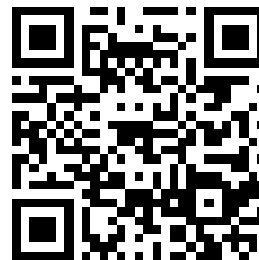


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Extraordinary Meeting Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission

Friday, 5 September, 2014 at 9.00am
in Council Chamber Council Offices Market
Street Newbury

Date of despatch of Agenda: Friday 29 August 2014

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact David Lowe / Charlene Myers / Elaine Walker on (01635) 519817 / 519695 / 5194

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Further information and Minutes are also available on the Council's website at www.westberks.gov.uk



Agenda - Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission to be held on Friday, 5 September 2014 (continued)

- To:** Councillors Brian Bedwell (Chairman), Jeff Brooks (Vice-Chairman), Sheila Ellison, Dave Goff, Roger Hunneman, Mike Johnston, Alan Macro, Garth Simpson, Virginia von Celsing, Quentin Webb, Emma Webster and Laszlo Zverko
- Substitutes:** Councillors Peter Argyle, Paul Bryant, George Chandler, Gwen Mason, Tim Metcalfe, David Rendel, Julian Swift-Hook and Keith Woodhams

Agenda

Part I

Page No.

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting (if any),
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
To remind Members of the need to record the existence and nature of any Personal, Disclosable Pecuniary or other interests in items on the agenda, in accordance with the Members' [Code of Conduct](#).
- 3. Severe winter weather 2013/2014** 1 - 34
Purpose: To undertake a review into the effects of severe weather that affected West Berkshire during the winter of 2013/2014 and the response provided by external agencies.

Andy Day
Head of Strategic Support

If you require this information in a different format or translation, please contact Moira Fraser on telephone (01635) 519045.

Agenda Item 3.

Title of Report:	Severe weather, winter 2013/14
Report to be considered by:	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
Date of Meeting:	5 September 2014

Purpose of Report: **To introduce to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission the process to be followed for its review into the severe weather events of the winter of 2013/14.**

Recommended Action: It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission continues to examine the effect on and response to the severe winter weather events of the winter of 2013/14 by organisations other than the Council, in order to identify recommendations for consideration by the Executive.

Key background documentation: Winter Floods & Storms 2013/2014 Debrief Report

Resource Management Select Committee Chairman	
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Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting of 25 February 2014 the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) agreed to carry out a review into the severe weather events experienced in West Berkshire over the winter of 2013/14.
- 1.2 This report reminds the members of the Commission of the Terms of Reference and methodology subsequently agreed by the Commission on 1 July 2014, sets out the broad review schedule and provides specific detail for the consideration of how the weather affected organisations other than the Council.

2. Terms of Reference

- 2.1 The Commission agreed that a review would be undertaken into the effects of and response to the severe weather that affected West Berkshire during the winter of 2013/2014, in order to ensure that the appropriate lessons are learnt and measures put in place to mitigate the effect of future severe weather events. In particular the review will seek to
- (1) Understand what happened and why
 - (2) Determine whether the plans in place prior to the flooding were effective
 - (3) Identify the lessons that should be learnt
 - (4) Assess the future severe weather risks to the District and the extent to which they might be managed
 - (5) Report to the Executive and others with recommendations as appropriate.

3. Methodology

- 3.1 The review is being undertaken by the full Commission over the course of a series of public meetings. In outline, the meetings have been structured as set out in the table below.

Date	Times	Meeting focus
1 September 2014	1100 – 1645	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Events overview• Council response
5 September 2014	0900 – 1630	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Response by other agencies
11 September 2014	1330 – 1745	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effect on and response by communities
15 September 2014	1400 – 1630	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drawing conclusions
30 September 2014	1830 – 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sign off of recommendations

- 3.2 Recommendations identified by the Commission will be included as part of a wider and composite debrief report, a working draft of which was provided to the Commission at its meeting of 1 September 2014, for consideration by the Executive in due course.

