

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Friday, 24th January, 2020

10.00 am

**Council Chamber, Sessions House, County
Hall, Maidstone**





AGENDA

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Friday, 24th January, 2020, at 10.00 am

Ask for: **Joel Cook/Anna Taylor**

Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone

Telephone: **03000 416892/416478**

Membership

- Conservative (9): Mr A Booth (Chairman), Mr M A C Balfour, Mr P V Barrington-King, Mrs P M Beresford, Mrs R Binks, Mr G Cooke, Mr R C Love, OBE, Mr A M Ridgers and Mr J Wright
- Liberal Democrat (2): Mr R H Bird and Mrs T Dean, MBE
- Labour (2) Mr D Farrell and Dr L Sullivan
- Church Representatives (3): Mr D Brunning, Mr J Constanti and Mr Q Roper
- Parent Governor (2): Mr K Garsed and Mr A Roy

Tea/coffee will be available 15 minutes before the start of the meeting

County Councillors who are not Members of the Committee but who wish to ask questions at the meeting are asked to notify the Chairman of their questions in advance.

Webcasting Notice

Please note: this meeting may be filmed for the live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site or by any member of the public or press present. The Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be filmed by the Council

By entering into this room you are consenting to being filmed. If you do not wish to have your image captured please let the Clerk know immediately.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

A - Committee Business

- A1 Introduction/Webcast Announcement
- A2 Election of Vice-Chairman
- A3 Apologies and Substitutes
- A4 Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this Meeting
- A5 Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2019 (Pages 1 - 4)
- A6 Affordable Housing Select Committee - Timetable (Pages 5 - 8)
- A7 To note the 2020/2021 Scrutiny Committee meeting dates

Please note the dates and times of the Scrutiny Committee for 2020/21. All meetings will begin at 10am and will be held in the Council Chamber.

- *Wednesday 12 February 2020 (previously reported)*
- *Thursday 16 April 2020 (previously reported)*
- *Tuesday 19 May 2020 (previously reported)*

- Tuesday 7 July 2020
- Tuesday 6 October 2020
- Friday 27 November 2020
- Wednesday 16 December 2020
- Friday 22 January 2021
- Friday 26 March 2021
- Wednesday 9 June 2021

- A8 Kent Flood Risk Management Committee - Annual Report (Pages 9 - 18)
- A9 Draft 2020/21 Budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan.
Please can Members bring their copy of the MTFP 2020-21, Budget Information 2020-21 to the meeting.

MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

EXEMPT ITEMS

(During these items, the meeting is likely to be NOT open to the public)

- A10 Exempt minute of the meeting held on 19 November 2019 (Pages 19 - 20)

B - Any items called-in

None at the time of publication

C - Any items placed on the agenda by any Member of the Council for discussion

None at the time of publication

Benjamin Watts
General Counsel
03000 416814

Thursday, 16 January 2020

This page is intentionally left blank

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 19 November 2019.

PRESENT: Mr A Booth (Chairman), Mr A M Ridgers (Vice-Chairman), Mr M A C Balfour, Mr P V Barrington-King, Mrs P M Beresford, Mrs R Binks, Mr R H Bird, Mr I S Chittenden (Substitute for Mrs T Dean, MBE), Mr G Cooke, Mr R C Love, OBE, Dr L Sullivan and Mr J Wright

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P B Carter, CBE, Mr R W Gough, Mr R L H Long, TD, Ms K Greig and Mr P Luxmoore

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

11. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item A2)

Apologies had been received from Mrs Dean, Mr Farrell, Mr Garsed (Parent Governor) and Mr Roper (Church Representative). Mr Chittenden substituted for Mrs Dean and Ms Paterson substituted for Mr Roper.

The Chairman noted the absence, without apologies, of two of the Church Representatives and asked that a note be sent to them asking whether they wish to remain on the Scrutiny Committee.

12. Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this Meeting

(Item A3)

Dr Sullivan declared an interest, as her husband was employed by the County Council in the Early Help and Prevention Team.

13. Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 26 July 2019

(Item A4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2019 were a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

14. Minutes of the reconvened meeting of the Pupil Premium Select Committee held on 2 September 2019

(Item A5)

The Chairman noted that the information requested on 2 September had not been received and asked that this be provided to the Scrutiny Research Officer, for circulation to the Scrutiny Committee before the next meeting on 18 December 2019.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the reconvened meeting of the Pupil Premium Select Committee held on 2 September be noted.

15. Review of the Planned Provision of School Places within the Thanet Area
(Item C1)

Mr R Gough, Leader of the Council, Mr R Long, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, Mr P Carter, Kate Greig, Chair of Thanet Secondary Schools and Headteacher at King Ethelbert School and Paul Luxmoore, CEO Coastal Academies Trust were present for this item.

1. The Chairman welcomed the guests and invited them to introduce themselves and to explain why they were present. He explained that the Scrutiny Committee had no facility to overturn or change the decision made but that there was the ability to make comments back to the Executive for consideration.

2. The Chairman referred to the supporting exempt information supplied via email and confirmed that this should be dealt with appropriately and not passed on to any third party.

3. Mr Carter, as the Executive Member who signed the decision explained the background to his decision, including the necessity for more education provision in Thanet, projected and delivered housing numbers and the projection of future rolls in schools. Mr Carter had met with the Thanet Headteachers to explore their views around alternatives to building the Royal School for the Deaf and it was considered that there was a better solution for young people in Thanet and the ability to make better use of public money in expanding existing schools. He confirmed that there were proposed highway improvement works catering for increased pupils at King Ethelbert and Ursuline Schools. Mr Carter commented on the impressive team of Headteachers in Thanet who were educating some of the most difficult and challenging young people in Kent, but the schools were on a positive trajectory.

4. Mr Carter considered that less capital could be spent resulting in a better solution, the schools in question in Thanet were not running at net capacity and where schools ran an overprovision there was a detrimental effect on school budgets.

5. The projected numbers had not been as anticipated and it was considered that this was the right option, Mr Carter wished to find a way of finishing the Hartsdown School renovation and ensuring that vocational education was accessible for young people who were struggling academically in years 10 and 11.

6. The Leader clarified the process in terms of assessing numbers of pupils coming into schools in Thanet. In 2014 there were rising rolls in primary and since then there had been a shortfall in housing and double counting within the data provided by the NHS. There was also a shift in migration figures with net inward migration; this was less than previously and less than projected. KCC's process in relation to this had been robust; however there had been a major change from the data presented by the NHS.

7. Ms Greig explained her work with the Thanet Skills Studio, this needed to be collaborative and ensure that all schools were involved. Funding was needed to improve the facilities at Hartsdown. The school was rated by Ofsted as Requires

Improvement but with good leadership. The Headteachers wanted to use the available money to improve the current schools and to allow work with Thanet Skills Studio.

8. Paul Luxmoore spoke briefly about the popularity of schools which was complicated and was affected by reputation and Ofsted judgements; the latter were in turn affected by the ability of young people entering secondary schools. There was a correlation between Progress 8 and Ofsted and schools in Kent with the least able children had a lower Ofsted rating; this was a significant problem across Kent.

9. School leadership in Thanet was very strong, there were two National Leaders of Education, two Kent Leaders of Education and the direct involvement of three multi-academy trusts.

10. Members clarified that the Regional Schools Commissioner reported to the National Schools Commissioner who answered to the Minister, this matter had gone to Lord Agnew for his decision.

11. Mr Bird suggested that the Scrutiny Committee should consider a proposal that the Cabinet Member and Chairman of CYPE Cabinet Committee look at the pros and cons of Through Schools so that Members were better placed to judge their merits in future.

POST MEETING NOTE: This proposal was withdrawn at the end of the meeting.

12. Following a question about the Commissioning Plan and its lead times the Leader explained that there had not been an issue with the Commissioning Plan but with the process following the plan. The Commissioning Plan identified rising demand in 2014 and this was sought to be addressed in a variety of ways. It was not considered that the Commissioning Plan was at fault, but there were discrepancies with the NHS data, highlighted within a quality assurance audit, and in addition temporary moves to expand some schools and changes in patterns of migration.

