



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Sue Jones
Convenor, Local Flood Risk Management
Scrutiny Working Group

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Date / Dyddiad: 19 December 2014

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Dear Councillor Jones

Local Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Working Group – 13 November 2014

Thank you for your letter dated 8 December 2014 regarding the views and recommendations expressed in the Local Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Working Group meeting on the 13 November 2014.

As you are aware the City and County of Swansea is the lead local flood authority for managing flood risk from local sources such as flooding from surface water, ordinary watercourses and groundwater. As part of this role the Authority is committed to the production of a Flood Risk Management Plan by December 2015 in order to meet our statutory requirements set out in the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 which will set out our intended measures for delivery, to address and reduce flood risk over the next six years.

You have been advised that the production of the FRMP is the final stage of the requirements set out in the Flood Risk Regulations and I appreciate that this will place an increasing demand on the Authority as we confirm our measures to mitigate the consequences of flooding to our most at risk communities.

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Many measures are already in place such as implementation of maintenance programmes on council owned drainage assets within the City and ensuring that there is no increase in flooding as a result of new developments can be regarded as prime examples. However, it is essentially important, to recognise that this is the first cycle that Lead Local Flood Authorities with designated flood risk areas have responsibility to produce a plan and conclusions drawn from the flood maps will inevitably result in new measures being assigned specifically to our worst affected areas with 'significant' flood risk. It also needs to be understood that this work cannot be undertaken in isolation from our risk partners and I am aware that with the ongoing work with NRW and other partners through regional working groups which will ensure that the production of the plan will be coordinated in a consistent manner.

Consequently, and in reply to the recommendations you have made to me, I am pleased to inform you that there is some excellent collaboration work currently being carried out by the Authority to ensure that the Flood Risk Management Plan is aligned and closely linked to the FRMP being produced by Natural Resources Wales which covers flooding from main rivers, reservoirs and the sea within the Western Wales River Basin District. This has involved the Authority working in partnership with Natural Resources Wales, Welsh Local Government Association, Welsh Government, and other Lead local Flood Authorities in Wales to ensure that there is consistency in approach whilst working towards the delivery of the FRMP for review by NRW by June 2015.

I would also like to concur with the point you have made with the importance of consulting with Ward members and would like to confirm that this will be undertaken as part of the process, together with the requirement for public consultation and consulting with other key stakeholders who have responsibility in flood risk management.

With regard to recommendation made for further consideration being given to prioritising staff in order to focus on maintenance obligations in the autumn months for flood risk management duties. I believe that this is an area which can be assessed more thoroughly.

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One good example of this will be the reassessment of the maintenance activities on the clearance of trash screens on our culverts and to ensure that the existing programme is updated to reflect current needs.

I agree with your views on the wider distribution of the public information leaflet "Guidance on drainage and flooding" and wish to confirm that the flooding leaflet will be issued to other council offices, libraries and community centres.

I also agree in the provision of additional information on where the public can obtain sandbags or other alternatives which will assist in the prevention of flooding. The Authority will also make assessment into the viability of supplying sandbags at an appropriate charge. However, prior to agreeing to this service to the public, an understanding of the necessary resource will be required to inform any decision.

In terms of the monitoring process I would anticipate that an annual review of the measures identified in the Flood Risk Management Plan will be necessary and reported to Natural Resources Wales accordingly.

To conclude, I wish to acknowledge and thank you for the recommendations of the Scrutiny Working Group and I hope that I have responded to the matters you have raised. Clearly, the production of the Flood Risk Management Plan will be a major challenge for the Authority, but one which we can aspire to deliver by working closely with all of our partners in the interest of reducing the consequences of flooding to our worst affected communities in Swansea.

Yours sincerely



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