4. Conduct of the 5 September meeting

4.1 The meeting of 1 September is structured as shown in the table below.

09:00 – 10:00	<p>Thames Valley Police</p> <p>Lindsey Finch – Inspector, Deputy Commander West Berkshire Police Area</p> <p>Sabine Furlong – Contingency Planning Officer</p>
10:00 – 10:15	Break
10:15 – 11:15	<p>Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service</p> <p>Paul Jacques - Flooding Response Strategic Project Officer</p>
11:15 – 11:30	Break
11:30 – 13:00	<p>Environment Agency</p> <p>Barry Russell – Operations Manger North West Maria Herlihy – Operations Manager South East Katherine Dolman – Flood Resilience Team</p>
13:00 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 15:00	<p>Scottish and Southern Electric</p> <p>Alex Howison - Stakeholder Engagement Manager)</p> <p>John Wright - Local Depot Manager Duncan Macdonald - Corporate Affairs</p> <p>Thames Water Hilary Murgatroyd - Local Regional Government Liaison Sarah Burchard - Emergency Risk Specialist, Business Resilience and Security Team</p>
15:00- 15:30	<p>Sovereign</p> <p>Matthew Hensby - Regional Housing Manager Simon Hall - Operations manager, Property Services Nick Gessey - Head of Health and Safety</p> <p>Neighbourhood Wardens</p> <p>Andrew Cooch - Neighbourhood Warden Manager</p>
15:30 – 15:45	Break

15:45 – 16:30	<p>Military Joint Regional Liaison Officer (JRLO)</p> <p>Philip Milham - Lieutenant Colonel PCE Mileham RA</p>
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4.2 All organisations will provide evidence on their

- Preparedness
- Response
- Business continuity
- Recovery
- Learning for future events.

4.3 Brief reports from these organisations are available at Appendices A to G. As outlined in the table above, representatives will be in attendance at the meeting to provide amplification on these reports.

5. Recommendation

5.1 It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission examines the effect on and response to the severe winter weather events of the winter of 2013/14 by organisations outside the Council, in order to identify recommendations for consideration by the Executive.

Appendices

- Appendix A Thames Valley Police
- Appendix B Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Appendix C Environment Agency
- Appendix D Scottish and Southern Electric
- Appendix E Thames Water
- Appendix F Sovereign Housing
- Appendix G Neighbourhood Wardens
- Appendix H Military

Name of Organisation	Thames Valley Police
Completed by	A/ Superintendent Lindsey Finch
What effect did the adverse weather have on your organisation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A requirement to initially set up a Force Gold supported by one Silver for the Force. This was then extended to individual Silver Command suites set up at both Windsor and West Berks – these then required resourcing • A resourcing requirement for the EOC prior to the full command structure being implemented • An increased call for assistance to incidents involving flooding – drivers stuck in vehicles, roads blocked by floods, roads blocked by fallen trees, resourcing road closures that were being breached, reporting drivers for breaching road closures • A requirement to provide additional reassurance patrols in the most affected areas to identify and support vulnerable residents • A requirement to provide crime prevention, high profile patrols in areas where flood victims had to leave their homes or businesses unattended • Resourcing these locally when a number of the local officers were also victims of flooding themselves
What plans did your organisation have in place beforehand to help manage the impact of the severe weather?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard plans for responding to multi-agency major incidents • Gold command plans • Standard practices for setting up Silver
Of the actions that you had planned, what worked well?	<p>Major incident command structure Silver set up at West Berks Council rather than the Police Station (as is more standard procedure) Tasking for all agencies went through local Silver which reduced duplication of effort and decision making Standard plans were activated and worked as expected</p>

<p>What worked less well or would you change for future events and why?</p>	<p>With the benefit of hindsight I would potentially have set up West Berks Silver 24 hrs earlier. There was no negative impact caused by the timing, but I think it would have eased the burden on a number of staff within the EOC, and assisted in the initial deployment of the Military staff who were by then present in significant numbers.</p> <p>The holiday period (this crossed over into February half term) presented a challenge for staffing the Silver role at both West Berks and Windsor. This was overcome, and a number of Commanders were able to put new skills to the test. I do not believe that this could be planned for as all abstraction rates were entirely in line with policy – the extraordinary demand could not be planned for. A number of Commanders changed their plans to make themselves available for deployment.</p> <p>The environment Agency took some time to supply a resource into West Berks Silver. Once this occurred, it had a positive impact and made the decisions from Silver much better informed in relation to potential impact of future weather events. Whilst recognised that they had significant resourcing issues, earlier involvement in West Berks Silver would have been beneficial</p> <p>Access to information about power outages and their locations was initially difficult to ascertain. This reduced ability to prioritise resourcing as Silver was unaware of a small number of significant long term outages which had significant impact (ie. Mains water pumping station at Compton)</p>
<p>What changes, if any, were made to your plan in response to events and what effect did they have?</p>	<p>Usually plans for establishing a local Silver would focus on placing it in a Police Station. The West Berks Silver was set up at the Council offices, next to the EOC.</p> <p>This worked well as all partner agencies were able to access Comms from that location, and link in with their own systems.</p> <p>Being close to the EOC ensured that decisions came into Silver and there was less temptation to just make a decision in the EOC</p>
<p>Please outline any other comments that you may have for the Commission.</p>	<p>From the Police perspective, the operation ran successfully. There were no reports of any thefts relating to the flooding from any evacuated or flooded properties. The engagement with local residents was very positive. Feedback from the community, even though often distraught, was positive in terms of the response that they received.</p> <p>All partners worked well together</p>

