

# Briefing Note

Cabinet Meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2010

## Flood Protection Update

### 1. Introduction

1.1 A review of flood risk management progress made since the floods of 2007.

### 2. Summary of the Issue

2.1 The major flooding of summer 2007 brought the issues of flood prevention and mitigation to the fore. Since that time, the Council has embarked upon a significant flood risk management programme. This briefing note outlines the progress made and future plans.

### 3. Summary information

#### 3.1 Introduction

Prior to the floods of 2007, the Council's flood risk management programme was generally limited to the maintenance of watercourse channels and culverts. Up to the end of the 2007/2008 financial year, the Council acted as an "agent" (under a memorandum of understanding) for the Environment Agency (EA) to maintain all "Main Rivers" within the borough (excluding The River Chelt), for which an annual budget of approximately £55,000 was set by the EA. Following the floods, additional budget streams became available enabling the Council to take a lead role in the management of flood risk by enhancing its maintenance programme and promoting and completing flood alleviation schemes across the borough.

The memorandum of understanding between the EA and the Council ceased to operate at the end of March 2008. From that time the EA have contracted out maintenance work previously carried out by the Council. However, the Council has riparian ownership responsibilities for considerable lengths of Main River throughout the borough which results in significant budgetary demands for maintenance purposes.

The predominant budget streams for Flood Risk Management work since 2007 have been the historic annual watercourse maintenance budget of around £15k; the post flooding Civil Emergency fund of £602k (set 2007) and a 3 year budget of £90k (£30k per year 2009/2010 to 2011/2012) set during the determination of the Council's budget in January 2009. In addition, further sources of funding have been obtained from Gloucestershire County Council match funding and Defra flood defence grant aid.

#### 3.2 Flood Risk Management Expenditure from 2007.

2007/2008

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| £106k        | Civil Emergency budget                                  |
| £ 55k        | EA standard maintenance budget                          |
| £ 28k        | EA extra maintenance budget (post flooding)             |
| £ 25k        | CBC general maintenance budget (enhanced post flooding) |
| -----        |   |
| <b>£214k</b> | <b>Total</b>  |

2008/2009

|              |                                |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| £280k        | Civil Emergency budget         |
| £ 13k        | CBC general maintenance budget |
| -----        |                                |
| <b>£293k</b> | <b>Total</b>                   |

2009/2010

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| £368k        | Civil Emergency budget, Glos County match funding and Defra grant aid |
| £ 15k        | CBC general maintenance budget  |
| £ 8k         | CBC enhanced maintenance budget (part of £90k from 09/10 to 11/12)    |
| -----        |   |
| <b>£391k</b> | <b>Total</b>  |

2010/2011 (forecast)

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| £570k        | Defra grant aid (Warden Hill Flood Relief Works)                           |
| £ 55k        | Defra grant aid (Hearne Brook Catchment Study)                             |
| £100k        | Civil Emergency budget (Prestbury Flood Alleviation Scheme – contribution) |
| £ 40k        | Civil Emergency budget and Glos County match funding                       |
| £ 15k        | CBC general maintenance budget   |
| £ 30k        | CBC enhanced maintenance budget (part of £90k from 09/10 to 11/12)         |
| -----        |  |
| <b>£810k</b> | <b>Total</b>   |

### 3.3 Works Undertaken since 2007

2007/2008 to 2009/2010 (approximately 250 individual work instructions)

- Oak Avenue Culvert Replacement
- Farmfield Road watercourse maintenance and improvements
- Imjin Road Flood Protection
- Glynrosa Road flood protection
- Naunton Parade Flood Alleviation
- Leisure@Cheltenham Flood Protection
- St Mary's School Flood protection
- Warden Hill Catchment Study
- Warden Hill Option Appraisal
- Noverton Brook Culvert Replacement
- Charlton Court Road / St Edwards flood alleviation
- Hyde Lane Improvements
- Southfield Brook Improvements
- River Chelt town culvert clearance (£50k contribution to EA works)
- Apple Orchard flood protection
- New Barn Close bypass culvert
- Cleevemount Road / Overbrook Drive – culvert/channel improvements
- New trash screen construction
- Prestbury Flood Alleviation – EA scheme in partnership with CBC and GCC
- General watercourse maintenance
- General culvert maintenance
- General culvert CCTV surveys
- Trash screen clearance

### 3.4 Multi-Agency Forums

Partnership relationships have been established with other agencies operating within Gloucestershire; viz. Gloucestershire County Council (GCC), Gloucestershire Highways (GH), The Environment Agency (EA) and Severn Trent Ltd (STW) meeting on a regular basis. The forum provides an opportunity to discuss flood related issues within the borough, forward planning and partnering schemes where appropriate.

