Agenda item: FC 61/21

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Tuesday 13th July 2021

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To inform council of delegated decisions made and provide a report from the Council Manager.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That council notes this report.
2. Council agrees to the advertising and recruitment of:
   a. Landscape Operative
   b. Advice Worker
   c. Café / Fridge coordinator
   d. Bank / temp youth team members

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

As agreed in the previous Full Council (Agenda Item FC 42.21), this is the monthly report of delegated decisions and a Council Managers report.

September 11th – ‘Tunnel to Tower’ event. Met with representatives from Bucks Fire and Rescue to discuss this event, where firefighters will be running, in full kit, from Ashland to CMK and then climbing the Xscape building. They are looking to have local residents support the event, both through raising awareness and volunteer support on the day (marshalling, staffing of drink stops, etc.). Email was sent round requesting names of people who may be interested – some responses received.

Had an online meeting with Alison Davis from MK Hospital (new Chair) regarding a number of issues – originally around a trustee for the KWWT but became a wider discussion about where WCC and the hospital might link (on our parish, etc.). Further meetings to take place around this.

The above both link to the provision of the Blue Light Walk which was discussed last time – thank you to the people who have registered an interest in being part of the group to deliver this.

Met with representatives from MKC re: Eaglestone Activity Centre. Reported via the Resources and Finance Committee last week (see RF 07/21). Work continues on this.

Following discussions of over a year ago, the project with the Open University around using technology to support older people within our communities is coming back to life, following the hiatus caused by the pandemic. The Council Manager has had two meetings around this, focusing on both some technology that might be
useful for the council and around data collection and community engagement in the longer term. More as and when clarification on times / specifics.

Proposal that WCC works in partnership with Mears to provide tenant engagement – using the trailer on a fortnightly basis across the parish areas where MKC properties are placed, to enable residents to meet face-to-face with Mears reps. This would involve WCC transporting and setting up the trailer, Mears (and potentially local councillors), staffing for 2 hours and then WCC returning to pack away and return trailer. Proposal is for this to happen every other Tuesday PM until the end of the year.

Some spending has been authorised – whilst in line with delegated powers and agreed budgets, worth noting. New engine needed for a mower, which whilst expensive will mean not replacing the mower until new landscape contract is agreed. Total cost around £4.5k, plus rental of mower in short term.

Ben Gregory, the Advice Worker, has handed in notice and has left the organisation. He is heading to Scotland to undertake a masters – we wish him well.

Stuart Rose (Rosey), Landscape Operative, has also left the organisation. This is a sad loss, and we again wish him all the best in whatever comes next.

There are several vacancies that now need to be filled.
- Advice Worker
- Landscape Operative
- Bank / temp Play Ranger / Youth Workers

There is also a need to revisit the previously agreed Café / Fridge Coordinator role, as this service comes back into operation. Whilst last year it was not needed, with the increasing relaxation of restrictions and plans for expanding this provision, the previously agreed post should also be advertised and appointed to*.

Linked to this is the launch of the Community Larder, which took place on 7th July – this is an additional element of the overall food provision within WCC, complimenting the community fridge by offering a ‘subscription’ service – a weekly fee of around £3.50 allows a selection of items to a significantly greater value.

Our Youth Team has been successful in getting a ‘Summer of Play’ grant through the MKC pot, which will enable us to provide both play sessions and food across the summer holidays. The work done with youth, projects and community team members and the proposed links with MK College to help deliver this project are to be commended.

The Community Fridge celebrated a couple of notable milestones – since reopening after the first lockdown (this was 14th July 2020), the first week of July saw the 4,000th visitor collecting the parcel that included the equivalent of the 100,000th meal. Over 43 tonnes of food, which has a carbon footprint that is the same as taking around 40 cars off the road. Congratulations to those who set the fridge up, supported development and continue to deliver each week.
The Gazette was delivered first weekend of July – there are some issues which will need to be addressed with the publishers (the pull out was in the wrong place). The process of tendering / procurement for the gazette (or similar) was due during the last year but has been delayed – this is something that will be undertaken prior to 2022/23 financial year.

