

HILLINGDON'S SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN: EVIDENCE BASE

Cabinet Member	Councillor Jonathan Bianco
Cabinet Portfolio	Finance, Property and Business Services
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Papers with report	Hillingdon's Surface Water Management Plan: Evidence Base & Map appendices <u>NOT INCLUDED WITHIN AGENDA:</u> <u>AVAILABLE AS REFERENCE COPY IN GROUP OFFICES</u>

HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	<p>Under the statutory requirements of the Flood and Water Management Act, the Council must produce a Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) to identify areas prone to surface water flooding.</p> <p>The Evidence Base is the first stage in the preparation of the SWMP. The SWMP, in combination with the Environment Agency Flood Map, will provide a comprehensive understanding of flood risk for the Borough.</p> <p>It will help the Council manage flood risk and meet its obligations as a Lead Local Flood Authority. Cabinet are asked to approve the Surface Water Management Plan: Evidence Base and authorise its publication on the Council's website.</p>
Contribution to our plans and strategies	The Surface Water Management Plan will contribute to Part 2 of the emerging Hillingdon Local Plan and will inform future plans such as the Flood Risk Management Strategy.
Financial Cost	The report was funded by the GLA as part of the Drain London project. It will be placed on the Council's website and no further cost is anticipated.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Residents' and Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee
Ward(s) affected	All

RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet:

- 1. Approves the Hillingdon Surface Water Management Plan: Evidence Base for the Borough.**
- 2. Authorises officers to publicise the report on the Council's website and to notify all groups having a particular interest in it.**

INFORMATION

Reasons for recommendation

Cabinet are asked to approve the Evidence Base for the Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) and publish it on the Council's website. The SWMP has been produced to identify areas adversely affected in times of heavy rainfall and to establish a framework for future policies to manage surface water across the Borough.

The Plan was undertaken to meet the requirements of the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 and the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. It is also a requirement of the Flood Risk Regulations that this document and the maps produced be published to help engage residents and other stakeholders in flood risk issues and encourage input into the Plan.

Alternative options considered / risk management

Cabinet could decide not to approve the Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) and not to make it available on the Council's website. In this case, the Council would not be meeting the statutory requirements of the Flood Risk Regulations 2009, nor providing a robust evidence base for future decisions on managing flood risk.

Comments of Policy Overview Committee(s)

None at this stage

Supporting Information

Background

1. The Surface Water Management Plan forms part of the Council's statutory requirements to produce a flood risk management portfolio. As a 'Lead Local Flood Authority', the Council is required to produce this portfolio to assist in understanding, planning for and managing flood risk. The production of the portfolio is a statutory requirement set out in the Flood and Water Management Act.

2. The first document in the portfolio, the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) was previously approved by the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business in May 2011. This document was subsequently uploaded to the website for public information. The Cabinet report for the PFRA set out the 4 stages to be undertaken which would result in the completion of the portfolio by 2016:

Stage 1	Undertaking a Preliminary Risk Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) – Completed
Stage 2	Identifying Flood Risk Areas – SWMP Completed (subject of this report)
Stage 3	Preparing Flood Hazard and Risk Maps – by June 2013
Stage 4	Preparing Flood Risk Management Plans – by June 2015

3. The SWMP was written by the same consultants as the PFRA. Both were commissioned by the GLA as part of the Drain London project. There have thus been no funding implications for Hillingdon Council for either piece of work. They were produced in consultation with neighbouring boroughs as surface water flooding is a cross boundary problem.

Surface Water Management Plan, a Summary

4. The Flood and Water Management Act sets out the responsibilities for managing flood risk. The Environment Agency retains primary responsibility for fluvial and tidal flooding, whilst certain Local Authorities (single tier and County Councils) are now required to take responsibility for surface water flooding. The purpose of the Surface Water Management Plan is to provide the Council with a more detailed understanding of surface water flooding in the Borough, to enable it to fulfil its statutory duties. The SWMP therefore identifies the areas adversely affected in times of heavy rainfall and establishes a framework for future policies to manage surface water across the Borough.

5. The SWMP does not set policy. It is primarily an evidence base to provide the Council with a more accurate understanding of the risks of surface water flooding. It will be used to inform a wide range of strategies, from emergency planning through to development planning. It also sets out a series of actions to manage surface water flooding, which will need to be adopted as part of other Council policies. Some of these actions are generic and can be implemented immediately, others require more detailed investigative work.

6. The SWMP contains an illustrative diagram (Figure 1-3, page 4) that shows the development process. There are four steps in the process, the first two of which have been completed:

A – Preparation. This included defining the scope of the SWMP study and developing the necessary partnerships (consultation with neighbouring boroughs and Thames Water for example).

B – Risk Assessment. This included the assessment of the risk, based on the scope of the study and consultation with partners. It used broad modelling (outlined below) to reveal the levels of risk across the Borough.

C – Options. A broad range of options and recommendations for managing flood risk were put forward by the consultant team, as required by the brief set by the GLA. Some of these options are very generic. For example, the SWMP includes recommendations for the use of sustainable drainage systems in new development and these recommendations will be taken forward in Part 2 (Development Control Policies) of the Local Plan. The evidence base also allows the Council to target more specific flood risk management projects to help residents and property owners. These options will continue to be developed and will be integrated into a comprehensive action plan.

D – Implementation and Review. This will constitute the Action Plan that contains all the measures to be taken by the Council to manage surface water flooding. Some of these measures are already being implemented. For example, the SWMP has influenced the initial drafting of Part

2 of the Local Plan. However, as a 'living document', it will need to respond to new development, whenever and wherever it comes forward, and will also be influenced by flooding events which may highlight areas previously considered at less risk but where action has now become urgently needed. The Action Plan will therefore be kept under constant review.

