

# TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

<b>Report to:</b>	Executive Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	8 June 2016
<b>Subject:</b>	Flood Risk Management Group Monitoring Report and Action Plan
<b>Report of:</b>	Richard Kirk, Interim Environmental and Housing Group Manager
<b>Corporate Lead:</b>	Rachel North, Deputy Chief Executive
<b>Lead Member:</b>	Councillor J R Mason
<b>Number of Appendices:</b>	Two

## **Executive Summary:**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been monitoring progress of the work of the Flood Risk Management Group. This report reviews the Terms of Reference of the Group and associated action plan. The report recommendations have been considered and approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 April 2016.

## **Recommendations:**

- 1. That the Terms of Reference and Flood Risk Management Group Action Plan be ADOPTED for the next 12 months; and**
- 2. That the Flood Risk Management Group Action Plan progress be MONITORED by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.**

## **Reasons for Recommendation:**

The Flood Risk Management Group Terms of Reference are due for review. At a meeting of the Executive Committee on 25 March 2015, it was agreed that the Flood Risk Management Group Action Plan progress be monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis and reviewed annually.

## **Resource Implications:**

Included in the report; met from existing allocated resources (the Council employs a Flood Risk Management Officer).

## **Legal Implications:**

None arising from this report.

**Risk Management Implications:**

Care must be exercised to ensure that no ongoing liability is attached to the Council for work on watercourses for which the Council has no direct responsibility through making a financial contribution or carrying out of works on a one-off basis. This will be achieved as part of the project management process.

**Performance Management Follow-up:**

The recommendation is that performance will be monitored through reports to the Flood Risk Management Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Environmental Implications:**

Any work involving natural watercourses or the cutting back of trees or hedges will be carried out at the time of year that has least impact on wildlife and habitat (e.g. bird nesting season). Where necessary the appropriate licences will be applied for.

**1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

**1.1** At a meeting of the Executive Committee on 25 March 2015, it was agreed that the Flood Risk Management Group Action Plan progress be monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis.

**1.2** That meeting also agreed a 12 month action plan and Terms of Reference for the Group. Therefore both are due for review.

**2.0 FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT GROUP ACTION PLAN**

**2.1** The action plan at Appendix 1 to the report is based on land drainage projects monitored by the Flood Risk Management Group. The action plan is a 'living' document to which funding or partnership opportunities can be added as and when they arise.

**2.2** Tewkesbury Borough Council owns various parcels of land across the Borough and some of these have watercourses either running through them or adjacent to them. This means that Tewkesbury Borough Council is a 'riparian owner' with responsibilities to maintain these watercourses in good condition. In 2010, Tewkesbury Borough Council agreed to increase the land drainage revenue budget in order to allow for routine maintenance work to be carried out.

**2.3** The Flood Risk Management Group last met on 15 March 2016. The action plan represents the report that was presented at that meeting albeit updated to reflect work carried out since then. The next meeting of the Group is scheduled for 27 June 2016.

### **3.0 FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT: 12 MONTH UPDATE**

- 3.1** Tewkesbury Borough Council continues to be successful in drawing in money from various sources, including the Lead Local Flood Authority (Gloucestershire County Council) and Flood Defence Grant in Aid monies to help fund further major capital projects. Officers will continue to identify and apply for funding in the future, so there will be a constant, continuing process of working with local communities to identify land drainage and flood alleviation projects, applications for funding where appropriate and overseeing the progress and completion of the work on such schemes. The Flood Risk Management Group Action Plan that has been quarterly reported to Overview and Scrutiny has been a ‘living’ document, with funding opportunities added when appropriate and completed schemes removed after they have been reported. Members may wish to consider for each future meeting of the Flood Risk Management Group to consider further relevant projects, identified by Officers for possible funding bids.
- 3.2** At the meeting of the Flood Risk Management Group on 15 March 2016, the Group considered the Terms of Reference and thought it still to be relevant and necessary but asked that a recommendation be put to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the Committee consider the Action Plan on an annual basis instead of quarterly as at present. This is due to the fact that the Group thought the current arrangement inefficient as it meets quarterly, therefore each of their meetings forms the basis of a report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The draft revised Terms of Reference, shown at Appendix 2, highlights the recommendation (see Section 3 (7)). If the draft revised Terms of Reference were adopted, it could be considered annually at the same time as the action plan.
- 3.3** The draft revised Terms of Reference also contains three small changes to clarify terminology (highlighted at Section 3 (1), 3 (2) and 3 (7)).

### **4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1** The Flood Risk Management Group could be disbanded and scrutiny of the Council’s statutory responsibilities and work programme monitored directly by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However, the recommendations made by the Land Drainage Review Working Group in 2009 and the reasoning for forming the Flood Risk Management Group to oversee the FRAP are still relevant, albeit with a different list of projects. In addition, Members of the Flood Risk Management Group find that the Group is useful and productive.
- 4.2** The Overview and Scrutiny Committee could continue to receive quarterly reports. However, this would mean each of the meetings of the Flood Risk Management Group is considered by the Committee.

### **5.0 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1** Funding opportunities are applied for and realised with the agreement of local communities, partners such as Gloucestershire County Council and the Environment Agency, and the Flood Risk Management Group.

## **6.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES**

**6.1** The Council Plan 2012-16 contains the following priority within the section “Improve recycling and care for the environment”;

5. Continued work with partners to provide flood resilience measures;
  - a) Work with partners to deliver flood alleviation projects funded by Gloucestershire County Council
  - b) Advise and signpost local communities when applying for external funding for flood resilience measures.

## **7.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES**

**7.1** National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (available from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-management-strategy-for-england>).

Gloucestershire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (available from <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/LFRMS>).

## **8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)**

**8.1** Tewkesbury Borough Council employs a Flood Risk Management Engineer. Part of the post holder’s responsibilities is to identify flood risk management funding opportunities and submit bids, as well as to monitor progress on the action plan.

## **9.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)**

**9.1** Flood risk management reduces the likelihood that local residents and businesses will have flood water entering their properties and the consequential impact that such an event would have on the health, welfare and finances of those affected.

## **10.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)**

**10.1** None.

## **11.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS**

**11.1** Flood Risk Management Group Terms of Reference and Action Plan (Meeting of Overview and Scrutiny, Tuesday, 24 February 2015).

Flood Risk Management Group - Terms of Reference and Action Plan (Meeting of Executive, Wednesday, 25 March 2015).

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**Background Papers:** None.

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**Appendices:** Appendix 1: Flood Risk Management Group Action Plan  
Appendix 2: Terms of Reference, Tewkesbury Borough Council Flood Risk Management Group