Three team members have commenced work on evaluating the potential for a heritage / arts trail within the parish, visiting two other art trails to see how this might work. With the excellent level of public art in place, the historic value of this and the potential for additional art to be commissioned, created or supported (e.g. the ‘Love Rocks’ project from last year), building a trail or a series of trails across the parish would be possible.

A suggestion has also been made that we start planning for 2022, where the Queen celebrates 70 years on the throne – a Platinum Jubilee. There is a fur day weekend planned to commemorate and one suggestion is that the Carnival returns for a ‘one off’.

And finally, there was some lower-level flooding within the parish on the 18th June. There will be a paper that goes to Planning regarding this, but a thank you to those who helped and a nudge to consider what, if anything, would help in future in terms of equipment, etc.

* This would usually be covered within delegated powers and / or Operations Committee, but due to timescales, agreement at Full Council ensures transparency and compliance, especially with the Café Coordinator role which has been ‘on hold’ for over a year.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The financial costs of these issues are predominantly agreed within existing budgets. There is a resource implication with the Mears provision (mainly staff costs, but minor costs in terms of fuel, etc.) and the Café Coordinator post, whilst previously agreed, was NOT included within the budget for 2021/22 (however, this is a part time post and will be more than covered by the unexpected surplus from last year).

Recruitment costs will be kept to a minimum but are likely to be in the region of £500. We will use mainly online, but also social media, JCPlus and other local networks to reach as many as possible.

The Youth grant is around £9k – this will be used to deliver the project.

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

See the main body of the report.

**OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

None.
BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager
Agenda item: FC 62/21

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Tuesday 13th July 2021

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To open discussion around potentially transferring some funds from the CCLA deposit fund to the CCLA property fund.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Committee notes the report.
2. That the Committee approves further investigation into the CCLA property fund prior to final decision on transferring of funds.
3. That the Committee agrees to the RFO drafting a final recommendation on our investment at the next Full Council meeting.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

We currently hold a deposit fund with CCLA, our initial investment was £200,000 into the CCLA deposit fund scheme, this is an investment scheme which allows us full flexibility, for example any request for the release of these funds can be actioned by the next working day.

At 31st May 2021 the fund currently sits at £202,763.75 although modest it does mean we have seen almost £3000 return on our original investment into the CCLA, roughly £1000 per year the funds have been in the scheme.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

We had previously discussed the potential to move approximately half of our initial investment (£100,000) into the CCLA property fund, although due to the COVID19 pandemic and the uncertainty that brought with it we decided to postpone discussions.

However, this fund differs to the flexibility we have with the deposit fund currently, and while there may be room for increased return on our money this no doubt comes with heightened risk. The property fund is used towards property management and the unit fund value will rise and fall with market value an fluctuations in values and rents and therefore any investment does come with the risk that the full amount invested may not be recuperated. They do note that investments are intended for long-term only and therefore not suitable for money we may wish to utilise/release in the near future. This investment should be recognised as an investment for a minimum of five (5) years but potentially even longer. The money can be requested to be released but only upon on a specific valuation date each month and the CCLA may impose a period of notice before they return our investment fund.
I would suggest that due to discussions being postponed last year, further investigation should be instructed before making such a decision to move our funds across. I would like to arrange a meeting with our Account Manager at the CCLA so myself, and the Council Manager can discuss the risks and recommendations for benefiting from the fund in more detail. I would be keen to speak to the account manager regarding the performance of the fund especially over the past year due to Coronavirus and any impact this has or may potentially have on the fund.

While it would be beneficial to attain a higher investment yield on our funds, this must be assessed against risk and while the current fund we hold is offering a modest investment return, we are still seeing a positive return with relatively no risk associated with our funds or the CCLA returning them should this ever be needed.

Due to the nature of the risks associated with this investment, more time is requested to investigate whether this is to be recommended as a necessary venture for our Council, at this time. I would suggest a more comprehensive risk assessment report will be submitted in September once a meeting has been held with our account manager.

*You should also note, that if we decide to transfer the funds then our AGAR at the end of 2020/21 will look different with the property fund deposit no longer being listed as a cash asset, this is nothing to worry about but worth noting our figures will differ based on how we account for long term and short term investments.

