

<b>URGENT REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE (BUDGET)</b>		Report No. 9
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> January 2008	
<b>Title of Report</b>	Multi-Agency Flood Working Group	
<b>Portfolio</b>	Community & Wellbeing	
Link to Corporate Priorities	Environment	
Key Decision	No	
Executive Workplan Ref	Not Applicable	
Public Report	Yes	

<p><b>Summary of Report</b></p> <p>On the 17 January 2008, the Chief Executive arranged the first meeting of a proposed multi-agency flood group in response to increasing concern with regard to flooding in North Wiltshire following the considerable flooding in the area in July 2007 and January 2008.</p> <p>North Wiltshire District Council, Wiltshire County Council, Wessex Water Authority and Thames Water Authority were all represented. In addition the Environment Agency has confirmed that they will attend in the future.</p> <p>This report recommends the appointment of three District Councillors to the group, including Councillor Causer as portfolio holder.</p>
<p><b>Officer Recommendations</b></p> <p><b>That the Executive:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Note and support the creation of the Multi-Agency Flood Working Group and appoints Councillors Causer, Greenman and Lay as the North Wiltshire District Council representatives.</b></li> <li><b>Approve the Terms of Reference for the Working Group as set out in paragraph 3.1 of this Report.</b></li> </ol>

Other than those implications agreed with the relevant Officers and referred to below, there are no other implications associated with this report.				
Financial Implications	Legal Implications	Community & Environmental Implications	Human Resources Implications	Equality & Diversity Implications
YES	YES	YES	NONE	NONE

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In July 2007, in common with a number of areas nationally, various parts of the North Wiltshire District suffered severe flooding. Although the amount of rainfall was unprecedented and described generally as a 200 year event, the issue highlighted some concerns and weaknesses in the overall drainage systems. For example, the lack of a coordinated multi-agency approach, the failure of some landowners to keep their watercourses and ditches clear, inadequate drainage in some areas following residential and other development and a general lack of resources across the various agencies.
- 1.2 The concerns highlighted in paragraph 1.1, were further emphasised by more flooding in January 2008. In an attempt to bring the various parties together, the Chief Executive coordinated a multi-agency Flood Working Group following discussion with Salisbury District Council which had created a similar group following severe flooding issues in its district. The notes of the group's first meeting of the 17 January 2008 are attached as Appendix (1). It was agreed that Councillor Causer would chair the meeting in the future and that two further councillors would be invited to attend. Councillors Greenman and Lay were suggested as members in wards particularly affected by the flooding in July 2007 and January 2008.
- 1.3 In addition to the above, Area 1 committee held a public meeting on 23 January 2007 at Crudwell Village Hall. Concern was expressed at a perceived tardiness of action to resolve some of the root causes of the flooding in the north of the district. Councillor Greenman gave a detailed presentation of the issues involved, progress made and the further actions agreed to be undertaken by the various agencies, particularly North Wiltshire District Council and Wiltshire County Council. The recommendations made following that meeting are attached as Appendix (2).

## **2. Options**

- 2.1 Option 1: To approve the recommendation
- 2.2 Option 2: Not to approve the recommendation

## **3. Terms of Reference**

- 3.1 The terms of reference agreed by the Multi-Agency Flood Working Group are as follows:
- To be a central point where all flooding issues in the North Wiltshire District can be discussed by all agencies involved and appropriate action agreed and then taken
  - To investigate areas prone to flooding and assess which agency could deal with the issues (including sewage problems) ensuring cooperation between the agencies thus making the most effective use of resources available to them
  - For all agencies to contribute to the collation of a district wide map, highlighting where flooding issues are present assisting with the prioritisation process.

#### **4. Composition of the Working Group**

4.1 As detailed in the summary of this report

#### **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 The budget for this area has been low for a number of years and has not had significant calls against it. It is clear that this is no longer the case and that it should be increased. The Executive is proposing a larger sum in the budget which will come before Council for approval on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

#### **6. Legal Implications**

6.1 Legal action may have to be taken against landowners who fail to keep watercourses, drains and ditches clear.

#### **7. Community and Environmental Implications**

7.1 There are still a number of our community who are unable to live in their homes following the July floods. The Council is committed to acting in partnership with other agencies in an attempt to avoid as far as possible the effects of severe flooding in the North Wiltshire District

#### **8. Risk Analysis**

8.1 Failure to deal with flooding issues on a multi-agency basis will result in a duplication of effort, an ineffective use of resources, a lack of effective prioritisation and a loss of confidence by the public.

<b>Appendices:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Notes of the NWDC Multi-Agency Flood Working Group – 17 January 2008</li><li>2. Recommendations of Malmesbury Area 1 Committee – 23 January 2008</li></ol>
<b>Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:</b>	