

Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Environment Committee – 19 March 2024
SUBJECT:	Arun Flood Forum – Inaugural
LEAD OFFICER:	Karl McLaughlin – Flooding and Coastal Engineering Manager Philippa Dart – Director of Environment and Communities and Interim CEO Joe Russell-Wells – Group Head of Environment and Climate Change
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Sue Wallsgrove
WARDS:	All Wards
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION: To meet the objectives set out in the Arun Flood Forum - Terms of Reference agreed by the Environment Committee on 21 November 2023. The Terms of Reference can be viewed in Appendix 1 attached to this report.	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT: Response to establishment of the Arun Flood Forum by Full Council on 8 November 2023	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY: A sum of £20,000 has been included in the 2024-2025 revenue budget	

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 A report was taken to Full Council on 8 November 2023 following Storm Ciaran which followed unprecedented rainfall in October 2023 and resulted in flooding impacts across the District. Full Council recognised the impacts on residents and business and resolved that the Environment Committee establishes a Forum to review the incident, to investigate and consider the contributing factors, impacts and possible solutions. This report sets out the terms of reference for the Forum.
- 1.2 This report seeks to update the Committee following the inaugural Arun Flood Forum held on 26 of February 2024.
- 1.3 In accordance with its Terms of Reference the Forum will bring recommendations to this committee where they relate to Arun District Council decisions.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the contents of this report and that the Forum will bring recommendations to the Committee where they require a decision from the Committee and/or a recommendation to Full Council.

3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a result of recent flooding within the District the Arun Flood Forum has been set up to investigate the contributing factors, impacts and possible solutions in a collaborative way. At the first meeting Southern Water (SW) made a presentation to the Forum and a number of questions to SW and other Forum members was asked. This report provides an update following this meeting of the Forum.

4 DETAIL

4.1 Background

Storm Ciaran arrived on the south coast of England on 2 November following unprecedented rainfall during October. The storm was subject of Yellow and Amber weather warnings for wind and rain impacts. 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.

On 8 November 2023 Full Council acknowledged the devastating impact of the flooding and unanimously resolved to recommend that the Environment Committee establishes a 'Forum'. It is proposed that the Forum is made up of various partners responsible for flood preparation, planning and response, including the Environment Agency, Southern Water, West Sussex County Council and others and that investigation and consideration be made to the contributing factors, impacts and possible solutions to the flooding events and impacts.

A report recommending Terms of Reference was taken to the Environment Committee on 21 of November 2023 and the Committee amended, debated and approved the document.

It is worth noting that the last 5-month period from October 2023 to February 2024 has been one of the wettest periods on record with over the annual rainfall for West Sussex falling in that period. The full rainfall figures for the area can be seen at **Appendix 2**.

Council officers were then empowered by the Committee to arrange the inaugural Arun Flood Forum meeting which this report gives an update on.

As part of this process we have appointed Simon Wilson of Wilson Sherrif as the independent Chair.

Simon Wilson is a professional facilitator and experienced meeting Chair. He has over twenty years' experience of designing and facilitating workshops, consultations and large conferences both face to face and online. He has particular experience of facilitating discussions around flood and coastal risk management issues for the Environment Agency, lead local flood authorities, coastal partners and other agencies.

4.2 Forum Members

In accordance with the Terms of Reference the following individuals have been appointed to represent the respective agency.

Membership on behalf of the District Council was established by Members and their respective political groups.

Membership by Parish representatives was established based on the number of flooding reports and the degree of impact experienced. Many parishes in Arun are impacted by flooding and the Arun Flood Forum will be seeking to address strategic issues which will apply to all parishes.

Arun District Councillors

Cllr Sue Wallsgrove - District Councillor seat
Cllr Gill Yeates - District Councillor seat
Cllr Keir – Greenway - District Councillor seat
Cllr Simon McDougal - District Councillor seat

Parish Councillor representatives

Jonathan Spencer – Chairman Bersted Parish representative seat
Shirley Haywood – Chairman Middleton on Sea Parish representative seat
Chris Wells – Barnham & Eastergate Parish representative seat
Steve Toney – Chairman East Preston Parish representative seat

Southern Water

John Penicud (JP) - Director of Wastewater Operations
Sue Cobb (SC)- Stakeholder Engagement Manager - Sussex
Catherine Marriott – Regional Operational Manager - Sussex
Andy Adams – Catchment Manager

