



Cabinet Working Group on Flooding

An investigation into the flood events of 19 – 20 July and 8 – 10 August 2014.

February 2015

Cabinet Working Group on Flooding

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A Cabinet Working Group was set up after a recommendation from Cabinet on 22 August 2014 following heavy rainfall events on 19 – 20 July and 8 – 10 August 2014 where, in some parts of the borough over half the monthly average rainfall fell in one hour, causing flooding of residential and business properties. The establishment of the working group was ratified at a Full Council meeting on 25 September 2014.
- 1.2 As the designated Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) the Council also has a legal duty, under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, to

investigate flooding in the borough where it considers it necessary and appropriate. Whilst the wording of the legislation is relatively loose the Council has decided to investigate all instances of internal property flooding, flooding of critical infrastructure and flooding of the strategic highway. These investigations were progressed at the same time as the working group – more information can be found in Section 10 – ‘Section 19 Investigations’.

- 1.3 The Working Group is still able to make recommendations separate to these investigations as its remit is different. The Section 19 investigations will look at specific causes and options for reducing the risk of flooding at each of the locations affected. Whereas, the Working Group will be making recommendations on the wider issues of preparedness, maintenance, use of sandbags, responsibilities to respond and the role that the wider community can play.
- 1.4 Once both sets of investigations are complete they should be read in conjunction to represent the response of the Council to the events in July and August.

2 MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1 The following members were on the Working Group:
 - Cllr Watson (Chair)
 - Cllr Burton
 - Cllr Thurogood
 - Cllr Colquhoun
 - Cllr Stinson

3 SCOPE

- 3.1 The terms of reference were set out in the Cabinet reports as follows:
 - Undertake a review of the impact of recent flooding (during July and August 2014) to residential and commercial properties and the Highways network.
 - To review the Council’s operational responsibilities including emergency responses, maintenance of gullies and drains, provision of sandbags and responsibilities for the protection of homes and commercial properties, as well as communications during flooding or other emergency events.
 - Explore the roles and responsibilities of other risk management authorities and the wider community in relation to flood risk management.
 - Make recommendations to Cabinet on improvements that can be made within the Council’s budgetary situation to improve the borough’s resilience and responses to future flooding events.
- 3.2 The Group met for the first time on 16 September 2014 to discuss the terms of reference and how they would gather the evidence. This initial discussion included what information would be needed and how it would be collected. It was resolved that members of the group would be provided with some

background information about the roles and responsibilities with regards to flooding so that they would be able to decide who the group would need to speak to.

- 3.3 A follow-up meeting was arranged for 29 September 2014. The Group was provided with background information on the different responsibilities in flood risk management; the areas affected in the borough; the use of sandbags; flood insurance and the draft local flood risk management strategy. The information was reviewed by the members in the meeting. They also decided that in order to seek specific information on the July and August events it would be necessary to talk to those affected by flooding and the risk management authorities with responsibilities.

4 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 4.1 The following is a list of the background information that was provided to the members of the Working Group:
- Information on the responsibilities of those involved in flood risk management.
 - Officers in the Council with responsibilities.
 - Lists of flooded properties (20 July and 8-10 Aug)
 - Maps showing where the flooded properties are.
 - A list of the wards and parishes affected.
 - Details of the different Section 19 investigations.
 - A briefing on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and the most recent draft.
 - A briefing on the current and future provision of flood insurance.
 - Information on sandbags including the draft Council policy and guidance on their use that was published by the Environment Agency.
 - A copy of the Action Plan from the Select Committee into the 2007 floods (version that went to the Overview and Scrutiny Board in December 2008).

5 INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED/EVIDENCE GATHERED

- 5.1 Two meetings in public were organised to be held at Grimsby Town Hall: 6.30pm on Tuesday 4 November and 2pm on Wednesday 5 November 2014. The meetings were publicised in the local media and everyone who reported property flooding was written to.
- 5.2 People were asked to inform the Council that they wished to attend to give evidence on their experience of the flooding. 23 people presented to the group which including residents, businesses and ward councillors. Those who could not attend in person were also able to write, email or telephone their evidence – 41 submissions were received. A number of residents submitted video clips which were reviewed by the members.
- 5.3 A meeting was also arranged on Tuesday 11 November 2014 to get information

from the risk management authorities and other organisations who either have legal responsibilities with regards to flooding or who responded during the flood events. This included:

- The Environment Agency.
- Anglian Water.
- Humberside Fire and Rescue Service.
- Highways and Transport including Drainage (NELC).
- Neighbourhood Services/Gulley Cleaning (NELC).
- Emergency Planning (NELC).
- Communications (NELC).

- 5.4 Information was also sought from the Town and Parish Council Liaison Committee meeting on 27 November 2014 to establish their role in response to flooding, how prepared they are and what support they feel they need.
- 5.5 Any information gathered by the Working Party that was relevant to the on-going Section 19 investigations was also passed to the Council's Drainage and Coastal Defence team who were undertaking this work.
- 5.6 After all the information had been gathered the Working Group met on 12 December 2014 to discuss the evidence that had been submitted and formulate recommendations that could address the problems raised.

6 EVIDENCE FROM MEETINGS IN PUBLIC

- 6.1 The minutes of the meeting held in public are attached in Appendices B and C.

7 EVIDENCE FROM WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

- 7.1 Written submissions were received from those who were unable to attend one of the meetings held in public. This included emails, letters and records of telephone conversations. As these were submitted in confidence they have not been attached to this report but copies of all were sent to all members of the Working Group for them to review.

8 EVIDENCE FROM THE RISK MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES

- 8.1 A summary of the presentations to the Working Group on 11 November 2014 is in Appendix D.

9 LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

- 9.1 The Council is currently working on producing the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy as is required by the Flood and Water Management Act

2010. Substantial progress on this has been made to produce a draft version which has been through a public consultation exercise and one session of a Scrutiny Working Group made up of members from the Regeneration, Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel. It was put on hold whilst the floods Working Group and Section 19 investigations were carried out so that amendments to the draft could be made if needed.

- 9.2 The Strategy contains a lot of information on the roles and responsibilities of different organisations and property owners in the borough. The key aim of the strategy is to make communities more aware of their flood risk so that they are also able to contribute to managing and reducing this. Work can now recommence on completing the strategy to get it adopted by the Council taking into account the findings of the Working Group.
- 9.3 The strategy contains a series of objectives and measures which are designed to address all flood risk issues and determine how the Council and partners will approach their flood risk management work. Many of the recommendations to be made by the Working Group will link to measures already included in the strategy – where this is the case it has been highlighted.
- 9.4 The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy is also accompanied by an Action Plan which is to be published separately. This will detail the work that is needed to reduce the flood risk in the Borough. This will take account of the findings from the Working Group and the Section 19 investigations and can be updated when new information becomes available.

10 SECTION 19 INVESTIGATIONS

- 10.1 These are carried out as a legal responsibility given to the Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The investigations were carried out separately to the Working Group but fed the findings into the Group as these became available. 23 separate investigations were undertaken.
- 10.2 A report detailing these investigations will be presented to the Regeneration, Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel. This will identify the causes of flooding at each location, which authority has the power or responsibility to act, and what the potential options are for reducing the risk in the future. The report will be published on the Council website.

11 DISCUSSION/FINDINGS

- 11.1 The Working Group reviewed all of the evidence carefully after the submissions and met again on 12 December 2014 to discuss the key findings and the recommendations that should be made to resolve the issues raised. The information reviewed generally fitted into the following categories and this is how they are presented in the remainder of this section:
 - Being prepared

- During the event
- Sandbags
- Follow-up work/actions
- Implications
- Suggested causes
- Emergency planning and response
- Communications

11.2 The recommendations are summarised in Section 14 and with a detailed breakdown with identified actions presented in a table in Appendix A.

Being Prepared

11.3 The flooding that occurred in the borough in July and August was a combination of surface water and sewer flooding. These are extremely difficult or impossible to predict, as will be discussed later in the report.

11.4 It is generally possible to predict that heavy rainfall will affect a part of the country a few days in advance. It is much more difficult to predict the time and precise location that this rain will fall. The intensity of rainfall will also vary throughout the storm. This is clear from the rainfall statistics that were presented by the Environment Agency which showed significant differences between rain gauges located across the borough.

11.5 A key source of information on the potential flooding comes from the Flood Guidance Statement issued by the Flood Forecasting Centre. This is used to determine the level of response required by the relevant authorities. Yellow (low risk) warnings do not normally trigger any formal response as they occur frequently throughout the year and mostly do not lead to any serious flooding. The amber (medium risk) warnings will trigger a teleconference from the Flood Advisory Service.

11.6 For the July event there was an Amber warning issued for the 19th (Saturday) and a Yellow warning for the 20th (Sunday). This triggered a teleconference on the 18th and a further one on the 19th. As the Amber warning passed with no incident and the Sunday remained on a Yellow warning the authorities were advised to 'stand down'.

11.7 For the August event there was initially no warning for the 8th (Friday), this was only updated to a Yellow warning on the morning of the 8th itself when the Flood Guidance Statement was released at 10:51am. The warning for the 10th (Sunday) remained as Yellow throughout the weekend and as such no teleconferences were organised in response.

11.8 The Environment Agency provided some statistics on the accuracy of the Flood Guidance Statement with regards to predicting the type of flooding seen in July and August. Surface water flooding has a 74% false alarm rate. When this is compared to a 27% false alarm rate for river flooding this highlights the progress that is still needed to increase knowledge and capability in this area.

