



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

Dinas A Sir Abertawe

BY EMAIL

Councillor David Hopkins
Cabinet Member for Environment &
Transport

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4th February 2016

Summary: This is a letter from the Local Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Working Group to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, following the meeting of the Working Group on 14 December 2015. It is about the Draft Flood Risk Management Report.

Dear Councillor Hopkins,

**Local Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Working Group
14th December 2015**

The Local Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Working Group met on 14 December to consider the Draft Flood Risk Management Report.

The members of the Working Group would like to thank Mike Sweeney for attending the meeting to present the report and to answer our questions. Members have had the opportunity to look at the general parts of the plan previous to the meeting; it contains a large amount of information and lists individual flood risk maps for all areas within Swansea.

This letter reflects the main issues we discussed and the questions we raised about this topic. Therefore we would be grateful if you could respond to some of the points, information and recommendations outlined within this letter.

The Flood Risk Management Plan

The Working Group noted that the Flood Risk Management Plan is the final part in a process which required the preparation of:

- Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment
- Production of Flood Hazard and Risk Maps
- A Flood Risk Management Plan.

We also learnt that work on the Flood Risk Management Plan has progressed down to ward level with the development of Flood Risk Maps for each of the communities not only within Flood Risk area but also for those situated outside, effectively, to cover the whole of the administrative area, which is a consistent approach used by all other Welsh Authorities. The Working Group was pleased to note this holistic approach in the production of the Flood Risk Maps. We also noted the analysis that has been undertaken, the conclusions drawn and the measures listed to mitigate the flood risk for each community.

The Working Group considered the impact of external influences that could impact on the Flood Risk Management Plan, for example: the Tidal Lagoon, City Centre Regeneration project and Climate Change. We felt that the authority should incorporate these elements into the process even if it is not their responsibility to address any issues or provide mitigating measures for them.

Joint Working

The Working Group discussed the importance of including flood risk management within the planning process and monitoring new build developments to determine any potential impact in terms of risk. Also how the Local Authority measures and evaluates the impact of lots of smaller developments. If within high risk areas the Local Authority should look at preventative and construction work measures, possibly compulsory purchasing and whether it is cost effective.

We looked at how the Highways Service interacts with the Flood Risk Management Plan and whether it feeds into the Highways planned maintenance programmes. For example, gully cleaning regimes for high flood risk areas. This emphasised to us the importance of services within the Authority working together as this is a complex issue. We agreed with the principle of a strategic, holistic approach to prioritising high risk and hotspot areas for all services. There is a need for more joined up thinking within the Authority and the relevant service areas.

Monitoring and further scrutiny work

The Working Group recognised the importance of the monitoring and review process of the Flood Risk Management Plan. The first review of the FRMP will be completed by June 2021 and subsequent reviews will be carried out at 6 year intervals. After the review the Authority will prepare a revised Flood Risk Management Plan which has to include an assessment of the progress made towards implementing the measures contained in the Plan.

Following on from the completion of this, every year the current position regarding the implementation of each measure listed will be monitored. We believe that there is now a role for regular scrutiny of this process and for consultation with the Working Group around the priority measures.

The Working Group considered the financial funding and resources required for the plan to be successful. We understand that the authority could bid for a grant from EU/WG to address some of the issues/priorities within the plan.

Recommendations

As a result of our consideration of the Draft Flood Risk Management report, we recommend:

- A more joined 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
- 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.
- Officers Investigate potential sources of funding to support the Flood Risk Management Plan and address priorities within the plan.
- Ensure that the Authority is consulted and has input into external schemes that could impact on the Flood Risk Management plan.

Finally, we plan to recommend to the Scrutiny Programme Committee that the Working Group meets annually to monitor and review the progress of the Flood Risk Plan, including scrutinising and assessing the progress of the priority measures and to consider the Flood Risk Maps in more detail. We also expect to see scrutiny involvement in the 6 year review.

Your response

In your response we would appreciate your comments on any of the issues raised in this letter. We would be grateful if you could specifically refer to the points and recommendations outlined. Please provide your response by 25th February 2016.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Tony Colbourn
(Temporary) Convener of the Flood Risk Management Scrutiny Working Group