Thus the SWMP provides the evidence base for developing a detailed set of options which will ultimately form a comprehensive Action Plan for managing surface water flooding. These options will be developed in consultation with the necessary stakeholders, such as residents, Thames Water and the Environment Agency, and presented to Cabinet as and when they are adequately developed.

The Evidence Base

7. The SWMP has been developed using broad flood modelling techniques. For example, it uses topographical information which enables the Council to map sources of flooding and the flow paths of water and identify where the low points are where the water will settle. This broad information allows the Council to understand more about surface water flooding. The study has been based on a precautionary assessment of possible surface water flooding which is why it is a strategic document and does not provide information about individual sites. Based on the Drain London outputs it is estimated that 30,600 properties (residential, business and commercial) are at risk of surface water flooding (at least 3cm of water) in a 1:100 year event (1% chance of flooding in a year).

8. The methodology used for the modelling is required to be precautionary to allow for worst case scenarios to be considered. A number of assumptions are made to deliver outputs like these, in the same way as those used to produce the Environment Agency flood zone maps. In reality, there are a number of detailed factors that cannot be included in a high level strategy such as this, for example, receiving watercourses may have more capacity than allowed for in the model, as may large areas of open space or roads.

9. In addition, the SWMP identifies a number of critical drainage areas. These are the areas that are most at risk from surface water flooding. New development will be heavily scrutinised in these areas to ensure they are not directly at risk, but, importantly, do not worsen the situation for other areas. The critical drainage areas will be where the water settles but the problems are likely to have come from other sources in the wider catchment area. Development control decisions will consider all applications that could increase flood risk and developers may be required to provide contributions for specific flood alleviation works.

10. The Flood and Water Management Act requires the Council to share flood risk information with partners and residents. The SWMP will be uploaded to the Council website and sit alongside the PFRA. This will allow people to take their own precautions to prepare for flooding and to plan for future events.

11. Ultimately, the SWMP provides the Council with helpful information on flood risk. As a Lead Local Flood Authority, it is important to have detailed knowledge as to where and when places might flood. The SWMP, along with other flooding strategies and maps (for example the Environment Agency flood maps), provides the Council with the tools to fulfil its new duties. The SWMP will therefore help to avoid the significant flood impacts witnessed elsewhere in the country.

Next Steps

12. The PFRA was the first stage in a 4 stage process for developing an effective approach to flood risk management within the Borough, while the SWMP has provided another, more specific, level of information relating to the Council's new functions.

13. The SWMP will enable the Council to target areas for improvement. Some of the Critical Drainage Areas relate to hundreds of dwellings and the Council will prioritise work to these areas when appropriate. The SWMP provides a starting point for applying for funding from the Regional Flood and Coast Defence Committee, which holds the budget for flood defence works. In addition, the SWMP provides the evidence base for negotiating contributions towards flood risk alleviation schemes from developers.

14. The SWMP will also influence the allocations of new development sites in the forthcoming Hillingdon Local Plan, Part 1 document, as well as providing the evidence base for drawing up drainage related policies.

15. In the longer term, the SWMP and PFRA, along with the Environment Agency flood maps (showing river flooding) will help the Council complete the flood risk management portfolio namely:

- Flood hazard maps and flood risk maps by June 2013; and
- Flood risk management plans by June 2015.

Financial Implications

16. The Surface Water Management Plan was completed by the consultants in 2011, as part of the Drain London project, funded by the GLA. There were no financial costs to Hillingdon in producing this document.

17. The SWMP has no direct financial implications, but it does provide an evidence base to prepare specific funding bids for flood risk management work. The Regional Flood and Coastal Defence Committee has a large budget to which Councils can apply. The SWMP will therefore provide the basis for launching funding bids to help manage flood risk for residents.

EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

The Surface Water Management Plan will provide a robust evidence base for decisions on managing flood risk in Hillingdon, informing planning proposals and future policies within the Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Document, as well as indicating areas which need to be investigated further and developed into future flood risk projects.

In particular, it will allow residents to understand better the risks to them and their property. It will highlight that the risk of flooding is a national problem and that all have a part to play in managing and reducing flood risk. The SWMP will be uploaded on to the Council's website which contains links to information for residents as to how they can prepare for flooding.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

As a factual document, no public consultation was necessary during its compilation. However, to fulfil the requirements of the Flood Risk Regulations, the document must be made available to public view on the Hillingdon Website. It is the intention that residents are made aware of

this document, and that they are encouraged to contribute information and photographs on flood events via an on-line form.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Legal

The publication of a SWMP is a statutory requirement under the Flood Risk Regulations 2009. The 2009 Regulations require such plans to be reviewed at least every six years. The SWMP will feed into the wider Flood Risk Management Plan that must be prepared by the Council. The purpose of these plans is to assist the Council in tackling flood risks, particularly in the context of development proposals within the Borough. The Flood Risk Management Plan will be a material consideration to be taken into account when the Council makes planning decisions.

Corporate Finance

The production of the SWMP was funded by the GLA. Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and is satisfied that there are no direct financial implications to the Council. It should be noted that any further work outlined in the "Next Steps" in the report, is likely to be funded from recently committed Government funds as the Government has an obligation to fulfil its obligations of the Flood and Water Management Act.

Corporate Property and Construction

Corporate Property and Construction are in support of the recommendations made in this report.

Civil Protection Service

The recommendations are fully supported by the Civil Protection Service as the document will identify flood risk areas, guide planning decisions and encourage residents to take their own mitigating actions. The publication of the SWMP will be recorded in the next review of the Borough risk register.

Relevant Service Groups

Highways fully support the recommendations set out in the report.

Green Spaces fully supports the recommendations.

Background Papers

NIL