

Sent: 26 October 2021 10:51

To: Adam Clapton

Subject: RE: Witney Town Council - Flooding 24-25 December 2020

Dear Adam,

In our role as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) we operate at a county wide level and as such take a holistic view of the flood risk across Oxfordshire. We are seeking to manage flood risk from a county council aspect within the resources we have available with Covid adding a further greater restraint on our resources.

There are currently ongoing discussions taking place with other Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) to consider the best way of reducing future flood risk across the county and in particular those areas affected in West Oxfordshire and Witney.

The location of Witney is an area that is classed as 'main river' and as such is the responsibility of the Environment Agency (EA). We work closely with the EA and have asked them in particular what actions they are taking following the flood events within this area:

Funding is available in the current (2021/22) financial year, to investigate flood risk in Witney. We will use this to improve our understanding of flood risk to the community in the Witney area. This will include building on the understanding of the 2014 Initial Assessment, considering information gathered in the December 2020 flooding and developing an updated flood risk computer model for the Windrush and its tributaries through the town. This improved understanding will be key to future decisions regarding options to manage flood risk in Witney. Other benefits from the updated model will include: an updated Flood Map for Planning, an improved basis for Flood Warnings and improved data for use in assessing options and their benefits.

Other actions we have taken across the county since the flooding incidents at the end of 2020 include the following;

- We have reviewed and streamlined the county council sandbag policy and guidance notes
- We are currently reviewing routine gully emptying procedure which will take a risk-based approach
- We have also reviewed our out of hours contact procedure for highway flooding and have streamlined the way these are dealt with

West Oxfordshire District Council are hosting a West Oxfordshire Flood Fair in the Witney Town Centre Shop on the 4th November 2021 which will have all relevant RMAs attending. The Flood Fair is an opportunity for members of the public to come along and understand each organisations roles and responsibilities in relation to flooding and to ask us questions.

We do publish Section 19 Flood Investigation Reports and whilst there is no statutory time period for the publication of the reports, clearly there is an expectation amongst our communities that such things will be completed in a timely manner. Workload in this area is varied and we do have to balance against other team priorities, however, we are considering additional support and resource levels to improve the capacity we have for the investigations and production of the reports.

I hope this answers your queries.

C Brown

Principal Officer - Flood Risk Management, Oxfordshire County Council