



**CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA**  
**DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE**

Councillor Tony Colburn  
(Temporary) Convener  
Flood Risk Management Scrutiny  
Working Group

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DH/JW

19 February 2016

**If you require this or any other information in another format  
e.g. Braille, audio tape or a different language, please contact me**

Dear Councillor Colburn

**LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP – 14  
DECEMBER 2015**

Thank you for your letter dated 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016 regarding the views and recommendations expressed in the Local Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Working Group meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015.

You have been advised that it was a legal requirement for the City and County of Swansea to prepare a Flood Risk Management Plan for its area and to have it published before December 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015 in order to comply with legislation. I am happy to inform you that this deadline was met and the next step which is in hand is for Natural Resources Wales to report the plan to Europe by March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016 to accord with European Floods Directive 2007/60/EC.

I am pleased to hear that you had learnt that the Flood Risk Management Plan has progressed down to ward level as this was a consistent approach taken by all Welsh Lead Local Flood Authorities. You have noted that the plan sets out a series of measures for each ward which will ensure that flood risk in the City and County of Swansea is managed during the 6 year period. Some of the measures have been termed borough wide measures which are measures currently ongoing to manage flood risk. However, following conclusions being drawn from the surface water flood

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maps this inevitably showed some communities or wards were susceptible to greater significant flooding than others which resulted in new specific measures assigned to areas considered to be the most at risk communities.

Referring to the recommendations that you have made, I wish to respond by answering the points raised as they have been listed.

**A more join up approach and thinking between services within the Authority. There is scope for improvement and the potential for more strategic working across departments e.g. Planning and Highways**

I agree with this recommendation as the more joined up and strategic integrated approach we have then the more effective the delivery of our flood risk management objectives will be across departments within the Authority.

In particular, I have noted the point raised by the working group concerning how the Flood Risk Management Plan can be used as a useful tool to inform the highway planned maintenance programme. In reply, I would like to confirm that there is already some excellent flood prevention works currently ongoing within the Authority. For example, the Authority currently categorises the maintenance activities for the watercourses and grids under the Council's ownership so that priority or 'hotspot' areas are given more frequent attendance during the Autumn/Winter months and inspections are also increased following weather warnings. However, I do agree with group that following the production of our Flood Risk Management Plan and the more detailed undertaking on the assessment of our communities at risk then there is scope to review our maintenance regime as this will provide an essential link between the communities with 'significant' flood risk and our operational regimes but this will have to be achieved in accordance to available budget.

In terms of Planning and the potential impacts in terms of flood risk, I wish to confirm that there is good collaborative work being undertaken between relevant departments so that flood risk from all sources is properly assessed and this work will continue in order to comply with the objectives as set out Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

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**The introduction of a reporting mechanism on the website and clarity of information about how the public can obtain sandbags. A look at alternative methods of delivery if the current system isn't working.**

I am pleased to inform you that there already exists a reporting mechanism on the website to report flooding and blocked gullies, with the complaints currently being received by the Authority's Highways Department.

With regard to the clarity of information regarding sandbags I wish to inform you that the Authority has adopted a sandbag policy and this can be seen on our Guidance to flooding leaflet which is currently on the Authority's website. See link below.

However, I am of the opinion that this could be improved to provide additional information on where the public can obtain sandbags and also other products which are commonly used for flood protection. I wish to assure you that this will be looked into with the aim of providing further information on available flood prevention products.

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/article/8031/Flooding-advice>

**Officers investigate potential sources of flooding to support the Flood Risk Management Plan and address priorities within the plan.**

I concur with the working group that this will be the biggest challenge for the Authority to steer funds in the direction of the Flood Risk Management Plan which inevitably places an additional financial burden on to the Authority. Nevertheless, it is essential that the Authority shows commitment of ensuring that our flood risk management plan is successful and to access available funding streams will need to be explored further. Currently, the Authority has access to the Single Revenue Grant issued by Welsh Government. It is recognised that the existing allocation will need to be increased to support the plan in order to show the necessary progress required. Other funding streams will also be investigated to meet the objectives as set out in the 6 year plan together with seeking potential of collaborative working with our flood risk partners should joint funding opportunities arise.

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**Ensure that the Authority is consulted and has an input into external schemes that could have an impact on the Flood Risk Management Plan.**

I wish to assure the working group that as Lead Local Flood Authority responsible for our own Flood Risk Management Plan then it is essential that good collaboration continues with other risk management partners such as Welsh Water and Natural Resources Wales to ensure that maximum benefits can be gain from collectively working together. Consultation between these risk management Authorities will continue through the planning process with any external schemes which have an influence on flood risk being screened accordingly by the Authority so that impacts to the plan can be avoided.

To conclude, I wish to acknowledge and thank you for the recommendations of the working group and welcome your further involvement in meeting annually to monitor and review the progress of the plan.

Yours sincerely



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