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

None perceived.

**OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

None perceived.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**


**AUTHOR**

Samone Winsborough

RFO
The Local Authorities' Property Fund
Fund Profile – 31 March 2021

A unique, specialist Property Fund available only to Local Authority Investors.

Price at 31.03.21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income units</th>
<th>293.63p (xd)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross dividend yield</td>
<td>4.30%*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Based upon the net asset value and historic gross annual dividend of 12.6291p.

Strong governance
The trustee is the Local Authorities’ Mutual Investment Trust (LAMIT). LAMIT is controlled by members and officers appointed by the Local Government Association, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers’ Superannuation Committee and investors in the Fund to represent unitholders. As fully independent trustee, LAMIT approves the investment strategy and the risk profile of the portfolio and reviews performance.

Meeting your needs
Suitable for Local Authorities, the Fund aims to provide investors with a high level of income and long-term capital appreciation.

The Property Fund is designed to achieve long term capital growth and a rising income from investments in the UK commercial property sector.

The portfolio is actively managed with a focus on asset selection. The intention is to boost returns by lease and tenant management and property improvement.

The Fund has a broad sector spread, with prudent diversification to keep risks under control.

Sector strategy
Holdings in LAPF are categorised as Treasury investments and so are not deemed capital expenditure.

Asset allocation at 31 March 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industrial &amp; Warehouses</td>
<td>37.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offices</td>
<td>30.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Warehouses</td>
<td>9.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>4.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shops</td>
<td>2.11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fund has no credit facilities.

Fund size: £1,203 million
Top 10 property holdings at 31 March 2021 – Total 33.82%

- London, Beckton Retail Park
- London, Papeete House
- London, Goodman’s Yard
- London, Imperial House
- Elstree, Centennial Park
- Bracknell, Arlington Square West
- Uxbridge, Stockley Park
- Bristol, Kings Orchard
- Cambridge, Cambridge Science Park
- Leeds, Park Row

Market Background
The trends which dominated the sector in 2020 remained the most important influences on returns in the first quarter. Industrial assets continued to be well supported but values weakened again in retail sub-sectors with both capital values and rents under pressure. The one bright spot here were retail warehouses, supported by resilient demand for bulk goods and ‘change of use’ interest in sector assets from companies seeking local distribution hubs. Offices were mixed, regional prices held up well but yields in central London edged higher on concerns over the potential impact on demand from changes in working practices. Overall capital values were steady, continuing the improvement which began towards the end of 2020.

Fund activity
It was another busy quarter for the Fund, maintaining a programme of client contact, a key part of the strategy to protect income. There was just one transaction, the industrial asset in Warrington was sold, achieving a price far above the most recent valuation. Lease management activity on the office asset in Crawley saw the entire building let to Rentokil on a new 10 year lease. Also, a new 15-year lease was agreed with Homebase for the retail warehouse in Cheltenham.

Outlook
Overall, we expect the steady trend in capital values to be maintained but, within that, the wide dispersion of performances at the sub-sector level will continue. Void rates for traditional high street shops and shopping centres are likely to rise further even though the sector can now open again for trading. We do not expect much change in office valuations but the trend evident in recent years, of a migration towards well located, good quality assets, is likely to continue. The portfolio remains well placed in the current environment, both at the strategic level and with regard to some attractive individual asset opportunities.

Dividend history of The Local Authorities’ Property Fund
Years to 31 March
Calendar performance versus the benchmark (net)

* The benchmark is the MSCI/AREF UK Other Balanced Quarterly Property Fund Index. Performance shown after management fees and other expenses. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future results and future returns are not guaranteed.
Source: CCLA & MSCI/AREF

Note: Fund calendar performance refers to total return whereas investment returns (shown below) splits the total return between income and capital. A small difference arises as a result of the compounding on the income and capital components.

The Local Authorities’ Property Fund investment returns (after expenses)

Source: CCLA & MSCI/AREF
Income from Property and the Fund has been consistent even in downturns, a reflection of its contractual basis.