- 11.9 The Council does not have the resources to rectify this situation and must rely on developments at a national level and the service currently provided by the Flood Forecasting Centre.
- 11.10 The Council does have access to the Hazard Manager service provided by the Met Office which can be used to track the direction and movement of storms but this does not improve the accuracy of which areas will be affected and when the rain might fall.
- 11.11 This leads to the conclusion that there is little that can currently be done differently or better to predict where in the borough this type of flooding can occur with the required accuracy for the Council to mobilise any effective response. Accurate warning will not always be available. Whilst more can be done to identify areas that are likely to be susceptible to surface water flooding providing an accurate warning in advance of it happening is not currently possible.
- 11.12 This situation makes it even more important to make people aware of their susceptibility to this type of flooding so that they can be prepared in advance.
- 11.13 The rapid onset of the flooding in July and August described by those who were affected means that without an accurate warning the Council would actually be unable to respond in an effective way. If property owners were able to be more prepared they would be able to react immediately on the onset of heavy rainfall or the first signs that flooding could occur. This could mean they are deploying flood barriers or sandbags or moving possessions to areas of safety. This is much quicker than the Council could react and is much more likely to result in properties being protected from flooding.
- 11.14 Responsibility for protecting private property actually rests with the owner and not organisations such as the Council or the Environment Agency. The Council also has no duty to provide sand bags to members of the public. Many residents do not currently undertake specific measures to protect themselves and their property. This is partly because they are unaware of the risk, as many reported to the Working Group, and sometimes unaware of their own personal responsibility.
- 11.15 This highlights that there is more work to be done to make people aware as until they are they are unable to be prepared.
- 11.16 Members recognised the need for the Council to have information on who was responsible for the different parts of the drainage system. The Council currently has an Asset Register as this is legally required by Section 21 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. This shows which parts of the system public authorities are responsible for. The register is currently available to the public on request but there are plans to make it available online. Members thought it would be useful for people to have access to it during a flood event, particularly as ward members are often the first to be contacted by residents during flood

events.

During the Event

- 11.17 As the events mostly occurred outside of normal business hours for the Council there were not as many staff available to take calls in the call centre or other officers to divert calls to. Some officers were called in, for example, to help with gulley cleaning.
- 11.18 The Drainage and Coastal Defence team explained how their role during a flood event is to attend areas affected, advise on whether it is likely to get worse based on forecasts and current weather conditions and assess whether or not any immediate mitigation is possible. During the July flooding they were not contacted and during the August flooding they were only contacted by the Humber Emergency Planning Service (HEPS) and not through a trigger caused by the calls through the Council switchboard. This situation highlights the need to consider the internal arrangements and trigger levels that the Council operates for this type of event especially when it occurs outside of the normal working hours.
- 11.19 These need to be linked with the arrangements that are used by the other risk management authorities as it is important to know what actions they are taking and where during the same event. This will avoid duplication of effort and ensure more efficient use of all resources.
- 11.20 During the event many residents had difficulty contacting the relevant authorities. In the case of the Council the switchboard become overwhelmed with calls which had to be dealt with by the out of hours service.
- 11.21 People also experienced difficulty finding out who was responsible for the flooding and which authority it should be reported to. Some felt that they were passed from 'pillar to post' and that the authorities were trying to avoid taking responsibility for what had happened.
- 11.22 This was also reported as a national problem for the summer floods of 2007 which was aimed to be resolved by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 which clarified responsibilities and made the Council the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). As the LLFA the Council has responsibility for the coordination of local flood risk management and so are in a position to advise on which of the risk management authorities has legal powers or responsibilities for the flooding. Undertaking the Section 19 investigations can clarify this after an event and the draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy does also contain this information which people can make reference to.
- 11.23 Members of the Working Group and some of those who gave evidence explained that there are some existing telephone services provided to the public where people can report concerns which are then passed on to the relevant responsible authority. The service provided by Freeman Street Resource Centre was given as an example. The Council will look into whether these

services could also be utilised for flood events or what best practice can be learned and implemented elsewhere.

- 11.24 It is evident from the submissions to the Working Group that more work needs to be done to communicate the responsibilities to members of the public. The risk management authorities also need to ensure that the information they give out is accurate to avoid causing further confusion and distress to those affected by flooding.
- 11.25 The Working Group heard from many residents about how they felt they had been left to deal with the flooding on their own. Anglian Water confirmed that they had all their operatives and some additional contracted staff out dealing with issues and the Council's gully cleaning service was attending areas that flooded. It should be acknowledged that the services provided by authorities will be stretched and not everybody will see them when they may feel they ought to. This once again highlights the need for people to be prepared for flooding.
- 11.26 Specific concerns were raised about how the more vulnerable members of the community are affected by flooding and the aftermath. The members of the Working Group suggested that there are some existing services provided to vulnerable people by charities and social services which may be able to provide assistance to those who need it. Further investigation into the services available should be carried out.
- 11.27 Flooding was reported to have been made worse by vehicles continuing to drive through floodwater. This creates waves which can force water further into property causing more damage. Many residents and councillors felt that more should be done to close roads or allow residents/groups to do this.
- 11.28 The Council find it difficult to attend the road closures as quickly as they are needed due to the need to mobilise resources in a short period of time. It was suggested that the police may be able to assist in these circumstances.
- 11.29 This was discussed with Humberside Police who have confirmed that they do have the power to close roads if they are first on the scene and deem it necessary. This tends to be the case if there is a danger that cars will break down causing roads to be blocked and emergency access being restricted. Support is then usually provided by the Highways Authority.
- 11.30 This does not address the concerns of residents and members further investigations are required into what options there are for closing roads as soon as possible to prevent further flooding to residents. This will need to consider the legal issues.

Sandbags

- 11.31 One of the biggest requests to the Council during a flood event is for sandbags to be provided. The current position of the Council is that these are not

provided to members of the public. Their use is reserved for:

- Prevention of loss of life or serious injury
- The maintenance of access for the emergency services
- Vulnerable or infirm residents who are unable to implement any self-help methods of property protection.
- Protection of the primary highway network and transportation routes.
- Protection of vital facilities within the community.
- Protection of NELC property.

- 11.32 The number of requests suggests that many people are not aware of this. Some members of the public also went to the Doughty Road depot and were turned away. It is therefore clear that the confusion over the provision of sandbags is not helping residents to prepare for flooding.
- 11.33 The members of the Working Group were provided with information on the use of sandbags which included benefits and disadvantages.
- 11.34 To summarise, they are relatively cheap and can keep water out for short periods of time when used correctly (Environment Agency guidance is available to provide more information on this). The downside of their use is that they can take time to fill, are heavy to carry and many are needed to form an effective barrier.
- 11.35 Considering the previously discussed difficulties in predicting the location and timing of surface water flooding, distribution of sandbags by the Council in response to flooding is unlikely to help. By the time they are filled and sent to an area affected, the flood is likely to have been and already caused damage. It would also be unaffordable to provide all residents who are susceptible to flooding with sandbags in advance of flooding happening.
- 11.36 There are more successful products that are available for use to keep water out of a property such as door barriers and air brick covers. These are easier and quicker to use and install than sandbags which are heavy and often only good for one use as they become contaminated with dirty water. The Council will need to ensure that these options are explained to those who can benefit from them.
- 11.37 Humberside Fire and Rescue Service explained to the Working Group how their request for sandbags to protect a row of vulnerable properties was turned down after much difficulty in contacting a relevant officer within the Council.
- 11.38 The Working Group believes that sandbags should not be provided to people to protect their own individual property and instead should be reserved for more strategic purposes such as maintaining access for emergency services and critical infrastructure.
- 11.39 A draft Sandbag Policy currently exists but this needs to be reviewed, formally adopted and communicated to all authorities, residents and ward members. It should clearly set out when their use will be considered and who will make this decision. The communication of the policy should ensure that people are

aware of the alternatives to using sandbags. Options for promoting the alternatives will need to be fully investigated.

- 11.40 This does not prevent residents from keeping their own supply but they are not recognised as the easiest or most successful way of keeping water from entering property.

Follow-up Work/Actions

- 11.41 After the flooding it was expected that people wanted answers to the causes and who was responsible. Much of this will come from the findings of the Section 19 investigations to be report separately to the Working Group.
- 11.42 There were many submissions which questioned the suitability of the drainage system and existing maintenance regime for managing the risk of flooding. Residents wanted the Council to do everything in its power to avoid a repeat of the flooding. Some felt that the Council had the power to force Anglian Water to carry out work on the sewers. This is not the case. As a risk management authority they do have a duty to cooperate with other authorities and are subject to the scrutiny process of the Council. The Council will continue to work with Anglian Water to resolve flooding issues.
- 11.43 The Council is already looking into some short, medium and long term options for reducing the risk of flooding as part of the Section 19 process. However, there remains a need to fully consider how to deal with the predicted effects of climate change causing rain to fall in more intense storms in the long term and the impacts this will have on the drainage systems within the borough.
- 11.44 It is therefore imperative that the Council builds on the existing partnership arrangements that have been established with all of the risk management authorities, particularly Anglian Water, to address these issues in the long term.
- 11.45 The Council has regular meetings with the risk management authorities that work in the borough: Environment Agency, Anglian Water and North East Lindsey Drainage Board. These provide the opportunity to share information and resources and to discuss operational issues. These have already been used to commence discussions with the Environment Agency and Anglian Water over their areas of responsibility.
- 11.46 There is currently no formal forum for members of the public to be involved in these decisions specifically relating to flood risk. The Council does respond to concerns raised by residents and will engage directly with those affected when looking at options to reduce the risk of flooding. The success of any formal arrangements to involve residents and businesses depends very much on their willingness to be involved. The level of interest in this type of arrangement can be assessed when the Council engages with communities on the outcomes of the Section 19 investigations.

