

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

Appendix 1

29TH September 2010

Progress on Flood 2007 Scrutiny Recommendations

Recommendation	Cabinet Member Response	Progress
<p>4.25 The Group also recommend that a system is developed, whereby each Category 1 Responder organisation can post relevant public information on (or linked to) a designated space on the same web-site, so that details of road closures, the location of rest centres, evacuations, public transport (for example) can be more easily checked by the public and other organisations.</p>	<p>As an integral part of its Communications Strategy, The West Mercia Local Resilience Forum intends to develop a one stop information website shared by all Category 1 partners. However, the County Council already posts information on road closures and public transport on its website and shares this information with Local Media. We will work with partner Category 1 responder organisations to seek to achieve the ambition of this recommendation.</p>	<p>Para cut from 5.10 response</p> <p>Also, the Worcestershire Hub website is a single point of information for the Worcestershire public and is specifically designed to provide the public with both up to the minute information and relevant contact details of partner agencies during an emergency. This service will complement the proposed National Resilience Extranet (NRE see comments above) which will also provide a public facing information portal during emergencies.</p> <p>The Worcestershire County Council website now has a public "alert" facility to enable emergency messages to be displayed in real time. This service has been used successfully during the recent severe weather. Further information relating to an ongoing emergency can be provided throughout the website including links to partner and relevant agencies.</p>

<p>4.32 The Group recommend that during a flooding emergency a single point of contact should be available to parishes to enable them to report local conditions (such as road conditions). Further, the LRF should consider the benefits and practicality of communicating with parish councils and how this might be included in the LRF Communications Plan.</p>	<p>Whilst our Highways staff did work with many Parishes and their Lengthsmen during the floods, we would welcome the opportunity to work closely with the LRF to support a more coordinated approach to communications in any future major severe weather events.</p>	<p>In addition, the County Council in the event of an emergency will complement its existing joint working with Parish Councils. It is intended that in conjunction with the Hub, it will provide a more focussed point of contact for Parish Councils where it is known that there is a history of flood risk management issues. We also intend to ensure that this improved approach is linked into our working with the LRF.</p>
<p>4.42 The Group recommend that the Highways Agency review its emergency procedures to ensure communication with a County Council Highway Authority Officer, who should liaise with named Officers in districts to alert them to the possible need for rest centres. The decision to (eg) open a rest centre or not should still however rest with the district council.</p>	<p>We agree with this recommendation and the Highways Agency have now put in place emergency arrangements for diversion routes and other associated matters, with clear lines of communication established with our Highways teams. The County Council's Highways Officers also have arrangements in place to liaise with named officers within the District Councils with regard to rest centre issues.</p>	<p>In place.</p>
<p>5. 7 The Group recommend that the further development of this approach (including their staffing and location)</p>	<p>The "hublet" (or mini hub) concept of local information centres set up by the Worcestershire Hub in the worst flood hit</p>	<p>In place.</p>

<p>should form a key part of the County Council’s response to any future emergency. To maximise their effectiveness ‘hublets’ would need to be established and fully operational as quickly as possible as an emergency develops.</p>	<p>areas to provide residents with up to date information and advice, were particularly well received by local communities. As part of any future emergency response the Worcestershire Hub will co ordinate any future “hublet” response on behalf of partner agencies. Arrangements to set up these up quickly and effectively during future flooding events are in place. However, I am anxious that the Hublets should be staffed with personnel drawn from all partner agencies not just the County Council.</p>	
<p>5.9 The Group supports Pitt’s Recommendation 68: that Council Leaders and Chief Executives should play a prominent role in public reassurance and advice through the local media during a flooding emergency, as part of a co-ordinated effort overseen by Gold Commanders. The Group believes that the development of a linked website (as recommended in paragraph 4.25) would provide a valuable tool for Council Leaders and Councillors to enable them to play a more prominent role in public reassurance and advice.</p>	<p>I agree with this recommendation and I am supportive of initiatives that support and promote the role of Councillors as Community Leaders. The West Mercia Local Resilience Forum (of which the County Council is a key member) recently published a Communications Plan designed to coordinate media and communications during an emergency. This Plan provides for a single point of contact for the public to find information relating to emergencies. However, during an emergency relevant council service information (including highways and public transport) will continue to be posted on the County Council website.</p>	<p>Nick Riding.</p>
<p>5.10 The Group recommends that it</p>	<p>The special role that Councillors perform</p>	<p>In addition, County Councillors are briefed</p>

