

## **NOTICE OF MOTION - Flooding**

Motion submitted by Cllrs Rob Devey, Cllrs David Whitaker, Richard Newman-Thompson, Colin Hartley and Karen Leytham:

*This council:*

- *Expresses its thanks to everyone involved in the response to December's floods, including the emergency services, businesses, council officers and members of the community.*
- *Welcomes the efforts currently underway by the council to assist in identifying what improvements can be made to help prevent the flooding and power cuts experienced in the Lancaster district in December from happening again – and asks officers for an overview of these and a further update by July.*
- *Affirms this council's commitment to continuing to work with lead flood authority Lancashire County Council, the Environment Agency and other agencies to secure funding for the necessary improvements.*
- *Agrees that flood defences should be designed to cope with much greater unprecedented volumes of rainfall given the evidence of new volatility in British weather conditions.*
- *Recognises that investment to prevent flooding in the first place is a better use of taxpayers money than the huge financial and human costs involved in dealing with the aftermath of flooding.*
- *Urges the Government to ensure that necessary funding is provided to implement recommended improvements to flood defences in the Lancaster district.*

### **Officer Briefing note:**

The City Council provides support to the Environment Agency and the County Council as Lead Flood Authority, who hold the statutory responsibilities for responding to flooding and flood risk management, through the Regeneration and Planning Service. The Engineering Team alongside its duties managing and maintaining the sea defences at Morecambe assists in the design and implementation of flood management solutions from time to time. It also provides local knowledge and monitoring capability for local flooding hot spots.

City Council Officers have already been working with the Environment Agency during 2015 to provide support to a potential bid by the Environment Agency to improve defences along the River Lune in the Caton Road area. Concerns about the vulnerability of the electricity sub-station had already been highlighted before Storm Desmond. The impacts of the storm have as one would expect accelerated the commitment to design further flood resilience improvements and a formal project team has now been established.

In addition to the River Lune a range of other vulnerable locations where further work may be necessary to address flooding have been identified and made known to the Environment Agency.

The City Councils ability to continue to support the Environment Agency and the Lead Flood Authority is highly dependent on retaining capacity and skills in the Engineering Team. It is a small team with only 5 posts and there remain difficulties in recruiting to a vacant post at this time. An internal Audit is currently taking place to address the issue of succession planning in this team to ensure that the council maintains this capability. The outcome of the audit and any implications or options regarding resourcing would be considered in the context of statutory responsibilities.

**Statutory Officer comments:**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.