

Meeting date: 31st JANUARY 2019
Report to: CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT
AND HOUSING
**Subject/report
title:** FLOOD INVESTIGATION REPORT – 27th MAY 2018
Report from: HEAD OF HIGHWAY SERVICES
**Report
author/lead
contact officer:** EDWARD BRADFORD



Wards affected:

- All Wards | Bickenhill | Blythe | Castle Bromwich | Chelmsley Wood |
 Dorridge/Hockley Heath | Elmdon | Kingshurst/Fordbridge | Knowle |
 Lyndon | Meriden | Olton | Shirley East | Shirley South |
 Shirley West | Silhill | Smith's Wood | St Alphege

**Public/private
report:** Public

**Exempt by virtue
of paragraph:** Select an Exemption paragraph from the Quick Parts drop-down list

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To notify Cabinet Member of the findings of a formal investigation into flooding that was experienced on May 27th 2018 across Solihull, under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

2. Decision(s) recommended

- 2.1 To note the contents of the attached report and the findings of investigations at 11 locations across the Borough.
- 2.2 To receive an update report in November 2019, detailing work undertaken at each of the affected locations over the forthcoming year.

3. What is the issue?

- 3.1. On 27 May 2018 Solihull experienced a period of high intensity rainfall with over a month's rain falling in an hour.
- 3.2. Over 300 properties were affected by flooding. The flooding also impacted the local road network, with the main A3400 Stratford Road through Hockley Heath impassable, as were key routes in and out of Cheswick Green, Dickens Heath and Shirley, restricting movement until the flood waters subsided.

- 3.3. As the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for Solihull, the Council's Flood Risk Management Team has investigated the events of 27 May 2018 and has produced a report in accordance with Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.
- 3.4. In accordance with Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010:
- (1) On becoming aware of a flood in its area, a Lead Local Flood Authority must, to the extent that it considers it necessary or appropriate, investigate –
 - (a) Which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions, and
 - (b) Whether each of those risk management authorities has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood.
 - (2) Where an authority carries out an investigation under subsection (1) it must –
 - (a) Publish the results of its investigation, and
 - (b) Notify any relevant risk management authorities
- 3.5. For Solihull, such investigations are undertaken for flood events that are considered to have 'Locally Significant Harmful Consequences'. Solihull Council's Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) and Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) define such events as:
- Internal flooding to 5 or more residential properties, or;
 - Flooding to 2 or more business properties, or;
 - Flooding to 1 or more items of critical infrastructure, or a transport link impassable for in excess of 10 hours
- 3.6. Detailed investigations have been carried out at 11 locations, with help from partners such as the Environment Agency, Severn Trent Water and the Canal and River Trust. The findings of each investigation is provided in Appendix A.

4. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

- 4.1 As the LLFA, the Council's Flood Risk Management Team has investigated the events of 27 May 2018 and has produced a report in accordance with Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. A copy of the report is provided as Appendix A.
- 4.2 In summary, the investigation determined that on 27 May 2018 Solihull experienced a period of high intensity rainfall. At its peak, 89mm of rain fell in just two hours, against an average total for May of just 53mm.
- 4.3 Over 300 reports of flooding to property were received, with residents being forced to leave their homes and live in alternative accommodation. The local road network was

also impacted and impassable in places.

- 4.4 11 locations have been investigated in more detail to identify the causes and mechanisms of the flooding. Work has included condition surveys of watercourses, culverts, attenuation features, surface water sewer and highway drainage systems, with follow up work being arranged on the occasions where it has been found necessary.
- 4.5 New and recent development sites have also been checked to ensure that they have been constructed in accordance with the approved plans.
- 4.6 Following the investigation work that has been undertaken at the 11 locations, an action plan has been produced, which is included as part of the investigation report given in Appendix A. The plan includes actions around determining what, if anything, may be possible in the future to prevent such flooding from occurring again.

5. Reasons for recommending preferred option

- 5.1 The action plan that has been produced is based on the findings of the investigation work that has been undertaken at the 11 locations and focusses on five key areas:
- Knowing when and where it will flood
 - Being rescued and cared for during an emergency
 - Reducing the risk of flooding and its impact
 - Better advice and helping people to protect their families and homes
 - Recovery
- 5.2 As set out in the action plan, work has already started to determine what, if anything, may be possible in the future to prevent such flooding from occurring again.
- 5.3 Whilst the main focus in many instances may be for a community wide avoidance or defence scheme, there will also be a place for measures to be taken at an individual level by owners of properties to help make themselves more resilient or resistant to flooding.
- 5.4 It is intended that the action plan and progress on its items be used to update Cabinet Member, as part of a wider report that is delivered annually in November.

6. Implications and Considerations

- 6.1 Delivery of key themes in the Council Plan:

How will the options/proposals in this report contribute to the delivery of the key themes in the Council Plan?

- Securing inclusive economic growth -
- Planning and delivery for Solihull's Low Carbon Future –

- Managing demand and expectation for public services –
- Developing and delivering our approach to services for adults and children with complex needs –
- Making the best use of our people and physical assets -

6.2 Implications for children and young people, vulnerable groups and particular communities:

6.2.1 None.

6.3 Consultation and Scrutiny:

6.3.1 A presentation on the May 27th flooding was made to the Stronger Communities and Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Board on November 6th 2018.

6.3.2 The Board noted and supported all of the work undertaken, to date, and the future planned activities as outlined in a presentation made by Officers.

6.3.3 Cabinet Member and Officers were invited to take account of submissions that were made at the meeting when completing this report and action plan.

6.4 Financial implications:

6.4.1 Various sources of finance fund the Flood Risk Management Team.

6.4.2 The day to day running of the team and the undertaking of its statutory duties is now funded through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, with a budget of £225k being provided for 2018/19.

6.4.3 Funding for studies and schemes (projects) is available via the submission of bids for Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) funding. Schemes need to be buildable, environmentally acceptable and cost beneficial. They also clearly need to reduce the risk of flooding to homes, with the amount of funding being dependent on the number of properties moved from a higher level of risk to a lower level of risk and the environmental benefits of the project. As part of a very first step, some initial expressions of interest for FDGiA funding have been submitted to support those communities affected by flooding in May 2018.

6.4.4 Where FDGiA does not cover the whole cost of the project then a bid for Local Levy can be submitted. Local Levy is a form of income raised by Regional Flood and Coastal Committees which is used for flood risk management projects that are not considered to be national priorities and which do not attract full funding through FDGiA. Appendix A provides further detail on sources of funding for any future project.

6.5 Legal implications:

6.5.1 On becoming aware of a flood, Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 places a duty on Local Authorities to investigate to the extent that it considers necessary or appropriate and to publish the findings of its investigation.

6.6 Risk implications:

6.6.1 None

6.7 Statutory Equality Duty:

6.7.1 A Fair Treatment Assessment was undertaken of the service in May 2016.

7. List of appendices referred to

7.1 Appendix A – Flood Investigation Report - Various Locations, Solihull 27th May 2018

8. Background papers used to compile this report

8.1 None.

9. List of other relevant documents

9.1 None.