13. One of the local members commented on the short notice of the notification of the decision, and that her comment was not included in the decision paperwork. The Member did agree with the reasoning behind the proposal however it was noted that the highways information was not available in the paperwork accompanying the notification and it would have been useful to know that the highways plan was ready. Mr Carter, as the decision taker, apologised for the late notice in consulting local members, he explained he was trying to ensure that they would support the decision and that the Regional Schools Commissioner would endorse it. Mr Carter confirmed that Sir Roger Gale MP had supported the Thanet Headteachers and his own opinion throughout the discussions.

14. In response to a Member raising concerns about Royal Harbour and whilst accepting Ofsted showed progress there were concerns that not enough progress had yet been made. It was considered that careful thought should be given around supporting a school taking on extra children, Mr Luxmoore and Ms Greig both offered an invitation to all Members to visit Royal Harbour, they reiterated that it had a strong team with a committed Headteacher and that progress over the two years had been

positive. Thanet was in a unique position with high calibre Headteachers wanting to work together on the basis that no school will fail.

15. One Member commented on the pattern of expanding schools and overcrowded schools, she asked whether there was capacity at the schools in question. Mr Luxmoore confirmed that they were only looking to expand schools that would be strengthened by expansion rather than undermined by it.

16. Members expressed disappointment that the Corporate Director was not present, however the focus of the meeting was on political decision-making on this matter.

17. In response to a query about whether the sponsor of the proposed new free school shared the concerns about viability when the application was made, the Leader explained that he didn't recall this being raised; however, he couldn't speak for the sponsor.

18. Ms Greig confirmed that the schools had a good track record of managing building works on site and this would certainly not affect the education of the young people.

19. A Member referred to the comment in the decision paperwork about Thanet District Council's housing projections being questioned and whether there were concerns in any other district? The Leader explained that an enormous amount of work was done with districts and borough councils and they were reasonably confident with the assumptions.

20. The Chairman asked Members if they wished to refer to the information set out in the exempt appendix to the report and hear the additional information provided by the witnesses and hence if they wished to pass a motion to exclude the press and public from the meeting. Members confirmed that they did wish to do this and, accordingly, the Chairman read out the motion to exclude the press and public from the meeting.

MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

(Open Minute of Exempt Discussion)

21. Members heard further confidential information from Mr Luxmoore and Ms Greig and then thanked them for attending and both guests left the room.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Committee note the information they had been provided with and thank the guests for attending the meeting.

By: Joel Cook & Anna Taylor – Scrutiny Research Officers
 To: Scrutiny Committee – 24 January 2020
 Subject: Affordable Housing Select Committee – Timetable
 Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: To advise Scrutiny Committee as to the timetable for the Affordable Housing Select Committee.

Introduction

1. At its meeting on 26 July 2019 the Scrutiny Committee agreed that following the conclusion of the Knife Crime Select Committee work should begin to establish the Select Committee on Affordable Housing.
2. A meeting with the Chair-designate and opposition spokespeople to draft the Select Committee's Terms of Reference took place in November. A timetable to was developed and to allow swift progress with the review, this was agreed, in consultation with the Chair and Spokespeople of the Scrutiny Committee, by the Select Committee at its first formal meeting on 17 December 2019.

Timetable

20 November 2019	Informal cross-party meeting for Committee to discuss the Terms of Reference of the review
17 December 2019	First meeting of Select Committee, to appoint the Chair and to discuss and agree the Terms of Reference of the review
Late December 2019/early January 2020	Christmas break
Mid January to early February 2020	Arrangements for hearing sessions, written evidence, visits and other evidence gathering methods
February 2020	Hearings
Late February 2020	Committee meets to identify key issues and to make recommendations
March 2020	Report writing, production of first draft
Early to late April 2020	Easter break
Late April/early May 2020	Committee discusses the first draft of the report and suggests amendments. Amendments carried out accordingly
Mid May 2020	Select Committee share the draft report with Cabinet Member(s) and Corporate Director(s)
Early June	Select Committee to agree the final report
12 June 2020	Despatch for Cabinet
22 June 2020	Report presented to Cabinet
9 July 2020	Despatch for County Council
16 July 2020	Report presented to County Council