Implications

- 11.47 Many of those who suffered flooding of their property expressed concern at being able to sell their property in the future or obtain affordable insurance that would cover them for flood damage.
- 11.48 The Council has no power to directly influence either the housing or the insurance markets.
- 11.49 The Group recognises that the government has legislated to make changes to the insurance market to ensure that affordable cover is provided for those at the most severe risk – known as Flood Re. This principle of the changes is that premiums would be capped but this would be gradually increased over a period of 25 years. A transition plan will be produced and communicated which will explain how the scheme proposes to manage the transition to risk-reflective prices by the end of the scheme. This allows time for people to implement measures to reduce their own risk so that their premium can be reduced to reflect this.
- 11.50 This proposal only applies to those at the most severe risk and does not cover commercial property. The government considers that the insurance market will apply the principles of the Flood Re scheme for other properties that do not qualify for it.
- 11.51 Methods for protecting properties include small scale property level protection, improvements to drainage systems and larger scale flood defence schemes. This reflects the role to be played by householders and risk management authorities. The authorities are able to provide information to residents to supply to their insurers as evidence that work has taken place. Ultimately it must be recognised the price of premiums outside of the Flood Re scheme are a decision for the insurance companies and not the Council.
- 11.52 Many submissions to the Working Group explained the disruption to normal life and the costs to businesses that were affected. Also, the stress caused and the worry that further rainfall will lead to a repeat of the flooding. An event lasting a relatively short length of time can have consequences for many months as well as expensive costs for residents and businesses.
- 11.53 This further highlights the importance of all contributing to reducing the risk and gives further incentive for property owners to be prepared with help and support of the relevant authorities.
- 11.54 Concerns were raised about the health hazards associated with raw sewerage in people houses and on the streets. Anglian Water confirmed that if reported to them they will be able to attend and clear up waste and disinfect the area. Some residents were not aware of this service and others did not experience this when they requested it. However, Anglian Water did confirm this is how they will respond and any exceptions to this may have been caused by specific issues with gaining access or getting permission to clean an area.

11.55 The Working Group was also made aware of concerns of increasing crime levels if residents need to evacuate their houses. Humberside Police have confirmed that if the evacuation is made at their request then they will ensure that the streets will be patrolled. In flooding situations it is not always easy to persuade people to leave their homes and so unoccupied properties can be spread out unevenly depending on the nature of the flood event which makes it difficult for them to provide additional officers. They do recognise that one of their primary roles is the protection of property and so they would have to make assessments about the what is needed and have discussions with other partners as resources are finite.

Suggested Causes

11.56 A common cause suggested to the Working Group was highway maintenance that had recently been carried out. Some stone chippings from surface dressing were washed in to the drains by heavy rainfall – photographs were submitted showing this.

11.57 Normal procedure for surface dressing works is for the drains to be covered during the work to prevent being permanently blocked with these temporary covers removed on completion. Loose chippings are swept three times to remove loose stones. During the heavy rainfall those which remained were washed into some of the gullies. This gave the impression that they were blocked but whilst flows through the drains would have been reduced the stones would still have allowed water to pass through and drain away.

11.58 The group also received submissions about the level of roads in relation to pavements and pavements sloping back towards houses. It is unlikely that surface dressing works have caused the level differences on the streets in question and that the profile of the road is part of the original design which was to facilitate the efficient draining of water from the centre of the road to the gullies at the side. However, the impact of these levels is being considered as part of the section 19 investigations.

11.59 Poor design and maintenance of the drains was also highlighted to the Working Group. Conversely some residents felt that the gullies were well maintained and they were not the cause of the floods. This is further evidenced by the floodwater being contaminated with foul sewerage which shows that the water had reached the combined sewer until it reached capacity and had then backed up through the gullies and flooded streets and property.

11.60 That is not to say that some of the gullies would not have been blocked either because they are yet to be cleaned this year or because there was difficulty in accessing it when the gully wagon was in the area. If this affects a whole street then a solution needs to be found to gain access. However, it is recognised that under less intense 'normal' rainfall conditions the number of gullies on a stretch of road should be able to pick up the slack if a small number are blocked.

- 11.61 The gully cleaning service still operates a system of tagging the drain covers with a spot of paint which changes every calendar year. They are also able to respond to reports of blocked drains but in the majority of cases the drains they attend are not actually found to be blocked.
- 11.62 Anglian Water were asked to provide data on the maintenance work they have carried out in the borough for the last five years. This is yet to be provided but there will be a need for the Council to work closely with Anglian Water when provided with this information. This will ensure that it is suitable to the needs of the borough, particularly with regards to the findings of the Section 19 investigations.
- 11.63 It is important to remember that the rainfall experienced was in excess of the design capacity of the drainage system and initial findings are that a lack of maintenance was not the main cause. Some people reported that the water seemed to disappear 'all of a sudden' leading to concerns that this was a result of pumps being turned on. There is no evidence that this is the case and would more likely have been caused by the drainage system recovering after the rain had stopped.
- 11.64 Concerns were also raised about the impact of new development on the existing drainage system. Anglian Water explained that they are consulted on all new developments of ten houses and above so that they can assess the impact on the sewers. In some cases they will investigate in more detail and may require the developer to undertake actions to ensure they do not have an impact. They did suggest that due to the recent flooding they may be able to make arrangements to look at smaller developments in the borough too. The Council will work with them on how this can be achieved as it may align with the development of the New Local Plan.
- 11.65 It is important to note that the detail of the causes of the flooding across the borough will be shown in the Section 19 reports which are being undertaken for the areas affected. This review by the Working Group can only make general comments on issues that were raised.

Emergency Planning and Response

- 11.66 When considering emergency planning arrangements it is important to distinguish between what is meant by 'normal business' and what constitutes an actual 'incident'. Service areas within the Council remain responsible for delivering their service during floods such as those in July and August. They need to have relevant plans in place and manage their resources to be able to respond to this. Only when the events escalate, making this no longer possible, is an emergency situation declared and an incident manager needs to be appointed.
- 11.67 There is a need to clarify and re-establish these arrangements for the service

areas within the Council as the Working Group has heard how the Drainage Team were not initially contacted when reports of flooding were coming in and instead this had to be done through a different route. For the July and August events this did not make the impact of the flooding any worse due to the nature of the event.

- 11.68 As the floods in July and August were difficult to predict the Council needs to consider carefully how they are able to respond and then make sure that this is clearly communicated. The Council is not a 24 hour organisation and does not benefit from the same set-up as some of the other responding authorities. A balance needs to be made between committing resources to making a response or helping with recovery. This will vary depending on the type of flooding and the advance notice that the warning provides. For example, for surface water flooding that is similar to July and August the balance may be best weighted to responding due to it being difficult to predict in advance. This should be considered with the reviews of the emergency response plans.
- 11.69 The Humber Emergency Planning Service (HEPS) are currently engaging with parish and town councils to promote the adoption of emergency plans that also cover issues other than flooding. Not all have so far adopted any form of emergency plan and there is a need to identify different community groups to cover areas without a parish or town council. It is important that this work progresses as it will be key to establishing a greater resilience to flooding amongst the communities who could be affected and will help identify those who are more vulnerable.

Communications

- 11.70 Many of the issues related to communications between the Council and residents have already been discussed in this section so they will not be repeated here. Instead the options for improving the messages given by the Council relating to before, during and after flooding will be explored in more detail, based on the submissions to the Working Group.
- 11.71 This report has already discussed the benefits of property owners being more prepared for flooding and how the Council will be offering advice to those who need it. Part of this strategy will require the Council to improve the current offering on its website so this information is available to people at any time they wish to look at it.
- 11.72 The Council will need to carefully consider the messages that it is able to give to residents in the borough about the possibility of flooding. As it is difficult to predict the onset of surface water flooding for a particular location it may not often be possible to provide a warning to residents. Issuing a warning is more likely to result in a false alarm which in the short term could cause stress and worry and in the long term would reduce the confidence that people had in communications from the Council. Further consideration needs to be given to the issues around this area taking account of the information that is available and the certainty that comes with it. For example, it may be possible to repeat

warnings issued by the Met Office and advise people to keep checking the weather for updates or where to go for further information if they feel they need it.

11.73 The Environment Agency remains responsible for issuing warnings that relate to rivers and the sea. People at risk from these sources are advised to sign up to the Floodline Warnings Direct service provided by the Environment Agency.

11.74 The Council is seen as a 'one stop shop' for people to contact for information or help. With regards to flooding in particular the Council needs to be prepared with the relevant information to give people. Some of this may need to be sought from external organisations.

12 KEY FINDINGS

12.1 The key findings from the review are:

- The rain that fell was extreme and beyond what the drains are designed to cope with.
- It was not possible to predict both flood events, or where would have been affected, with the flood warning information that is currently available to all risk management authorities. This made it difficult for the Council to prepare in advance.
- This has led to a gap in what many people expected the Council to do and what the circumstances leading up to the events allowed the Council to do. Due to the rapid onset of these types of floods the Council will often not be in a position to respond quickly enough to reduce the impacts.
- It is therefore important that more is done to inform people what their flood risk is to empower communities to implement their own measures to help protect themselves.
- The risk management authorities will remain responsible for managing their own infrastructure in the areas that were affected.

13 CONCLUSIONS

13.1 The original terms of reference from Section 3 have been met in the following ways:

- The flood events of July and August were reviewed after an extensive data gathering exercise. This was then used to assess the impact on residents, businesses and the highway network.
- The Council's responsibilities and powers were clarified so their role in responding to events of this nature is clear. This included the gully cleaning service, Highways and Drainage team and the options that the Council has to communicate messages about flooding before, during and after an event.
- The other risk management authorities explained the roles that they have in forecasting and responding to floods, including the limitations. Where there are still problems the Council can use its role as the Lead Local Flood

Authority (LLFA) to provide clarity and attempt to limit further distress to residents.

- The review of evidence has highlighted areas that can be improved or where further investigation should be carried out to see if improvements are feasible and achievable. These are outlined in Section 14.

13.2 As the LLFA the Council remains committed to undertaking its role in coordinating the management of local flood risk. This means continuing engagement with relevant partners, risk management authorities and local communities and property owners.

13.3 It is clear that identifying ways of reducing the risk requires a partnership approach between the relevant risk management authorities and the communities affected. This is particularly important considering the pressures that there are on budgets.

13.4 The focus for the Working Group was to review the flooding from July and August but the recommendations that have been made can apply to other types of flooding so this will need to be considered when they are being implemented.