MSCI/AREF UK Annual Property Digest returns (before expenses)
### Long-term performance

**Total return performance (net) 12 months to 31 March**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Local Authorities’ Property Fund</td>
<td>3.75%</td>
<td>+0.66%</td>
<td>+5.96%</td>
<td>+9.72%</td>
<td>+3.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparator Benchmark</td>
<td>+2.46%</td>
<td>+0.12%</td>
<td>+5.69%</td>
<td>+10.46%</td>
<td>+4.58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The comparator benchmark is the MSCI/AREF UK Other Balanced Quarterly Property Fund Index. Performance shown after management fees and other expenses. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future results and future returns are not guaranteed.

Source: CCLA & MSCI/AREF

### Costs and charges

Our policy is always to keep costs and charges low - we believe that high costs and charges have a very damaging cumulative effect on investor returns. We negotiate to keep expenses low and monitor dealing costs closely. We have no entry or exit fees, the only income taken by the investment manager is the annual charge of 0.65%.

### Key facts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dealing day</td>
<td>Month end valuation day*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum initial investment</td>
<td>£25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum subsequent investment</td>
<td>£10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dividend payment dates</td>
<td>End January, April, July &amp; October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual management charge</td>
<td>0.65% (deducted from income)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit types available</td>
<td>Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedol number</td>
<td>0521664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISIN number</td>
<td>GB0005216642</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Dealing instructions for the purchase of units must be received by 5.00pm on the business day preceding the valuation date. If the valuation date is a bank holiday, the dealing day will be the previous working day. Whilst units are registerable on each monthly dealing date, all redemption requests are subject to a minimum notice period of 90 calendar days and will therefore be processed on the next available dealing day following expiry of the notice period.

### Risk warning and disclosures

This document is a financial promotion and is issued for information purposes only. It does not constitute the provision of financial, investment or other professional advice. To ensure you understand whether our product is suitable, please read the Scheme Information and the risk factors identified therein. We strongly recommend you seek independent professional advice prior to investing. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future results. The value of investments and the income derived from them may fall as well as rise. Investors may not get back the amount originally invested and may lose money. Any forward-looking statements are based upon our current opinions, expectations and projections. We undertake no obligations to update or revise these. Actual results could differ materially from those anticipated. Investment in the Fund is for Eligible Local Authorities only. Holders of the Fund are not covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). The Fund is an unauthorised Alternative Investment Fund and an Unregulated Collective Investment Scheme established under a Scheme approved by HM Treasury under Section 11 of the Trustee Investments Act 1961 and is subject to provisions of a Trust Deed dated 8 April 1972 and supplemental Trust Deeds dated 6 April 1972, 13 September 1978, 21 April 2016 and 23 September 2019. The Fund operates as an open-ended Fund under Part IV of the schedule to the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Exemption) Order 2001. The company CCLA Fund Managers Limited registered in England & Wales No. 8738639 at Senator House, 85 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4ET is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and is the manager of the Local Authorities’ Property Fund. For information about how we obtain and use your personal data please see our Privacy Notice at https://www.ccla.co.uk/our-policies/data-protection-privacy-notice.

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Agenda item: FC 63/21

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Tuesday 13th July 2021

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update the council on defibrillators, with costs, possible benefits, etc. so that consideration of provision can be discussed.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That council notes this report.
2. That council revisits previous discussions around the provision of machines.
3. That council considers whether provision of defibrillators is something that WCC should offer.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Following recent events and contact from a concerned citizen asking about our defibrillator provision, it has been suggested that this issue returns for a further exploration at council, to see whether the view of the council has changed since previously discussed.

WCC as a parish is home to the Hospital, two GP surgeries and, on the border, sits the Blue Light Hub which includes the three emergency services (police, fire, and ambulance). As a result of this provision, WCC has not, to this point, felt it appropriate or necessary to provide defibrillators, as it is felt that coverage is sufficient.

Following some recent events, including a footballer having a heart attack and an incident on Beanhill where someone died, possibly as the result of a cardiac arrest, the idea of us, as a parish council, providing machines has once again been suggested. As a result, the Council Manager has undertaken research into provision, costs, coverage, etc for consideration.