<p>should be made clear to Councillors how they will be briefed on a developing emergency and how Councillors can find out what is happening.</p>	<p>as community leaders is recognized and the Community Leadership Unit of which Emergency Planning is a part has reviewed its procedures to ensure that where appropriate, relevant information about emerging or actual emergency situations is made available to local members as soon as practicably possible. However, the nature of emergency situations means that the initial immediate response takes precedent and that prompt communication may not always be possible. Members should also bear in mind that where appropriate, and without putting themselves at risk, they can perform a key role in the collection and communication of local information into the Council during an emergency incident.</p>	<p>on Emergency situations affecting the county through the County Council Communications Team via the Member Infonet briefings. These briefings are updated on a regular basis as necessary and this information provides the councilors with the most up to date and accurate situation report to enable them to fulfill their roles as local community leaders.</p> <p>Also see response to recommendation at para 4.25</p>
<p>5.11 With this in mind, the Group also recommend that all Councils review and update their emergency contact lists and that they be shared widely in a co-ordinated way. Furthermore, agreed arrangements should be put in place to ensure that such lists are regularly and routinely updated.</p>	<p>The County Council has procedures and arrangements in place to update and share appropriate emergency contact information with partner agencies. Members should be aware that such contact information is sensitive and time limited. Safeguards are in place to limit circulation to appropriate officers only.</p>	<p>These lists are regularly updated.</p>
<p>5.15 Taking on board the spirit of the</p>	<p>I am informed that it would be very</p>	<p>To be considered for development.</p>

<p>Pitt recommendation 66, the Group recommend that the County Council investigates the feasibility of introducing a system to enable customer contact centers to redirect callers where appropriate (such as to the Environment Agency for advice on what to do in a flood).</p>	<p>expensive for the Worcestershire Hub to provide such a “switchboard” service and redirect callers to partner agencies. However, I can assure you that the Worcestershire Hub provides callers and web site users with appropriate and up to date information and contacts.</p>	
<p>5.16 The Group recommends that structures for the provision of relevant information to the contact centers are drawn up and put in place as soon as possible.</p>	<p>The County Council has recently adopted a new Emergency Response Framework (ERF) that will manage the Council’s response to emergency incidents. An integral part of these new arrangements is a Response Centre that will coordinate and manage an emergency response. An important element of the Response Centre role will be to ensure that the Worcestershire Hub receives up to date and relevant information that can be used to inform the public.</p>	<p>In addition, The Hub is briefed on Emergency situations affecting the county through the County Council Communications Team via as detailed in the 'Member Infonet briefings' referred to above. These briefings are updated on a regular basis as necessary and this information provides the Hub with the most up to date and accurate situation report actions and issues in relation to the Emergency event at is progresses.</p>
<p>5.19 As previously mentioned (paragraph 4.25) creating a dedicated space on the same website with lists of contacts for each partner organisations such as for example, trading standards, the highways agency and the Chamber of Commerce, would be a useful start. The Group recommends that ways of achieving this be explored further with members</p>	<p>The County Council plays a prominent role in the Local Resilient Forum and supports the work of its Communications working group. This group will explore the provision of relevant partner agency contact information on the LRF and partner websites.</p>	<p>See 5.10 and 5.16 above. In addition, this service will complement the proposed National Resilience Extranet (NRE see comments above) which will also provide a public facing information portal during emergencies.</p>

<p>of the Local Resilience Forum, led by the County Council’s Emergency Planning and Communications Units.</p>		
<p>5.22 The Group recommend that the Chamber of Commerce be invited to discuss further its offer to help local authorities maintain a list of useful numbers, including approved contractors with a variety of different skills (ie flooring, electrical, plumbing) to be called upon as required during or after an emergency.</p>		<p>The County Council Emergency Planning Unit has worked with the Chamber of Commerce to deliver a programme of Business Continuity sessions to local businesses.</p> <p>The Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses are seen as key partners in spreading the Business Continuity message. The County Council EP website contains links to these organization and others including the Business Continuity Institute to provide help and advice. The EP team also participates in Business Continuity events throughout the year, including BC week activities (e.g. Tenbury Wells in March 2010)</p>
<p>5.29 The Group therefore recommend that (a “door knocking”) system should be explored further and incorporated into parish emergency plans where</p>	<p>A pre flood warning system delivered to “at risk” local communities by local parish council volunteers would appear to be logical. However, caution needs to be</p>	<p>Dave Throup/Steve Jorden.</p> <p>The Environment Agency is currently carrying out pilot work to define</p>

