

To: Kent Flood Risk Management Committee – 10th March 2015

From: Michael Harrison, Chairman of Kent Flood Risk Management Committee

Subject: Environment Agency and Met Office Alerts and Warnings and KCC flood response activity since last meeting.

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: To update Kent Flood Risk Management Committee on Environment Agency and Met Office Alerts and Warnings and KCC flood response activity since the last meeting of the Committee on 17th November 2014. Members are requested to note this report.

1. Background

1.1 KCC Resilience and Emergencies Unit and Contact Point receive Environment Agency Flood Alerts and Warnings and Met Office Severe Weather Alerts and Warnings by e-mail and fax on a 24 hour basis. Potential impacts upon communities, infra-structure and the wider environment are then assessed and a response mobilised as required.

1.2 Some 70,000 properties in Kent are located within areas identified as potentially at risk of fluvial or tidal flooding. Where practically possible, these properties are offered a Flood Warning Service by the Environment Agency. However, other parts of the county are also vulnerable to surface and ground water flooding. Early warning of flood risk to communities (including areas outside of floodplains) is delivered through Flood Guidance Statements, Severe Weather Warnings and Kent Resilience Forum Severe Weather Advisory Group.

1.3 More precisely geographically focused Flood Warning Service zones were introduced by the Environment Agency on 29th October 2014. This change was informed by lessons learned from the flooding events experienced during winter 2013/14, and has undoubtedly enhanced the effectiveness of this service.

2. Latest situation

2.1 Autumn and winter 2014/15 did not bring the intensity of severe weather events experienced in winter 2013/14. However, statistically this period was, as forecast, slightly wetter and warmer than average, and thus continues the recent climatic trend.

2.2 Since 11th November 2014 50 Environment Agency flood alerts, 9 warnings and no severe warnings were issued¹. This contrasts starkly with the corresponding period last year when 63 alerts, 41 warnings and 5 severe warnings were issued.

¹ please see appendix 1

2.3 Further, 5 yellow Severe Weather Alerts and Warnings have been issued for heavy rain and the risk of surface water flooding, and 5 Yellow Alerts and Warnings for high winds and gales since the last meeting². Again this evidences a less extreme weather picture than was experienced over the same period last year, when 87 Severe Weather Warnings covering Kent were issued by the Met Office (including 58 for heavy rain).

2.4 The Thames Barrier was closed on 4 occasions, for both test and operational reasons. This contrasts with 49 closures in the equivalent period last year.

2.5 A total of 11 flooding related incidents were reported to the 24/7 KCC Emergency Planning Duty Officer since the last meeting, encompassing surface water flooding affecting property (primarily affecting Ashford and Isle of Sheppey), and one serious subsidence event. The figure for the corresponding period last year was 66.

3. Next Steps

3.1 September 2015 will experience the maximum tidal range in the natural 19 year astronomical tide cycle. The main risk from tidal flooding is November to March, however, vigilance will need to be maintained throughout this year and KCC, the Environment Agency and other partners are currently working to enhance their resilience to the east coast tidal surge risk.

3.2 Members will continue to be regularly updated on flood alerts and response in Kent.

4. Recommendations

4.1 That Members:

- Note the level of alerts received since the last meeting of the Kent Flood Risk Management Committee; and
- Contribute any additional matters arising from debate by the Committee.

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Background documents: None

² please see appendix 2

Appendix 1: Environment Agency Flood Alerts and Warnings issued since 17th November 2014