Costs of provision:

Cost of a defib machine is between £600 - £1200, with the likelihood being somewhere around the £1000 mark for a decent, long lasting machine that meets the needs.
Cost of a lockable case is £500 upwards, plus installation (please note that some are mains connected – again, likely that this would be the type of provision we would be looking at).

Estimated costs per unit, assuming a suitable building can be found, is around £2000.
Monthly maintenance and regular replacement costs also to be included – assuming a monthly visit to each unit, plus 10% costs per year per unit (including depreciation – this is based on a lifespan of around a decade), this equates to:

- 15 mins per month, x 12 months = 3 hours per year staff time = £45ish
- 10% per year costs plus depreciation = £200 per year
- Total cost per unit, per year = £245.

Assuming that we would be looking to have a machine on each of our estates (and assuming that there is a suitable site on each estate), the total initial cost would be around £14,000 with annual costs of around £1700. In reality, the 10-year cost is £17,000, assuming costs remain static*

*This is due to ‘depreciation’ costs being built in – after 10 years, the process would all start again, possibly with fewer costs up front as the infrastructure would be there.

Potential sites:

- PB – Marina?
- ES – Community Centre
- LH – college?
- CH – Hub
- BH – Moorlands?
- NF – Shops / Comm Centre
- TB – Comm Centre

Placement:

Suggestion / advice online is that 100 metres is a reasonable distance to travel to access a machine. Even if we have them in each of the places noted above, the vast majority of the parish will remain uncovered by this 100-metre rule.

For example, if one is at the NFMP, there is a 400-metre distance to the shops (800 metre round trip) which, at walking pace, is around 10 minutes.

For Coffee Hall, a similar distance from the Hub to Chapter House or the Islamic Centre and similar on other estates – if you are near the buildings, then there is a benefit but most of the parish remains in a position where ambulance response is quicker.

For a fuller picture, see the map in Figure 1. The area within the red circles is 100 metres of the proposed sites, with 200 metre in yellow and 400 metres in green.
Median ambulance response times for the ward are 4 minutes (the fastest response time in the city, perhaps unsurprisingly).
Medical evidence:

There is evidence to support the provision of defibrillators, but this is secondary to being able to provide CPR, which is the key to survival – a defib is significantly more useful if someone is able to.

provide CPR whilst sorting out the machine, etc. Given the exceptional response times that the ambulance service has locally, ensuring access to someone able to offer CPR is key. WCC’s commitment to offering training to local people helps fulfil this need via First Aid and similar – consideration should be given to specific CPR training for local RA’s, employers, and community stalwarts.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This provision is not within the budget for this year and, as detailed above, is a significant financial demand.

The costs associated with provision of CPR training (or first aid training more widely, to enable interventions for a more common range of issues) are varied, but if buying in bulk start from around £50 per person (£1000 for up to 24 attendees).

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

As noted above, there would be a need for regular checking and maintenance – 2 or 3 hours per month.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

The costs above are based upon provision and regular maintenance and do not include any additional costs associated with any vandalism, damage, etc. Whilst careful positioning can help reduce the risks associated with this, the risk remains that the units could be used for activities other than saving lives.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager
Agenda item: FC 64/21

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Tuesday 13th July 2021

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update the committee on the recent floods and actions taken.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That council notes this report.
2. That the Planning, Licencing and Development Committee takes this item and continues to develop suitable responses, to include:
   a. Further work on the Community Flood Plan.
   b. Clarification on equipment request from MKC.
   c. Any other work considered suitable regarding flooding in the parish.
3. That council agrees to the recommendations in BOLD ITALICS throughout this paper, namely:
   a. It is recommended that collective approaches and coordination are built into any community flood plan or extended incident plan, as there were clear episodes where duplication or lack of communication led to worse outcomes / responses.
   b. It is recommended that this issue is once again revisited and a schedule of clearance is published, alongside publicity to promote the reporting of blocked drains.
   c. It is recommended that WCC requests a range of equipment, alongside permission to use identified space as a new depot, to enable storage and effective management of this equipment.
   d. It is recommended that post 19th July, a refresh of the Community Flood group is arranged to enable the plan to be further expanded.
   e. It is recommended that any review or refresh of the Neighbourhood Plan and any WCC involvement in the estate renewal preparations includes a focus on flood prevention.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Following a yellow weather warning for the period of 17th – 20th June for ‘heavy rain’, WCC had prepared for the possibility of local impacts, especially following the historic issues of surface water flooding across the parish.

