

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Environmental Services Portfolio Holder 15 November 2011
AUTHOR/S: Executive Director (Operational Services) / Corporate Manager (Health & Environmental Services)

SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT PLANS (TWO NUMBER) AND COUNTYWIDE PRELIMINARY FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

Purpose

1. To report to the Portfolio Holder on the above plans that were commissioned by the County Council as part of its obligations under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and the Flood Risk Regulations 2009.
2. This is not a key decision but the report outlines the work being undertaken by the County Council and the Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership as part of the response to the above legislation.

Recommendations

3. That the Portfolio Holder notes the reports and, where possible, endorses their use as an evidence base for the Local Development Framework and as a material consideration in planning decisions.

Background

4. During 2009 the County Council established the Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership in order to prepare for its new duties under the legislation outlined above at 1. Details of the partnership and the new legislation were reported at the Portfolio Holder meeting on 24 January 2011.
5. The Flood and Water Management Act places responsibility for managing the risk from local floods on upper tier or unitary authorities. Upper tier authorities are classified as 'Lead Local Flood Authorities' and may, under the Act, delegate flood risk management functions to other statutory drainage authorities – e.g. Water Company, Drainage Board or District Council.
6. The Flood Risk Regulations bring together key partners to manage flood risk from all sources. Local authorities (upper tier) are assigned responsibility for the management of surface water.

Considerations

7. The three County Council reports contain a substantial amount of detail and may be accessed at <http://www.scambs.gov.uk/Environment/Drainage/default.htm> Alternatively, a paper copy of the reports is available from the Council's Drainage Manager, Pat Matthews.

Cambridge and Milton Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP)

8. Cambridge City Council obtained a £100,000 grant from Defra in 2009 to undertake a Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) for the City. Under Defra guidance, the Cambridge City area as well as parts of both Milton and Impington parishes is

considered as one settlement. A small part, therefore, of the South Cambs district is included in the SWMP.

9. The report uses complex surface water computer modelling to identify areas at greatest risk from Surface Water flooding. These areas are known as 'Wetspots' and become the focus of further detailed computer modelling that is subsequently used to assess the financial damages as a result of surface water flooding. Finally, theoretical measures for mitigating the risk are examined in order to find the most economical options for reducing the surface water flood risk.
10. The Cambridge and Milton Surface Water Management Plan appraisal report recommended that the Kings Hedges/Arbury and the Cherry Hinton wetspots should be progressed to detailed analysis. This detailed analysis formed an additional part of the final report and various engineering measures and options were explored and outlined in the report.
11. The detailed analysis and recommendations within the report were used to form the basis and justification for a grant application to Defra by the City/County Council. If successful, the grant will be used to implement recommended works to reduce the surface water flood risk in both the Kings Hedges/Arbury and Cherry Hinton areas. Initial indications on the likely success of the grant application will be published in mid December 2011 by the Environment Agency. If the grant application proves successful, the detailed design for the Kings Hedges/Arbury scheme may show some benefits, and possibly works, within the SCDC area.

Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) for Cambridgeshire

12. The Flood Risk Regulations 2009 implement the European Floods Directive (2007/60/EC) by providing a consistent approach to managing flood risk across Europe. The Regulations reflect a six-year planning cycle and the PFRA is the first of four stages that will implement the Regulations. Further stages include; Identifying Flood Risk Areas; preparing Flood Hazard and Risk maps; preparing Flood Risk management Plans.
13. The PFRA is a high level report that brings together various types of pre-existing information from sources throughout the County. Its production was based on guidance documentation produced by the Environment Agency in February 2011. The report was completed in May 2011 and has been approved by Cambridgeshire County Council (Cabinet 24 May 2011).

Cambridgeshire Strategic Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP)

14. Following the widespread flooding during 2007 and the subsequent 'Pitt' review, the County Council was tasked with new responsibilities regarding surface water flooding. Pitt recommended that 'Local Surface Water Management Plans should provide the basis for managing all Flood Risk'. Cambridgeshire County Council's initial response to its new duties was to produce a strategic SWMP for the whole of Cambridgeshire.
15. The strategic SWMP identified links to other local and regional delivery plans such as 'Water Cycle Studies', 'Catchment Flood Management Plans', and 'Strategic Flood Risk Assessments' that might influence or be influenced by the SWMP. Additionally, data came from a variety of sources – e.g. the 'Flooding Memories' public consultation; the Environment Agency's 'National Receptor Database' and 'Flood Maps for Surface Water'; information from City and District Councils, Town and Parish Councils, Internal Drainage Boards, Water Authorities, the County Highways teams and Emergency Planning teams.

16. Following the collection and analysis of the data, various 'Wetspots' were identified and prioritised having considered which 'receptors' would be affected in the event of a flood. Prioritisation was heavily influenced by factors such as housing, critical infrastructure (electricity sub-stations or waste water treatment works), vulnerable sites (e.g. care homes) and transport infrastructure.
17. The ranking of the 'top ten' wetspots is shown in section 8 of the report and section 8.1.3 outlines the approach being used to further analyse a single wetspot in each of the individual District Council areas. In the SCDC area, Girton and the adjacent A14 is the area under current investigation. Following the investigation it is likely that recommendations will be made on whether to carry out any detailed modelling or the viability of localised works to reduce flood risk. The Girton report is expected to be made available at the end of February 2012.

Implications

18. Any detailed modelling results, assessments and maps that emerge from the reports can be used as follows:
 - To indicate potential development constraints
 - Opportunity to reduce flood risk
 - Evidence to require developers to undertake detailed site investigations and provide mitigation where appropriate
 - To help focus maintenance and emergency response on the areas of greatest need
 - As an evidence base for future planning and flood management policies

19.	Financial	None
	Legal	None
	Staffing	None
	Risk Management	None
	Equality and Diversity	None
	Equality Impact Assessment completed	No Not appropriate
	Climate Change	None

Consultations

20. Cambridgeshire County Council has undertaken very thorough consultations throughout the whole process of producing the three reports as indicated above at 15. Additionally, the reports were commissioned with the assistance and guidance of the Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership - see 4 above.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Cambridge and Milton Surface Water Management Plan; Strategic Surface Water Management Plan for Cambridgeshire; Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for Cambridgeshire.

Contact Officer: Patrick C Matthews – Drainage Manager
Telephone: (01954) 713472