14 RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 After reviewing the issues and problems raised the Working Group was able to make a number of recommendations. Some of these are cross-cutting and will help to resolve more than one problem. They are listed below with full details in Appendix A:

1. Make communities/residents more aware of their flood risk (all sources) and what they can do to reduce their risk.
2. Review of maintenance procedures for drainage infrastructure to establish whether it is fit for purpose.
3. Review of the out of hours call handling arrangements for dealing with unexpected emergencies.
4. Ensure that residents are provided with up to date and correct information on flood events.
5. Investigate further the ability to close roads that are flooded. Produce a document to outline position and advice.
6. Produce a communications strategy for providing information to residents and ward councillors before, during and after a flood event. This should consider all available methods of communication including the Council website and social media.
7. Produce a policy for the provision and use of sandbags by the Council. This should meet the aims of the draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and the Council Plan to encourage people to help protect themselves from flooding. It should be fully communicated to all involved in dealing with floods including external partners.
8. Explore further the implementation of the recommendations made by the Section 19 investigations to reduce the risk of flooding to the areas affected in July and August.
9. Make people aware of the service provided by Anglian Water for clearing

- up sewerage resulting from flooding.
10. Investigate what support can be given to the more vulnerable members of the community.
 11. Assess and reduce the impacts of new developments on the existing drainage infrastructure
 12. Review of highway maintenance procedures to ensure flood risk is taken account of in any proposals.
 13. Give advice on the appropriate use of the drainage system.
 14. Review of the emergency procedures within the Council for dealing with events that do not trigger a multi-agency response. Consider the role that social media can play in emergency plans and response.
 15. Encourage more public involvement in flood risk management.
 16. The Council should ensure that they fully promote and explain their role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).
- 14.2 Each recommendation has clearly identified actions for how it can be implemented.

15 MONITORING

- 15.1 Council officers will be required to keep the Regeneration, Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel up to date with the progress of the recommendations at 6 monthly intervals.

16 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 16.1 The Working Group would like to thank the residents and businesses for their contributions, especially from those who had been personally affected by the flooding. They would also like to acknowledge the expertise, support and assistance provided by staff from within the Council and from the risk management authorities.
- 16.2 The Working Group was supported by Sue Webster (Democratic Services), Paul Windley (Democratic Services Team Leader), Steven Coe (Lead Flood Risk Management Officer), Andy Smith (Senior Drainage Engineer), Ange Blake (Service Manager Development and Infrastructure), Tony Neul (Assistant Director Environment) and Helen Isaacs (Assistant Director Governance and Democracy).

17 APPENDIX A – Recommendations and Actions Table

Recommendation	Proposed Action to Achieve	Who is Involved?	Link With Draft LFRMS Measure	Expected Outcome
<p>1. Make communities/residents more aware of their flood risk (all sources) and what they can do to reduce their risk.</p>	<p>1.1 Identify those areas which are found to be more susceptible.</p>	<p>NELC, AW, EA, DB</p>	<p>M2.4, M2.5</p>	<p>Better picture of areas at risk within the borough to allow targeting of resources to these areas.</p>
	<p>1.2 Engage with those identified to help them reduce their risk of flooding, working with other risk management authorities as required.</p>	<p>NELC, AW, EA, DB</p>	<p>M1.2, M4.4, M8.3</p>	<p>Residents and businesses are more aware of their risk and what they can do to reduce it.</p>
	<p>1.3 Improvements to the Council website to highlight where information is available.</p>	<p>NELC</p>	<p>M1.3</p>	<p>Information is more readily available for people to access as and when they need it.</p>
	<p>1.4 Investigate the different options for communicating with residents and businesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaflets • Roadshows (linked with what is done for waste) • Information on products in the directories which are sometimes delivered direct to residents. • Campaigns in the local newspapers. 	<p>NELC</p>	<p>M1.2, M4.4</p>	<p>This will identify the different options for engaging with people, including coverage of areas affected and expected costs.</p>
<p>2. Review of maintenance procedures for drainage infrastructure to establish whether it is fit for purpose.</p>	<p>2.1 Liaise with Anglian Water on the maintenance they currently carry out in the borough. Use the outcomes of the Section 19 investigations to review these plans.</p>	<p>NELC, AW</p>	<p>M4.3, M5.1, M5.2</p>	<p>If areas are identified as requiring more frequent maintenance to prevent blockages these can be identified and current arrangements altered.</p>

Recommendation	Proposed Action to Achieve	Who is Involved?	Link With Draft LFRMS Measure	Expected Outcome
	2.2 Review the existing arrangements for the gulley cleaning service to ensure that they meet the needs of the borough. (e.g. problems with parked cars)	NELC	M4.3, M5.1, M5.2	This will establish if the current arrangements for the gulley cleaning service meet the needs of the borough and will identify what needs to be done if this is not the case.
	2.3 Investigate what information on the maintenance activities of other authorities can be published including general information and recent work undertaken.	NELC, EA, DB	M4.3, M5.1, M5.2	This will establish what information other risk management authorities are able to provide and what can be published. This will need to recognise the sensitivity of some information and any legal issues.
3. Review of the out of hours call handling arrangements for dealing with unexpected emergencies	3.1 Review the arrangements for taking emergency phone calls out of normal business hours (this will link with emergency planning arrangements). This should include further investigating the practicalities of providing a single contact number or dedicated phone line to deal with flood events, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of the 313131 number (possible use of golden number). • Provision of a new number. 	NELC		This would lead to an improved experience for customers who try to report flooding problems to the Council. This will need to recognise the limitations in predicting some flood events which mean it may not always be possible to mobilise resources needed to run this service.

Recommendation	Proposed Action to Achieve	Who is Involved?	Link With Draft LFRMS Measure	Expected Outcome
	3.2 Provide a facility on the council website for reporting property flooding – information then needs to be sent to the correct team to action.	NELC	M1.3, M2.1. M2.4	Residents and businesses will be able to update the Council about a flooding problem without having to go through the call centre which may be busy. This will reduce pressure on the call centre and help improve the customer experience. It will also help to provide a consistent format for data collection and allow for immediate reporting.
4. Ensure that residents are provided with up to date and correct information on flood events.	4.1 Provide a section on the Council website to update with specific information on the current event.	NELC	M1.3	This will help inform residents and businesses on the existing flood event by providing information and advice when available. Will need to consider the confidence in the accuracy of any information given.
	4.2 Review and update the information provided to call centre staff for when they deal with enquiries and requests for advice from residents.	NELC	M8.2	More accurate information and advice will be given to those seeking it.
5. Investigate further the ability to close roads that are flooded. Produce a document to outline position and advice.	5.1 Consider the legal powers for road closures and who these apply to. Further discussions to be held with Humberside Police on their position.	NELC, Humberside Police	M3.2	This will establish who has the legal power to close a road during a flood event and whether they will be able to respond.

Recommendation	Proposed Action to Achieve	Who is Involved?	Link With Draft LFRMS Measure	Expected Outcome
	5.2 Consider what equipment is needed, how much this will cost and where this is stored to allow for a quick response to closing roads.	NELC	M3.2	This will establish what equipment is needed by those who have the power to close roads whether or not this is affordable and where the best place to keep this equipment could be.
6. Produce a communications strategy for providing information to residents and ward councillors before, during and after a flood event. This should consider all available methods of communication including the Council website and social media.	6.1 Consider the information that is available for forecasting heavy rainfall or flooding. This will influence the confidence in predicting whether flooding will happen and will influence the message that can be given.	NELC, EA	M6.1	The information available to the Council has limitations in terms of accurately predicting flooding for to an individual street level. It is important that this is taken account of in a communications strategy aimed at informing people about an imminent risk of flooding.
	6.2 Review procedures for communicating with elected members to update with the flood event and the work being undertaken post event.	NELC	M6.1	Will ensure a consistent message is given to residents and businesses as members can be the first point of contact some have with the Council.
	6.3 Work with other RMAs to align our communications strategy with theirs to ensure a consistent message.	NELC, EA, AW, DB, Fire and Rescue	M6.1	Will ensure a consistent message is given to residents and businesses on behalf of all RMAs.
	6.4 Improve the Council website to provide residents with general advice and guidance on flood risk management.	NELC	M1.3	Information is more readily available for people to access as and when they need it.

Recommendation	Proposed Action to Achieve	Who is Involved?	Link With Draft LFRMS Measure	Expected Outcome
	6.5 Investigate further how the Council can communicate information about specific flood events.	NELC	M8.2	The Council may be able to provide some level of warning to vulnerable areas. This depends very much on the information available so at this stage it is not possible to guarantee that this service can be provided.
7. Produce a policy for the provision and use of sandbags by the Council. This should meet the aims of the draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and the Council Plan to encourage people to help protect themselves from flooding. It should be fully communicated to all involved in dealing with floods including external partners.	7.1 Consult with other authorities (particularly the Fire and Rescue Service) for their expertise.	NELC, Fire and Rescue	M6.2	Other authorities have expertise that can help decide on a suitable deployment of sandbags so provision should be made in the policy for this.
	7.2 Identify clear decision making responsibility on both sides of the Regeneration Partnership by setting out how the decision on their use is made for an operational response and an emergency response.	NELC	M6.2	This will make it clear to all involved about who to contact for a decision on their use.
	7.3 Publicise and communicate the content of the Sandbag Policy to officers, ward members and other authorities.	NELC	M6.1, M6.2	Residents will know in advance of a flood event what the Council position on sandbags is which should reduce demand and enquires immediately before and during flood events.
	7.4 The Policy should provide information about other methods that can be used to protect property.	NELC	M6.2	Residents and businesses will be provided with advice on the alternatives that can be used instead of sandbags or where they may be able to purchase their own.

