

Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Full Council – 8 November 2023
SUBJECT:	Urgent Item - Storm Ciaran and Flooding Impacts
LEAD OFFICER:	Philippa Dart – Director of Environment and Communities and Interim Chief Executive Joe Russell-Wells – Group Head of Environment and Climate Change
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Stanley
WARDS:	All Wards
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION: Emergency Planning response under the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT: Emergency Planning response under the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY: No direct financial implications have yet been identified as a result of the proposals in this report.	

Reasons for urgency: The special circumstances for non-compliance with Access to Information Procedure Rules Part 6 Section 1 Paragraph 5.1 and Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (items not to be considered unless open to inspection at least 5 days before the meeting) are that:-

- This item is in the opinion of the Chair of the Council business of such urgency as to require immediate attention by the Full Council in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 3.1(viii).

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To briefly set out the impacts of Storm Ciaran which followed unprecedented rainfall in October 2023 in the local area. In addition to propose that the Environment Committee sets up a 'Forum' to review the incident through inviting technical reports from partners such as the Environment Agency and Southern Water. The aim being to set out in future how the impacts can be mitigated.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Full Council is requested to resolve that:

- 1) Arun District Council acknowledges the devastating impact the recent flooding has had on residents and businesses within the district;
- 2) This Council recommends to the Environment Committee that a 'Forum' is established made up of various partners responsible for flood preparation, planning and response, including the Environment Agency, Southern Water,

West Sussex County Council and others, to investigate and consider the contributing factors, impacts and possible solutions;

- A) The Forum is to be chaired by a suitably qualified independent person;
- B) The Forum's findings be reported back to the Environment Committee and Full Council;
- C) Authority is delegated to the Interim Chief Executives in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Environment Committee to agree the terms of reference and arrangements for the establishment of the forum.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1 Storm Ciaran arrived on the south coast of England on 2 November following unprecedented rainfall during October. The result was the Environment Agency issuing flood alerts and flood warning across the district and a number of residents and businesses either being flooded or impacted. The district council has the role of leading during the recovery phase following an incident. This report recommends that the Environment Committee sets up a 'forum' to review the impacts of the incident and set out steps to reduce impacts in the future.

4. DETAIL

- 4.1 The District received unprecedented rainfall during October. As reported in the Members' Newsletter (3 Nov 2023) the rainfall average for West Sussex is 62.2mm. The rainfall for Bognor Regis recorded in the last two weeks of October was 274.6mm, nearly 4 and a half times the normal October rainfall. Storm Ciaran hit parts of the south of the country bringing yet more rain on 2 November 2023.

This resulted in the Environment Agency issuing various Flood Alerts and Warnings in our district. Our District did escape the worst of the weather however the significant rainfall on top of already saturated ground has resulted in flooding of some areas including affecting some homes and businesses. A full picture of the impact is emerging with information being drawn together from partners who have been involved in dealing with the impacts.

Although the affects have been significant it has not been declared this a *Major Incident*. The definition of a Major Incident is provided in Appendix 1. The resources locally available have meant that services have been able to deal with the event and provide most services as normal. This is by no means intended to understate the impact upon a number of individual residences and businesses which for them has been devastating.

4.2 Arun District Council (ADC) response

ADC role in dealing with these events is set out under the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004. The following is taken from the Sussex Emergency Response and Recovery document.

Districts Roles & Responsibilities

- Alert other local authorities and organisations, including parish councils.
- Deploy liaison officers
- Assist in warning and informing of the general public
- Provide a Strategic level officer to the Strategic Coordinating Group (when appropriate)
- Provide and manage Rest Centres & arrange emergency feeding
- Support the running of Survivor Reception Centres
- Coordinate the provision of Transport (if not already being carried out by County)
- Re-housing and accommodation needs for displaced persons.
- Support to major public events
- Respond to local coastal pollution incidents
- Waste removal
- Provide technical and engineering advice
- Environmental health advice and services,
- Building Control Services e.g. structural safety advice

A full list of the involvement of the Emergency Planning Officer and other officers in responding to matters that have arisen is listed in Appendix 2.

