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| Meeting: | Cabinet | Date: | 2nd April 2014 |
| Subject: | Positive Impact of Flood Risk Management Work in Protecting our Communities during Weather/Tidal Events | | |
| Report Of: | Cabinet Member for Environment | | |
| Wards Affected: | All | | |
| Key Decision: | No | Budget/Policy Framework: | No |
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| Appendices: | None | | |

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the positive impact that our flood risk management work is having in protecting our communities against flooding during extreme weather and or tidal events

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The contents of this report be noted.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 Over the last 2 years we have seen an increasing number of situations where both our resources and our physical flood protection schemes have been tested as we have faced a series of challenges such as flash surface water flooding, fluvial flooding on the River Severn, extreme high tides exacerbated by tidal surges and obstruction of watercourses due to collapse of buildings.
- 3.2 These events have seen the City Council develop its preparedness and resilience role to a point where it is now the envy of the County and is highly recognised by the Environment Agency. We are mindful that the detail and timing of our warning and informing of communities is key to providing re-assurance and allowing them to have confidence in the messages we are promoting and encourages them to use us a point of information and assistance.
- 3.3 The latest weather event linked to high tides, tidal surges and a river in flood saw us implement our emergency arrangements with officers working on a shift basis from 07:00hrs – 23:00hrs with callout provision offered overnight to residents. During this time over 3000 sandbags were delivered to at risk communities and

our officers along with AMEY operatives and the military assisted residents with erecting sandbag walls to protect their homes and gardens.

- 3.4 Furthermore re-assurance and welfare visits were regularly carried out within these communities and feedback we have received is that these are highly regarded and very much welcomed by residents. And finally it is fair to say that the Councils actions in identifying the need for and providing pumps on Tewkesbury Road quite certainly prevented these properties from suffering flooding and it is this level of engagement with our at risk communities during these times that allows us to respond so effectively.
- 3.5 This warning and informing role via our emergency arrangements is only one element of our flood risk management work, the other being the proactive delivery of schemes that reduces flood risk in our at risk communities. It is no coincidence that over the last 2 years where we have faced several serious events, only 3 homes have suffered minor flooding and this is intrinsically linked to the £1.5m of funding that we as a Council have secured, and that has seen us deliver over a 100 flood protection schemes which has resulted in approximately 600 properties being afforded greater flood protection.
- 3.6 During the recent flood related event, the focus was on the River Severn given that it reached a height not seen since the 2007. As a result a number of communities were put at significant risk, but it was pleasing to note that several flood protection schemes implemented since 2007 and that we as a Council had played a significant role in delivering ensured that these communities were protected. An outline of some of these schemes are included in the table below -

| Location | Measures |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tewkesbury Road | The works carried out at Plock Court Wetlands Reserve and surrounding areas has aided conveyance of water and increased storage capacity in the surface water system |
| Deans Walk | Repair works to a collapsed section of culvert under Deans Walk which would have caused an obstruction and not allowed the flow of water which would have exacerbated issues. |
| Deans Way | Clearance and de-silting of a culveted section of the River Twyver that runs through Deans Way was created better flow of water, increased capacity and removed potential obstructions. |
| Alney Island | Regular clearance of ditches to improve conveyance of water surrounding the site |
| Upper Rea | Regular clearance of the ditches in this area in addition to repair works to replace a damaged culvert under the highway. We have also recently supported work to unblock and clear the surface water system which serves these properties |

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sudmeadow Road / Hemmingsdale Road | Regular clearance of the ditches in this area . Works have also been carried out to the rear of Hemmingsdale Road to offer a greater level of protection to properties from over land flows and to deal with surface water issues on the industrial estate |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

3.7 These are just a handful of schemes the City Council has been directly involved with since 2007 and like these there are many more which we have delivered, identified the need for, overseen and supported in conjunction with key partners such as the EA, Gloucestershire County Council, Internal Drainage Board and Severn Trent Water.

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

4.1 Given Gloucester’s location on the edge of the River Severn, the changing nature of British Weather, the increasing physical development of the City and its surrounds that reduces natural drainage and the forecast of a series of several high tides over the next couple of years, we must continue working in a priority based manner alongside our partners to deliver flood protection schemes for the benefit of our communities.

