

CABINET MEMBER DECISION

Decision:

(i) Details of decision

**LOWER THAMES STRATEGY – FLOOD RELIEF PROPOSALS
(ENVIRONMENT AGENCY CONSULTATION)**

That the response to the report of the Runnymede Local Committee attached at Appendix 1 be agreed.

(ii) Reasons for decision

To respond to the report from Runnymede Local Committee.

(iii) Details of any alternative options considered and rejected

None

(iv) Details of any consultation and representations received not included in the published report

Mr Chris Norman, on behalf of the Chairman of Runnymede Local Committee presented the Committee's report. He noted that the Strategy was significant for Runnymede.

Conflicts of Interest

(Any conflict of interest declared by any other Cabinet Member consulted in relation to the decision to be recorded)

None

Dispensation

(Any dispensation granted by the Standards Committee in respect of any declared conflict of interest to be noted)

None

Decision taken by:

(i) Name: Lynne Hack

(ii) Portfolio: Environment

Date of Decision: 11 November 2009

Date of Publication of Record of Decision: 11 November 2009

Date decision effective (i.e. 5 days after date of publication of record of decision unless subject to call-in by the Environment and Economy Select Committee): 19 November 2009

LOWER THAMES STRATEGY – FLOOD RELIEF PROPOSALS (ENVIRONMENT AGENCY CONSULTATION)

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF LOCAL COMMITTEE IN RUNNYMEDE

Thank you for your report to the Surrey County Council Cabinet Member, following consideration of the Lower Thames Strategy by the county council's Local Committee in Runnymede on 2 October 2009.

As the Cabinet Member for Environment, I am aware of the impacts of the 2000, 2003 and Summer 2007 floods on Surrey. Surrey County Council takes flooding seriously.

We want to work with the Environment Agency to ensure there is a coordinated approach to flood risk management in Surrey. If implemented, the Lower Thames Strategy will substantially reduce flood risk in Surrey, removing many properties out of the insurance industry's significant flood risk band. There will be significant benefits to residents and businesses in Runnymede.

On considering the Lower Thames Strategy, the Cabinet welcomes the package of proposed measures and the opportunity for major new infrastructure investment in the county. We feel it should include the issue of surface water flooding, which is an issue in Surrey. We want to know what the Environment Agency will do should funding not be forthcoming from Government to implement the strategy. As well as seeing major improvements implemented, given the long-term nature of the strategy, we also want to find ways to make progress in partnership in the short-term.

With specific reference to your resolutions:

- a) The county council is preparing its response to the Lower Thames Strategy. I have ensured that your concerns are reflected in this response. It will explicitly include our support for proposed flood diversion channels.
- b) I welcome the offer from the Runnymede Flood Forum and have informed relevant officers in the county council.
- c) We recognise the significant flood risk in Runnymede Borough. I maintain dialogue with Surrey MPs on the issue of flood risk management and have had a highly positive response from them to our concerns on the lack of clarity in the draft Flood and Water and Management Bill. In addition Anne McIntosh, MP for the Vale of York and the Shadow Minister for the Environment, Water and Waste has also responded positively to our concerns.

**Lynne Hack
Cabinet Member for Environment
11 November 2009**

CABINET MEMBER DECISION

Decision:

(i) Details of decision

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY CONSULTATION ON DRAFT LOWER THAMES FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

- (1) That the response to the Environment Agency consultation on the draft Lower Thames Flood Risk Management Strategy as set out in the report submitted be endorsed, subject to the addition of key points in relation to concerns regarding breaches in reservoirs and suggesting that Fire and Rescue Services must be consulted separately in light of their potential role in dealing with incidents of flooding. The full response will also cover the technical/ practical detail.
- (2) That the final approval of the Surrey County Council response be delegated to the Lead Manager for Environment and Economy in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment.
- (3) That the Strategic Director for Environment & Infrastructure begin dialogue with the Environment Agency over long-term funding issues regarding implementation of the strategy for Reach 3 and Reach 4; and on interim and smaller scale measures that could potentially be delivered in partnership.
- (4) That Surrey County Council continue to apply pressure to central Government to accept the urgency of the issue, particularly given that Runnymede Borough is identified by the Environment Agency as one of the top 10 local authorities in England with the highest number of properties in areas with a significant risk of flooding.

(ii) Reasons for decision

Principally, these are to:

- Ensure that Surrey County Council's views are made known to the Environment Agency
- Ensure that the Lower Thames Flood Risk Management Strategy maximises benefits to people in Surrey.

(iii) Details of any alternative options considered and rejected

None

(iv) Details of any consultation and representations received not included in the published report

The Senior Manager - Environment and Economy reported the comments which had been made by the Elmbridge and Spelthorne Local Committees at informal Member briefings.

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety reported that there were 49 reservoirs in Surrey, the majority of which were above ground, and stressed that any breaches would impact greatly on communities. She suggested that concerns regarding breaches in reservoirs should be included in the response to the consultation. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety also reported that although the Fire and Rescue Act 2004 did not require Fire and Rescue Services to deal with flooding or any water related issues, Surrey's Public Safety Plan did consider flooding as an issue for communities and addressed the role and operational capability of the Fire and Rescue Service in dealing with incidents of flooding. She questioned whether Surrey Fire and Rescue Service had been consulted separately by the Environment Agency and suggested that the Environment Agency should be advised that the Fire and Rescue Service must be a consultee.

Conflicts of Interest

(Any conflict of interest declared by any other Cabinet Member consulted in relation to the decision to be recorded)

None

Dispensation

(Any dispensation granted by the Standards Committee in respect of any declared conflict of interest to be noted)

None

Decision taken by:

- (i) **Name:** Lynne Hack
- (ii) **Portfolio:** Environment

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