

# Report to Environment & Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Item:  
**A.5**

Meeting Date: Thursday 20th April 2017  
 Portfolio: Cross Cutting  
 Key Decision: Not Applicable:  
 Within Policy and Budget Framework NO  
 Public / Private Public

Title: FLOOD UPDATE REPORT  
 Report of: The Deputy Chief Executive  
 Report Number: CS10/17

**Purpose / Summary:**

This report is part of a series of regular update reports prepared for Overview and Scrutiny Committees on flood recovery activities and future programmed work.

This report will:-

- Update Members on the recovery of Council assets, including the Civic Centre
- Update Members on the provision of grants and relief to those households and businesses directly affected by the flood.
- Update Members on the activities being undertaken by the Environment Agency and Cumbria County Council.

**Recommendations:**

That members of the Environment & Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel consider this report and the progress made to date in the continued efforts to recover from the December 2015 floods.

**Tracking**

Executive:	
Overview and Scrutiny:	<b>COSP 6/4/17 ROSP 13/4/17</b>
Council:	

## BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 This report aims to set out an update of the recent and future planned work associated with recovery from the 2015 flood and plans to deal with any future such events.
- 1.2 During the past fifteen months an extensive range of recovery activities have been undertaken, these work areas are outlined in the report and officers will be present to answer questions associated with these.

## 2. CITY COUNCIL ASSET RECOVERY PROGRAMME

- 2.1 As outlined in previous reports Phase 2 of the Asset Reinstatement programme is underway and in some assets growing to a close. The Council employed WYG as programme managers. WYG are to design, specify and deliver the reinstatement works to all scheduled properties, including the procurement process and management of the construction works. A number of controls are in place to ensure effective delivery of the programme to budget, quality and time. A plan is in place for effective communication of progress and for early identification of any issues and emerging risks. During the detailed design stages, consultation and sign-off procedures will be scheduled to ensure the relevant stakeholders are involved in the process.

This programme includes all the flood damaged properties owned by the City Council. The target start and end dates for individual assets/recovery have been updated and are shown below:

Warwick St properties	Complete and settled
Adriano's	06/2016 - 04/2017
Sands Centre and Swifts	Complete and settled
Stoney Holme (inc. Depot)	10/2016 - 05/2017
John St properties (Hostel and Annex)	06/2016 - 05/2017
Shaddongate Resource Centre	06/2016 - 05/2017
Botcherby Community Centre	06/2016 - 05/2017
Bitts Park (Depot, Lodge, Pavilion& WCs)	Dates to be confirmed await design/costings
Caldew Riverside Properties (demolition)	06/2016 - 04/2017
Old Fire Station	Complete
Sheepmount - final programme still to be determined following conclusion of insurance negotiations	10/2016 – 06/2017

Funding for the recovery of all these assets is the subject of ongoing work with our insurers.

## 2.2 Civic Centre and Customer Contact Centre

As reported previously, Customer Contact services continue to be provided from the temporary portababin accommodation located in the car park as the ground floor and basement remain out of action. Work has been completed to investigate initial options for the future use of the Civic Centre and Customer Contact Centre. This exercise include investigation into:

- Accommodation requirements having regard to current and future staffing, service delivery needs and working practices;
- The current costs of occupying, running and maintaining the Civic and comparison with the costs of relocation;
- The scope and demand in the marketplace for alternative uses for the ground floor, basement and any surplus office space in the tower from both the public and private sector, and the income generating potential which might arise;
- Any building and engineering constraints and opportunities, together with associated costs, which need to be taken into account if alternative uses are considered;
- Practical and cost efficient flood resilience measures which can be built into the reinstatement;

The initial investigations are complete, however detailed design is on hold until negotiations with insurers are complete following which we will have a defined budget to work with. We anticipate all insurance negotiations to be completed by mid-April.

## 2.3 Bitts Park

The upper tennis courts have been open to the public since Easter. Permanent repair works to the fencing and floodlighting for these courts is now complete.

The lower courts remain out of action, however they were due to be resurfaced and redeveloped as part of the proposed canopy development. On that basis we have not progressed repair works as they will be unnecessary as and when the canopy project commences. Having had a protracted discussion with the Lawn Tennis Association we are now confidently moving forward to starting this project.

The Pavillion was insured and will form part of the Council's reinstatement programme. We now have a firm understanding of the insurance settlement figures for the lodge, Pavillion, toilets and depot and we are working with WYG to bring a new set of facilities to members for their views and advice.

Officers are currently working with WYG to facilitate temporary toilet facilities whilst the redevelopment occurs.

The play area has now benefitted from a complete array of new equipment, designed to be fully accessible. This facility was re-opened in October and is proving to be very popular

### **3. FLOOD GRANTS & HOUSEHOLD PAYMENTS (FIGURES AS OF 17<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2017)**

#### **3.1 Community Support Grant -£500 Household Scheme**

Further to the floods the Government announced an immediate assistance scheme targeted to support households affected by the event. This offered a one off Community Support Grant payment of £500 to each household.