Monitoring of Select Committee Recommendations

3. Following completion of the review and the consideration of the final report by County Council (as per timetable above), the work of the Select Committee will cease, while managing and responding to the Report becomes the responsibility of the Executive.
4. The relevant Executive Members and Directorates are required to produce an implementation plan detailing if and how the Executive intends to progress with the Select Committee's recommendations. This update will be presented to the Scrutiny Committee at an appropriate meeting not less than three months following the County Council consideration.
5. The Select Committee will be reconvened for a further update one year on from the County Council consideration, when they will have an opportunity to review progress made since the implementation plan was presented to the Scrutiny Committee. The minutes of the Select Committee meeting are reported to the Scrutiny Committee for noting at its next meeting. This concludes the formal process for monitoring Select Committee recommendations.
6. To illustrate the above process in practice, the most recent Select Committee Topic Reviews are at the following stages (First established to last established):

Pupil Premium Select Committee

Minutes of the reconvened Select Committee meeting held in September 2019 were noted by the Scrutiny Committee in November 2019.

- Select Committee closed.

Loneliness and Social Isolation Select Committee

Due to be reconvened in March / April 2020 for its One Year On update – minutes of this meeting to be reported to the May Scrutiny Committee meeting, after which the activity of the Select Committee will be concluded.

Knife Crime in Kent Select Committee

Executive currently developing an implementation plan to be presented to the Scrutiny Committee in early 2020.

Recommendation:

The Scrutiny Committee is invited to note the timetable for the Topic Review.

Contact: Anna Taylor / Joel Cook
Scrutiny.committee@kent.gov.uk
03000 416478 / 416892

Background documents:

Report to Scrutiny Committee:
26 July 2019 Select Committee Work Programme

Affordable Housing Select Committee:
17 December 2019 – Topic Review report

This page is intentionally left blank

By: Joel Cook & Anna Taylor – Scrutiny Research Officers
To: Scrutiny Committee – 24 January 2020
Subject: Kent Flood Risk Management Committee Annual Report
Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

To confirm the purpose and scope of Scrutiny Committee consideration of the Kent Flood Risk Management Committee (KFRMC) Annual Report.

The KFRMC operates within Kent County Council's (KCC) scrutiny suite, alongside the Scrutiny Committee. The Annual Report is an information item intended to highlight positive work undertaken by the KFRMC.

Introduction

1. The KFRMC is responsible for reviewing and scrutinising the exercise by risk management authorities of flood risk management functions or coastal erosion risk management functions which may affect the local authority's area.
2. The Annual Report is presented to the Scrutiny Committee for noting, providing an opportunity for the KFRMC to raise awareness of the scrutiny activity it has undertaken, scrutiny it intends to undertake in the future and to flag up any particular points of concern where required.
3. As the KFRMC performs a scrutiny function on behalf of KCC, the Scrutiny Committee is not being asked to scrutinise their activities or scrutinise flood risk management more generally as part of this item.

Recommendation:

To note the Kent Flood Risk Management Committee Annual Report.

Contact: Anna Taylor / Joel Cook
Scrutiny.committee@kent.gov.uk
03000 416478 / 416892

This page is intentionally left blank

From: Tony Hills, Chairman of the Kent Flood Risk Management Committee
To: Scrutiny Committee – 24 January 2020
Subject: The work of the Kent Flood Risk Management Committee
Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report provides the Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the work of the Kent Flood Risk Management for the period May 2018 to November 2019.

Recommendation(s): The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Kent Flood Risk Management Committee last reported to this Committee on 18 November 2018.
- 1.2 The Committee's Terms of Reference are set out at Appendix 1 to this report. The membership of the Committee comprises 7 Members of the County Council. There is also a standing invitation to each of the District Councils, the Internal Drainage Boards in Kent, Kent Fire and Rescue Service and KALC to send representatives to the meetings. All these representatives are treated as full Committee Members except for the formal items of business. The Committee's policy is to encourage attendance by as many organisations as wish to be represented. Attendance has dipped slightly as there has not been a county-wide flooding event in recent years, although there has been a significant number of highly localised emergencies.
- 1.3 Officer support to the Committee is provided by Tony Harwood (Resilience and Emergency Planning Manager) and Max Tant (Flood and Water Manager). Senior Officers from KCC Highways and the Environment Agency also report regularly to the meetings.
- 1.4. The Committee has met on four occasions following its last report to Scrutiny. The topics covered during this period were:
- The Highways Drainage Programme (in both 2018 and 2019),
 - The work of the National Flood Forum,
 - The Met Office's Climate Change Impacts Forecast (UKCP18),
 - The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Vision for the future of Kent,
 - The Middle Medway Flood Resilience Project,
 - The Environment Agency's Coastal Modelling for Kent,
 - The Kent Environment Strategy – Sustainable Communities,
 - The KCC Flood Response Plan Update,
 - Flood Risk Management Policies (Drainage and Planning; Land Drainage Policy; Section 19 Investigations),
 - Water Sustainability and Farmer Co-ordination (NFU),
 - Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans,
 - Kent Emergency Planning,
 - Standing reports on Environment Agency and Met Office Alerts and Warnings and KCC flood response activity.