As the weather warnings were issued in advance of Storm Ciaran these meetings were held to coordinate a response between the agencies and by Arun to the likely events of the impact of the storm and aftermath. This includes some outcomes which coordinate activities between the listed organisations below. It included providing communications giving advice to the public. The final meeting listed is the first recovery meeting referred below.

The lead agency for this incident is the Environment Agency, supported by WSCC as the Lead Local Flood Authority. The meetings held are multi-disciplinary agencies and comprised of representatives from several organisations including:

- Environment Agency,
- Upper and lower tier local authorities (ADC / WSCC),
- all blue light services,
- health agencies,
- utility providers,
- Met Office,
- Coastguard Agency,
- UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA),
- Highways England,
- Ministry of Defence representative,
- voluntary agencies.

Services provided by ADC have continued as normal during this storm period. This has included clearing fallen trees, ensuring the streets remain clear of debris, checking and clearing drain grates, and inspecting the condition of the coast, beaches, promenades and sea defences. The council refuse collection service continued largely as normal.

The number of staff dealing with the above works are small in number. The Emergency Planning Officer is a half post shared with Chichester District Council.

4.3 Communications

Communications during this period has also been key from preparation prior to the storm event to advise during and after the storm had passed.

The council has issued the following communications related to heavy rains, Storm Ciaran and associated issues:

- seven detailed member communications
- seven news updates on the Arun District Council homepage
- 19 Facebook posts and shares
- 15 X posts and shares (formerly twitter)
- Six Instagram posts
- Three detailed staff communications

4.4 Impacts

The full impact of the storm and flooding is still being assessed, however reports provided by the fire service were that 5 properties did have flooding with one of those properties needed to be pumped out by the fire service the other residents requiring advice only. In addition, the council has received reports of other properties flooding and further reports have been requested through the multi-agency recovery meeting held on 8 Nov 2023. The Riverside Caravan Park was evacuated following flooding which made the site in accessible. Information about the number of caravans being flooded is being collated.

A number of businesses have also been affected, particularly in the Durban Road area of Bognor Regis.

It is likely that some properties will not be known to Arun where it may have been reported to an agency such as Southern Water and the information will not have been passed to all authorities. As part of the recovery work it will be important to fully establish the impact. All members who do receive reports of damage, particularly where the flooding of businesses or homes takes place are encouraged to report this to the following email: StormCiaran@arun.gov.uk

As part of the response to the storm several storm damaged trees were cleared from ADC land and some neighbouring properties. Clearance of shingle from the promenades has commenced, more clearance will follow.

4.5 Recovery

In accordance with the CCA 2004 ADC takes the lead role in coordinating the recovery from an incident.

The aim of the recovery phase is to restore key services, establish a collaborative approach to helping communities recover from the incident to achieve relative normality and establish and maintain communication channels with the public, partners and other stakeholders.

A series of recovery meetings with partner agencies will be held to assist in the coordination.

The outcomes from the recovery meetings can be used to inform a future Forum in identifying the contributing factors, the full impact of the storm and flooding. This information can then be used by the partners involved to proposing steps to reduce the impacts in future to residents and businesses within the district.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 None to date

6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

6.1 None

7. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

7.1 The financial impact of Storm Ciaran on this Council will be assessed by Officers and reported to the Environment Committee in due course. Additional costs may be partially covered by the Council's insurance policies (after any excess payable) and should it become available, Officers will also apply for any central government funding that may become available. Any unbudgeted expenditure that cannot be mitigated by savings will need to be funded from the Council's Usable Revenue Reserves.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 None to date

9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

9.1 The reasons for this report coming forward as an urgent item are set out at the beginning of this report.

9.2 The proposed 'Forum' would not be a committee, sub-committee or working party of the authority. Instead, it would be a body established by the Environment Committee and the appropriate statutory power for its establishment would be the Council's general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

10.1 Resource implications to be fully assessed.

11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

11.1 Impact under assessment

12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

12.1 Impact under assessment

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

13.1 Impact under assessment

14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

14.1 To be considered as part of the proposed Forum outcomes.

15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

15.1 Not applicable

16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

16.1 Not applicable

17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

17.1 Not applicable

CONTACT OFFICER:

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Job Title: Group Head of Environment and Climate Change

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: *None*

APPENDIX 1

Major Incident:

A Major Incident is a widely used term recognised nationally and locally within the Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF).

