

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>AUDIT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officers:</b>	Clare Nolan-Barnes, Head of Coastal and Environmental Partnership Investments Will Britain, Head of Highways and Traffic Management Services Neil Williams, Emergency Planning Manager
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	20 January 2022

**AUDIT FOLLOW-UP – FLOOD MANAGEMENT**

**1.0 Purpose of the report:**

1.1 To consider a progress report on the recommendations made in the internal audit report of Flood Management issued on 7 August 2020.

**2.0 Recommendation(s):**

2.1 To consider the actions being implemented to address the audit recommendations relating to Flood Management.

**3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):**

3.1 To enable the Audit Committee to consider an update and progress report on the audit recommendations.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council’s approved budget? Yes

**4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:**

4.1 None.

**5.0 Council priority:**

5.1 The relevant Council priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

## 6.0 Background information

- 6.1 At its meeting in April 2021, the Audit Committee agreed to invite Heads of Service to the meeting to provide an update in relation to internal audit recommendation implementation.
- 6.2 The report being considered at this meeting relates to the Flood Management audit with the background, scope and assurance statement as follows:
- 6.3 After extensive flooding in 2007, the government commissioned a review, which recommended that 'Local Authorities should lead on the management of local flood risk, with the support of the relevant organisations' (Pitt Review 2008). This led to the development of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010. The act designated Blackpool Council as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).
- 6.4 The FWMA places a range of new powers, duties and responsibilities on Councils and their partner Flood Risk Management Authorities (RMAs). These authorities include local authorities, water and sewerage companies, Highways Agency and the Environment Agency (EA). The cause of a flood will determine which authority leads on managing the risk of flooding. It is recognised that local authorities are generally responsible for flooding caused by ordinary watercourses, surface water and groundwater, with the Environmental Agency being responsible for flooding related to main rivers, reservoirs and sea flooding and water and sewerage companies for flooding caused or linked with sewer systems. Flooding may however be caused by a combination of these sources. It should also be noted that some watercourses are riparian and the responsibility for keeping these watercourse flowing is the owner of that asset.
- 6.5 In order to establish who should be doing what and when and how these responsibilities will be undertaken, the FWMA places a legal duty on each LLFA to produce a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (a 'Local Strategy'). The Local Strategy creates a framework around which flood risk management will be undertaken by the LLFA. It has to be compliant with the Environment Agency's National Flood Risk Management Strategy.

## 6.6 Scope

The scope of the audit was to review:

- Flood management strategy and associated operational plans;
- Coordination and management with local and national partner organisations;
- Integration with emergency planning and recovery after a flood event;
- Internal and external communication protocols; and
- Systems and processes in place for identifying potential flood risk areas including mapping and assessment of bodies of water.

6.7 **Assurance Statement**

It was considered that the controls in place are adequate, with some risks and weaknesses being identified. A number of recommendations were made to help address and strengthen systems.

6.8 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 **List of Appendices:**

7.1 Appendix 3(a) - Internal Audit Recommendations and Agreed Actions.

8.0 **Financial considerations:**

8.1 The controls being implemented will be done so within current budget constraints.

9.0 **Legal considerations:**

9.1 Risks need to be effectively managed in order to comply with relevant legislation.

10.0 **Risk management considerations:**

10.1 To enable the Audit Committee to gain assurance that risks are being effectively managed.

11.0 **Equalities considerations:**

11.1 Where equality analysis is appropriate these will have been undertaken whilst making decisions relating to the subject.

12.0 **Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 Any matters relating to sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations will be considered when making decisions relating to the subject.

13.0 **Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 The progress report has been prepared in conjunction with the relevant Head of Service and Chief Officer.

14.0 **Background papers:**

14.1 None.