<p>appropriate.</p>	<p>exercised in respect of asking people to access potentially risky areas and situations. Therefore, I believe that alternative methods of raising community awareness such as the Environment Agency Floodline Service and local policing should be considered in the first instance.</p>	<p>community engagement methodology relating to flood information. The Districts are completing Multi Agency Flood Plans which will, in part cover this. So far Wyre Forest, Malvern and Wychavon have signed off their MAFP's and will shortly be testing them. Worcester City, Bromsgrove and Redditch are due to complete theirs by March 2011 as previously agreed due to the significant resources needed to undertake this work.</p>
<p>5.30 In urban or non-parished areas, the possibility of existing neighbourhood watch areas taking on responsibility for warning the vulnerable should be considered.</p>		<p>See 5.29</p>
<p>5.33 The Group recommend that the County Council's Emergency Planning Team assists with the development of a blue print or toolkit, providing more than just a skeleton, for other parishes' emergency plans, with the aim of encouraging parishes to create their own emergency plans for use in appropriate circumstances.</p>	<p>Wychavon and Wyre Forest District Councils have developed proposals for the development of local community parish level emergency plans. A pilot scheme run and funded by Wyre Forest District Council began recently and Wychavon DC has funded the development of local plans in some of the worst flood hit parishes. The Emergency Planning Unit will monitor the development of these plans and if they prove successful will work with other District authorities to establish similar</p>	<p>The results of the work/proposals detailed in the Cabinet Member response, is due later this year. This will need to be compared to the National Government Community Resilience work being led by the Cabinet Office and for which official guidance is also due shortly.</p>

	arrangements.	
5.34 It was acknowledged though that all parishes were different and that in some parishes, turnover could be quite frequent, so ways of ensuring information and knowledge were passed on were important, such as perhaps a dedicated annual meeting.		Nick Riding. See 5.33 Surely 5.33 would include ensuring information was passed on appropriately?
5.36 The Group recommend that alternative transport arrangements for areas known to flood are contained within the county's emergency plans; and that a training exercise takes place to test out the effectiveness of the plans and that bus operators involved are fully aware.	Our Transport team already have alternative 'flood' bus timetables in place for key critical areas known to flood. In addition, an Emergency Transport Functional Plan is in the final stages of development, which will further ensure that all elements of this recommendation are addressed, this will include the testing of this plan in an exercise involving key parties.	In addition, transport provision in this context (evacuation) is a District Council responsibility under the Civil Contingencies Act. For instance Wyre Forest DC has a contract with a local coach operator to assist with evacuation of people when required. This contract can be used during any emergency situation, not just specifically to flooding. The details are held by the relevant District Council. The County Council Transport Team has also developed an on call rota system to enhance the council emergency response and ability to assist with emergency transportation requirements.
6.15 The Group recommend that parishes which have formed there own flood groups, consider incorporating, promoting and deploying flood		See comments above in relation to community resilience and business continuity.

<p>resistant products as part of the work of the group. [paragraph 6.15]</p>		<p>Which ones – How would we know if parishes with flood groups might be considering/doing this? NR</p>
<p>7.15 The Group recommend that the Land Drainage Partnership consider this and other relevant research (as highlighted in the Pitt Review (Chapter 4) to find a practical cost effective way to model and map areas at risk from flash flooding.</p>	<p>I have been informed that the Worcestershire Land Drainage Partnership have already met with the Lecturer from the University of Worcester and are liaising closely with the Environment Agency who are members of the partnership on flood research mapping and modelling issues.</p>	<p>The County Council in liaison with the Worcestershire Land Drainage Partnership is in the process of developing a GIS based approach to mapping areas at risk from Surface Water Flooding. The Council has also very recently been successful in its bid to DEFRA in securing £100k for the development of Surface Water Management Planning across relevant areas of Worcestershire. This will include modelling of relevant critical areas where necessary.</p>
<p>7.16 The Group recommend that the flood risk map should be produced by the District Councils and held by the County Council for every parish and urban area affected by floods, showing which properties and roads had flooded and the extent and direction of flow of flood waters. The District Council should carry out the mapping, with assistance from parishes. Information needs to be fed in to the County Council, and shared</p>	<p>The County Council is working with the District Councils and other parties through the Worcestershire Land Drainage Partnership (which includes the Environment Agency) in developing an effective approach to flood risk mapping, which can then be used by a variety of key organisations.</p>	<p>See section 7.15 above.</p>