- 1.5 In 2018/19, the Committee adopted a two-pronged approach to its work. It continued to gather as much information as possible on the effects of and preparedness for climate change whilst also assessing the County's ability to respond to events in the short term.
- 1.6 Nearly all of the items discussed were accompanied by presentational materials. These can be accessed on the KCC webpage for the meetings themselves or by requesting them from Democratic Services (see contact details at the end of the report).

2. Committee meeting of 12 November 2018.

- 2.1 The Committee received a joint report entitled "Meeting the Challenge of Highways Drainage" from Michael Payne (Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste) and Earl Bourner (Asset Manager, Drainage, Structures and Safety Barriers). Michael Payne set the scene by describing the problems of drainage maintenance facing the County and the strategy for dealing with them. Earl Bourner explained how KCC Highways was moving to an Asset Management approach in order to manage the drainage asset using a risk-based model. He also introduced many Members of the Committee to "*map 16*" which enabled digitally mapping of the County's drainage assets and consequent improvement to the maintenance process.
- 2.2 Sanjay Johal from the National Flood Forum (NFF) described his national charity's work in helping to support communities at risk of flooding across the country. It had set up and supported 250 active Flood Action Groups made up of community representatives. It helped communities to recover when they had been flooded, working to ensure that flood risk communities were at the centre of policy making and operational delivery. One of the NFF's key objectives was improving understanding of local flood risk within local communities. Sanjay Johal's presentation gave the Committee a greater understanding of the crucial role that voluntary organisations such as the NFF play in the field of flood risk management.

3. Committee meeting on 11 March 2019

- 3.1 Mark Rogers, the Met Office Advisor on Civil Contingencies gave a presentation on the Climate Change Impacts Forecast 2018 (UKPC 18) which had been launched at the end of 2018 using the most recent scientific evidence to provide a comprehensive analysis of how the climate in the UK could change by the end of the 21st Century. This document updated its predecessor which had been published in 2009. Its projections were based on the latest developments in climate science, including state-of-the-art global climate models, innovative regional climate models and up to date observational data. The headline findings were that there would be hotter, drier summers leading to more thunderstorms and torrential downpours. There would also be a greater frequency of milder, wetter winters leading to more river flooding. There would also be further rises in sea level around the entire UK coastline, particularly in the South. It was projected that by 2100 there would be a rise of between 29 cm and 115 cm depending on whether there was a low or high emission scenario.
- 3.2. Mark Rogers' presentation paid particular attention to the period 2020 to 2039. He reported that the average winter temperature was most likely to rise by up to 1°C in the 2020-39 period leading to a 10% increase in rainfall. Summer temperatures were expected to rise by 1 to 2° between 2020 and 2039 leading to a drop in rainfall of 10% (accompanied by severe, localised flash flooding). The projections for the rest of this century were even more significant.