	The Flood Warden programme appeared very effective in terms of having individuals to engage with and cascade messages.
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Name of Organisation	Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service
Completed by	Group Manager Paul Jacques
What effect did the adverse weather have on your organisation?	<p>The adverse weather had a massive effect on RBFRS. As part of the major incident managed by the TVLRF, RBFRS received more Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) national assets than any other fire service in the UK. The flooding event that affected Berkshire and other areas of the UK gave rise to the largest mobilisation of FRS since the Second World War.</p> <p>RBFRS is in the final stages of producing a report on the flooding of 2014, with many examples centred events in West Berkshire. I am the author of that report and it will be available for partnership consumption by October.</p>
What plans did your organisation have in place beforehand to help manage the impact of the severe weather?	<p>RBFRS works closely with TVLRF partners and as such it was aware of the 'generic' flood plans that were in place. In addition, the service had formulated its own plans which centred on the availability of fire crews and specialist equipment.</p> <p>There was however no 'area specific' plans that gave detailed prior intelligence of what to expect for any given area during widespread flooding.</p> <p>My report calls for these and indeed I have begun working with WBC's Civil Contingencies Manager on these recently.</p>
Of the actions that you had planned, what worked well?	<p>Having appliances and equipment moved to flood hit communities worked well, but the whole event became far more involved than these plans catered for requiring decisions and actions to be made without reference to plans.</p> <p>What did work exceptionally well was the WB Tactical Coordinating Group that was chaired by TVP.</p>

	This alongside the excellent work undertaken by WB's EOC were major success factors
What worked less well or would you change for future events and why?	The lack of detailed pre planning meant that decision were being made in response to events rather than in preparation for them. Luckily, the TCG was very adept at making such decisions but an awful lot of preparation work could have been in place given prior knowledge of previous flooding events e.g. the 2007 floods.
What changes, if any, were made to your plan in response to events and what effect did they have?	None. Any predetermined plans were quickly superseded by events.
Please outline any other comments that you may have for the Commission.	

Name of Organisation	Environment Agency
Completed by	Kate Vincent
What effect did the adverse weather have on your organisation?	<p>Responsibility for flooding issues is managed by the flood risk authorities: these include Lead Local Flood Authorities, Thames Water and us. The Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010 gives responsibilities for planning for and managing any <i>local</i> flood risk issues, including surface and groundwater flooding problems, to Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs). The highway authority, county councils or unitary authorities are also responsible for drainage systems associated with the highways. Thames Water is responsible for the sewer system. We, the Environment Agency, have responsibilities relating to flooding from main rivers and the sea.</p> <p>Our responsibilities include forecasting and mapping flood risks, providing flood warnings for river and coastal flooding, building and keeping defences in good working order and taking part in emergency planning and response. We manage central government grants for capital projects carried out by all risk management authorities.</p> <p>Our West Thames Area office is based in Wallingford, Oxfordshire. We cover a large geographical area taking in the Thames from its source in Gloucestershire down to Teddington where the Thames turns tidal and many of the tributaries that drain into it through parts of Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Buckinghamshire and the whole of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Surrey.</p> <p>In West Thames, the flooding started in December and continued into January and February. Some areas received two and a half times the rainfall they would normally expect between December and February. In just 12 days before Christmas, some locations received 150mm of rain. This compares with a monthly average of 75mm.</p> <p>There were several dry days between Christmas and New Year that allowed river levels across the area to subside. However, the period around New Year and the first week of 2014 was once more, exceptionally wet. Rainfall totals averaged 90mm however, some areas received up to 150mm of rain again.</p>

At the end of January, river levels were falling slowly. However, further rain prevented levels from returning to what would be considered normal for the time of year. Heavy and sustained rainfall at the end of January and in the first week of February caused rivers to rise once again.

County	Winter 2013/14 rainfall (mm)	Winter long term average rainfall (mm)	Winter 2013/14 rainfall compared with winter average
Berkshire	415	190	220%

We issued 157 flood warnings during the winter floods: 22 in December, 63 in January and 72 in February. On 9 February we issued 14 severe flood warnings on the Lower Thames following forecasts that levels could approach those last seen in 1947. We issued severe flood warnings because there had been significant risk to life and a threat to the local infrastructure.

Over the winter period, we issued 19 flood warnings for main river flooding and 2 groundwater flood alerts for West Berkshire.

We opened our Area Incident Room on 23 December. In total, it was in operation for 46 days. For the majority of the incident it was manned 24 hours a day, and over the 46 days involved over 600 staff. It finally closed on 28 February.