<p>with members of the Land Drainage Partnership.</p>		
<p>7.17 The Group recommend that the flood risk map should be produced by the District Councils and held by the County Council for every parish and urban area affected by floods, showing which properties and roads had flooded and the extent and direction of flow of flood waters. The District Council should carry out the mapping, with assistance from parishes. Information needs to be fed in to the County Council, and shared with members of the Land Drainage Partnership.</p>		<p>See section 7.15 above. In addition, the developing District Multi-Agency Flood Plans for Worcestershire will have flood risk maps for every relevant Parish area affected by flooding.</p>
<p>7.18 The Group recognise that this could involve much work especially for larger parishes, therefore, areas most prone to flooding should be prioritised first.</p>		<p>See sections 7.15 and 7.17 above.</p>
<p>7.19 The County Council should co-ordinate sharing of the information on GIS maps, working in collaboration and sharing information with the Environment Agency.</p>		<p>See sections 7.15 and 7.17 above.</p>
<p>7.20 The Group recommend that</p>	<p>We support this recommendation directly</p>	<p>See section 7.15 above.</p>

<p>records of drainage maintenance carried out are also kept and routinely maintained and that, again, overall responsibility should rest with the County Council.</p>	<p>in relation to the Highways asset and working with our District Council partners to take a lead in coordinating broader drainage records management. The use of GIS in this for both the District and County Council's is vitally important.</p>	
<p>7.21 The Group recommend that records of drainage maintenance carried out are also kept and routinely maintained and that, again, overall responsibility should rest with the County Council.</p>	<p>We support this recommendation directly in relation to the Highways asset and working with our District Council partners to take a lead in coordinating broader drainage records management. The use of GIS in this for both the District and County Council's is vitally important.</p>	<p>See section 7.15 above. In addition, The County Council in partnership with its Term Maintenance Contractor for Highways 'Ringway Infrastructure Services', have developed a comprehensive GIS based Gulley/Jetting database, which will ensure we have location and maintenance records of every Highway Gulley in the County.</p>
<p>7.27 The Group recommend that the County Council, in collaboration with the District Councils, should consider maintaining an inventory of local equipment held by local farmers which could be used in alleviating flooding and drainage problems either during a flooding event or as part of recovery.</p>	<p>We support the spirit of this recommendation and my officers are already working through the Worcestershire Land Drainage Partnership (whose membership includes the National Farmers Union and other farming interests), to develop a Flooding and Drainage 'Resource' inventory, which will include local resources and equipment. Caution needs to be exercised however, as this recommendation should only relate to physical resources and not to people in view of potential liability issues.</p>	<p>Being considered as the next stage for development?</p>

<p>7.37 The Group recommend that each District Council assess whether they have sufficient technical capability and if necessary ensure that a suitably qualified individual is available to advise District Planning Committees about drainage issues and flood risk implications for each development.</p>		<p>See section 7.17 above. However, on specific information as to progress, need to contact District Council's directly? (spoken with Ian Bamforth ref overview from WLDP first). Technical capability in some of the Districts is still a problem! Discussions have taken place at Chief Executive level and at the recently formed Flood Risk Management Strategic Coordinating group with a view to addressing this shortfall on a County wide basis. It has however been agreed that as there is already a significant workload on shared services under the WETT programme and the proposed Flood and Water Bill will cover this issue, it has been agreed to wait until the new legislation is in place before deciding the most appropriate structure to meet this important recommendation.</p>
<p>7.42 The Group recommend that consideration be given to a greater utilisation of the local knowledge on road drainage and watercourses of Parish Lengthsman. Parish Lengthsman should be contacted wherever possible to advise the County Council drain</p>	<p>The County Council already works closely with many Parishes and their Lengthsmen over drainage matters. We are keen to ensure that the Parish Lengthsmen do become even more involved in helping identify and manage drainage issues where appropriate.</p>	<p>In addition, the County Council is currently developing and extending its Parish Lengthsmen scheme, very much with the intention of focussing in part on relevant flooding and drainage issues.</p>