- 3.3** Frank Heeley from the Environment Agency gave a presentation on the Flood Risk Vision for the future of Kent. He began by discussing the 25-year Environment Plan. This was an ambitious document put together by DEFRA covering all aspects of the environment, including waste, clean water, and the mitigation of climate change effects. One of its targets was the protection of 300,000 homes from flooding by the end of the current funding cycle in March 2021. This target was just over half-way to being fulfilled. He said that there were some 60,000 residential and commercial properties in Kent at risk of flooding from the rivers and the sea. This estimated figure could rise in the light of the revised climate change projections and because development continued to be permitted in Flood Zone 2. He also talked about funding pressures which could rise significantly as a result of the likely growth in summer flash flooding events.
- 3.4.** Peter Waring from the Environment Agency gave an update on the Middle Medway Flood Resilience Project. The area in question lay within the Low Weald, focused on the confluence of the Medway, the Beult and the Teise. It contained the parishes of Yalding, Hunton, Collier Street, Marden, Nettlestead, East Farleigh, West Farleigh Wateringbury, Teston and Barming as well as other smaller communities.
- 3.5** None of the potential measures for the reduction of flood risk could be implemented in this area without increasing the risk to other communities. For this reason, the only viable option was property flood resilience. He described its implementation in detail.
- 3.6** The Committee found this meeting particularly important because it gained an insight into the extent of the climate change problem and its impact, as well as the methods developed by the agencies who were undertaking mitigation and remedial measures in response to the significant complications posed by existing and future climatic conditions.

4. Committee meeting on 22 July 2019.

- 4.1** This meeting began with a presentation on Coastal Modelling delivered by Samantha Howe from the Environment Agency. She explained how these computer models helped to understand areas at risk. It identified scenarios for areas in both defended and undefended circumstances in the present day as well as the future, taking climate change into account and including increases in offshore wind speeds. There were three flood risk models covering the Kent coast. These were the North Kent coast from Erith to Seasalter, the East Kent coast from Seasalter to Hythe and for Romney Marsh (covering Hythe to Fairlight in East Sussex). These models were in the process of being updated to take account of recent tidal surge events and new data for extreme sea levels. She also set out the very localised level of detailed analysis that the modelling was able to provide.
- 4.2** Christine Wissink, the KCC Adaptations Manager gave the second presentation, which was on the topic of Sustainable Communities. It covered the work being undertaken in partnership with national and international organisations to make adaptations for climate change.
- 4.3** Identification of the necessary adaptations has been informed by the recently - developed Kent Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment; the Social Care Assessment on Flood Disadvantage; and the Severe Weather Impact Monitoring System (SWIMS). The Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment identified six priority risks, four of which

were significant in terms of the work of the Kent Flood Risk Management Committee. These were identified as:

- (a) Flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses and infrastructure;
- (b) Risk of storm events/intense rainfall impacting productivity and transport infrastructure. This was particularly significant for the Fruit industry;
- (c) Overheating, flooding, drought and coastal change risks for Kent's natural capital; and
- (d) Soil erosion and slope destabilisation as a result of flooding and drought impacting infrastructure, the natural environment and productivity. This was an additional risk for Kent beyond the national risks set out in the UK Climate Risk Assessment 2017 and was particularly significant for the Rail industry.

4.4 The meeting also received updates from Tony Harwood on the Flood Response Plan and from Max Tant on Flood Risk Management Policies.

5 Committee Meeting on 11 November 2019

5.1 The Committee received a presentation from Tom Ormesher of the National Farmers' Union on Water Sustainability and Farmer Co-ordination, which concentrated on the role that farmers were being encouraged to play in respect of flood, water quality and water resource management caused by climate change. This was crucially important, not least because of Kent's crucial contribution to the UK's agricultural economy.

5.2 Tom Ormesher also told the Committee that water was going to become a more restricted resource in the future. For example, the volume of water for irrigation would need to increase by 700% by the 2050s for present day levels of potato production to be able to continue.

5.3 The approach that Tom Ormesher was advocating was one of developing farmer engagement in a business-friendly manner to build up a willingness to identify and adopt the necessary measures. He explained how this approach had succeeded in the USA and elsewhere.

5.4 Earl Bournier gave an update report on Winter Readiness in which he described how Kent Highways' increased resources coupled with an asset management approach would lead to fewer incidents of highway flooding, roads and footways that were protected from the adverse effects of standing water, reduced disruption as a result of carriageway flooding, and greater resilience against increasingly frequent intense rainfall events.

