

		AGENDA ITEM 9
		PSEG/14/16
Committee:	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	26 May 2016	
THIRD PARTY RESPONSIBILITIES AND FLOOD ENFORCEMENT SCRUTINY REPORT: UPDATE (Minute 8/ March 2016)		
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In November 2015 (Minute 8) the Committee endorsed the Scrutiny Report 'Third Party Responsibilities and Flood Enforcement in Essex'.

The scrutiny report contains five recommendations, which have been duly sent to the relevant Cabinet Members. The following response has been Councillor Johnson, as Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport Delivery:

'Thank you for your letter regarding the Scrutiny Report on Third Party Responsibilities and Flood Enforcement.

I was very pleased to receive the Scrutiny Committee's report and welcomed issuing the joint press release to publicise the work. I am pleased that this detailed and thorough piece of work, which was undertaken over many months, has recognised the quality of work we do in regard to flood enforcement.

As Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport Delivery, I am committed to utilising my role to ensure that, in partnership with agencies and my colleagues in Cabinet, work continues on this valuable piece of work.

With regard to the recommendations that fall within my portfolio, I can confirm that work is underway and a business case is being developed to continue and expand the enforcement pilot.

I wish to thank the scrutiny committee and officers for their time and hard work on this report and I look forward to working closely with you in the future.'

The Committee will continue to monitor outcomes arising from the recommendations, and the Cabinet's full response to the scrutiny report will be brought forward in due course.

As a result of a recommendation proposing that a short supplementary piece of work is undertaken around IT and Communications support in raising public awareness about the Council's services such as flood management, it is intended that a briefing paper will be delivered to a future meeting of the Committee on the topic. If it is considered that a further investigation may be appropriate then the matter may be referred to Scrutiny Board if it falls into the remit of another Scrutiny Committee's remit.

For ease of reference the Scrutiny Report's recommendations are set out at the Appendix to this report.

Action required by the Committee at this meeting:

To note the update to be provided in this report.

Appendix

Recommendations

The Task and Finish Group submitted this scrutiny report to the full Committee on 26 November 2015 for its endorsement, and it was agreed to forward the following recommendations to the Council's Cabinet:

1. That the Cabinet Members for Transport, Planning and Environment; Infrastructure; and Highways Delivery be advised that the Committee commends the LLFA and HA for the positive way that they are taking forward the County Council's flood management role, and in particular the framework of preventative measures being developed as featured in this scrutiny report.
2. That the Cabinet Members for Transport, Planning and Environment; Infrastructure; and Highways Delivery be requested to provide progress reports to the Committee on the following matters in June 2016 so that the outcomes of the particular pieces of work identified can be reviewed:
 - (1) The Committee supports those projects such as the LLFA 'Where does water go?' that is assisting in the mapping of watercourses and the development of highways asset databases that will contribute to the creation of comprehensive records for more effective flood management across Essex in the future. An update is requested on the production of the databases that are being developed to enhance flood management.
 - (2) Given the benefits that could accrue from the co-ordination of LLFA and HA activity, the Committee welcomes the steps taken so far to formalise flood enforcement activity. Nevertheless an update is sought on what outcomes may accrue as a result of the Teams working more closely together and the formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).
 - (3) Given the implications for enhanced enforcement activity, the early success of the Maldon Highway Enforcement Pilot Project is welcomed by the Committee. Consequently when that Project is reviewed in early 2016 the Committee would wish to receive an update on any proposals that may be considered by the Cabinet Member for extending the project to other parts of the county, and its impact upon local flood alleviation.
3. That, in view of the links between flood management and planning that the review has highlighted, the Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning and Environment be recommended to engage LPAs in the matter of:
 - raising the profile of surface water drainage in strategic planning and development management in the way that flood management and preventative measures are implemented across Essex; and

- establishing the principle of seeking Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to address local flooding issues as appropriate eg ensure it is added to the strategic list for contributions.

The Cabinet Member is requested to provide the Committee with a response in April 2016.

4. That the Cabinet be requested to provide the Committee with a briefing paper in Spring 2016 that explains how the County Council itself co-ordinates its own activities in order to identify and address overall infrastructure needs in Essex including flood risk management and preventative measures associated with new development. The Committee will provide a scoping document setting out the key questions that it will ask the Cabinet to address.
5. That the Task and Finish Group conduct a short supplementary scrutiny review of the IT and Communications support provided for the delivery of frontline flood management services using the website and social media, with the aim of reporting to the Committee early in the New Year.