Flood Zone	Date issued	Status
Rivers Eden and Eden Brook area	23 rd November 2014	Alert
Upper River Medway Area	23 rd November 2014	Alert
River Bourne Area	23 rd November 2014	Alert
Shuttle and Cray Catchments	23 rd November 2014	Alert
Darent Catchment	23 rd November 2014	Alert
Plenty, Swalecliffe and West Brooks Area	23 rd November 2014	Alert
Rivers on the Isle of Sheppey	23 rd November 2014	Alert
Upper River Stour Area	23 rd November 2014	Alert
Rivers on the Isle of Sheppey	26 th November 2014	Alert
Rivers on the Isle of Sheppey	2 nd December 2014	Alert
Upper River Stour Area	3 rd December 2014	Alert
Plenty, Swalecliffe and West Brooks Area	3 rd December 2014	Alert
Lower River Stour Area	3 rd December 2014	Alert
Rivers on the Isle of Sheppey	11 th December 2014	Alert
River Bourne from Hadlow to East Peckham	26 th December 2014	Alert
Upper River Stour Area	26 th December 2014	Alert
Rivers on the Isle of Sheppey	26 th December 2014	Alert
Upper River Stour area	3 rd January 2015	Alert
Rivers on the Isle of Sheppey	8 th January 2015	Alert
River Beult area	8 th January 2015	Alert
Lower River Stour	9 th January 2015	Alert
Coast from Pegwell Bay to Deal including the Tidal Stour	10 th January 2015	Alert
Lower River Stour area	12 th January 2015	Alert
Lower River Medway area	12 th January 2015	Alert
River Rother area	12 th January 2015	Alert
Upper River Medway area	12 th January 2015	Alert
River Sheppey	12 th January 2015	Alert
River Darent	12 th January 2015	Alert
Collier Street	14 th January 2015	Warning
Little Venice Country Park and Marina	14 th January 2015	Warning
River Medway between Yalding and Maidstone	14 th January 2015	Warning
River Teise and Medway at Paddock Wood and Laddingford	14 th January 2015	Warning
River Teise and Lesser Teise between Horsmonden and Claygate	14 th January 2015	Warning
Rivers on the Isle of Sheppey	14 th January 2015	Alert
Yalding including Benover and Congelow	14 th January 2015	Warning
River Medway between Penshurst and the Leigh Barrier	14 th January 2015	Warning
Properties on the Teise in Lamberhurst and Goudhurst	14 th January 2015	Alert
Plenty, Swalecliffe and West Brooks Area	14 th January 2015	Alert
Middle River Medway Area	14 th January 2015	Alert
Hamstreet Arm Area	15 th January 2015	Alert
Aylesford Stream between Hinxhill and Ashford	15 th January 2015	Alert
Lees Road, Laddingford	15 th January 2015	Alert
Isle of Sheppey and Coast from Kemsley to Seasalter	24 th January 2015	Alert
Coast from Pegwell Bay to Deal including the Tidal Stour	24 th January 2015	Alert
Isle of Sheppey and Coast from Kemsley to Seasalter	20 th February 2015	Alert
Coast from Dartford to Allhallows	20 th February 2015	Alert
Tidal Medway, Medway Estuary and Isle of Grain	20 th February 2015	Alert
River Rother area	20 th February 2015	Alert
Coast from Pegwell Bay to Deal including the Tidal Stour	20 th February 2015	Alert
River Beult area	20 th February 2015	Alert
Coast from Sandgate to Dungeness	20 th February 2015	Alert
Coast from Dartford to Allhallows	20 th February 2015	Alert
Tidal Medway, Medway Estuary and Isle of Grain	20 th February 2015	Alert
Coast from Kemsley to Seasalter	20 th February 2015	Alert
Coast from Pegwell Bay to Deal including the Tidal Stour	21 st February 2015	Alert
Isle of Sheppey and Coast from Kemsley to Seasalter	21 st February 2015	Alert
Tidal Medway, Medway Estuary and Isle of Grain	21 st February 2015	Alert
Coast from Dartford to Allhallows	21 st February 2015	Alert
Coast from Fairlight to Dungeness including the Tidal Rother	23 rd February 2015	Alert

Appendix 1: Met Office Severe Weather Flood Alerts and Warnings issued since 17th November 2014

Met Office Alerts and Warnings	Date issued	Status
Yellow Warning of Rain for London and South East England	23 rd November 2014	Warning
Yellow Alert of Wind for London and South East England	8 th December 2014	Alert
Yellow Alert of Wind for London and South East England	9 th December 2014	Alert
Yellow Alert of Wind for London and South East England	10 th December 2014	Alert
Yellow Warning of Rain for London and South East England	8 th January 2015	Warning
Yellow Warning of Gales for London and South East England	11 th January 2015	Warning
Yellow Alert of Rain for London and South East England	11 th January 2015	Alert
Yellow Warning of Rain for London and South East England	12 th January 2015	Warning
Yellow Warning of Rain for London and South East England	12 th January 2015	Warning
Yellow Alert of Wind for London and South East England	12 th January 2015	Alert