4.2 In addition our response effort during flood related events offers so much to our communities and partners and is so widely regarded and recognised, that it would be foolish to scale back at this time. We also recognise that partners such as the Environment Agency, like us are facing a significant period of change and cannot deliver alone. It is therefore crucial that we understand those pressures and co-ordinate our services accordingly so the customer receives a joined up flood risk management service during times of need.

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 The flood risk management work that we deliver as a City Council is widely and highly recognised. This includes both our preparedness and resilience work during events, and our proactive work in identifying areas for improvement, developing schemes and funding bids and then delivering and or overseeing these schemes.

6.0 Future Work and Conclusions

6.1 During and following every event it is vital that we learn from what we have experienced and the latest series of high tides and tidal surges has assisted us in identifying vulnerable areas that require further attention. As a result of this our Flood Resilience Officer has prepared a number of grant applications with a view to delivering (some in partnership) a number of flood protection schemes over the next few years. The table on the following page briefly outlines these schemes –

| Area / Location | Brief Details of Scheme |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Upper Rea | We have played a pivotal role as conduit in bringing the EA, County Council, IDB and Severn Trent Water together to discuss options for this community. As a result the EA have committed to preparing an options appraisal for improving flood defences in this area, the outcome of which if deemed viable, will form the basis of a bid/scheme moving forward |
| Alney Island | We are supporting the community in communicating with the EA regarding a scheme that will look at increasing the height of the flood defences at Alney Island. This support will continue and we will also ensure that the development of such a scheme is supported by City Council Officers. |
| Tewkesbury Road | We are currently preparing a funding bid to be submitted to the EA for an IPP scheme to deliver flood protection measures to several targeted properties. |
| Deans Walk / Deans Way | We are currently preparing a funding bid to be submitted to the EA for an IPP scheme to deliver flood protection measures to several targeted properties. |
| Sandhurst Lane | We are currently preparing a funding bid to be submitted to the EA for an IPP scheme to deliver flood protection measures to several targeted properties. We have assisted the one householder that did suffer property flooding to apply for the £1k County Council grant and are also supporting them in applying for the £5k Government grant to install flood protection measures. |
| Walham Lane | We have assisted one family to apply for the £1k County Council grant and are also supporting them in applying for the £5k Government grant to install flood protection measures. |
| Sudmeadow Road | We are trying to ensure through ongoing dialogue with the EA that any scheme delivered for the benefit of Upper Rea also takes into account this community in its design. |
| Hemmingsdale Road | Investigations are currently ongoing regarding the possibility of erecting a dwarf bund/wall to the rear of several properties and if feasible a funding bid will be considered. As above however we are also ensuring through ongoing dialogue with the EA that any scheme delivered for the benefit of Upper Rea also takes into account this community in its design. |

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 The proposed projects would be funded by a variety of means including Central Government and private sector monies and the resource required of us would be staff time in developing and submitting applications and project management.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 There are no legal implications.

(Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

9.1 The following risk and opportunities have been identified:

| Risks | Opportunities |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| By not continuing with our programme of works communities could be negatively impacted by flooding | To improve flood risk within our communities and across the City |
| The quality of service we provide does create a high level of expectation with our communities and this has to be monitored as resources reduce so that we are giving a clear message of what our communities can and cannot expect of us | This type of work allows us to engage with our communities to deliver tangible outcomes |
| | By aiding re-assurance we can enhance community cohesion and improve safety, welfare and well being To promote the a key Council service and enhance its reputation for delivery in the community |
| | To improve our chances of securing funding and gaining partner support from building our reputation as an authority that excels in delivering flood risk management |
| | To assist homeowners with issues around insurance etc |

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

10.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required. Our work towards reducing flood risk and increasing flood resilience has many potential positive impacts for individuals and communities.

11.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

11.1 The project has obvious benefits for community safety in that the measures that have been and are continuing to be implemented are designed for that very purpose, to protect our communities from flooding and to keep them safe and well.

Sustainability

- 11.2 The measures our schemes have and continue to deliver have sustainability built into them as they are designed to a certain standard that looks forward as to what we can expect in respect of weather and river levels. This is very important with the changing nature of weather events we are experiencing.

Staffing & Trade Union

- 11.3 N/A

Background Documents:

None