Environment Agency

Claire Francis (CF) - Area Flood and Coastal Risk Manager
Dave Bonner (DB) - Flood Resilience Advisor
John Parsonage (JP) - Asset Performance Team Leader
Michael Carleysmith (MC)– Partnership and Strategic Overview Team Leader

West Sussex County Council

Micheal Elkington (ME) - Head of Planning Services
Kevin Macknay (KeM) - Drainage and Flooding Lead Professional

Arun District Council

Phillippa Dart (PD) - Director of Environment and Communities / Interim CEO

Joe Russell-Wells (JRW) – Group Head of Environment and Climate Change

Chair

Simon Wilson – Director, Wilson Sherriff

4.3 Agency Key Roles and Responsibilities

The Key roles and responsibilities document is provided in **Appendix 3**. This document sets out the key roles and responsibilities with respect to flooding.

4.4 Southern Water Presentation

Southern Water gave their presentation, which included the following: -

- Roles and responsibilities
- Overview of the different flooding sources and who manages these.
- Regions and Challenges
- Short and long term challenges
- Wastewater plan by area and enhancements
- Clean River and Sea plan for 2025-2030 (subject to regulatory approval) which outlines the investment planned across the district.
- Role in providing infrastructure for new developments.
- Summary of wastewater treatment works.
- Infiltration reduction plan
- Update on flooding schemes

A copy of the presentation is attached at **Appendix 4**.

4.5 Question and answer session

All members of the Forum, District and County Councillors were asked to submit questions prior to the Forum meeting. Written responses to questions were provided at the meeting. Additional queries were asked at the meeting to which some questions were answered. In addition, where questions were not answered at the meeting these were provided with written responses.

A record of all of these questions and answers are provided at **Appendix 5**.

4.6 Notes of meeting

The notes of the meeting and action points can be found at **Appendix 6**.

The discussion included future agenda items and presentations to be brought to the next meeting.

5 CONSULTATION

5.1 No further consultation has taken place.

6 OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

6.1 None.

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

7.1 The costs of the proposals in this report are £20,000. The Council's 2024/25 revenue budget was approved by Policy & Finance committee on the 8 February 2024 and by Full Council on the 21 February 2024, and included a provision of £20,000 within the central contingency budget to fund the work of the Arun Flood Forum.

8 RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 None to date.

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

9.1 The Arun Flood Forum is a body established by the Environment Committee and the appropriate statutory power for its establishment is the Council's general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. This report provides an update on the Forum's work and any recommendations that might be required from the Committee and Full Council in the future will be brought to and through the Committee.

10 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

10.1 The newly appointed Flooding and Coastal Engineering Manager will carry the project as part of their caseload. Short-term this will impact their ability to reshape the service but the impact is likely to have diminished following the inaugural meeting.

11 HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

11.1 Health and Safety impacts will be assessed as actions from the Forum are proposed and agreed.

12 PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

12.1 Impacts to be assessed as actions from the forum are proposed and agreed.

13 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

13.1 The overall objectives of the Working Party is to improve the equalities opportunities and social value as a result of the recommendations.

14 CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

14.1 To be considered as actions from the Forum are proposed and agreed.

15 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

15.1 Not applicable.

16 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

16.1 To be considered as actions from the Forum are proposed and agreed.

17 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

17.1 Sensitive data will be handled in accordance with the GDPR.

CONTACT OFFICER:

Name: Karl McLaughlin

Job Title: Flooding and Coastal Engineering Manager

Contact Number: 01903 737814

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Full Council report 8 Nov 2023

[\(Public Pack\)Full Council - 8 November 2023 - Supplement Two - Urgent Items Agenda Supplement for Full Council, 08/11/2023 18:00 \(arun.gov.uk\)](#)

Environment Committee report 21 November 2023

[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Environment Committee, 21/11/2023 18:00 \(arun.gov.uk\)](#)

APPENDICIES

Appendix 1 – Arun Flood Forum Terms of Reference

Appendix 2 – Rainfall figures for the local area October 2023 to February 2024

Appendix 3 - Agency key roles and responsibilities

Appendix 4 – Southern Water presentation

Appendix 5 –Questions and answers – record of queries raised prior and during the forum meeting and the written answers provided.

Document will be uploaded as a supplementary document after publication of the agenda but prior to the meeting.

Appendix 6 – Notes and action points from the Forum meeting 26 February 2024

Document will be uploaded as a supplementary document after publication of the agenda but prior to the meeting.