From the onset of the heavy rain just before Christmas and throughout the prolonged flooding, we kept our Local Resilience Forum (LRF) partners informed of river response to rainfall and areas that would flood. As the incident developed, our Operations teams worked alongside our LRF partners and members of the Armed Forces to build temporary flood defences, clear trash screens and pump out floodwater. Our Waterways staff maintained the River Thames (its lock sites and control assets) as trees and debris were washed downstream.

We operated the Jubilee River throughout the incident as part of the Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton

	<p>flood alleviation scheme that protected around 1,000 properties. Other smaller schemes, such as those at Newbury and Haydon Wick in Swindon, were in action for the very first time.</p> <p>Overall, more than 1,400 properties in West Thames suffered internal flooding by main river and a further 300 were flooded by groundwater. Our assets protected over 1750 properties.</p>
<p>What plans did your organisation have in place beforehand to help manage the impact of the severe weather?</p>	<p>We are a Category 1 responder along with the emergency services, local councils and NHS bodies. These responders¹ are organisations at the core of the response to most emergencies.</p> <p>On 20 December, we first informed our Thames Valley LRF and Surrey LRF partners of the potential for flooding the following week.</p> <p>We either chaired Flood Advisory Service (FAS) teleconferences or sent advisory emails to both the Surrey and the Thames Valley LRFs. This daily activity took place between: 20 December and 1 January; 2 January and 8 January; and 3 February and 28 February.</p> <p>Our FAS communications were arranged to make sure our partners received early warning of where and when locations were likely to flood/continue to flood.</p> <p>As the flooding became more severe and the potential effects on property and infrastructure flooding were identified, our FAS teleconferences were replaced by ones coordinated by the Thames Valley and Surrey LRFs. These tactical and strategic teleconferences were called and chaired by the police. The Strategic Coordination Groups (SCG) discussed and agreed the responses of each organisation whilst the Tactical Coordination Groups (TCG) took the lead for the response.</p> <p>We attended the SCG and TCG meetings that were held by TVLRF and Surrey LRF partners including the TCG that West Berkshire set up during February 2014.</p>
<p>Of the actions that you had planned, what</p>	

<p>worked well?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing daily flooding forecasts on what would flood and when, extent and duration of flooding to all responding agencies throughout the prolonged event and contributing to a multi agency response via SCGs and TCGs. • Issued flood warnings to over 3000 properties affected by the flooding in Dec, Jan and Feb. • Keeping communities up to date on their local river flooding forecasts/outlook by providing detailed information on our website and Floodline service, at least once daily • Sending our ambassadors to communities that were going to flood or during the flooding to offer information and practical advice. • The flood alleviation work in Newbury.
<p>What worked less well or would you change for future events and why?</p>	<p>After the flood eventually subsided at the end of February 2014, we held internal de-briefs to review our own performance. From this we have identified actions to improve our response, these will feed into a high level National Lessons Learnt Report that we expect to publish at the end of September. This is because the winter floods 2013/14 was on such a widespread scale affecting many different parts of the country, we want to make sure that all the improvements we make to our response and services are consistent across England.</p> <p>We also attended the de-briefs arranged by TVLRF and Surrey LRFs. The Thames Valley LRF held its multi-agency debriefing session on 10 April 2014.</p> <p>The Thames Valley LRF debriefing report and action plan is due to be published soon. The actions vary from multi agency actions to others placed on individual agencies.</p> <p>We also attended other more localised de-briefs including the de-brief held by the Berks Resilience Group which was chaired by West Berks Emergency Planning Officer in July.</p> <p>The Berkshire report with issues and suggested actions has been produced and many of the actions were either the same or very similar to ones identified in the TVLRF plan so these will be included in the TVLRF action plan.</p>

What changes, if any, were made to your plan in response to events and what effect did they have?	We didn't make changes to our planned response as such it was more a case of working with our LRF partners to provide an increased response as the scale of the flooding grew in magnitude through the Thames Valley and Surrey counties.
Please outline any other comments that you may have for the Commission.	

