

From: Max Tant, Flood Risk Manager

To: Flood Risk Management Committee

Subject: Local Flood Risk Management and the Local Strategy

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary:

Kent has a significant risk of flooding from a variety of sources. There are a number of risk management authorities in Kent with powers and duties for different types of flooding.

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 makes KCC a Lead Local Flood Authorities and gives us a role to provide strategic overview of local flood risk (flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses). As LLFA, KCC has prepared a Local Strategy which sets out how local flooding will be managed.

Recommendation:

That the committee note the paper.

1. Introduction

The County of Kent is at risk from all forms of flooding:

- River flooding
- Coastal flooding
- Sewer flooding
- Ordinary watercourse¹ flooding
- Surface water flooding and
- Groundwater flooding

There are a number of different bodies with powers and duties to manage these forms of flooding. Kent County Council (KCC) is one of these authorities.

KCC's flood risk management role comes from two acts. From the Highways Act 1980, this gives as the county responsibility for managing the roads in the county including providing drainage for them. And from the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, this makes KCC the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for Kent, with a role to provide strategic oversight for local flooding, which is flooding from surface water, ordinary watercourses and groundwater.

2. Flood risk management authorities

The Flood and Water management Act 2010 identifies a number of bodies as risk management authorities, with powers and duties that affect flood risk. Aside from KCC, there are a number of risk management authorities in Kent, these are:

¹ Ordinary watercourses are all watercourses that are not main rivers, which are rivers managed by the Environment Agency

The Environment Agency – they have a national strategic overview role for all flood risk in England, which includes:

- Providing a National Strategy for all forms of flood risk management;
- Overseeing the distribution of grant funds for flood defence works; and
- Reporting on the progress and delivery of flood risk management in England.

The Environment Agency also has a local role to manage the flood risks from main rivers and the sea.

Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) – they manage areas with special drainage need, usually flat poorly draining areas. They have powers to manage the ordinary watercourses in these areas. There are six IDBs in Kent, the East and West of Gravesend IDBs managed by the EA, the Upper and Lower Medway IDBs, the River Stour IDB and the Romney Marshes Area IDB.

Sewerage Undertakers – they manage the sewer network in Kent. There are two sewerage undertakers in Kent, Thames Water and Southern Water.

Coastal Districts – district authorities on the coast have powers to manage coastal erosion risk, which is closely related to coastal flooding.

The Highways Agency – they are responsible for the national strategy road network and its drainage.

Many other authorities have powers and duties that impact on flood risk management, but are not recognised as risk management authorities, for example parish councils.

3. Flood Risk in Kent

Kent is at significant risk of flooding. Approximately 70,000 properties are estimated to be at risk from coastal and river (from main rivers) flooding, according to mapping undertaken by the Environment Agency. The principle areas of flood risk are the Medway and Swale coastline and the Romney marshes, from coastal flooding, and the Rivers Medway and Stour valleys from main rivers.

Plans for managing these forms of flooding are known as Catchment Flood Management Plans, for river flooding, and Shoreline Management Plans, for coastal flooding. These plans are written by the Environment Agency.

Approximately 76,000 properties are estimated to be at risk from surface water flooding in Kent. This estimate comes from the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment that KCC has undertaken as one of our duties as LLFA. This assessment used national surface water mapping, prepared by the Environment Agency on behalf of Defra, to identify the risk from surface water flooding for each LLFA. Kent has been identified as the most at risk LLFA, with at risk of surface water flooding.

There is no data with which to estimate the risk from ordinary watercourses or groundwater flooding accurately.

KCC has since undertaken further studies to understand where the risks of local flooding are in Kent. These studies include surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourse flooding, but they are not quantitative, they only provide an indication of risk. These studies have shown that the surface water mapping may have overestimated the risks in some areas and underestimated it in others.

Areas with significant local flood risk are Dover, Deal, Folkestone, Paddock Wood and the Isle of Sheppey. Other areas where we are further investigating the local flood risks are Dartford, Margate, Ramsgate, the Upper Medway Valley and Whitstable.

