

REPORT TO: Environment and Urban Renewal
Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 21 November 2012

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Policy and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Transportation

SUBJECT: Petition regarding surface water drainage
issue, Heath Road and Coronation Road,
Grange

WARDS: Grange

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To inform the Board of a petition that has been received from residents of Coronation Road regarding surface water drainage problems and the actions that have been taken to resolve issues raised.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

(1) the petition be noted; and

(2) the Board note the work that the Council's Property Services Department has undertaken to date and the further work that is required; and

(3) the Petitioners and local ward Members be informed of the outcome of the Board's consideration of the petition

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Halton Borough Council received a petition on 30 July 2012 signed by 6 residents concerning surface water drainage problems ranging from Heath Road through to an area near 44 Coronation Road.

3.2 Copies of the petition will be available for members at the meeting. In summary, the petition raises seven separate issues relating to flooded land which have been investigated and, where appropriate, addressed.

3.3 The Council owns land in the area of concern, as shown on the plan at Appendix 1. The land comprises three elements: part of a car park serving the health centre / doctors surgery at 78 Heath Road, Runcorn; the road known as Heath Road Crescent; and open space land at the rear of Heath Road / Langdale Road, which abuts properties in Coronation Road occupied by the petitioners and Halton Housing Trust's

sheltered housing. The land is administered and maintained by Property Services.

- 3.4 The car park area at the rear of the doctor's surgery is drained by a road gully that had been reported as blocked. The plan at Appendix 2 shows the location of the car park and gully. The problem was investigated by Property Services earlier in the year following a request for action from the Doctor, who owns & occupies the car park. The gully connection was traced and it was determined that the line of the drain runs in a northerly direction, toward Coronation Road. The pipe was found to be blocked by tree roots and in a state of collapse. This was causing flooding within the car park and meant that it was not possible to survey the entire length of the drain, or to locate its connection to the existing drainage system.
- 3.5 Property Services have explored alternative routes to re-connect the gully to the surface water sewer system. The installation of underground drainage across the open space area could place a constraint on the future use and development of this land.
- 3.6 Initially, the owners of the doctor's surgery were approached to investigate the suitability of a connection to a nearby manhole chamber within their land, however this was refused, we think because of the potential disturbance to the block paved surface of their car park. Halton Housing Trust has been approached to allow connection of the gully to the drainage system which serves their housing development off Coronation Road, although this is a longer route, involving greater cost. HHT have indicated that they would require a formal way-leave agreement for this arrangement. At the time of writing this report, these matters are being progressed, but remain unresolved. An update will be provided for Members at the meeting.
- 3.7 In the meantime, a section of kerbing has been removed from the back of the car park to allow water to drain onto the grassed area as a temporary measure. Whilst this may be reducing the risk of flooding to the paved area, it may have had the effect of increasing groundwater over the adjoining grassed area.
- 3.8 It should be noted that the summer months (defined as June, July and August) have been the wettest since 1912 (Met.Office figures). The heavy rainfall during the period, combined with the additional discharge of surface water from the car park, may have caused the grassed area to become saturated to the point where it cannot absorb further rainfall. Whilst ground is in this condition, any further rainwater will pond or will run off as natural surface water which may have resulted in the minor external property flooding listed in the petition.
- 3.9 The risk of flooding will be reduced when the car park gully is re-connected as described in paragraph 3.6. This will remove any additional surface water discharge onto the adjacent land.

Unfortunately, at the present time, the connection of ground water or land drainage into the United Utilities sewer systems is not permitted, and neither is it practicable to drain this land to other drainage systems or watercourses. If the open space land is developed in the future, the nature of this land and how it drains will change.

3.10 The Council unfortunately cannot solve the problem of flooding arising from the open space land if it becomes saturated solely due to heavy or prolonged rainfall, but residents do have the option of taking their own steps to prevent ingress of water to reduce the risk of flooding, for example by raising levels or reducing the extent of paved areas within their gardens.

3.11 In addition to the saturated ground and problems of flooding raised by the residents, which are being dealt with as described above, the petition itemises two other issues: Firstly, the tree referred to in the petition was removed by the Council's Open Spaces Department as it was diseased and rotten. This tree may have contributed to the problem of tree roots in the drain. Finally, the gully within the car park serving the HHT sheltered housing development has been cleaned and the connection checked to ensure that it is in working order. When heavy rainfall occurs, the sewer system can become surcharged and the outlet flow from gullies may be temporarily obstructed or slow.

3.12 It is proposed that the petitioners are informed of the investigations and the work that has been undertaken by The Property Services Department to date and the proposals for further work to resolve the surface water drainage in Heath Road Crescent.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no policy implications arising from the report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Resource Implications.

As stated in paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6, Property Services Department are currently pursuing a solution to the reconnection of the gully. There are both staff resource and financial implications in relation to reaching way-leave agreements with existing landowners and costs associated with the implementation of the repair works themselves.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

There are no implications on the Council's 'Children and Young People in Halton' priority.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

There are no implications on the Council's 'Employment,

Learning & Skills in Halton' priority.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

There are no implications on the Council's 'Healthy Halton' priority.

6.4 A Safer Halton

There are no implications on the Council's 'Safer Halton' priority.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

There are no implications on the Council's 'Urban Renewal' priority.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

There are no Equality and Diversity implications.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

There are no background papers within the meaning of the Act.