The following partnership schemes have been undertaken

#### Schemes led by other agencies

- New Barn Close culvert replacement – GH lead agency, CBC contributed £30k
- Desilting of R. Chelt town culverts – EA lead agency, CBC and GCC contribute £50k each
- Prestbury FAS – EA lead Agency, CBC and GCC committed to contribute £100k each

#### Schemes led by Cheltenham Borough Council and match funded by GCC

|                                       |       |                              |
|---------------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|
| • Apple Orchard Flood Protection      | £ 5k  |                              |
| • Hyde Lane Improvements              | £ 5k  |                              |
| • Charlton Court Rd Flood Protection  | £10k  |                              |
| • Sandy Lane Culvert Replacement      | £ 5k  |                              |
| • Oak Avenue Culvert Replacement      | £15k  |                              |
| • Naunton Parade Flood Relief         | £15k  |                              |
| • Cleevemount Rd flow improvements    | £ 8k  |                              |
| • Brizen Farm Retention Pond          | £14k  |                              |
| • Warden Hill Feasibility Study       | £ 9k  |                              |
| • Warden Hill Flood Relief Scheme     | £50k  | (works ongoing)              |
| • Trash screen replacements           | £11k  |                              |
|                                       | ----- |                              |
| Total match funding received from GCC | £147k | (£40k 08/09 and £107k 09/10) |

### 3.5 Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA)

The Council has been successful in its application for FDGiA. This is a Defra fund which is administered by the Environment Agency. To date, four applications have been made as detailed below:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Warden Hill Catchment Study / Option Appraisal | £ 61k awarded/received (09/10)         |
| • Warden Hill Flood Relief Scheme                | £820k awarded (09/10 to 10/11)         |
| • Hearne Brook Catchment Study                   | £ 55k allocated (10/11) * <sup>1</sup> |
| • Hearne Brook Flood Relief Scheme               | £150k allocated (14/15) * <sup>2</sup> |

\*<sup>1</sup> Preliminary allocation made in the EA's Medium Term Plan (5 year) for financial planning purposes. Further work required to achieve an award. Presentation for final approval to be made to the EA's Project Assessment Board in July.

\*<sup>2</sup> Approval of this funding will be subject to a full option appraisal / business case upon completion of the preceding catchment study.

### 3.6 Other Funding Sources

Property Level Flood Protection: A Defra fund directed towards communities where household resilience measures may be appropriate. Two applications were submitted for consideration earlier this year.

- Whaddon - 24 properties (£136,800) \*\*
- Charlton Kings - 9 properties (£51,300) \*\*

\*\* Both bids were unsuccessful. This national scheme was greatly oversubscribed with Defra receiving 270 applications to protect 5,500 properties at a potential cost of £28 million. The available fund of only £2.6 million has been spread across the country between 27 Authorities and 34 schemes protecting a total of 532 homes.

### 3.7 Surface Water Management Plans (SWMP)

Cheltenham is to benefit from an award of £100k to the County Council for the development of a SWMP. This is part of the £16 million Defra funding announced in August 2009. The County has applied for further Defra funding to augment the £100k already awarded. The success or otherwise of that application will determine the extent of the SWMP coverage.

The County Council will be taking the lead role on this project. However, CBC anticipates being heavily involved and looks forward to working closely with the County and its commissioned consultants.

### 3.8 Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (enacted 8<sup>th</sup> April 2010)

Summary of the key provisions of the Act:

- Gives the Environment Agency an overview of all flood and coastal erosion risk management;
- Gives Unitary and County Councils the lead in managing the risk of all local flooding;
- Local people will have greater input to shaping local flood and coastal erosion risk management strategies;
- Encourages the uptake of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) by removing the automatic right to connect to sewers and provides for unitary and county councils to adopt SUDS for new developments and redevelopments.
- Introduces an improved risk based approach to reservoir safety;
- New powers will help water companies better control non-essential domestic uses of water during periods of water shortage;
- Water companies will be able to operate concessionary schemes relating to surface water drainage charges, thereby reducing the burden on community groups.

## 4. **Next Steps**

### 4.1 Priorities 2010/2011

- Warden Hill Flood Relief Works – a major scheme for which the Council has received Defra funding of up to £820k (includes £50k from the County and £50k from CBC). The scheme will provide an improved standard of protection to over 100 properties. Construction is programmed to commence in October 2010 with completion in February 2011.
- Hearne Brook Catchment Study – another Defra funded scheme (£55k). The study will consider the various options and cost benefit of a preferred solution, if any. If a sufficiently robust business case can be presented, a scheme may follow (currently included in the EA's Medium Term Plan for 2014/2015).

- Surface Water Management Plan – a County led scheme concentrating on areas of Cheltenham.
- Gloucestershire County Council match funding schemes – the County has less money available this year for match funding. However, they have offered up to £20k to each district for flood related schemes. An application for this funding will be submitted by the end of June.
- General maintenance programme - a programme of works shall be undertaken this year. Works on watercourses are currently affected by the bird nesting season (1<sup>st</sup> March to 31<sup>st</sup> July).

## **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 A great deal has been achieved since the floods of 2007. A particularly significant factor associated with this achievement has been the successful partnership working with other authorities such as the Environment Agency, Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucestershire Highways and Severn Trent Water. Current economic constraints may limit partnership working opportunities in the near future but it is hoped that a degree of momentum can be maintained. The new Flood and Water Management Act 2010, encourages partnership working so in that respect the Council is very much involved.