<p>clearance teams of main flooding problem areas.</p>		
<p>7.43 The Group recommend that the County and District Councils consider ways to improve advising both rural and urban householders of their drainage responsibilities, including details on the availability of grants as well as the consequences of non compliance.</p>	<p>The County Council recently published a major article on Flooding and Drainage issues in the 'WOW' magazine, a copy of which is circulated to the large majority of households in the County. Details of responsibilities for land drainage issues were included in this article, with contact details for obtaining the 'user friendly' Environment Agency leaflet 'Living on the Edge', which provides more detail on responsibilities for landowners and householders. We will also continue to work with the Worcestershire Land Drainage Partnership on more ways to improve the advice we and others provide on these issues and the availability of any grants.</p>	<p>Information on what grants are available have been shared with all Councils, however it is up to each individual Council to establish whether or not their particular issue/community meet the criteria for such grants and where appropriate apply for those grants.</p> <p>Good practise has been shared and there has been considerable success across the County in attracting funding from a variety of funding streams.</p> <p>A Land Drainage Enforcement Protocol has been agreed by all Councils which has helped focus on land drainage issues and create a consistency in approach.</p>
<p>7.48The Group therefore recommend that all district councils should consider proactively making use of their powers to serve enforcement orders on landowners who do not comply with requests to maintain their ditches and/or water courses</p>		<p>A Land Drainage Enforcement Protocol has been agreed by all Councils which has helped focus on land drainage issues and create a consistency in approach.</p>
<p>7.50 The Group recommend that District Councils should develop an arrangement whereby if a riparian land</p>		<p>There is reluctance amongst some Council's to carry out works in default due to the lack of clarity over the legal process</p>

<p>owner can not afford or is unwilling to repair water courses, then under the Local Government Act 2000, they should carry out necessary work and where possible claim the cost of works back from the land owners or their estate.</p>		<p>and concerns over costs. It is anticipated that the proposed Flood and Water Bill will make this process simpler and combined with the agreed Land Drainage protocol, achieving compliance will be easier.</p>
<p>7.8 The Group recommend that the County and each District Council ensure that suitably qualified officers in each district can take the lead responsibility for checking the condition of drainage assets (watercourse and ditches), feeding information to the drainage condition and assets map and sharing information with the Land Drainage Partnership.</p>	<p>The County Council took the lead in bringing together the Worcestershire Land Drainage Partnership to help provide for a more coordinated approach to managing drainage issues across the County. We have also put in place a Special Projects team of very experienced officers, largely dedicated to dealing with drainage and flooding issues who work closely with our District Councils partners and other key organisations. The County Council has already completed over 190 drainage projects which will help alleviate and address flooding and drainage issues, and has dedicated an additional £5 million pounds over two years to deal with these issues.</p>	<p>See sections 7.15 and 7.17 above. In addition, the County Council has now completed over 300 drainage projects and allocated a further £4.5 million pounds over the next 2 years to deal with these issues.</p> <p>Technical capability in some of the Districts is still a problem! Discussions have taken place at Chief Executive level and at the recently formed Flood Risk Management Strategic Coordinating group with a view to addressing this shortfall on a County wide basis. There has been a good take up of a EA/DEFRA student training scheme resulting in funding for 2 students at County and Wyre Forest. Further progress against this recommendation will be made once the roles and responsibilities of Councils is clarified in the proposed Flood and Water Bill.</p>
<p>8.24 The Group recommend that when</p>	<p>The County Council as a Category 1</p>	<p>See section 5.22 above.</p>

<p>such advice is produced, the County Council's emergency planning officer should discuss with the Chamber of Commerce how to then promote improved business continuity planning in the county</p>	<p>Responder under the Civil Contingencies Act has a statutory duty to promote the concept of business continuity within the local community. During the past year the Emergency Planning Unit sponsored a week of business continuity awareness activities in association with partner agencies. The opportunity to work in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce is welcomed</p>	
<p>8.35 The Group recommend that the County and District Councils develop protocols for sharing appropriate staff resources during recovery work after emergencies where appropriate.</p>	<p>The current Emergency Planning Memorandum of Agreement between the County Council and each District Council creates the setting for mutual aid arrangements when necessary. The County Council worked closely with our District Council Partners during the major floods in many ways to good effect. Specifically in relation to Drainage matters the County Council through the Worcestershire Land Drainage Partnership has enabled more effective joint working.</p>	<p>In place.</p>