

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Cabinet	Date:	12th November 2014
Subject:	Flood Assets Report		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Environment		
Wards Affected:	All Wards		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Wayne Best, Environmental Health Officer – Flood Resilience & Land Drainage		
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Appendices:	1. Completed Flood Works/Schemes		
	2. Capital and Maintenance works ongoing		
	3. Future works for consideration		
	4. Ward Risk Register		
	5. Case Study – Retro Fit of SuDS at St Peter’s School		
	6. List of areas where works carried out by volunteers		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To update Members of the flood alleviation works which have been completed across the City throughout 2013/2014, those that are currently in progress and to outline future planned works.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE:**

- (1) That the contents of this report are noted.
- (2) That the importance of flood alleviation works within the City to minimise the risk and impact of flooding events is recognised.
- (3) That the partnership work that is being undertaken to reduce flood risk in the City is acknowledged and supported.
- (4) That officers continue to investigate additional sources of funding to maximise opportunities to reduce flood risk for residents and businesses across the City.
- (5) That opportunities to provide information, education, and signposting and to undertake consultation are pursued to help reduce the impact of the reduction in funding available for schemes.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

3.1 Introduction 2007- 2014

- 3.1.1 To date 110 schemes and major improvement works have been completed since 2007 to reduce the risk of future flood risk to residents and businesses city wide.
- 3.1.2 Many of the projects undertaken have only been possible as a direct result of partnership working and obtaining external funding.
- 3.1.3 The City Council has contributed towards these projects with funding secured from a number of sources including the Environment Agency, DEFRA, Gloucestershire County Council and Developers through section 106 agreements and commuted sums. The City Council has secured around £1.6 million pounds since 2007; approximately £1,068,000 has been spent on the delivery of schemes to date.

3.2 Capital Schemes

- 3.2.1 Approximately £85k was secured in funding this financial year and between September 2013 and September 2014 approximately £184k was spent on Capital Schemes and associated works, see Appendix 1 for list of completed schemes.
- 3.2.2 There are currently 12 Capital projects currently in progress across the City. Details can be found in Appendix 2.
- 3.2.3 An additional 14 Capital projects identified will be investigated and progressed if viable/cost effective over the next 12 months. See Appendix 3 for details.

3.3 Future Funding

- 3.3.1 The County Council's Local Flood Risk Strategy has identified the most vulnerable locations for flood risk across the County. Wards at the highest risk are given priority for funding where viable schemes are available. See Appendix 4 for list of wards in Gloucester.
- 3.3.2 Although funding for flood alleviation projects and works is decreasing schemes that can deliver additional environmental benefits (including improved water quality, creation of wildlife habitats and increased biodiversity) are looked upon more favourably and presents additional funding opportunities including third party contributions. Details of a scheme at St Peter's School can be found in Appendix 5.

3.4 Maintenance Works

- 3.4.1 Works to remove Himalayan Balsam in areas where there is known issue is ongoing with the support of the TCV (The Conservation Volunteers) on behalf of the City Council. However, there continues to be a marked reduction in Balsam.
- 3.4.2 Inspections and assessments of flood assets throughout the City including; culverts, trash screens, balancing ponds, flood barriers etc is ongoing.

3.4.3 The City Council has Riparian Responsibilities of approximately 25 kilometres of watercourse the majority of which is not included in the Amey contract and works are carried out on a priority basis.

3.4.4 There is no capacity to put all maintenance works on to contract; as a result resources are focused on those areas at greatest risk with the support of voluntary groups. See Appendix 6 for list of areas where the majority of works are carried out by TCV. Between September 2013 – and September 2014, TCV accumulated 951 volunteer hours carrying out watercourse clearance works on behalf of the Council.

3.5 **Recent Weather/Tidal Events**

3.5.1 The completed projects, continuing programme of maintenance works including monthly pinchpoint inspections and ongoing vigilance have contributed too few flood related issues despite several episodes of acute adverse weather over the winter months.

3.5.2 A number of areas affected by recent events have resulted in further investigations and the securing of funding to carry out flood alleviation works including Tewkesbury Road, Deans Way, Stroud Road and Rea Lane.

3.6 **Planning**

3.6.1 Regeneration is important for Gloucester and the City Council has been actively working with developers to attract further investment whilst offering constructive planning advice to reduce future flood risk.

3.6.2 Looking to resolve issues with land which the City Council is likely to adopt from developers which in some cases attracts a commuted sum.