“An event or situation with a range of serious consequences which requires special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder agency”.

Notes

1. *“Emergency responder agency” describes all category one and two responders as defined in the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and associated guidance.*
2. *A major incident is beyond the scope of business-as-usual operations, and is likely to involve serious harm, damage, disruption or risk to human life or welfare, essential services, the environment or national security.*
3. A major incident may involve a single-agency response, although it is more likely to require a multi-agency response, which may be in the form of multi-agency support to a lead responder.
4. The severity of the consequences associated with a major incident are likely to constrain or complicate the ability of responders to resource and manage the incident, although a major incident is unlikely to affect all responders equally.

The decision to declare a major incident will always be a judgement made in a specific local and operational context, and there are no precise and universal thresholds or triggers.

Source: The Sussex Emergency Response and Recovery document

APPENDIX 2

Summary of meetings and actions - Storm Ciaran		
Date	Meeting	Comments and actions
Fri 27/10/2023	Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) Tactical Advisory Group (TAG) 1	Concerns about Littlehampton Bonfire. Comms on standby for weekend. Tides are high with strong winds
Sat 28/10/2023	SRF TAG 2	A number of flood warnings issued. Rifes and rivers high.
Sat 28/10/2023	SRF Tactical Coordination Group (TCG) 1	Minor impacts expected on coast. Environment Agency (EA) concerned about river wall works at Arundel, changes made to work plan.
Sat 28/10/2023		Emergency Planning Officer (EPO) liaised with Duty Standby to check calls received
		Road flooding referred to WSCC
		EA reports Climping broken through. EPO asked WSCC to close road.
		Incident Liaison Officer (ILO) visited Climping to assess extent of breach/flooding
		ADC Comms requested to attend Sussex Warning and Informing Group
Sat 28/10/2023	SRF TCG 2	WSFRS checking around Felpham for road flooding. 70mm rain possible in next 24 hours. More strong winds forecast. Next couple of tides will probably flood Climping fields.
		Rest Centres contacted to double check readiness
Sat 28/10/2023	SRF TCG 3	Tornado in Littlehampton. Roof off house. Building Control attended, Housing accommodated evacuee. More heavy rain and strong winds forecast. EA report no significant change, flood water might reach Ferry Road on next high tide.
Sun 29/10/2023	SRF TCG 4	WSCC Durban House flooded. Heavy rain continues. EA - flood risk should start to drop. EA continue to repair Climping Beach between high tides. Arundel river wall works looking stable.
		EPO checked Ferry Rd and Rope walk clear
Sun 29/10/2023	SRF TCG 5	High tides will continue through week as strong wind push up levels. Concerns are increasing for Wednesday and Thursday's weather. A few trees have been blown down. Riverside Caravan Park access becoming difficult.
Sun 29/10/2023		EPO responded to Substation flood at A29 Bognor Regis. Attended site for multiagency response. Offered sandbags through mutual aid, although not required. SRF (Sussex Warning & Informing Group)