4. Lead Local Flood Authority

The new role of the Lead Local Flood Authority gives KCC a strategic overview role for local flooding. As Lead Local Flood Authority, KCC has flood risk management powers and duties, which include:

- Providing a Local Strategy for managing local flood risk;
- A duty to investigate flooding;
- Powers to regulate ordinary watercourses;
- A duty to maintain a register of structures and features, and
- A role to promote sustainable drainage.

To help us manage the new burden of LLFA, Defra provides funds to each LLFA. KCC uses these funds to deliver these powers and duties.

5. The Local Strategy

The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (the Local Strategy) is a requirement of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (the Act) for Kent County Council. It is part of our new role as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) to oversee local flooding, which is flooding from surface water, ordinary watercourses and groundwater. This section gives an overview of the local strategy. The local strategy can be found here:

http://www.kent.gov.uk/local_flood_strategy

5.1 Requirements of the Local Strategy

The Act sets out the minimum that a local strategy must contain and, in accordance with this, the Kent Local Flood Risk Management Strategy details:

- The risk management authorities in the relevant area.
- The flood and coastal erosion risk management functions that may be exercised by those authorities in relation to the area.
- The objectives for managing local flood risk and the measures proposed to achieve those objectives.
- How and when the measures are expected to be implemented.
- The costs and benefits of those measures, and how they are to be paid for.
- The assessment of local flood risk for the purpose of the strategy.
- How and when the strategy is to be reviewed.
- How the strategy contributes to the achievement of wider environmental objectives.

All risk management authorities must act consistently with the local strategy, with the exception of water companies, who must act with regard to the local strategy.

5.2 Objectives

The Local Strategy sets out the following objectives for flood risk management in Kent (see Section 4 of the Local Strategy), which all Risk Management Authorities in the county must act consistently with:

1. Improving the understanding of the risks of flooding from surface runoff, groundwater and ordinary watercourses in Kent.
2. Reducing the impact of flooding on people and businesses in Kent.
3. Ensuring that development in Kent takes account of flood risk issues and plans to effectively manage any impacts.
4. Providing clear information and guidance on the role of the public sector, private sector and individuals in flood risk management in Kent and how those roles will be delivered and how authorities will work together to manage flood risk.
5. Ensuring that emergency plans and responses to flood incidents in Kent are effective and that communities understand the risks and their role in an emergency.

The local strategy aims to coordinate the work of KCC with the Environment Agency, local authorities, water companies, internal drainage boards and other partners to better understand flood risk in the county and provide effective solutions to protect the people and economy of Kent from flooding.

5.3 Action plan

The Local Strategy includes a 12 month action plan (see section 9 of Strategy) to deliver the objectives, which is split into three parts:

1. The actions KCC will deliver countywide to meet the objectives of the Flood and Water Management Act.
2. The local actions that KCC will undertake to better understand flood risks, including Surface Water Management Plans in the areas identified as highest risk.
3. The actions KCC will deliver in partnership with other risk management authorities.

The action plan will be reviewed annually. The annual action plan and other measures to deliver the Local Strategy will be submitted to the EHW Cabinet Committee, as requested at their meeting on 23 April 2013.

6. Conclusions

Kent has a significant risk of flooding from a variety of sources. There are a number of risk management authorities in Kent with powers and duties for different types of flooding.

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 makes KCC a Lead Local Flood Authorities and gives us a role to provide strategic overview of local flood risk. As LLFA, KCC has prepared a Local Strategy which sets out how local flooding will be managed.

7. Recommendation

That the committee note the paper.

8. Background Documents

The Flood and Water Management Act:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/pdfs/ukpga_20100029_en.pdf

National Strategy for Flooding and Coastal Erosion Risk Management,

Environment Agency: www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/policy/130073.aspx

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Kent; KCC, 2013

http://www.kent.gov.uk/local_flood_strategy

Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for Kent, KCC, 2011

[http://www.kent.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/flood_risk_management/how_w
e_manage_flood_risk/preliminary_flood_risk.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/flood_risk_management/how_we_manage_flood_risk/preliminary_flood_risk.aspx)

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