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Name of Organisation	Scottish and Southern Energy Power Distribution
Completed by	Alex Howison
What effect did the adverse weather have on your organisation?	The adverse weather created massive challenges for us, our overhead lines suffered multiple points of damage during the storms while our underground network and substations were threatened by the subsequent flooding. Both adverse conditions hindered our staff's ability to locate damage and attempt repairs. Normal BAU works such as connections and investment works were suspended throughout the period and these costs combined with compensation amounts and storm repair works amounted to significant costs for our business.
What plans did your organisation have in place beforehand to help manage the impact of the severe weather?	<p>Our normal storm preparedness plans were initialised at the moment adverse conditions were announced, this includes increased numbers of staff both during the day and over evenings and weekends. Extra engineers were drafted from our scope of operations in the North of Scotland when they were available, this contingent joined contractors and occasionally engineers from other, less affected DNO's (Distribution Network Operators) within the UK. Frequently throughout the conditions we had over 400% more staff available than on any normal evening or weekend. Extra generation plant had been provisionally booked and our own fleet of generators dispersed through the suspected 'worst affected' areas. Support staff were drafted from 'non-operational' units of the business to assist with call taking, information provision and welfare visits alongside welfare units. Replacement equipment had been placed at depots in addition to stores of cable in preparations for possible damage. Separate 'Storm' and 'Flood' control rooms were in operation giving our business the advantage of central coordination of staff, resources and communications.</p> <p>We also liaised frequently with Emergency Planning Officers throughout the events, despite this contact being more advisory to begin with, throughout the winter months this contact improved with offers of help and useful information being passed much more frequently by the end of the adverse events.</p>
Of the actions that you had planned, what	Tried and tested plans involving staff movements, storm control and liason meant we were able to respond quickly to the events and provide a coordinated and well staffed response. Although the

worked well?	damage our network suffered was severe and widespread we had sufficient equipment and materials to effect repairs, had the extreme weather not been as sustained as we experienced times of restoration would have been shorter across the areas affected.
What worked less well or would you change for future events and why?	Our initial communication with external agencies was minimal, preparatory calls were made with each county EPO which were well regarded, however sustained contact throughout the events was difficult and information provided was often vague. We committed more staff as the events continued and were able to provide more specific information and respond to queries in a more timely fashion. In future we will have a designated team responsible for this contact across our area of operations that will provide area specific updates to local resilience partners, coordinate any request for assistance and relay information to our central storm control who can liaise with strategic and tactical commands if required.
What changes, if any, were made to your plan in response to events and what effect did they have?	When the floods became the more prominent concern a separate 'Flood' control room was set up in Slough. This team took over all flood related activities including scouting and asset protection throughout the flooding across our area of operations. Internally this separation worked well, with staff activities, equipment requirements and communications split between both control rooms. However external communications again started at a minimal level, improving over time until the risk reduced and the need for instant response diminished. The staff manning the flood control room's efforts were able to ensure that not a single supply was lost due to the floods, thanks to active monitoring, liaison with external agencies and in some cases adjusting routes of supply to ensure our networks were resilient.
Please outline any other comments that you may have for the Commission.	Despite negative press for DNO's during and after the adverse weather we're proud of the efforts our staff made in restoring supplies despite being faced with some of the worst weather in living memory. Over the Christmas storms we restored supply to 99% of customers within 24hrs, our emergency contact centre received (at peak) over 130,000 calls and sent 117,000 text message updates a day. We also committed to continually improving our communications throughout the winter and have undertaken significant changes in response to feedback we've received, for example we have formed a Customer and Community advisor team. This team are based across our local depots and in the event of storms they will visit communities and vulnerable customers, providing up to date information, hot food and drinks and storm packs including wind up torches, hand warmers and blankets. This

	<p>team will also ensure regular, meaningful contact with Emergency Planning Offices and local authorities throughout the year. In addition to this we have improved our information offering across social media and our 'powertrack' application to ensure better information is more readily available for our customers. We are also committed to a major investment programme across the south focussing on tree cutting, replacing equipment and installing new lines to improve network performance in areas which were worst hit during the winter.</p>
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Name of Organisation	Thames Water
Completed by	Sarah Burchard
What effect did the adverse weather have on your organisation?	Flooding affected TW assets right across the Thames Valley and in South London. Wastewater assets were particularly badly hit with sewers and pumping stations being inundated with river / groundwater. In addition TW were called in to assist other water companies Sutton and South East Water (Croydon) and Viola Water (Ashford).
What plans did your organisation have in place beforehand to help manage the impact of the severe weather?	A number of asset / process specific contingency plans, and the TW Event Management Procedures were activated.
Of the actions that you had planned, what worked well?	Risk prioritisation and response.
What worked less well or would you change for future events and why?	The scale and geographical extent of the event was something that we had not anticipated. Initially we ran our response as one event. Later we divided it up by LRF area with a dedicated, senior manager led team for each area.
What changes, if any, were made to your plan in response to events and what effect did they have?	See above.
Please outline any other comments that you may have for the Commission.	

