

REPORT TO: Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 27 February 2019

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community & Resources

SUBJECT: Lead Local Flood Authority Section 19 Flood Investigation and Flood Hub

WARD(S) Boroughwide / Farnworth

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To remind Members of the Council's responsibilities as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The LLFA has duties regarding investigation of flood incidents under Section 19 of the Act. This report highlights the investigation of a recent flood event at A557 Watkinson Way, Widnes.
- 1.2 To bring Members' attention to the recently launched Flood Hub website resource.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

2.1 That the Board notes:

- i) the Council's responsibilities as LLFA;**
- ii) the content of the Section 19 Report for Watkinson Way; and**
- iii) the Flood Hub resource.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 LEAD LOCAL FLOOD AUTHORITY (LLFA) RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.2 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA or 'the Act') places a number of duties on the Council. The key powers and duties include:
- Preparation of an Asset Register (s.21);
 - Power to designate flood risk management structures (schedule 1);
 - Investigation of flood incidents (s.19);

- Preparation of a Local Strategy for Flood Risk Management (s.9) (Halton's Strategy was published in March 2015);
- Works powers and enforcement (through amendment to Land Drainage Act 1991 s.14);
- Consenting changes to Ordinary Watercourses (s.21);
- Powers to create Byelaws (amendment to Land Drainage Act 1991 s.66)

- 3.3 In addition, the Flood Risk Regulations (2009) require the completion of a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA). Members will recall that Halton's updated PFRA was submitted and accepted by the Environment Agency (EA) during 2017.
- 3.4 The LLFA is a local coordinator and directs responsibility for Surface Water, Highway Drainage, Groundwater and Ordinary Watercourses working with other Risk Management Authorities such as Environment Agency (with responsibility for strategic overview, main rivers and reservoirs) and United Utilities (water supply and sewage systems), and private riparian owners. It is also a statutory consultee on major planning applications, seeking to ensure developers implement sustainable drainage to manage flood risk.
- 3.5 The LLFA takes a 'whole catchment' view of flood risk management and works together with adjoining authorities as part of the Cheshire Mid-Mersey Strategic Flood Partnership, reporting to the North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.
- 3.6 Section 19 of the FWMA requires a LLFA to investigate flooding incidents in its area which it becomes aware of. This is in order to identify which risk management authority has flood risk management functions in respect of the flooding and establish whether that authority has responded or is proposing to respond to the flood. The LLFA must publish the results of any investigation. Halton's investigation policy is in 3 phases:

- A. Incident capture (incident is reported and logged)
- B. Post incident review (significance of incident assessed)
- C. Formal investigation (undertaken if considered necessary)

A formal investigation is undertaken if an event is deemed to have had significant consequence, defined as having one or more of the following impacts:

- Resulted in major disruption to the flow of traffic for 12 hours or more
- Posed, or could have posed, a risk to human health
- Adversely affected the functioning of critical infrastructure
- Caused harmful impacts to environmentally and socially important assets

- Caused internal flooding to a property used for residential or commercial purposes.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 WATKINSON WAY FLOOD INCIDENT AND SECTION 19 REPORT

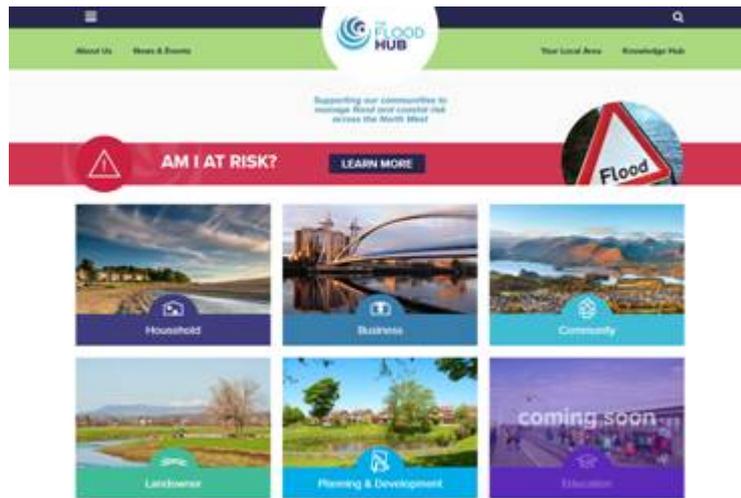
A flood event on 25th-26th September 2017 at A557 Watkinson Way (Cranshaw Bridge) met the criteria defined by the Council prompting an investigation due to flooding of a major road, requiring its closure. The investigation report is included as a background document. The main aspects of the event were as follows:

- The reported flooding was due to pluvial (rainfall) and fluvial (watercourse/highway drainage ditch) sources.
- In the 36 hours prior to the incident 10.6mm rainfall was recorded (at Richard Fairclough House Warrington between 5pm 24/9/2017 and 11am 25/9/2017). This was not considered to be an unusual event.
- No properties were affected by the flooding.
- A major road (Watkinson Way A557) was affected by the flooding on the evening of the 25th September 2017, and although warning signs had been erected, there was an incident later that evening where a vehicle skidded and collided with the barrier. This resulted in the decision to close the road. The road remained closed after the flood had subsided whilst works were undertaken on the 26th September to address the cause of the flooding.
- The cause of the flooding was found to be debris which had collected in a culvert inlet carrying a highway interceptor drainage ditch across the carriageway. This caused a back-up allowing water to flow onto the carriageway.
- During the closure works were also undertaken to remove excess vegetation from the ditch, and remove silt from the ditch immediately prior to the culvert. These works were undertaken by Halton BC as riparian owner and Highway Authority.

- 4.2 The review of this flood incident has been used to identify areas for future improvement in relation to proactive / reactive response and impact to local residential and business communities. Recommendations include work on asset database/ inspections/maintenance regime (including appropriate resource) and internal/external communications.

4.3 FLOOD HUB

The North West Flood Hub became available online on 5 November 2018 at the following address: <https://thefloodhub.co.uk>



- 4.4 The Flood Hub is a one stop shop to increase awareness and help householders, businesses, communities and landowners across the North West help themselves become more flood resilient. The website has been funded by the North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) and developed by Newground and other partner agencies. It gives advice on flood risk with direct links to EA flood risk mapping, and details of who to report different types of flooding to. The website also contains a section named 'Your Local Area' with information about the Cheshire Mid Mersey (CMM) Flood Partnership (under the 'Cheshire' title). The Council has placed a link to the Flood Hub on its website.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no specific other implications in relation to this report. However, the recommendations of the Watkinson Way Section 19 report will have resource implications with regard to additional Asset recording, inspections and repairs.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 6.1 Children and Young People in Halton
There are no implications associated with this report.
- 6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton
There are no implications associated with this report.
- 6.3 A Healthy Halton

There are no direct implications associated with this report, although the actions described will help to prevent future flooding, which has positive health implications.

6.4 A Safer Halton

The actions described will help to prevent future flooding and reduce the impacts of flooding, which has positive public safety implications.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

There are no direct implications associated with this report

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Not applicable

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no Equality and Diversity issues in relation to this report.

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

- A557 Watkinson Way Section 19 Report
- Flood Hub website
- Place of Inspection - Highways Division, Municipal Building, Widnes
- Contact Officer – Jonathan Farmer