Recommendation	Proposed Action to Achieve	Who is Involved?	Link With Draft LFRMS Measure	Expected Outcome
8. Explore further the implementation of the recommendations made by the Section 19 investigations to reduce the risk of flooding to the areas affected in July and August.	8.1 Use the findings of the Section 19 investigations to identify what could be done to mitigate the flooding in future. This will need to take account of budget constraints.	NELC, EA, AW	M2.1, M2.4	Possible risk reduction measures are identified and discussions can begin with those involved (NELC, EA, AW, property owners) about what could be done to reduce the risk. Any recommendations made by the Section 19 investigation process need to be explored in further detail, particularly with regards to funding sources.
	8.2 Investigate and identify areas which are considered to have long standing flooding problems so see what can be done to mitigate the impacts.	NELC	M2.1, M2.4	Those areas which have suffered problems for a number of years will be investigated with an aim to identify risk reduction measures. Some of these areas will also be targeted as part of 7.1.
	8.3 Look into the possibility of the Council bulk-buying property protection products to enable a discount to be passed on to residents.	NELC	M3.2, M4.3	If this is possible it could help to reduce the cost to residents and businesses of installing their own property level protection measures.
9. Make people aware of the service provided by Anglian Water for clearing up sewerage resulting from flooding.	9.1 Provide information on the Council website.	NELC, AW	M1.2, M1.3, M6.1	Information is more readily available for people to access as and when they need it.
	9.2 Work with Anglian Water to publicise this further after a specific flood event.	NELC, AW	M1.2, M6.1	This should ensure that land and property contaminated by sewerage is cleaned up as soon as possible helping to reduce any negative health impacts.

Recommendation	Proposed Action to Achieve	Who is Involved?	Link With Draft LFRMS Measure	Expected Outcome
10. Investigate what support can be given to the more vulnerable members of the community.	10.1 Look into how the following existing schemes can be used to provide help during a flood event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age Concern – HandyVan scheme • Clinical Commissioning Group, Care Trust Plus (Social Services). • Telecare services (Carelink). • Freeman Street Resource Centre. 	NELC, other identified partners	M1.2, M4.1, M4.4	Those who are less able to help themselves or are more likely to be affected by flooding will have options available to get additional help.
11. Assess and reduce the impacts of new developments on the existing drainage infrastructure	11.1 Engage with Anglian Water, through the development of the New Local Plan, to consider the impacts of new development on existing infrastructure. This will consider Anglian Water being consulted on non-major as well as major development.	NELC, AW	M7.1	This should ensure that Anglian Water are given suitable opportunity to consider the impacts of new development on their infrastructure. This includes planning applications and strategic allocations.
	11.2 Continued engagement with the Development Management process, through the Drainage and Coastal Defence Team, the Environment Agency and Anglian Water to ensure that new development does not increase flood risk and seeks opportunities to reduce it where possible.	NELC, EA	M7.2, M7.3	Flood risk issues associated with new developments are identified and mitigated so there is no impact on existing or new property.
12. Review of highway maintenance procedures to ensure flood risk is taken account of in any proposals.	12.1 Specific consideration on how surface dressing works are carried out including inspection/cleaning of drains after the work and the impact changing road levels could have on drainage.	NELC	M5.2	Maintenance works which are carried out will have fully considered potential impacts on drainage and flood risk and can mitigate effects if needed.

Recommendation	Proposed Action to Achieve	Who is Involved?	Link With Draft LFRMS Measure	Expected Outcome
13. Give advice on the appropriate use of the drainage system.	13.1 Promote the Anglian Water 'Keep it Clear' campaign on the Council website and when engaging with residents to provide advice on 'unflushables'.	NELC, AW	M1.2, M1.3, M4.1, M5.2, M6.1	Residents and businesses will be more aware of what should and should not be put down the drains which should reduce the possibility of blockages.
	13.2 Provide advice on avoiding wrong connections which can increase flood risk and cause pollution.	NELC, AW	M1.2, M1.3, M2.1, M4.1, M5.2, M6.1	Should avoid situations where surface water is connected to a foul drain which increases flood risk and foul connected to surface water systems which can pollute watercourses.
14. Review of the emergency procedures within the Council for dealing with events that do not trigger a multi-agency response. Consider the role that social media can play in emergency plans and response.	14.1 Identify appropriate trigger levels for an operational response. This should include for the provision of normal business until the situation means this is no longer possible.	NELC, HEPS	M8.2	The relevant teams within the Council will be know how and when to respond to flood events including the transition from normal business to an emergency situation.
	14.2 Ensure that Council arrangements are consistent with those of other risk management authorities.	NELC, HEPS, EA, AW, DB, Fire and Rescue	M8.2	This will ensure the most efficient use of resources when responding to a flood.
	14.3 Provide elected members with information on the Council emergency procedures.	NELC	M8.2, M8.3	Members will be able to help in an emergency but they will also know where to report issues that arise and be able to advise residents.
	14.4 Further work to establish parish/community emergency plans.	NELC, HEPS	M8.3, M8.4	Communities will gain more knowledge about their flood risk and how they can be prepared and help to reduce this risk.

Recommendation	Proposed Action to Achieve	Who is Involved?	Link With Draft LFRMS Measure	Expected Outcome
	14.5 Establish the role that 'door knockers' can play in a flood event.	NELC, HEPS	M8.2, M8.3	The use of door knockers will help to provide a link between those affected and the Council. They will be a visual presence that can give advice and help collect data.
	14.6 Review and establish a recovery plan.	NELC, HEPS	M8.2	This will provide some support to residents who have been affected by flooding.
15. Encourage more public involvement in flood risk management.	15.1 Direct engagement with the communities affected by the flooding in July and August and other known areas at risk. Involve ward members as community champions.	NELC, Parish Councils, Community Groups, Elected Members.	M1.2, M4.4	People affected and at risk will have the opportunity to be involved in the decisions on how the risk could be reduced. They will feel more empowered to dealing with the risk rather than fearing the consequences.
16. The Council should ensure that they fully promote and explain their role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).	16.1 Through the engagement with local communities, elected members and improvements to the Council website.	NELC	M1.1, M1.2, M1.3, M6.1	Some people experienced difficulties speaking to the relevant RMA and felt passed about. As the LLFA the Council is able to help resolve this issue to prevent people from feeling that they are being ignored.

18 APPENDIX B – Minutes from Meeting in Public (4th November 2014)



CABINET WORKING PARTY – FLOODING

4th November, 2014

PRESENT: Councillor Watson (in the Chair)
Councillors Burton, Colquhoun, Stinson and Thurogood

Officers in attendance:

David Moore – Interim Assistant Director Economy
Steve Coe – Lead Flood Risk Management Officer
Rod Dean – Parks Grounds and Cleansing Manager
Andy Smith – Senior Drainage Engineer
Paul Windley – Democratic Services Team Manager

FCWGP.1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received for this meeting

FCWGP.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Thurogood declared a personal interest in the matters discussed at this meeting as the Chairman of the North East Lincolnshire branch of Unison, a member of the Cleethorpes Renaissance Team and Council representative on the North East Lindsey Drainage Board.

Councillor Colquhoun declared a personal interest in the matters discussed at this meeting as a Council representative on the North East Lindsey Drainage Board.

FCWGP.3 INTRODUCTION AND PRESENTATION

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting and introductions were made. The Working Party received a presentation from Mr. Moore which provided background to the setting up of the Working Party, its terms of reference and the purpose of this meeting which was to gather information about the experience that people had of the floods in July and August, 2014. The information gathered at this meeting would be

used to inform recommendations that would be made back to Cabinet. It was noted that the findings of a separate Section 19 investigation into the flooding were expected to be available to link into the findings of the Working Party.

FCWGP.4 **REPRESENTATIONS**

The Working Group received representations from the following wards:

Waltham

Councillor Jackson, Ward Councillor for Waltham, reported that Waltham was not as badly affected as other areas but there were a number of areas where the drains couldn't cope. He particularly highlighted the beck that runs along the south side of Barnoldby Road. Problems had been experienced in the past with the beck and there appeared to be uncertainty over who was responsible for its maintenance which he felt needed to be resolved.

Mr. Smith noted that he was in discussions with the Shoreline Housing Partnership over ownership and added that the Council had taken a proactive role in the beck's maintenance as a result of the floods in 2007.

West Marsh

Councillor Mickleburgh, Ward Councillor for West Marsh Ward, spoke on behalf of residents affected by the floods and particularly highlighted the problems experienced in Lawrence Street which had been the subject of a petition. He noted that drains had not been able to be cleaned due to parked vehicles and suggested that clear notice be given in future so that vehicles could be moved. He also referred to the problems caused by vehicles driving through the flood waters and creating bow waves and issues associated with the Haycroft culvert.

It was noted that the lead petitioner had been invited to attend this meeting but had felt that the points raised within the petition were sufficient.

Yarborough

Graeme King from Keen King and Jones Opticians on Lynton Parade addressed the Working Party and felt that the flooding was an alarming repetition of that experienced in 2007. He noted the disruption and distress that had been caused and the cost of replacing damaged fixtures and fitting, especially when the threat of a repeat remained. He referred to the impact on insurance premiums as a result of claims made in 2007 and the difficulties in finding alternative insurance once a claim had been made. He strongly felt that the problem was caused by the deterioration of the local drainage network and highlighted that there

appeared to be capacity in the drains elsewhere, citing the example of the Boulevard Avenue subway which had not filled with water. Councillor Thurogood enquired what flood protection measures had been taken by Mr. King.

Mr. King explained that boarding to the front of the premises had been replaced by brickwork. Also the wall at the rear of the property was found to be clearly permeable in areas and a layer of damp-proof concrete had subsequently been applied to the lower part of the wall.

Mr. Hewitt of Wentworth Road addressed the Working Party and noted that the Council only had one truck for cleaning drains. He also commented that he had been turned away at the Doughty Road depot when he had asked for sandbags. His house had flooded three times in seven years and he felt stuck there as he couldn't sell the house and nor could he change his insurance. He queried whether the floods had been caused by an issue with the drainage processing plant. Mr. Hewitt noted that in Boston, grants were being made available for flood improvements and he queried whether anything similar was available here.

Mr. Smith responded that for the majority of the time there was a free outfall into the estuary but he was seeking clarification from Anglian Water on how the drainage issues had occurred. He added that there was a national grant funding stream for flood protection improvements.

Mr. Moore reiterated that it was not the Council's policy to hand out sandbags to individual properties and they were not necessarily the most effective means of preventing water from coming into properties.

Councillor Wheatley, Ward Councillor for Yarborough Ward, commented that the Yarborough Ward was probably one of the most severely affected during both flood events. He noted that the majority of footpaths sloped towards the houses and surface dressing over the years had built up so that it was almost level to the kerb edge. He suggested that LTP grant funding should be prioritised towards making sure that kerbs were at a reasonable height. He noted that both Cromwell Road and Yarborough Road flooded regularly in the same place and that sewage water came out as well, impacting also on the Grimsby Leisure Centre. He also enquired whether the results of the Section 19 investigation were available yet.