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Name of Organisation	Sovereign Housing Association
Completed by	Matthew Hensby, Regional Housing Manager Simon Hall, Operations Manager, Property Services Nick Gessey, Head of Health and Safety
What effect did the adverse weather have on your organisation?	<p>In total 2 properties were flooded in Newbury and residents required to be rehoused. One family at their request remained in the property until works were completed, a second family temporarily moved in with friends and were then temporarily rehoused in an alternative property.</p> <p>We temporarily rehoused a further 14 residents, 12 of which were residents from 2 specialist supported schemes. These properties did not flood but the action was taken to protect vulnerable residents.</p> <p>A further 60 properties across the district were protected with Flood bags to stop the possibility of flooding. Some of these were at serious risk, in others it was completed as a precautionary measure.</p> <p>Staff from all departments within Housing and Property Services were mobilised to provide support to residents 24 hours a day with emergency rotas established and teams working seven days a week to ensure support and assistance was provided.</p>
What plans did your organisation have in place beforehand to help manage the impact of the severe weather?	<p>Our 24 hour emergency Contact Centre is supported by an out of hours' emergency process and on – call managers from both Property Services and Housing. Once the first indications of the impact of the floods became known the emergency plan was instigated. This involved teams from Property Services, Health and Safety, and Housing working with residents to provide food bags and emergency accommodation over the weekend of 8 & 9 February.</p> <p>The emergency service included the provision of temporary accommodation; the On-Call Housing Manager placed 3 families in local hotels on 8 – 10 February.</p> <p>As a response to the floods in 2007 we hold a supply of Flood bags, some of these were provided to residents in the Purley area in January and further bags were provided by Property Services to residents across the local authority area from 8 February as required.</p> <p>In December 2013 we supported the Member for Pangbourne and Pangbourne Parish Council in part funding the clearance on Sulham Brook. This preventative work ensured at least 50 properties in the</p>

Pangbourne area were not flooded.

Once the full impact of the floods was clear a full emergency plan was established across all Sovereign's stock. This was co-ordinated by the Chief Operating Officer. Within Berkshire the response was co-ordinated by Nicole Sharp, Regional Director, and managed by the Regional Housing and Property Teams with support from the Health and Safety teams.

The EOC provided daily updates to the Regional team on the Local authority response and the Met Office reports this information was vital in our preparations and response to residents.

Officers who worked on the floods in 2007 provided invaluable advice and assistance in our immediate response. Officers visited the high risk locations, or locations where previous flooding occurred, to ensure we quickly understood the full impact.

By Mid-day on Monday 10 February a database of affected properties was established. This was developed from local intelligence, contact with residents, other agencies and a series of site visits carried out the teams. The database was updated daily and provided a central record of affected or at risk properties and enabled us to deploy resources to the priority areas. We gathered data on the vulnerability of the residents and details we would require to move them on a temporary basis if required. This ensured we could target resources to those at greatest need and keep in touch with our residents if they had to move out.

Our response to residents varied depending on the flood risk and the vulnerability of the residents. In some areas we deployed flood bags and carried out daily phone calls to monitor the situation. These included residents in rural areas, as in some areas residents requested that we do not visit the locations as our vehicles increased the flood risk.

In other locations officers visited the properties daily to monitor the water levels, arrange for Flood bags to be deployed and ensure residents where supported.

Where we perceived the flood risk to be very high and the properties likely to flood we worked with the residents to establish a plan to rehouse them in temporary accommodation. In total we spoke with over 30 families to develop an understanding of their emergency accommodation needs if their homes were flooded. These were primarily in the Shaw and Cromwell Road areas of Newbury.

In the case of 12 residents in high support accommodation we took the decision to temporarily rehouse them before the properties were flooded. Both units where decanted within 24 hours to

	<p>alternative accommodation. In both cases their homes were not flooded and we were able to move them back once the flood levels dropped. This work ensured the residents could be moved in a planned and supportive way. The pro- active steps we took in many cases reduced the impact on residents in what was already a very difficult and stressful situation. It also enabled us to undertake work in daylight and when we had sufficient resources available to provide support.</p> <p>In order to respond to this we carried out temporary works to a decommissioned scheme so this could quickly be brought back into use to house affected residents. This accommodation was not needed as, fortunately, the protective measures worked and water levels receded.</p> <p>We established an emergency response team to provide support to residents out of office hours and over the weekends if required. This included visits to residents where needed, monitoring of water levels and contact with WBC Emergency centre.</p> <p>A lesson from the 2007 floods was the provision of 4 wheel drive vehicles, this aided our ability to attend affected or at risk properties and support affected residents.</p> <p>Where tankers and pumps were required calls were made to the EOC and tankers and in all cases tankers were provided.</p>
<p>Of the actions that you had planned, what worked well?</p>	<p>Our 24 hour contact team worked very well over the whole period of the floods, supporting affected residents and arranging for affected residents to be provided with temporary accommodation. The team were supporting not only West Berkshire residents but also residents from Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Dorset.</p> <p>The On Call Housing and Property Manager mobilised the required resources very quickly and provided the necessary support to residents. Our property teams arranged for Flood bags to be deployed quickly and additional bags were obtained and deployed as required.</p> <p>As the seriousness of the situation become clear the Housing and Property teams worked in a co-ordinated manner supporting and assisting each other to provide a proactive and preventive response. This approach ensured the support provided to residents was joined up and teams' actions complemented each other.</p> <p>The information sharing between Sovereign and EOC was excellent enabling us to respond as required and arrange for tankers and pumps to be deployed quickly. This information flow enabled us</p>