3.6.3 The City Council now has access to surface water and ground water maps. This information will be used to assist with determining planning applications, emergency planning purposes and to aid with securing funding for flood alleviation schemes.

3.7 **Education**

3.7.1 Riparian owners in a number of areas have been contacted where clearance works are required. Land owners have been made aware/reminded of their responsibilities whilst being offered advice and support.

3.7.2 The continued need for improved signposting and information for residents, Members and other customers in relation to the roles and responsibilities of the various organisations involved with flood related work through improved communication and information.

3.7.3 A Members training sessions held in November 2013 included updates on schemes and works, discussions on how the FWMA 2010 influences our work and proposals regarding planning guidance to reduce flood risk as part of future development.

3.8 **Resilience**

- 3.8.1 The City Council and partners have been working together to promote community resilience in those areas at greatest risk of flooding. A number of future events to promote community resilience are planned by officers over the coming year.
- 3.8.2 A drop in event at The Lampreys in August to promote a proposed scheme and community resilience was well attended by residents and supported by officers from a number of organisations including; Environment Agency, Gloucestershire County Council (Civil Protection and Flood Risk Management Teams), Gloucester City Council and National Flood Forum. A recent event at the City Council offices in September was well attended by residents, Members and Community Leaders.
- 3.8.3 Officers are working with communities on management plans (i.e. Saintbridge) to assist with future ongoing maintenance in addition to trying to establish Friends Groups in these areas which will create additional opportunities including funding and awards.
- 3.8.4 There is a continued need for additional flood storage capacity and better management of water across the city to reduce the risk of future flooding. A number of options are currently being considered including:
- Additional storage within the existing drainage ditches at Blackbridge
 - Creation of an attention area within the open space at Scott Avenue
 - Flood storage area at Winnycroft Farm as part of the proposed development
 - Improving a number of existing balancing ponds at Appleton Way, Barnwood Park and off Abbeymead Avenue
 - Diverting surface water along Coney Hill Road into the existing balancing pond near Harley's Field

3.9 **Gloucestershire Highways**

- 3.9.1 The City Council has been working closely with Gloucestershire Highways (GH) to resolve a number of ongoing localised highways flooding issues with the agreement of further investigations and future works planned by GH, see table below -

Location	Issues	Timetable/Proposed Works
Estcourt Road	Access road floods regularly	Phase 1 – Utilities company to carry out works to reinstate drainage which was damaged when laying cables in 2013. Phase 2 – to address flooding issues on northern carriageway scheduled for 15/16. Interim Measures include the replacement of a number of gully pots as existing are difficult to clean and camera.
Naas Lane	Road and adjacent property affected by surface water during heavy rain	CCTV of highways drainage carried out in July identified an obstruction in the line. Further investigations/works planned to remove obstruction.

Location	Issues	Timetable/Proposed Works
Fox Elms Road	Several metres of curb stones have fallen away from the roads edge resulting in surface water pouring into the rear gardens of residential properties.	Sandbags laid along the line of the missing curbs as an interim measure to reduce runoff. Further investigations, works/design planned for autumn, construction early 2015.
Innsworth Lane	Issues with surface water affecting a number of properties during heavy rain.	High pressure jetting & CCTV survey carried out have identified an issue which requires further works. Design & construction works planned for late 2014/early 2015.
Tewkesbury Road	Issues with surface water ponding when Wotton brook/River Severn is high for prolonged periods causing backflow and silt depositing in highways drain.	CCTV survey carried out by GCC. Further works include silt removal, and prevention of backflow to be carried out by GCC on behalf of GH as part of a scheme for the area.
St Oswald's Road	Issues with surface water on the highway during heavy rain.	CCTV planned by GH for the near future.
Painswick Road	Issues with surface water running down driveway of property since resurfacing works carried out in 2013.	GH investigating the need for additional road gulleys.
Porchester Road	Near flood incident in November 2012. CCTV survey carried out by GCC identified a number of issues with GH drainage.	Remediation works added to GH drainage programme. Works will be carried out by GCC on behalf of GH.

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 Do minimum; only carry out maintenance works currently on contract and no further submission of bids for the funding of Capital Schemes resulting in minimal costs and resources.
- 4.2 However doing the minimum would increase the flood risk to residential and businesses premises in addition to important infrastructure and assets. Given Gloucester City's geographical location and history of flooding events this would also be a backward step and would increase anxiety for residents and businesses. There is also an expectation that works to reduce flood risk will continue which also helps attract investment and employment into the City. Flood schemes are politically supported in Gloucester and the Council has built up a good reputation which could be affected if works do not continue.