		SWIG producing general flood messaging for circulation.
Mon 30/10/2023		ILO checked Ferry Road and Rope Walk clear.
Mon 30/10/2023	SRF TCG 6	WSFRS asking Littlehampton Bonfire Society to remove bonfire from site. Expecting gusts up to 80mph on Thursday. Levels in Aldingbourne Rife stabilising but will remain high for weeks. Climping Beach very vulnerable from wave action. Water levels around A29 substation under control. Riverside Caravan Park checking regularly on residents. A29 closed in both directions but plans to open one lane in each direction. Red Cross on standby. UK Power Networks expect some isolated power outages.
Mon 30/10/2023	ADC Emergency Management Team (EMT) 1	Need to raise staff and Rest Centre awareness to impending storm. Ask SWEP to be activated. Ask Committee Services if meeting need cancelling.
Mon 30/10/2023		Started to put all staff on readiness and check availabilities. Including ILO, Rest Centre (RC), Tree and Maintenance Team
		Coastal engineer checked sites
		SWEP activated
Tue 31/10/2023	SRF TCG 7	Storm expected to arrive Wednesday evening and continue through Thursday. Could be small number of properties flooded as rife levels high at Bersted. WSFRS keeping an eye on some caravan parks.
Tue 31/10/2023	ADC EMT 2	Generally, state of beaches okay. Will check with Cleansing to see if they are having to clean up. Will check with Housing to see if they are prepared. Economy Committee to be moved. Check Facilities are prepared. PR to issue more comms.
Wed 01/11/2023	SRF TCG 8	EA, generally improving but rife still high. Waves less damaging to beaches. Small number of properties affected in the usual places. Aldingbourne Rife pumping station working hard, Climping beach work continues, Arundel River wall okay, Ferring rife has some garden flooding. A29 partially open both directions.
	ADC EMT 3	Pagham beach looking okay.
Wed 01/11/2023	SRF TCG 9	Transport and Evacuation Cell on standby.

Thu 02/11/2023	SRF TCG 10	Worst of storm considered over. Amber reduce to East. Rifes still high. Tide risk gone by weekend. Beaches held well. Now don't expect flood to Ferry Rd. Ultra-high-volume pump (UHVP) being planned for Felpham pumping station. A few power cuts.
		EPO contacted Southern Water regarding Marshall Close.
Thu 02/11/2023	ADC EMT 4	Pagham looking okay, reports of a couple of our trees down, all major contractors working well.
		Concerns raised over Marigold caravan park, Shripney. Rest Centre (RC) possible. Then stood down after WSCC visited site.
Thu 02/11/2023	ADC EMT 5	Earlier concerns for Marigold Park and 3 houses in Pagham - no evacuations necessary.
Thu 02/11/2023	SRF TCG 11	Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) concern for Bersted substation. Beaches holding, tides falling. EA working on Climping Beach.
Thu 02/11/2023	SSEN Meeting Bersted Substation flooding	Bersted Electricity substation flooded. 32,000 customers at risk. WSFRS working overnight to keep levels low in switch house. Flood defence equipment on the way. Agencies working together to ensure access for equipment. Plan A to bund switch gear. Plan B to reroute supplies.
Fri 03/11/2023	SSEN Meeting Bersted Substation flooding	Further work required to ensure access of flood defence equipment.
Fri 03/11/2023	SRF TCG 12	SSEN think they can cope without military assistance. But will make request in afternoon if necessary.
Fri 03/11/2023	ADC EMT 6	ADC Engineer to be invited to future TCGs. Engineer checking reports of flooding in East Preston.
Fri 03/11/2023	SRF TCG 13	Climping Beach work good. SSEN making good progress on bunding.
Fri 03/11/2023	ADC EMT 7	Ask housing for a report of any flooding they are aware of. EA asked to map flooding if levels rise another 30cm.
Sat 04/11/2023	SRF TCG 14	Shripney area stable. SSEN bunding complete and successful. No increase in flood risk around Bognor. EA staff in area and monitoring the situation.
Sun 05/11/2023	SRF TCG 15	Met Office -Worst is over. Aldingbourne rife not expected to rise much more. Pump to be installed at Felpham pumping station on Wednesday. Rifes should start falling after today. Addison Way road flooded. Rest Centre not required. SSEN bunds holding
Mon 06/11/2023	SRF TCG 16	Rife levels coming down and will continue. Weather not causing concerns.

	EA UHV pump meeting	Agencies working together to enable installation of UHVP at Felpham with diversion for promenade walkers. EA will engage with locals.
	ADC EMT 8	Planning for Recovery Coordination Group (RCG). New email in box created to receive reports of flooding photographs etc.
Tue 07/11/2023	SRF TCG17 last	Last TCG agreed to moved to RCG. Strong winds expected Wednesday could delay installation of Felpham pumps. All plans stood down.
Wed 08/11/2023	RCG 1	