	<p>to plan our response ahead and predict which properties may be affected.</p> <p>The shared knowledge of who the key local contacts were, both within WBC and Sovereign, and a sense of trust across organisations helped information flowed freely. This enabled quick and timely information flow across teams and ensured we could respond quickly to a changing situation, supporting one another.</p> <p>Throughout this time the information flow and co-ordinated responses enabled the teams to proactively manage our response and the deployment of our resources to the priority areas.</p> <p>Due to the scale of the floods there was a shortage of high volume pumps in the first few days, once pumps were sourced by the Fire service the impact and risk to the Cromwell Road areas reduced.</p>
<p>What worked less well or would you change for future events and why?</p>	<p>Information from 2007 floods and our response was patchy. It was fortunate that a number of officers who worked in 2007 floods remained in Sovereign; their advice in the early days was invaluable.</p> <p>A key outcome for Sovereign from the 2014 floods has been to gather intelligence of how we responded and what we could do better. This information will ensure that next time the floods impact we will have access to the lessons and will have a plan in place on how to respond.</p> <p>This local officer information enabled us to target areas that were at highest risk; again this was down mainly to local officer knowledge. This information is now being saved into our property services systems for future reference.</p> <p>The lack of response by Thames Water to blocked or backed up drains delayed the clear up in Newport Road area and resulted in wasted time and resources in trying to arrange for them to clear up the areas. This delay had a significant impact on the local residents.</p>
<p>What changes, if any, were made to your plan in response to events and what effect did they have?</p>	<p>The plans we had in place for managing emergencies worked well, however, the impact of the floods in all our operating areas put this under extreme pressure. To respond to this we established Regional Emergency teams which were centrally co-ordinated. This enabled us to respond locally as required whilst supporting other regions. These teams were on call 24 hours a day until the flood levels dropped.</p> <p>Residents directly flooded had trouble in contacting the Housing team as initially they were directed through our contact centre who were dealing with a huge increase in calls. To enable them to contact</p>

	<p>the Housing team directly a direct phone number was provided.</p> <p>Whilst we had good local knowledge of the areas at highest risk of flooding, we were able to use our GIS systems to map our properties that may flood if water levels continued to rise. We are continuing to develop this capability and use GIS and our stock data to be able to identify vulnerable properties.</p> <p>We have carried out a review of our response to the floods so we can continue to learn lessons and ensure we are more prepared next time this occurs.</p>
<p>Please outline any other comments that you may have for the Commission.</p>	<p>The co-ordinated approach taken by WBC EOC and particularly the sharing of information and prompt response to all requested enabled our responses to be joined up and supportive to each other. This definitely reduced duplication and enabled an effective deployment of resources.</p> <p>Whilst Sovereign Officers provided much needed support and assistance, we would like to acknowledge the outstanding work undertaken by members of the public and in particular Sovereign residents in working to support their friends, neighbours and families throughout the floods. On many occasions residents worked tirelessly to look after vulnerable neighbours and defend their homes. This work without doubt made our role easier and ensured we could focus our resources where most needed.</p>

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Name of Organisation	West Berkshire Neighbourhood Wardens (employed by Sovereign Housing Association)
Completed by	Andrew Cooch
What effect did the adverse weather have on your organisation?	Neighbourhood Wardens had to deploy at a number of locations in Newbury and the Purley/Pangbourne area to help residents who were affected by the floods.
What plans did your organisation have in place beforehand to help manage the impact of the severe weather?	We have our own severe weather plan in place.
Of the actions that you had planned, what worked well?	Pretty much everything in our severe weather plan worked well as it is based on previous experience.
What worked less well or would you change for future events and why?	Can't think of anything from our perspective.
What changes, if any, were made to your plan in response to events and what effect did they have?	No changes made.
Please outline any other comments that you may have for the Commission.	No further comments.

