

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## REPORT TO: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>7 July 2011</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Lead Emergency Planning Officer for Cheshire East Council</b>
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	<b>Cheshire East Council Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment</b>
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	<b>Councillor Rachel Bailey</b>

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### **1.0 Report Summary**

1.1 As part of its new duties as a Lead Local Flood authority (LLFA) under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the Council must prepare a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA). This is a high level screening exercise in order to determine whether there is significant local flood risk within the LLFA boundary based on historic and potential future flood risk data. This screening and any identified risk is contained within a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment Report (PFRA) which requires approval from the LLFA and review by the Environment Agency within a specified timeframe. The Environment Agency requested the PFRA document to be submitted to them by the 22 June 2011 and this has been undertaken. This report seeks scrutiny committee endorsement of the attached Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment report. The Portfolio Holder, Councillor Rachel Bailey, has already approved the PFRA report prior to it being submitted to the Environment Agency.

### **2.0 Decisions Requested**

2.1 It is recommended that the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment, as attached to this report, be endorsed as the PFRA for the Cheshire East Council LLFA as submitted to the Environment Agency for formal review.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendation**

3.1 Defra and the Environment Agency has requested scrutiny committee endorsement of the PFRA document.

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

4.1 Potentially all Wards may be affected.

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

5.1 All Ward Members

**6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change  
- Health**

6.1 Climate change could well potentially lead to greater flooding problems in the future. Climate change projection work will play an important part in helping the Council to understand the likelihood of future flooding, particularly in relation to development plans. Work in relation to Flood and Water Management and the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment should prove useful tools to mitigate and lessen this risk and also reduce any associated potential health problems to the community at large.

**7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

7.1 The Council as LLFA has been given £124,700 by DEFRA this financial year for the purpose of delivering the new Act and £176,500 for future years.

**8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)**

8.1 It is a statutory requirement for the Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority to produce a PFRA and to submit this to the Environment Agency by the 22 June 2011.

**9.0 Risk Management**

9.1 Flooding and its associated issues is one of the major risks to the Cheshire East community. Work in relation to Flood and Water Management and the attached Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment will assist in helping to mitigate and lessen this risk.

10.1 The EU Flood Risk Regulations 2009 and the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 set out a range of new duties and responsibilities for local authorities in planning for, and delivering local flood risk management. All unitary authorities, for the purposes of flood risk management, are designated as Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFA).

10.2 The four Cheshire local authorities together with St Helen's Council are engaged in a process of seeking to identify and establish common and collaborative working wherever possible. This is being achieved by way of the these authorities match funding a £30,000 grant from the Environment Agency in order to employ Jacobs Engineering for the purpose of delivering a PFRA for each authority together with adopting common standards to deliver the requirements under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and the EU Flood Risk Regulations 2009 This will facilitate efficient and effective mechanisms to plan for, and deliver flood risk management recognising the need to build capacity to deliver new duties and also that many flood management issues are

best addressed at a more strategic scale. The PFRA is a high level screening exercise to determine whether there is a local flood risk within the LLFA area based on historic and potential future flood risk. Local flood risk includes that arising from surface water, groundwater, ordinary watercourses and canals.

- 10.3 The PFRA is based on the most up to date information available to the LLFA. A National Flood Map has recently been produced by the Environment Agency which identified ten national Indicative Flood Risk Areas where risk meets a specific, nationally established threshold of significance. These Indicative Flood Risk Areas occur where clusters of population greater than 30,000 people are located within an area of flood risk that is above prescribed national thresholds. It should be noted however that other locally significant flood risk in the Borough, remains a fundamentally important component of current and future flood risk management planning. This is set out in Cheshire East Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (as commissioned by the former legacy authorities) and may be further explored and refined through a Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) in due course which will identify, with greater clarity, the extent of properties and critical infrastructure susceptible to risk from surface water flooding.
- 10.4 The PFRA is required to review the national Indicative Flood Risk Areas by using the most up to date locally available evidence. It should also set out the need for any amendments to the National Indicative Flood Risk Areas Map with supporting evidence and explanation. Whether seeking to amend National Indicative Maps or not, the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment report sets out how the assessment has been undertaken and provides a robust evidence base to help support preparation of future Local Flood Risk Strategies. In the case of Cheshire East the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment report is based on data held by the Environment Agency and United Utilities and from within the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- 10.5 Having identified no Indicative Flood Risk Areas (affecting 30,000 people or more) but some locally Significant Flood Risk Areas, within the Cheshire East Borough, the next required stage of the PFRA process is to develop a Local Flood Management Strategy to plan how these risks will be managed.
- 10.6 The Committee will be informed of further progress with regard to flood risk management activities when key milestones are reached and where specific approvals require endorsement.

## **11.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues**

- 11.1 Assistance from Jacobs Engineering together with consultation both locally and within Cheshire Local Authorities / St Helen's Council / Environment Agency structures, as well as with United Utilities has been

undertaken for the purpose of the preparation of the Cheshire East LLFA  
PFRA report

## **12 Background Papers**

The following background papers relating to this report can be inspected by  
contacting the report writer:

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Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment Report (attached).  
Flood and Water Management Act 2010  
Flood Risk Regulations 2009