Mr. Moore clarified that the Section 19 investigation was thorough and commenced immediately after the floods in July. It was due to report back in early December, 2014.

Councillor Hylton-King, Ward Councillor for Yarborough Ward, commented on problems caused by a local sub-station blowing and taking out power from homes. This caused real concerns for residents who were on their own and meant people were unable to access the emergency services. The resurfacing of roads had also led to stones

being washed into drains. She also noted that there were sewage problems outside properties on Richmond Road and Kingston Avenue. She highlighted that there were difficulties with contacting Anglian Water and residents were not particularly happy with the response that they did get. She enquired whether any thought could be given to have a centralised number in future to allow people to be redirected to relevant services and agencies.

Councillor Cairns, Ward Councillor for Yarborough Ward, commented on a distressing aspect which was the burglaries that took place after people had been forced out of their homes. He also reported that a resident had informed him that when the drains had been cleaned, there was an abundance of nappies found.

Freshney

Andy Arundel of St. Nicholas Drive addressed the Working Party. He noted that he had lived there for 30 years and since 1992/93 there had been constant problems with sewage water coming in off the roads. His house was a metre below the road surface and six houses on his side of the road had been flooded front to rear. He felt that the response from the authorities was dismal. He was told that there was only one pump in the area and that the Environment Agency had pump storage but this was not used. He added that he had suffered from long term health issues since the flooding had started and had been wading in sewage up to his knees. As an ex-employee of Anglian Water he had considerable knowledge of the issues. He commented that there was a 600mm pipe that ran down St Nicholas Drive, which had been added to by the developments at Laceby Acres and Aylesbury Park, all connecting to the same sewage system. The drainage system had been built for 30 years and was now well over 30 years old. He felt that the Council had the power to force the issue and make sure that the drains were modified. He added that he had videos of the flooding incidents which he would make available for the Working Party.

Brian McConnell of Defender Drive commented on problems experienced within Defender Drive and Oakwood Drive. He felt that there was no problem with the gullies but the flooding had been caused by an inadequate drainage system. A 600mm drainage pipe was insufficient and there needed to be adequate sewer alleviation. Thankfully the water had not got into his house but he feared that the problems would just be repeated and he did not want to end up paying excessive insurance as a result. Mr. McConnell left video clips of the incidents for the Working Party to view.

Councillor Sutton, Ward Councillor for Freshney Ward, commented that the flooding had been extensive in his Ward. The evidence heard told him that it was the pressure in the drains that had caused the problem. He reported that the road drains had been largely clear but there had been reports of drain covers popping up as a result of the pressure on

the drainage system. He reported issues around the Valiant public house area, at Stratford House residential home and at Greyfriars in addition to those already brought to the Working Party's attention. He felt that the problem was not coming from the new cut drain and this was highlighted by the fact that Mayfair Drive West had been affected, which was a long way from the main drain. This pointed instead to the inadequacy of the whole sewer. He was concerned at the lack of multi-agency working and the communication issues that had been experienced.

South

David Stamp of Carson Avenue addressed the Working Party and commented on problems caused by the road surface dressing taking the road higher than the paving and filling the drain with bitumen and stones. He felt that if the drains had been cleared after the July floods then the problems in August would not have been as bad. He added that, on the advice of the Drainage Officer, he had now installed flood defence air bricks. 20th July flood waters came up. He questioned whether he was now situated in a flood risk area and where he stood legally in relation to insurance as he had been told it was storm damage rather than flood damage. He also enquired whether Anglian Water should install non-return valves as it was water coming back out of the drains that was the problem and whether the company was jettisoning the system twice per year as it was supposed to. He felt that it would have been useful to have been warned, perhaps in the same way as the tidal flood alerts, as residents could then be careful with their use of water. He circulated some photographs for the Working Party to consider.

There being no further representations, the Chair thanked those who had attended for their comments which he felt would prove very useful when questioning the agencies that were due to appear before the Working Party. He declared the meeting closed at 7.50 p.m.

19 APPENDIX C – Minutes from Meeting in Public (5th November 2014)



CABINET WORKING GROUP – FLOODING

5th November, 2014

PRESENT: Councillor Watson (in the Chair)
Councillors Burton, Colquhoun, Stinson and Thurogood

Officers in attendance:

David Moore – Interim Assistant Director Economy

Steve Coe – Lead Flood Risk Management Officer

Ange Blake – Service Manager Development and Infrastructure

Glenn Greetham – Head of Neighbourhood Operations

Paul Windley – Democratic Services Team Manager

FCWGP.5 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received for this meeting

FCWGP.6 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Thurogood declared a personal interest in the matters discussed at this meeting as the Chairman of the North East Lincolnshire branch of Unison, a member of the Cleethorpes Renaissance Team and Council representative on the North East Lindsey Drainage Board.

Councillor Colquhoun declared a personal interest in the matters discussed at this meeting as a Council representative on the North East Lindsey Drainage Board.

FCWGP.7 **INTRODUCTION AND PRESENTATION**

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting and introductions were made. The Working Group received a presentation from Mr. Moore which provided background to the setting up of the Working Group, its terms of reference and the purpose of this meeting which was to gather information about the experience that people had of the floods in July and August, 2014. The information gathered at this meeting would be

used to inform recommendations that would be made back to Cabinet. It was noted that the findings of a separate Section 19 investigation into the flooding were expected to be available to link into the findings of the Working Group.

FCWGP.8 **REPRESENTATIONS**

The Working Group received representations from the following wards:

Freshney

Jackie Jennison-Green of St. Nicholas Drive stated that she had been a resident since 1996 and the flooding was a historical issue. There had been eight occasions when raw sewage had come up from the drains and deposited itself in her and her next door neighbour's house. In that time she had been passed from pillar to post and it was only when the rest of the street was affected that it felt like something was being done. She had particularly felt insulted to come home and find that Anglian Water had left her bottles of disinfectant to clean up the house. She had been told that a thorough investigation had found that the drainage system was not good enough as a result of the Aylesbury Park estate being added to the system.

Ms. Jennison-Green's mother also lived on St. Nicholas Drive and commented that she had lived there for 40 years but it had only been in the last 10 years that there had been a problem. She noted that every time there is heavy rain, the street floods and runs down the driveway like a river. She had been told that the drains were not blocked but simply inadequate.

Councillor Sutton, Ward Councillor for Freshney Ward, thanked the Working Group for a further opportunity to address them, speaking also on behalf of Councillor Barber. He commented that there was clearly a capacity issue and that residents were frantic over the issue, having lived through it for a long time. He estimated that there were approximately 350 people at risk within his ward and noted the impact of the flooding, including on insurance policy excess figures.

West Marsh

Mr. Kreamer of Fildes Street commented that his property had been flooded quite severely in August. He added that drain covers had come up and he didn't think that the gullies had been cleaned for some time. He also queried whether the three or four newly built properties in the street may have caused the problems.

Mr. Smith reported that the Fildes Street sewer had been investigated and there was a partial obstruction. He intended to take this issue up with Anglian Water. Mr. Smith added that the gullies were cleaned annually.

Neil Grice of Freshney Place Shopping Centre commented on the issues caused by the flooding including loss and disruption of trade and some property costs which were not covered by insurance. He was aware of flooding incidents dating back to 2006, for which he could provide further information if requested. He felt that Anglian Water were not overly helpful and had suggested that drains be sealed or screwed down. However, he felt that this would merely pass on the problem to one of the retail units and the only real solution was investment in the drainage infrastructure.

Mr Smith reported that the public sewers within the footprint of the centre became an internal system and his engineers had been in touch about the maintenance of the internal systems. However, there were some issues with the layout shown by Anglian Water.

Mr. Grice confirmed that the centre did carry out regular maintenance of the internal drains.

Chris Dixon of Lord Street informed the Working Group that she had lived there for 46 years and noted that there had been historic flooding problems due to the nature of the West Marsh. She felt that the Haycroft culvert was an issue that needed to be looked at. She also reported that the Council's main switchboard was not particularly helpful. While appreciating the funding difficulties she urged that a small amount of money be spent to ensure that gullies were cleared out in priority areas.

Mr. Greetham responded that the gully cleaning service had actually increased. He acknowledged that there was only one vehicle but it was out all of the time. He added that there was an issue with parked cars preventing access for the vehicle. However, the Street Pride service was being utilised to clear cars to allow drains to be cleared in priority areas.

Mrs. Dixon asked if the section of Lord Street between James Street and Boulevard Avenue could be looked at under the Street Pride service.

Mr. Smith added that he asked a number of questions of Anglian Water on the issue of the Haycroft culvert and was awaiting a response.

Councillor Billard, Ward Councillor for West Marsh ward, handed in the petition from residents of Lawrance Street that had been previously referred to. He made some suggestions for the Working Group to consider. Firstly, that residents be given the necessary equipment to seal off roads to prevent the issues caused by vehicles driving down flooded streets. He felt that communications had to improve and highlighted issues with Anglian Water and agencies passing on responsibility. He suggested that a common unified approach was required across all agencies. In particular there appeared to be no point of contact over weekends to assist with enquiries about sandbags, road closures or protection of property. There also needs to be clear communication with

residents on the frequency of gully cleaning. Finally he enquired whether Anglian Water had a drain replacement programme and what the company intended to do about the problem if the drains cannot cope. He suggested that Neville Hutson of NH Drains may be able to assist as he had good knowledge of the drainage systems in the West Marsh area.

Mr. Coe commented that the purpose of the Council being the lead flood authority was to ensure organisations were not passing on responsibilities to each other and he added that the Council does meet regularly with all the agencies.

