:
- (b) Estimated costs of financial support -

Financial Support	General Fund	HRA	Total Cost
	£	£	£
Emergency “Humanitarian” Payments (150 x £200)	30,000		30,000
Two Month Rent Reduction (100 Properties @ £87 average rent)		70,000	70,000
Estimated Total Cost	30,000	70,000	100,000

- (c) In addition to these arrangements, the Council also operates a Local Welfare Provision scheme. This scheme provides white goods or other household items to residents ‘in crisis’, to enable them to remain in their homes. The criteria to access this scheme could be temporarily adapted to replace damaged household items that would not ordinarily be covered by the scheme. For example, items that could be replaced by accessing a DWP Budgeting Loan or items that are not always essential, such as flooring and certain white goods. The Council will ensure that sufficient resources are available to provide appropriate support, using similar criteria to that already in place for the LWP scheme.
- (d) The table also does not take into consideration the costs incurred by the Council to support the initial costs of responding to the flooding or the clean-up operation. Such costs can potentially be recovered through the Bellwin scheme. Such a scheme may be activated where an emergency or disaster involving destruction of or danger to life or property occurs and, as a result, one or more local authorities incur expenditure on, or in connection with, the taking of immediate action to safeguard life or property, or to prevent suffering or severe inconvenience, in their area or among its inhabitants. There is no automatic entitlement to financial assistance. Ministers are empowered by section 155 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to decide whether or not to activate a scheme after considering the circumstances of each individual case.
- (e) The Bellwin scheme is intended to reimburse the cost of local authority actions taken in the immediate phase of an emergency, not those taken as part of the recovery phase. The scheme is not intended to fund longer term repairs or costs, such as road re-surfacing. This is reflected in the eligible spending period of one month from the date when a qualifying incident comes to an end. The scheme allows for 100% claim back as long as the incident is qualifying and the costs that we have incurred are over 0.2% of the local authority budget; to qualify, MKC would have needed to incur over £349,000. The costs will need to be identified to determine whether a claim can be made, but in the meantime, any additional costs can be funded from the Council’s General Fund and HRA Reserves. A summary of the actual costs incurred will be incorporated within the Council’s regular budget monitoring reports to Cabinet at a later date.

	Capital		Revenue		Accommodation
	IT		Medium Term Plan		Asset Management

4.3 Carbon and Energy Management

N/A

4.4 Legal

Under the Local Government Act 1972 powers exist for Local Authorities to incur expenditure in order to avert, alleviate or eradicate in their area, or among their inhabitants, the effects or potential effects of an event. The recommendations are therefore in accordance with said powers.

4.5 Other Implications

N/A

	Equalities/Diversity		Sustainability		Human Rights
	E-Government		Stakeholders		Crime and Disorder

Background Papers: Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum Recovery Plan
<O:\Emergency Procedures\Emergency Plans and Procedures\2. CURRENT PLANS\TVLRF Recovery Plan 170606.pdf>

Annex(es): None