

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro forma

Under section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, Overview and Scrutiny Committees must require the Cabinet or local authority to respond to a report or recommendations made thereto by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Such a response must be provided within two months from the date on which it is requested¹ and, if the report or recommendations in questions were published, the response also must be so.

This template provides a structure which respondents are encouraged to use. However, respondents are welcome to depart from the suggested structure provided the same information is included in a response. The usual way to publish a response is to include it in the agenda of a meeting of the body to which the report or recommendations were addressed.

Issue: Flood Event Response

Lead Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Dr Pete Sudbury, Deputy Leader of the Council with Responsibility for Climate Change, Environment & Future Generations

Date response requested:² 19 November 2024

Response to report:

Enter text here.

Response to recommendations:

| Recommendation | Accepted, rejected or partially accepted | Proposed action (if different to that recommended) and indicative timescale (unless rejected) |
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| That the Council should investigate how best to retrofit sustainable drainage systems, as well as other flood prevention measures, to Council maintained properties and streets. | Partially accepted | These will be investigated on a case by case basis and as the need arises. |

¹ Date of the meeting at which report/recommendations were received

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| <p>That the Council should improve communications to Members, raising awareness of the up-to-date Flood Toolkit generally as well as active flood measures in the event of emergencies.</p> | <p>Accepted</p> | <p>There is a clear process in place for communicating key updates to members and where to signpost residents to, evidenced by a number of flooding incidents in January/February 2024 (Storm Henk) and late Sept 2024 and November (Storm Bert). However, timing of member communications can be reliant on the nature of the flooding incident and amount of heavy rainfall (Sept 2024) linked to the warnings the Met Office issue. We will continue to endeavour to issue member comms at the earliest opportunity when flooding thresholds are reached.</p> |
| <p>That the Council should improve social media communication for residents during flooding and other emergencies.</p> | <p>Accepted</p> | <p>Social media communications have also been in place to support warning and informing residents. Following Storm Henk, the council increased the use of social media channels (assessing the right balance with other content) in addition to X, which was being used as the main (not only) social media channel to warn and inform. While this remains the most appropriate channel to use in this capacity increased use of Facebook, Insta, Next Door, where appropriate, is widening the reach for those who might not access X.</p> <p>Social media is one method of reach but other channels are also used (timing dependent) including Your Oxfordshire (resident e-newsletter) and the council's dedicated news flooding page that is activated during incidents (this gives situational updates, including high level travel information). Messages (including member comms) are also shared with the TVLRF warning and informing group, including the city and district councils, for message amplification across their channels.</p> <p>We also now have a more visual landing page that has been developed (again to be activated in relation to flood</p> |

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| | | <p>warnings) to support those who are being flooded or who are about to be flooded by signposting to trusted sites – gov.uk, the flood forum or sites that they link to. The focus is on providing quick and easy information to residents. To support this a number of social media assets have been developed that can be issued proactively and reactively to support and link to this page. This will also link to the newpage, and in development is a highways / roads closed page (again to be activated in a flooding emergency). All will be linked and connected.</p> <p>The recently created Flooding Task Force will also be reviewing communications with residents as a part of its work.</p> |
| <p>That the Council should promote the benefits of creating of community emergency plans by parish councils and support the Resilience team to do that.</p> | <p>Accepted</p> | <p>The Joint Oxfordshire Resilience Team promotes these to communities twice a year but has low take up, as a small team attending parish meetings in the evenings is a challenge, support from locality meetings, with comms and councillors supporting this process would be beneficial.</p> <p>The recently created Flooding Task Force will also be reviewing how there can be better community resilience and activation.</p> |
| <p>That the Council should commit to working closely with partners to ensure that s.19 reports are completed swiftly, and recommendations can be acted upon.</p> | <p>Accepted/Partially accept</p> | <p>Collaboration with other Risk Management Authorities has always been fostered and is further embedded in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. In regards S19 reports these are undertaken with the District/City partners and are discussed with all authorities involved as the report progresses. There is always an initial phase of data gathering and information which is required to provide factual</p> |

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| | | <p>information. Recommendations are reviewed and will be reported.</p> <p>The recently created Flooding Task Force will also be reviewing this process with partners.</p> |
| <p>That the Council should investigate the role and responsibilities of OFWAT and the potential for invoking s.94 measures.</p> | <p>Accepted</p> | <p>Collaborative working will always be prioritised, but a clear understanding will be sought from Legal Services about what formal action could be taken if it became necessary.</p> |