5.5 Max Tant's report on Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans concentrated on the water industry which is under pressure from the Government, the National Infrastructure Commission and the Environment Agency to provide more long-term plans for drainage and wastewater. In response, it has brought together many organisations with responsibilities for differing aspects of drainage and flooding, to produce a new framework for long term drainage and wastewater planning. This framework will be used by water companies (in England and Wales) to produce their long-term drainage and wastewater management plans (DWMPs).

- 5.6** The intention is for the DWMPs to be developed collaboratively in partnership with organisations such as Lead Local Flood Authorities, Planning Authorities and Highways Authorities who have an interest in drainage and wastewater.
- 5.7** Tony Harwood And Lisa Guthrie (KCC Kent Resilience Team Manager) gave a joint presentation on Emergency Planning in Kent, setting out the detail of KCC's work in this field, both internally and in collaboration with other agencies. The Committee found it very useful to gain a broad perspective of the scope and detail of Emergency Planning work.
- 5.8** Tony Harwood provided his regular update on Environment Agency and Met Office Alerts and Warnings and KCC flood response activity. Over the past 18 months, the most common feature of these report has been the unpredictability of the number flooding events, with dramatic differences being recorded in the same month from one year to the next. Coastal flooding and localised flash flooding throughout the county have occurred throughout this period, whilst groundwater aquifers have often been very low. Even after a month of heavy rainfall, they are currently within the "normal" to "below normal" ranges.

6 Future activities

- 6.1** The Committee will maintain its two-pronged approach in 2020, continuing to receive updates on how various agencies are adapting to climate change, whilst also monitoring responses to current concerns.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1** Kent Flood Risk Management Committee is carrying out an important oversight and scrutiny function in receiving regular reports on the work carried out by KCC and its partner agencies. The Committee's influence has benefited from the continued positive engagement by those local authorities who regularly attend and by the positions of authority that their representatives hold within those organisations.
- 7.2** Climate change is undeniably having the effect of increasing the threat of flooding at the same time as major housing developments are taking place in Kent and the South East. The Committee's role is to examine whether and how KCC and all its partner agencies are working together effectively to reduce the risk and to respond to events. The general picture of preparedness is encouraging. Sudden flash flooding is a growing risk and is responded to very thoroughly whenever and wherever it occurs, whilst preparations for major coastal and fluvial floods and reservoir inundation are constantly being updated and tested. At the same time, research of a very high standard is being carried out by different agencies, and the information gathered is widely disseminated amongst them and shared with communities. The Met Office's Climate Change Impacts Forecast 2018 (UKPC 18) is the most important data source and its findings are being used to update most plans. There is a cross-over period where reviews which began before UKPC's publication are now, themselves being updated.
- 7.4** The Committee does not have the resources to help develop full co-ordination of all the partner agencies. This is the reason that the pending Select Committee on Climate Change is particularly important. The process of information-gathering should be a learning exercise for all concerned, whilst the conclusions and recommendations of the Select Committee should be enormously valuable for years to come.

8. Recommendation

8.1 The Committee is invited to note the content of this report

Tony Hills
Chairman of the Kent Flood Risk Management Committee
tony.hills@kent.gov.uk

Andrew Tait
Democratic Services Officer
03000 416749
andrew.tait@kent.gov.uk

Appendix 1

KENT FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

7 Members

Conservative: 6; Liberal Democrat: 1.

- 1 In accordance with the Localism Act 2011 (Schedule 2), this committee is responsible for reviewing and scrutinising the exercise by risk management authorities of flood risk management functions or coastal erosion risk management functions which may affect the local authority's area.
- 2 This committee is responsible for:
 - (a) the preparation monitoring and review (in conjunction with the Flood Risk Management Officer) of a strategic action plan for flood risk management in Kent, taking into account any Select Committee recommendations, the Pitt Review and relevant requirements of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.
 - (b) reporting annually (and more often if necessary) to the Scrutiny Committee and to the Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport.
 - (c) reviewing and responding to any consultation on the implementation of the Pitt Review and the future development of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.
 - (d) receiving reports from the Southern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee and responding as appropriate.
 - (e) the investigation of water resource management issues in Kent.
- 3 A risk management authority must comply with a request from this committee for information and a response to a report.
- 4 The committee may include (non-voting) persons who are not members of the authority, including representatives of District Councils, the Environment Agency and Internal Drainage Boards.

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank