

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO CABINET

1.	Meeting:	CABINET
2.	Date:	19 October 2011
3.	Title:	Draft Report – Preliminary Flood Risk Assessments for Rotherham (June 2011) All Wards
4.	Programme Area:	Environment and Development Services

5. Summary

To provide a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessments for Rotherham in accordance with the requirements the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 and the European Floods Directive, which aims to provide a consistent approach to managing flood risk across Europe.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 that the contents of the Draft Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for Rotherham be noted (refer to Appendix A).
- 6.2 that the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for Rotherham be submitted to Defra before December 2011 for approval.
- 6.3 that the Final Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for Rotherham be published for public information.

7. Proposals and Details

The Flood Risk Regulations 2009 implement the requirements of the European Floods Directive, which aims to provide a consistent approach to managing flood risk across Europe. The regulations impose new duties on the Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for Rotherham, including the responsibility for managing local flood risk in particular from ordinary watercourses, surface runoff and groundwater.

Under the requirements of the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 and Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the Lead Local Flood Authorities are responsible for undertaking a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for local sources of flood risk, primarily from surface runoff, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. As a unitary authority, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority for the Borough of Rotherham.

The Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment is a high level screening exercise which involves collecting information on past (historic) and future (potential) floods, assembling it into a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment report, and using it to identify Flood Risk Areas which are areas where the risk of flooding is locally significant. The following table summarises the main steps.

1	Set up governance & develop partnerships
2	Determine appropriate data systems
3	Collate information on past & future floods and their consequences
4	Determine locally agreed surface water information
5	Complete preliminary assessment report document
6	Record information on past & future floods with significant consequences in a spreadsheet
7	Illustrate information on past and future floods
8	Review indicative Flood Risk Areas
9	Identify Flood Risk Areas
10	Record information including rationale

The approach consists of a six year cycle of planning based on a four stage process of:

- 1 Undertaking a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA).
- 2 Identifying flood risk areas.
- 3 Preparing flood hazard and risk maps.
- 4 Preparing flood risk management plans.

The Draft Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment completed by Rotherham in June 2011, identifies over 8,500 residential properties in Rotherham as being potentially at risk from surface water flooding, compared with less than 300 properties at risk of flooding from rivers. 106 areas have been identified for prioritisation in subsequent flood risk management planning.

Defra has defined all Indicative Flood Risk areas as areas that are deemed to be of national significance and are defined as clusters numbering in excess of 30,000 people at risk of surface water flooding.

Rotherham has no indicative flood risk areas which are deemed to be of national significance. The only flood event considered to be significant on a European scale and included on the reporting spreadsheet is the floods of June 2007

Under the requirements of the Floods and Water Management Act 2010, Rotherham as the Lead Local Flood Authority will develop and maintained its own Local Flood Risk Strategy. The general principles of the Local Flood Risk Strategy:

- Community focus & partnership working
- Sustainability
- Risk Based Approach
- Proportionality
- Multiple benefits
- Beneficiaries allowed to invest in local flood risk management

Surface water flood modelling has been carried out by the Environment Agency to indicate the broad areas likely to be at risk of surface water flooding. However, the Environment Agency surface water flood maps are not suitable for identifying whether an individual property will flood, this is because information on floor levels, construction characteristics or designs of properties is not considered.

The surface water modelling was carried out by applying rainfall to a digital terrain model, using 2 different methodologies, namely Flood Map for Surface Water (FMfSW) and the Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding (ASfSWF). Both the Flood Map for Surface Water and the Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding were found to accurately represent the areas at higher risk. The Flood Map for Surface Water FMfSW was considered to be marginally better overall, so it was decided to use this map as locally agreed surface water information. The Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for Rotherham does not consider flooding from main rivers, reservoirs or as a consequence of sewer blockages.

The programme for the final completion of the Final Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for Rotherham is as follows:

- 21 June 2011, the Council submitted the Draft Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for Rotherham to the Environment Agency, for checking.
- 9 September 2011, the Draft Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for Rotherham will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.
- December 2011 the Final Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for Rotherham will be submitted to Defra for approval.

8. Finance

The Council's Streetpride, Drainage Team have now submitted the Draft Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for Rotherham to the Environment Agency for checking. All minor amendments to the Draft Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment will be carried out by the Drainage Team, and submitted to Defra by December 2011 for approval. Defra has provided the Council with funding for the sum of £20,000 for the completion of the Final Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for Rotherham.

In January 2011 the Government's Environment Secretary Caroline Spelman, confirmed that in 2011/2012, grants for the sum of £21 million rising to £36 million for 2012/2013 and subsequent years, would be made available to help Councils protect and support their own community when managing flood risk. In addition the funding will fully support Lead Local Flood Authorities in developing local flood risk management strategies; surface water management plans and priority actions; mapping, running overview and scrutiny committees; and administering consents for private changes to ordinary watercourses.

Defra allocated £120.2K in 2011/2012 to Rotherham through the Council's Area Base Grant, which will enable the Council to carry out its new duties under the Floods and Water Management Act 2010. A further £156.3K in 2012/2013 and subsequent years will be allocated to the Council to continue in its duties under the Act.

Defra has announced that the funding allocated to Lead Local Flood Authorities should be in addition to the funding provided by Defra through the Formula Grant funding for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management within the Environmental, Protection and Cultural services. It is likely that the Council will be audited by Defra in the future.

Please note any requirements for additional revenue funding are not reflected in the current medium term financial strategy.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority for Rotherham, is committed to carry out its new duties for local flood risk management, including surface water throughout the Borough of Rotherham. Local knowledge in the management of surface water and the flood risk areas in Rotherham is important. It is likely that there will be additional pressures on the Council's resources to carry out its duties as the Lead Local Flood Authority, under the Act.

The Government funding provided is part of the £2.1 billion the Government expects to spend on flood and coastal erosion risk management by 2015. Local authorities also receive funding under formula grant arrangements administered by Communities and Local Government. The Government expects local authorities to spend about £100million on flood and coastal erosion risk management supported through formula grant arrangements. The grants provided by Defra for Rotherham, will be required to fulfil the Council's duties under the Act.

The Environment Agency surface water flood maps show various flood risk areas throughout the Borough of Rotherham. In some cases the Council has no records of flooding in these predicted flood risk areas, as indicated on the maps. These maps will be published for public information as part of the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for Rotherham. This could lead to confusion and uncertainty with some residents whose properties will now be shown within flood risk areas, although they may not have experienced or be aware of any potential flooding to their property or surrounding area.

It is likely that there will be additional pressures on the Council to obtain future funding to carry out some of the improvement works identified in the Council's future surface water plans and reports.

The majority of the surface water overland flooding problems are from privately owned land and will require the full corporation of the landowner(s). The duty of all riparian owners (i.e. landowners) is to ensure that all flows within a watercourse are not impeded. The Council has a duty to ensure that the watercourses are satisfactorily maintained.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

- (1) Floods and Water Management Act 2010
- (2) Flood Risk Regulations 2009

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Appendix A – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, Draft Report for Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment June 2011, including Maps, Preliminary Assessment Report Sheet, and Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment Checklist.

The issues contained within this report support the Council's main Corporate Priorities.

Ward Members in the Wards listed above have not been consulted.

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