- 4.3 The City Council could consider making funds available to fund Capital Schemes however given the current economic climate this is unlikely to be an option.

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 Although a number of Capital Schemes and maintenance works have been delivered in 2013/2014. It is our intention to reduce the risk of future flooding to both residential properties and business premises including continued investment in flood alleviation schemes/works, the promotion of self resilience, advice and information, community flood plans and drop in sessions.
- 5.2 Reducing flood risk to homes and businesses will continue to support regeneration and further investment into the City which will be communicated to developers through planning policy.
- 5.3 To meet the requirements of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 in respect of flood risk management including working with partners to resolve flooding issues.
- 5.4 The ongoing Capital Works Schemes and Maintenance programme in 2013/2014 has proven very successful. This was illustrated by the performance of these assets during this winter's severe weather events which resulted in a small number of localised issues in Gloucester.
- 5.5 To continue to investigate and utilise additional sources of funding and resources to deliver schemes and improvement works to further reduce flood risk to homes and businesses throughout the City.
- 5.6 To investigate improving the effectiveness of our resources with the aid of technology, better signposting for customers and building community resilience.

6.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 6.1 The City Council will continue to plan, prioritise and deliver flood alleviation schemes and works where resources allow, whilst delivering improvements to watercourse biodiversity, habitat creation, water quality and amenity value in accordance with legal requirements.
- 6.2 Works will continue to be funded through our capital and maintenance budgets and external funding will continue to be sought where opportunities present themselves and resources allow.
- 6.3 The City Council will continue to work with partner organisations to identify where flood alleviation schemes and watercourse improvement works are required and seek joint funding where possible to deliver schemes.
- 6.4 Continue to target areas and assist Riparian owners with carrying out regular maintenance works.
- 6.5 An update report will be provided for Members on an annual basis regarding works that have been completed and future planned works.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 Costs for capital and maintenance works have been met through existing budgets. The City Council continues to be proactive in securing additional funding from external sources for capital projects and maintenance works. The Council will continue to bid for funding for flood alleviation and watercourse improvement works wherever the opportunity presents itself and where resources allow.
- 7.2 The annual Streams and Watercourse revenue budget was previously £15,000. A report requesting an increase to £25,000 was submitted to GLT in July 2013 and approved (Streams and Watercourse Budget Paper) which has assisted with being able to carry out additional works as required to reduce flood risk.
- 7.3 With the ongoing constraints on Local Authority and partner organisations budgets there is a need to investigate alternative sources of funding whilst prioritising existing resources.

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

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The report identifies that the City Council has riparian responsibilities as a land owner under the Land Drainage Act 1991 which requires parties to maintain the watercourses in such a condition as to ensure that the free flow of water is not impeded.

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

9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 9.1 See table below -

Risk	Opportunities
Flood Alleviation structures and assets will not perform to their full potential if ongoing maintenance is not carried out subjecting residents/ communities and businesses to greater risk of flooding during extreme weather events which increases anxiety and concern.	To prioritise resources on those areas at greatest risk and to work with partners to deliver additional works to reduce flood risk. The Council will work with communities to promote resilience and participation with schemes and works in their areas.
Increased insurance premiums or becoming uninsurable and the potential loss of investment and employment to the City.	Continue working with voluntary groups and to promote a programme of community events which we will publicise through the Partnerships and Community Groups.
	Continue working with communities to establish more 'Friends Groups' which can have a number of positive outcomes including residents taking ownership of their area, attract funding opportunities for further enhancements and awards.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

- 10.1 Reducing flood risk to an individual property or a community does not prejudice against any one group or community. Reducing flood risk and increasing flood resilience provides re-assurance and comfort to those communities and groups at greatest risk.
- 10.2 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

11.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

- 11.1 Flood alleviation works and measures have a critical role to play in protecting communities. Proper maintenance of all our flood assets will reduce the risk and impact of flooding events.

Sustainability

- 11.2 Given the ongoing reductions to local authority resources there is a need to support communities to become more resilient.
- 11.3 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems are promoted in relation to new developments and used whenever possible in flood alleviation schemes. SuDS (ponds, swales, rain gardens etc) are usually less expensive to implement, maintain, add amenity value and are important for habitat creation.
- 11.4 Consideration is given to other requirements such as the Water Framework Directive to enhance and renaturalise watercourses in addition to improving water quality.

Staffing & Trade Union

- 11.5 None.

Background Documents: None