Early on the afternoon of the 18th (Friday), the first reports of concerns were reported. At this point, Cllr Sue Smith was allocated the ‘coordinator’ role, taking calls and login the concerns. There were councillors working across the affected estates (primarily CH, BH and NF, with some issues on TB) and there was also
involvement from other agencies, including Fire and Rescue, Ringway, MK Council and Serco. These had varying levels of positive impact.

*It is recommended that collective approaches and coordination are built into any community flood plan or extended incident plan, as there were clear episodes where duplication or lack of communication led to worse outcomes / responses.*

In the period immediately prior to the flooding, Cllr Smith had requested drain clearance to try and prevent any issues coming from this and was assured by MKC Head of Environment and Waste that he had ‘asked Highways to consider if there are any gullies or drains that could benefit from emptying within your critical catchment area in advance of any flood risk or concerns’. The impact seen across the parish suggests that and consideration and action was not sufficient, as many incidents appear to be related to blocked drains.

*It is recommended that this issue is once again revisited and a schedule of clearance is published, alongside publicity to promote the reporting of blocked drains.*

The majority of incidents that were reported and logged would be classed as ‘near misses’ – water was within a small margin of entering properties, but was managed, either due to the rain stopping or through additional work from councillors, officers or the Fire Service, using pumps, etc. Despite this, there were once again, properties that were subject to water ingress and these were, in some cases, properties that have previously been flooded.

There were also calls from people where there was no immediate risk, but due to historic flooding, anxieties are raised as soon as water falls from the sky. Provision of sandbags is a frequent and regular request when rain happens. This is an ongoing issue and residents living with this level of anxiety and worry is unhelpful at best and unacceptable in the longer term.

The Council Manager received reports from a number of councillors who were involved in the response and would like to note the contribution made by these councillors on the day and in the aftermath – they provided an essential element of support and helped reduce the impact on numerous households.

The Council Manager has also received a call from MKC in the post flood period. This was to ask if there is equipment that they could provide to enable WCC to further improve the response offered – this might include sandbags, pumps, brushes / sweepers, etc. This does suggest that the principal authority welcomes WCC providing services that support their statutory duties but provides additional challenges – an expectation that WCC will act, a belief that there is somewhere suitable to securely store the equipment provided (a real challenge currently) and then to suitably clean and restore the equipment post incident.

*It is recommended that WCC requests a range of equipment, alongside permission to use identified space as a new depot, to enable storage and effective management of this equipment.*
WCC does have the beginning of a Community Flood plan, but the process to create this was halted by the past years of lockdowns. As these restrictions begin to reduce, there is the option to recall the group that started this process to build upon the initial work and instigate a more detailed ‘incident plan’ when flooding is the incident.

*It is recommended that post 19th July, a refresh of the Community Flood group is arranged to enable the plan to be further expanded.*

With four flood incidents in the past 8 years, there is a pattern presenting that suggests that a level of flooding is something that is going to happen and as such, having a clear route forward is essential. With estate renewal due on the four estates with the greatest problems, supporting the inclusion of flood prevention and water management systems in any development will also be an important part of the future flood management approach.

*It is recommended that any review or refresh of the Neighbourhood Plan and any WCC involvement in the estate renewal preparations includes a focus on flood prevention.*

Whilst the duties regarding flooding remain with the principal authority (MKC), there is a clear role for WCC to plan in supporting our residents and promoting effective approaches to mitigate the impact. Whilst Council needs to ensure that any additional support that is offered is reasonable, affordable and consistently able to be delivered, the response during the most recent flooding event suggests that this is possible, and input makes a difference.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

None noted – any additional equipment may be funded through MKC, but any maintenance and repairs will become the responsibility of WCC. It is unclear what this might be in the long term.

**STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:**

As noted above, any input that WCC has will impact on both officers and councillors. The reality of this resource must be considered and included in any planning.

**OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

None.

**AUTHOR**

Steve McNay – Council Manager