Up to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 1,670 households have been confirmed as flooded by Storm Desmond, of these 1,602 are eligible for the £500 community support grant. The Council has made payments made to 1,567 households equating to 97.84% and totalling £783,500.

This is being recovered from the County Council upon submission of fortnightly grant claims.

#### **3.2 £5,000 Flood Resilience Grant**

Flood resilience grants are available to assist householders and business to make their properties more flood resilient in future. The grants can be used to cover costs associated with resistance products such as flood doors and barriers or they can be used to make properties more resilient, so water proof plaster, moving electric, boilers etc. above the flood water. Since the introduction of the scheme, the Housing team have provided advice to over 1000 flood affected property owners, through online enquires, telephone, advice sessions. The scheme has also been widely publicised through partner agencies, local press and social media.

The Council are also now working in partnership with JBA consulting, who are able to provide independent Property Protection reports. The report costs are covered by the £500 allowance within the grant and the Council are arranging payment on behalf of the owner through the process, so there are no upfront costs for the property owner. The report will be invaluable for those who require advice on what measures might be best to future protect their properties.

The Flood Resilience grant covers both residential and commercial properties and is being administered by the Housing Department. 930 applications (56%) have been received, with 1096 approved (as of 17<sup>th</sup> March) totalling £3,951,905. The 625

applications paid equate to approx. £2,333,496. This is recoverable from the County Council.

### **3.3 Council Tax & NNDR discount schemes**

County wide schemes have now been approved with the DCLG paying £400,000 to the County Council to fund the local discretions (second homes / empty properties / flood affected businesses) contained within the County wide schemes.

Districts are submitting monthly claims to recover the costs incurred. Funding for discounts offered in line with the Government Scheme will be paid through a S31 grant directly to us. Council tax discount awarded to 2,218 householders which amounts to £2.020 million for the affected properties. Business rates discount awarded to 108 properties amounting to £507,833 in total.

## **4. ONGOING WORK OF THE ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN THE FLOOD RECOVERY**

### **4.1 Strategic Flood Update**

We continue to work in partnership with the Environment Agency, the County Council and other partners on resilience and resistant measures to address specific issues arising from the floods in December 2015 and manage flood risk in the future.

Sainsbury's application for resistance measures was considered by the Development Control Committee in March who gave authority to the Corporate Director of Economic Development to issue planning permission on receipt of a satisfactory response from the Environment Agency that they have no objections.

Rickerby Residents - The Environment Agency continue to work with the residents on proposals which will provide resistant measures in the area.

Cumbria Strategic Floods Partnership Board – A new Board has been set up to lead, coordinate and monitor the management of flood risk in Cumbria. The Board brings together Flood Risk Management Authorities including the Environment Agency, Cumbria County Council, District Councils and United Utilities and a wide range of representatives from other organisations and community groups who have an interest of responsibility for flood risk management.

## **4.2 Carlisle City Council**

The Carlisle Emergency Plan has been reviewed and signed off by the Senior Management Team on 30th August. The plan is now stored on the Resilience Direct system, a national extranet for Emergency Planning

Additional locations for Reception Centres have been identified with feedback from communities at risk from flooding. A risk assessment for each location has been carried out and once an agreement has been reached with the centre's owners and operators they will be added the Carlisle Emergency Plan and the Cumbria Resilience Forum Welfare Plan (Emergency Assistance Centres).

## **4.3 Cumbria Resilience Forum**

The Cumbria Resilience Forum (CRF) consists of all organisations and agencies involved with emergency response in Cumbrian communities. The CRF was set up in response to the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to co-ordinate the response to major incidents in Cumbria.

The Community Resilience Network is a sub-group of the CRF which focuses on improving community resilience. This group will be the an important link to a new Big Lottery Funded project called 'Rebuilding Together' . This new programme will take place over the next 3 years, led by Cumbria CVS and delivered in partnership with Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAfS) and Action with Communities in Cumbria (ACT). 'Rebuilding Together' will help to build on the partnerships we already have, and support local communities and organisations to increase their resilience and confidence to respond alongside statutory organisations.

CRF have commissioned a debrief report on the ongoing recovery. This is a separate debrief to the CRF Storm Desmond Report, which focused on the immediate acute phase of the emergency. The recovery debrief work is been led by an Hugh Deeming, an independent consultant.

**Contact Officer: Darren Crossley**

**Ext: 7004**

**Appendices  
attached to report:**

**Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:**

- None

**CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS/RISKS:**

**Chief Executive's -**

**Deputy Chief Executive –**

**Economic Development –**

**Governance –**

**Local Environment –**

**Resources -**