Scartho

Mr. Tuck of Torbay Drive informed the Working Group that he had lived there for 13 years and the road sloped down towards the drain to his house. He reported that water had bubbled up out of the drains and manhole covers and came into his drive, back garden, conservatory and through the front door. A surveyor had visited after the floods and agreed that the slope was excessive. The drain had been cleaned out and found to be silted up to a third of the drain. In addition, service pipes from Boundary Road were going through the drain and severely restricting the flow of water. He now had his own sandbags and a barrier. Whilst appreciating that the road would not be levelled, he asked if kerb edging could be installed around his drive to help the water flow along to the drain.

Heneage

Mr Jeffreys and Miss Render of Hainton Avenue commented that flood waters were up to their knees in their garden and it appeared that the drains were not coping with the amount of rain.

Mr. Smith noted that his engineers had visited them and would continue to try to resolve their particular problem.

Mr. Moore advised on the issuing of sandbags and on alternative products that were available to lessen the impact of flooding.

Humberston

Mr. Ball of Hewson Road commented that his problems did not appear to be as bad as others but water had entered his conservatory. He reported that his house was three inches lower at the rear than those either side of him and the water had come up through the drains. There was an inch of flood water but the houses next door had not been flooded. At the front, rainwater had flooded the street but not entered the houses. He added that this was around 5 a.m. and the water had gone by the time most people had woken up, so he was convinced there was a pump somewhere that had taken it away.

Mr. Hodgson of Parker Road also represented his neighbour, Mrs Sandford. He explained that the rain had started early on 20th July and he knew that through his toilet making a gugging noise that the drains were starting to fill up. The water came in to both his house and his neighbours but not the whole road and appeared to be coming mainly from the drains to the front of the house. He contacted the fire brigade as he thought they would be able to pump the water away. They came reasonably quickly but only in a car and said that there was nothing they could do other than offer a few suggestions. They also said that the insurance would be dealt with through an agreement with Anglian Water which he was surprised by. Anglian Water had been very polite and offered to reimburse the sewerage charges. They would not accept responsibility but did say that the pumps had failed. He reported that he had been out of his house since August and unlikely to return before Christmas. He feared that it would happen again and wanted to know its cause and a guarantee that it wouldn't happen again. He added that it had been suggested that there was a link to the new houses that had been built near the school.

Mr. Smith commented on the extremity of the rainfall and that Mr. Hodgson's problems had highlighted the issues with separate systems and wrong connections being made. In relation to new housing, there was a requirement for the discharge to be no greater than when it was a greenfield site. However, he would look into that issue.

Mr. Rickett of Sinderson Road commented that he had lived there for 30 years and that there had been no problems until nearby new houses had been built. He reported his experiences and his concern that his toilet would overflow. He also reported that Buck Beck had silted up very badly and the gates at St. Anthony's Bank did not appear to open any more.

Mr. Coe responded that he had asked the Environment Agency about Buck Beck and the flood gates at St. Anthony's Bank.

There being no further representations, the Chair thanked those who had attended for their comments. His initial thoughts were that there had been capacity issues and serious questions would be asked of the risk management authorities when they appeared before the Working Group. He declared the meeting closed at 3.15 p.m.

20 APPENDIX D – Record of the Presentations from the Risk Management Authorities (11th November 2014)

The following is a summary of the information presented to the Working Group from the other authorities involved in flood risk management

Environment Agency

Sandra Stubenrauch, Jennifer Parker and Claire Rose from the Environment Agency presented the following information:

- The EA have a strategic overview over all sources of flooding with operational responsibility for main rivers and the coast.
- They explained the flood risk management cycle that they use to understand the risks; prevent and mitigate flooding; prepare; respond; recover; identify lessons learned and review outcomes.
- The EA carry out maintenance activities including grass cutting; weed control and blockage removal. They also maintain the sirens used in Grimsby, outfalls and sluices and flood storage areas.
- As members of the public has raised concerns about the condition of Buck Beck they provided some information on the work they undertake. For the outfall to the sea this includes: an annual asset inspection; checks ahead a forecast flood event; ad hoc maintenance upon report of a problem and explained the silt is flushed out of the system when flows in the channel are greater. For the channel itself: annual inspection of channel condition; grass cutting and weed control was carried out in August 2014 and there are weekly checks for blockage.
- For their own incident response role the EA operate a telemetry system which triggers alarms direct to duty staff when river levels rise beyond pre-determined levels.
- NELC sits within the EA's Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire area but bordering their Yorkshire area on the north bank of the Humber – these areas are determined by river catchments. The Council is a member of the Humber Local Resilience Forum which is dealt with by the EA Yorkshire area. However, the EA Lincolnshire and Northampton area feed in their knowledge of the potential impacts on our catchment to their colleagues in the Yorkshire area.
- At a national level the Environment Agency and the Met Office jointly the run the Flood Forecasting Centre. This produces the Flood Guidance Statement (FGS) which is sent to the Council and other organisations. This is produced everyday providing warnings for the next 5 days by categorising the risk of flooding from various sources, including surface water as yellow amber or red.
- Prior to the flooding on 19-20 July the FGS had an amber (medium) risk warning for 19 July and a yellow (low) risk warning for 20 July. As a result of these warnings the Flood Advisory Service organised a teleconference to provide further advice – one was held on 18 July and another on 19 July.
- They showed a map of the rainfall totals for four rain gauges that they monitor which showed how localised and intense the rainfall was around the areas that were affected the most intense was recorded at Beelsby where 33mm fell within 1 hour.

- Prior to the flooding on 8-10 August the FGS had a yellow (low) risk warning for the 8 and 10 August. This gave an indication of a very low likelihood of significant impacts and as such no teleconference was organised by the FAS.
- The EA provided some statistics on the accuracy of the FGS: between 2013-14 it had a 74% false alarm rate for surface water flooding compared with 27% for river flooding. This demonstrates the difficulty in predicting flooding from surface water and the challenges faced by authorities when trying to determine what actions to take.
- It is not currently possible to develop a warning system for surface water although advances in technology may possibly alter this in the future.
- The Council does have access to the Hazard Manager service provided by the Met Office where it is possible to track the movement of storms to see where they might go but it is still very difficult to predict how much rainfall will fall and over which parts of the borough.

Neighbourhood Services and Gulley Cleaning

Glen Greetham, Head of Neighbourhood Operations at NELC, presented the following information:

- The Council operates one gulley wagon 7 days a week, 362 days a year. Other vehicles are able to suck up floodwater.
- 29,000 gullies are cleaned annually with 4,000 done twice – these are mostly located on the 'A' roads.
- The programme to clean all gullies are visited can be completed within 50 weeks.
- They receive to attend a gulley as a 'one off' but often these are not blocked.
- There is increasingly a problem with congested streets and parked cars preventing access to some gullies.
- Previously the running of the Street Pride campaign helped with this problem. During this campaign residents on targeted streets are asked to make sure their cars are removed from the street which would allow the Council access to carry out various works including gulley cleaning, pot hole repairs and painting white lines. The use of this approach has reduced due to budget pressures but it is recognised as a solution to the problem accessing the gullies.
- If the access to a gulley is blocked the procedure is to re-visit it 3 times. During the visit the operatives will knock on doors but sometimes the car does not belong to a local resident. The machine uses a vertical gulper that swings from the truck and there is no attachment that can get around parked cars.
- All drains are tagged when they have been cleaned. The same colour is used from January to December before being changed.
- The gulley wagon is coming to the end of its life and will soon be replaced. Any significant breakdown would impact on the service provided.
- The current resources mean that the Council is 'just' coping to provide the level of service required. Additional resources could easily be put to use if they were provided.

- Resurfacing has been highlighted as a problem by residents in some streets. The Neighbourhood Services to coordinate with the Highways team over this work. Drains are temporarily covered during the resurfacing works to prevent them being tarred over and blocked. When complete the covers are removed and the new surfaced undergoes sweeping to remove loose stones. There have been reported problems in Wentworth Road where there were still some loose stones that were washed into the gullies. This did not cause a complete blockage of the gulley but has since been cleaned.
- During emergencies the locations that the gulley wagon is sent to are prioritised. Operatives assess the situation before deployment.
- Grass that is not cleared or collected after being cut is not considered to be the main cause of the flooding.
- If problems are found with the gullies these are reported to the Drainage Team for further investigation.

Humberside Fire and Rescue

Jason Kirby, Group Manager at Humberside Fire and Rescue Service and Flood Tactical Advisor on behalf of the service for North East Lincolnshire, presented the following information:

- The Fire and Rescue Service has no statutory responsibility to respond to incidents of flooding. However the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 does make provision for them to respond to other emergencies.
- The Pitt Review and other reports have suggested that a lead role be taken in response and rescue but this hasn't happened.
- The Humber Local Resilience Forum does recognise the Fire and Rescue Service as being the lead organisation for flood rescue.
- The service has invested heavily in their flood capability since 2007 partly funded by Defra and National Resilience.
- They now have trained personnel to deal with flooding – in particular Flood Tactical Advisors with one on duty 24 hours a day 7 days a week. They are able to interpret the warnings issued, liaise with partner organisations and provide advise at all levels of incident management (before, during and after events).
- They have suitable equipment to access areas of flooding and rescue people (boats and 4x4 vehicles) and pumping capability.
- For the events on 8 August they had received the FGS but it was difficult to be accurate about where flooding would happen.
- There were multiple calls from the Wybers Wood estate although much of this seemed to be in gardens rather than houses. The worst affected areas were on St Nicholas Drive.
- The Fire and Rescue Service felt that the area could benefit from the use of sandbags, not to place at the doors of individual properties but to be used in the street to divert flows of water away from vulnerable property. A request was made to the Council where it was where it was difficult to get hold of the right person to speak to but ultimately the request was turned down and the properties flooded on the 10 August.
- Would it be possible to identify higher priority areas where sandbag used could be beneficial?

