

Minutes of the Flooding Meeting

27 October 2011

Committee rooms 8&9

Main Civic Town Hall reception area at 3 – 5pm

Purpose of the meeting

To update on the projects that the Council and Thames Water are undertaking to reduce surface water run-off. The draft Surface Water Management Plan was discussed with special attention to its action plan.

Update on Thames Water retrofitting SUDs pilot project

Mark Mathews and Mark Dickinson gave an update on the Thames Water project. Rainwater butts will be installed on a commercial site in South Kensington and in private residences. They are working with the GLA on a "Greenstreets" project to test green infrastructure and with TfL to provide SUDs.

Actions:

- There was a suggestion for the Kensington Academy and Leisure Centre to incorporate SUDs.
- Another suggestion was for Thames Water to work with local private landscape firms to see whether SUDs can be fitted as part of schemes.
- There was a question about prioritisation of FLIPs on properties more likely to suffer from flooding. Thames Water will get back to us on that.
- There was also a query on whether there should actually be a net reduction of water into the sewers rather than simply not have a net increase. The current policy CE2 requires SUDs to reduce both the volume and the speed of water run-off to the drainage system. By applying this policy to all developments which increase impermeable surfaces we will be aiming to reduce the amount of water in the drainage system.
- There was a query as to whether the Council consult Thames Water on schemes such as Exhibition Road and whether SUDs could have been incorporated. Thames Water are to clarify.

Update on SUDs in small development projects

Royal Haskoning consultants were hired August 2011 to produce a tool to help development control officers and developers to determine the

volume of storage and the potential SUDS required to attenuate this volume. The tool will aid the implementation of CE2 from early next year.

Actions:

- Include monitoring of SUDs produced.
- To look into how this tool will be included in the validation list.
- The link to the consultation on the SUDs Standards (in relation to the Council's new duty as a SUDs approval body) will be circulated to members of the steering flooding group once it starts.

Community Flood Plans (CFP)

A pilot project for a community flood plan in Holland Ward will be discussed at the next ward panel meeting in November and the project will start soon after. Several individuals are working in partnership to put together the CFP: Drain London, Safer Neighbourhood team members, Planning and Contingency Planning. A CFP brings together the community to understand flood risk, locations that might flood, the reasons, and actions to reduce potential severity of the flood and any associated damage and distress. The EA will provide the CFP template and some funding for the developmental work

There was a discussion around the appropriateness of choosing Holland Ward for the pilot as it does not seem the most active ward.

The ward meeting will take place on Tuesday 8th November at St Barnabus Church, Addison Road at 7pm. If you are interested in attending please contact Miranda or Keith on their email addresses:

Miranda.Tyrie@met.pnn.police.uk

Keith.Robins@rbkc.gov.uk

Flood Risk Management website

A website explaining our new duties as a Lead Local Flood Authority, related flooding documents and projects is live. However it was seen as too legalistic and will undergo some changes to include a description of the flooding issues followed by the strategy or solutions to reduce the risk of flooding and finally an explanation of our new duties. A map showing the risk of flooding could help improve the website. The changes aim to make the webpage more interesting and user friendly.

Positive feedback on the website: the fact that it was printing friendly and the inclusion of the date when the webpage was last updated. The link to the website is the following:

<http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/planningandconservation/planningpolicy/floodingissues.aspx>

Actions:

- The website will be updated with the changes mentioned above by the 10th November.

Draft Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP)

The draft SWMP and its action plan were explained. It includes different sections: introduction, Phase 1: preparation, Phase 2: risk assessment, Phase 3: options and Phase 4: implementation and review. The outputs of the risk assessment were outlined. There was a discussion on the numbers of properties at risk of flooding which could be life-threatening (depth of 0.5m or more). The importance of explaining the total amount of properties at risk, not just those facing flood depths of 0.5m was highlighted. It is important that this is clarified so it can help support Thames Water's bid to OFWAT. The draft SWMP explains the different risks and numbers of properties affected.

Actions:

- Ensure that the level of flood risk is properly presented and explained.
- Include in footnotes an explanation of 'flood risk asset'.
- Explain which Committee will look into the draft (there was a suggestion that it should be the Public Realm Scrutiny Committee).
- There was a question on when the Borough policies will be fully implemented and a timetable for any updates. At the moment there is not a timetable for updating the policies. There will be a period when the SUDs tool is implemented and its effects monitored to check its performance. However, it was considered that the current policies do not need re-wording. A clear timetable is required as to when critical drainage areas will be identified.
- A review of the SFRA will follow the consultation of the draft SWMP.
- All developments along the boundary with Hammersmith and Fulham should be properly assessed. This point should be included in the action plan and coordination between boroughs should be improved.
- The retrofitting of flood resistance measures in individual properties should be explained as an action that residents could take up voluntarily rather than expect the Council to pay for it. This should be spelt out in the action plan.

- The action plan should include proper deadlines rather than a short, medium and long-term timeframes.
- Cracking on buildings (upheaval of water in clay soils) as a result of incremental basement development was raised. This could be addressed in a revised version of the subterranean development SPD and the Council will look into whether this work can be incorporated as part of the Vanguard project at Markham Square in Chelsea.
- It was requested that a register be kept of those properties where it is alleged that cracking or other damage has occurred because of subterranean development. It was agreed that these would be passed on to the lead officer for the Vanguard Project.
- In terms of monitoring it was agreed that outcomes such as the number of SUDs that have been incorporated into schemes would be important
- There was a request that the Policy Officer who deals principally with energy: Code for sustainable Homes and Ecohomes, should meet members of the Kensington Society to explain the methodology. This was agreed and is currently being arranged.