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Name of Organisation	HQ 145 (South) Brigade (HQ 11 th Infantry Brigade and HQ South East (wef 01 Aug 14))
Completed by	Lieutenant Colonel PCE (Philip) Mileham, Joint Regional Liaison Officer
What effect did the adverse weather have on your organisation?	Response to requests from Civil Authorities (CA), starting as result of W Berks declaration of Major Incident on Fri 7 Feb 14, became Main Effort for HQ for 3+ weeks, coordinating (Op PITCHPOLE) response across Hampshire & Isle of Wight (HIOW) and Thames Valley (TV) using 15 units from across Defence. Brigade Ops Room manned 24/7 and normal HQ staff outputs sub-optimal due to focus on providing flood support. Flooding response also had significant impact on wider Defence outputs.
What plans did your organisation have in place beforehand to help manage the impact of the severe weather?	No specific plans as HQ is not, under CCA 04, a Categorised responder, although HQ has role (Defined in JDP-02) to coord and provide support to CAs in circumstances when requests for support are made that warrant assistance. HQ coincidentally had conducted a 3 day UK Ops Combined Arms Staff Trainer (CAST) exercise, Ex RESILIENT ROEBUCK in Nov 13, focussed on a fluvial and coastal flooding scenario in Hampshire!
Of the actions that you had planned, what worked well?	No actions specifically planned, but diverse response to unfolding and dynamic challenges effective in mitigating and preventing flooding impacts. Of note: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value of established inter-personal linkages with LAs, EA and 'blue lights' through regular LRF/JRLO contact underlined and key in this response. In particular communication between JRLO and W Berks Emergency Planning Officer on 7/8 Feb pivotal in enabling timely mobilisation of Defence (7RIFLES) support on 8 Feb. • Brigade Ops Room stood up from 7 - 28 Feb and Defence maintained flexibility to respond in a timely manner to support MA effort. Liaison maintained during Recovery phase. • Early attendance of JRLO and LO from 7 RIFLES at W Berks EOC on Sat 8 Feb enabled, not without challenges being overcome, effective coord of response to crisis at Pingewood SSE sub-station that prevented its loss and attendant impacts.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision with agreement of W Berks to enable use of Chieveley Depot as Defence sand bag filling hub for Thames Valley. • Defence established key LO linkage and communication with LA TCGs/EOCs as well as GOLD. In addition LO team deployed to EA Regional Office at Wallingford on Sat 8 Feb. • Defence exercised 'Mission Command' enabling coordination at highest (Strategic) levels and decisions and effect at lowest (Operational/Tactical) levels. This involved formation of Sectors across Thames Valley and HIOW. • Defence able to pro-actively seek work and not just react to requests, but mindful that civil agencies maintained lead. • Formal MACA processes suspended and as result response more timely and agile, particularly as uncertainties surrounding potential costs of Defence support suspended. • Defence demonstrated it is only 'national' asset able to provide effective and timely response to reinforce MA effort in such circumstances. • Defence has effect of galvanising and increasing effect of civil response. • Employment of local Army Reserve unit (7 RIFLES) worked well and has benefited future Community Engagement in Berks/South Oxfordshire. • Defence able to mitigate risks through coordination with other agencies (e.g. RBFRS Water Rescue Team and TVP providing lighting that enabled 24/7 work in hazardous surroundings) . • HQ able to augment own manpower from Reservists, but is challenged in being able to provide LO teams to every TCG/EOC during wide area response (e.g. Berks having 6 LAs presented particular challenge!)
<p>What worked less well or would you change for future events and why?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty surrounding costs needs to be clarified and communicated at earliest opportunity. • In early stages of flooding evident that weak comms between EA, SSE and W.Berks resulted in lack of SA and sub-optimal response that could have resulted in loss of Pingewood sub-station. • Defence cannot be relied upon to provide lift capacity (of bulk sandbags) due to Whole Fleet Management. LAs need to identify hauliers and other contractors who may be able to assist. • Defence able to provide and fill some 180,000 empty sandbags for Thames Valley to EA and LAs. This resource must not be relied upon in future and EA/LAs require to hold greater stocks and have effective supply chain of this key resource. Some parochialism encountered between

	<p>LAs around supply of and distribution of sand/sand bags in early stages of response. W Berks should consider establishing Log Cell within EOC to coord sandbags etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EA struggled to prioritise and resource protect tasks for Defence in early stages. This resulted in Defence assets not being employed effectively on 9-10 Feb. • Situational awareness of all agencies across W Berks and TV in early stages of flooding response. • Defence personnel lacked sufficient PPE in early stages.
<p>What changes, if any, were made to your plan in response to events and what effect did they have?</p>	<p>Once sufficient force elements generated, HQ developed and employed Sector model to enable Mission Command.</p>
<p>Please outline any other comments that you may have for the Commission.</p>	

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