

REGENT AVENUE, HILLINGDON - PETITION REQUESTING TO UPGRADE THE EXISTING DRAINAGE NETWORK IN REGENT AVENUE, UXBRIDGE

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Keith Burrows
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Planning, Transportation and Recycling
Officer Contact(s)	Poonam Pathak, Residents Services Directorate
Papers with report	Appendix A - Location plan

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	To inform the Cabinet Member that that a petition has been received from residents requesting the Council to evaluate the drainage system in Regent Avenue and any repairs to be made to it thereof, to prevent a repeat of the flooding incident that occurred on the 23 June 2016.
Contribution to our plans and strategies	A safe Borough, a clean and attractive Borough.
Financial Cost	There are none at present associated with this report.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Residents' and Environmental Services.
Ward(s) affected	Hillingdon East

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Meeting with the petitioners, the Cabinet Member:

That the Cabinet Member:

- 1. Notes and listens to the residents who suffered a flooding incident on the 23 June 2016 and sympathises with their concerns regarding flooding;**
- 2. Notes that on 23 June 2016 a 'Flood Guidance Statement - AMBER: Surface Water, YELLOW: River' was issued for parts of London and Essex as parts of the capital endured a month's rain in a matter of hours and furthermore that there were reports of flooded streets as storms caused disruption;**
- 3. Notes that in Hillingdon there were 223 flooding incidents reported to the Council;**
- 4. Notes that the relevant surface water gullies are maintained by the Council and that residents acknowledge that the flooding was not caused by a lack of maintenance of these;**

5. Notes that the main sewer network, which the gullies drain into, is maintained and managed by Thames Water Utilities (TW), and that residents have correctly reported the flooding to Thames Water; and
6. Subject to the outcome of the discussion, consider instructing officers to submit details of the findings and petition to TW to urge them to bring forward proposals to upgrade the drainage system in order to prevent future flooding incidents, and for officers to report back to the Cabinet Member on TW's response.

Reason for recommendations:

On 23 June 2016, a month's rain fell in a few hours which caused flash flooding across the Borough causing some of our roads to become submerged under water.

The gullies in this road were last cleaned on 19 May 2016.

The road network was overwhelmed due to the excessive rainfall in a short period of time. This indicates that there was inadequate drainage capacity for such a heavy rainfall. As TW is responsible for the capacity of the drainage network, it is suggested that TW investigate and clear their sewers and, if no issues found, include this area in their programme of work for increasing capacity.

Alternative options considered / risk management

The Council's Highways Service is responsible for clearing gullies and they do so on a regular basis. Additionally further ad-hoc inspections are carried out after receipt of concern relating to blocked gullies on the public highway.

It is to be noted that the majority of residents along this road have hard paved their front garden to create driveways. This has added to the amount of surface water running from housing on to the road and into the sewers. There are also ways that residents can take action to reduce the amount of water entering the sewer, by digging up a small part of a driveway to create a permeable area, or installing a collector drain at the end of the driveway to direct it to a permeable area. Further information on what can be done can be found on the Council website, under "Sustainable Drainage".

Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage.

3. INFORMATION

Supporting Information

1. A petition with 49 signatures has been received which states that the existing drainage system is inadequate to cope with the heavy rainfall which has become a more frequent event as Regent Avenue has been subject to flooding for the second year in a row.
2. It is to be noted that the rainfall on the incident date was exceptionally heavy; amber flooding warning was issued for parts of London. The heavy rainfall resulted in flash flooding in

various locations within the Borough, causing severe disruption to the residents. There was far too much water flowing into and across the network for the drains to cope.

3. There were 223 other incidents reported to the Borough, including 68 properties that experienced internal flooding.
4. The Council has a cyclic gully cleansing programme to clear any blockage within the network. The gully blockage reports received from members of the public is actioned on an ad-hoc basis. Moreover, any other issue that may cause the blockage (e.g. broken pipes, tree roots damage) within the network are rectified within the stipulated time scale.
5. There is a small park behind the house numbers 10 and 12 Regent Avenue. The green land helps to retain and provide natural storage and surface water reduction. However on 23 June 2016, due to heavy rainfall in a short period of time, this caused water to run towards the slope. Officers' view is that no work is required within the small park. If drainage was added, this would add water to the surface water network.
6. TW Utilities is responsible for investigating the functioning of their sewer to see if there are blockages and for the capacity of drainage system.
7. The runoff from new development is strictly controlled through the planning system within the site, through a variety of methods such as tanks. This is designed to hold water from a much higher event than the one experienced in June, and will not add to the amount of surface water entering the sewers.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications at this stage.

4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

To allow the Cabinet Member an opportunity to discuss in detail with petitioners their concerns.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

None at this stage.

5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed the report and notes that there are no financial implications at this stage.

Legal

The Council has a statutory duty to maintain the highway under section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 (the duty) to the standard necessary to allow its ordinary traffic to pass along it, for example there is a breach of duty in cases where danger is caused by a failure to maintain.

A failure to comply with the duty leading to loss or damage to users of the highway creates a risk of legal liability for the Council.

A continued cyclic gully cleansing programme and the making of expeditious repairs, is adequate to keep the highway in accordance with the necessary standard. The Council has taken all reasonable steps, as evidenced by regular maintenance activities, which conclude that there was no blockage on the system.

To upgrade the capacity of the existing drainage lies with the third party; which in this case is Thames Water Utilities.

In relation to informal consultation there are no special legal implications for the proposal. A meeting with the petitioners is perfectly legitimate as part of a listening exercise, especially where consideration of the suggestion is still at a formative stage. Fairness and natural justice requires that there must be no predetermination of a decision in advance of any wider non-statutory consultation.

In considering any informal consultation responses, decision makers must ensure there is a full consideration of all representations arising including those which do not accord with the officer recommendation. The decision maker must be satisfied that responses from the public are conscientiously taken into account.

Should there be a decision that further measures are to be considered then the relevant statutory provisions will have to be identified and considered.

Corporate Property and Construction

None at this stage.

Relevant Service Groups

None at this stage.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Appendix A



Key Purple - Environment Agency Mapping showing low lying areas likely to be at risk from flooding