- As the service have experience with responding to flooding they feel they are in a good position to give advice in this regard. When advised in other local authority areas they are generally provided.
- The service do run educational campaigns and acknowledge that there is a personal responsibility for property owners to help protect themselves.
- Communications with the Council were not easy as most of the problems were outside of working hours. They found it difficult to get answers to the sandbag question after 4.30 on 8 August and were diverted to the 313131 number. On the 10 August the line was jammed with residents calling. Many residents were also being told to call the Fire and Rescue Service if they had internal flooding which was causing them increased pressure.
- Residents wanted reassurance by seeing people in authority on the ground. When they were out the Fire and Rescue Service were the only people in authority present.
- The service will not respond to instances of external flooding. When many calls come in all are logged and officers will visit them all. 30-40 were visited during the August floods. They prioritise where there is greatest need including protecting life or critical infrastructure.

Highways and Drainage

Mark Scarr, Deputy Head of Highways and Transport, and Andy Smith, Senior Drainage Engineer, from Cofely (the Council's Regeneration Partner) presented the following information:

- The Drainage Team's main duties were described as: management of local flood risk (surface water, land drainage and groundwater), managing the highway drainage network, maintaining the coastal defences and leading on investigating the causes of flooding under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act.
- To undertake this role they have an extensive programme of inspection and maintenance, secure capital funding for flood risk management schemes and work with the Development Management team to ensure that new development does not increase the risk of flooding.
- The Council and Cofely have an effective partnership in place to manage the risk of flooding in the borough. The Council provide the strategic direction through the Lead Flood Risk Management Officer with many years of operation experience within the Cofely Drainage Team. This partnership arrangement has been used to produce a draft of the North East Lincolnshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.
- There are also good partnership arrangements between the Regeneration Partnership and the other risk management authorities: the Environment Agency, the Drainage Boards and Anglian Water.
- Actions of the drainage team during a flood event: attend locations to feedback information and identify if mitigation can be undertaken to reduce the risk; liaise with partner organisations; pass on requests for sandbags to the responsible officer; request road closures where needed; coordinate with gully cleaning to assist with removal of floodwater.
- They monitor weather conditions and the forecast to advise on the likelihood of future flooding particularly to vulnerable or critical infrastructure.

- After a flood event they will begin the process of carrying out the Section 19 investigations to identify causes and see if measure can be applied to prevent re-occurrence – this can range from minor ‘quick fix’ to more major capital improvements. This can also be more engagement with affected communities to explain they options they have for protecting themselves.
- The Drainage Team are able to provide advice to householders which includes private and social landlords. The Council also has some powers over the standards of accommodation provided by private landlords.
- Questions were asked about who is responsible for the capacity issues in the sewers. Highway drainage in urban areas predominantly goes to the Anglian Water system whilst in more rural areas highways tend to drain to ordinary watercourses which are either a Council or landowner responsibility. Whilst some members of the public were referring to sewers having a 30 year life this is not the case but systems are regularly assessed.
- Issues about drainage in Humberston were raised and discussed. Different sections of watercourse are owned and are therefore the responsibility of the various riparian owners. There is a pump operated by the North East Lindsey Drainage Board which is triggered automatically by water levels – no problems were reported with this. The quick reduction in flood levels is more likely a result of the drainage system recovering after the intense rainfall had stopped.
- With riparian owned watercourses it has historically been difficult to get riparian owners to fulfil their maintain stretches that they are responsible for. This is because they have no direct duty to carry out maintenance. The Council does have enforcement powers to ensure that flow is maintained within the channel. It would be preferable if riparian owners maintained watercourses to release some of the burden from the Council.
- Buck Beck is the only awarded drain in the borough resulting from the Enclosures Act – this gives us maintenance responsibilities. Other watercourses that the Council maintains have been done for many years to ensure that flood risk is managed for the benefit of residents.
- Closing roads to prevent vehicles driving through floods is a big issue which was not helped by the entrance to the Doughty Road depot being blocked by floodwater.
- No liaison was held between the police and the Drainage Team.
- Communications around both of the events was less than ideal. The Drainage Team was not made aware of the flood events as they happened.

Anglian Water

Richard Farrow, Asset Planning Process Manager, and Martin Taylor, Collection Manager, from Anglian Water presented the following information:

- There are 3 types of sewers: surface water, foul and combined. The majority serving the borough are combined which means they take foul and surface water.
- In 2011 Anglian Water took on the maintenance of private sewers which increased the length of pipes they are responsible for across their region from 37,000 to 74,000km.

- New sewers are designed in accordance with the 'Sewers for Adoption' industry guidance to take the flows from a storm with a 3.33% annual probability of occurrence (1/30 chance).
- Flow increases on their system have resulted from urban creep; groundwater infiltration; misconnections (rainfall of 1 conservatory = 1000 toilet flushes); flooding from rivers entering the sewers and climate change.
- Anglian Water are not a statutory consultee in the planning process but they are consulted on applications for 10 dwellings or more so that they can assess the impact on their systems. When questions they weren't sure where this standard but though it could be internal. When they receive applications they are able to look at the impacts to see if a more detailed investigation is required. Only a small proportion need to be looked at in more detail – from 3000 applications annually across their region only 250 require further investigation. This can then lead to discussions with the developer about what can be done to avoid a negative impact on the sewer system. They will consider whether to flag that all the new developments in Grimsby get a more detailed look.
- Once developments have been given planning permission they have the right to connect to their public sewer system.
- The majority of the floods from the sewer system are due to blockages. Every event is assigned a 'cause' and an action plan for internal incidents is created. An assessment of the rainfall event is made as part of this.
- Anglian Water keep a register on properties affected. NEED MORE INFO.
- The statistics they currently have for NELC show only a handful of properties and do not reflect the number that have been reported direct to the Council.
- When looking at mitigation schemes Anglian Water can only take forward cost beneficial schemes. It is therefore important that they have a full picture of all the properties that are affected. Issues in North East Lincolnshire will need to compete for funding across the whole of their region. New schemes are designed to cater for the 3.33% annual probability event (1/30 chance) with a 10% allowance for climate change.
- They are currently awaiting approval from OFWAT (the industry regulator) for some schemes that will resolve flooding problems that were previously known about.
- They are looking at future improvements to their network to include more 'real time' monitoring and controls of structures which should be able to provide a more efficient control over volumes of water in their system.
- Their maintenance programme is based on the previous history of the sewer so that it is based on need. Therefore some sections will be maintained more regularly than others if they are more prone to blockage.
- Anglian Water run a 'Keep it Clear' campaign which is aimed at informing residents and businesses about items that should not be disposed of in the sewer system.
- They are currently working closely with the Council on the Section 19 investigations which will identify whether their system has any capacity issues. They are also investigating the performance of Pyewipe pumping station.

- If a resident reports flooding of their property (internal or external) Anglian Water will carry out the initial clean-up of removing any solid waste and disinfecting.
- They have agreed to supply the group with their maintenance activities for the last 5 years.
- It has been reported that people who rang the Anglian Water customer number were told to contact the Council. They confirmed that this should not really happen as call centre staff have access to their asset plans. When a call is made if there is an Anglian Water asset nearby this should trigger a job to be created for further investigation.
- During the events in July and August Anglian Water were operating an incident room and had all available staff 'on the ground' including some extra contracted staff. They do have contact with other authorities.
- Any new systems are looked at to ensure they are designed to cope with the currently predicted effects of climate change.

Emergency Planning

James Mason from the Humber Emergency Planning Service (HEPS) presented the following information:

- An explanation of the role of HEPS was given and how they advise the Council on developing their emergency arrangements.
- Explanation of the Humber Local Resilience Forum and their structure was provided.
- For crisis management purposes a major incident can be called for when authorities can no longer cope under normal business arrangements.
- The emergency role that operate within the Council structure were explained: Incident/Recovery Manager; Forward Liaison Officer, Emergency Link Officer and Service Area Representative. Service area representatives will need to advise on the impacts on the services they are responsible for delivering.
- The information contained in the FGS was explained as were the trigger levels. There are many yellow (low risk) warning issued every with very few leading to any impact on the ground in terms of flooding – therefore these do not trigger a response or a multi-agency teleconference. Amber (medium risk) warnings will trigger a response.
- The events of the tidal surge in December 2013 and the July event were used to give an example of how these trigger levels worked.
- A map showing the parish and town councils and the level of emergency plan that they currently have was shown. There is a challenge for the areas not represented by parish council, particularly those in urban areas, where much of the summer flooding occurred.
- They often find that people are unwilling to prepare for flooding until it has already happened to them.
- The incidents in July and August were difficult to predict in advance of them happening and the warnings received were not sufficient to need any further action. It was difficult to respond to during the event itself as the flooding only lasted for a short period. The Council is not currently geared up to be a 24 hour organisation like some of the other risk management

authorities – this meant that some communications had to go through HEPS rather than direct to the Council.

Communications

Iain Lovell from the Communications team at the Council presented the following information:

- The Council has a good relationship with the local media.
- The Council has 10,000 followers on Facebook, 6,000 on Twitter and 1,000 on the Invest NEL website that is predominantly business users.
- The communications arrangements that are used for ‘major’ incidents worked well for the December 2013 tidal surge. The Communications team sit in a media/comms cell on the Local Resilience Forum. Lessons are also being learned from this event including the consideration of a single Twitter account for the Humber.
- The summer events were not considered a ‘major’ event in terms of incident response arrangements. There was no request for the communications team to be involved during the events in July and August.
- When communicating information about flooding which is difficult to predict you need to be very careful about what is said. Need to be clear that the information is the best available at the time.
- In July and August there is not much lead in time to get the message to the people who need it.
- Need to consider at what stage in this type of event the Communications team are involved and what we should be saying.
- Other authorities, such as the Environment Agency, have campaigns to raise awareness of flood risk and to sign up to flood warnings.
- Local media may have also been caught out by the events in July and August. The BBC are generally very good in this type of situation.
- We are in need of a generic communications plan for this type of event.
- Although the Communications team are not responsible for call centre arrangements there is a need to consider the resources for increased demand.
- The Council could provide further information on the personal responsibilities of property owners including advice on some low cost protection methods.
- There is a need to make people aware of their risk throughout the year rather than immediately prior to an expected flood event. Communications targeted at those at risk could achieve this.
- Any information that is given by the Council needs to be factual and honest including about the resources we have available.
- The Council was considered to be the obvious choice to bring together information from other authorities as residents tend to turn to us first for help.