

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROFORMA**

Cabinet Meeting .....5th November 2009

1. Title of Item/Report

Pitt Review and the Draft Flood and Water Management Bill

2. Record of the Decision

Members considered a report that set out the key issues emerging from the draft Flood and Water Management Bill which was the government's response to the Pitt Review into the summer floods in 2007.

There were several reasons why the new Legislation was needed:-

§ The current flood and coastal erosion risk management as well as reservoir safety Legislation is outmoded and has its roots in the 1930's;

§ The Pitt review identified gaps in the way that risk is managed;

§ The need to adapt to climate change with the changing patterns of rainfall as flood flows in rivers plus increased risk from surface run-off;

§ EU Flood Directive and the need to fulfil those requirements.

The legislation included measures that were highlighted in the government's 'Future Water' strategy and it would help deliver the requirements of the EU Floods Directive

Key issues for the Council, raised by the Bill included:-

- setting out a local leadership role for local authorities
- a requirement of developers to include sustainable drainage where practicable, in new developments. Approval, adoption and maintenance of the sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) would fall to local authorities.
- The development of a Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP)
- a skills gap in terms of drainage engineers
- impact on resources – eg delivery of SWMP and SuDs

In response to the Bill Stockton had taken the lead role in setting up a Tees Valley Flood Risk group with the other four Authorities, the Environment Agency, Northumbrian Water and Emergency Planning.

The role of this group was:

§ To develop surface water management plans.

§ To develop a methodology for asset management of the drainage systems.

§ To develop an approach to the design and adoption of Sustainable Urban Drainage systems.

§ To ensure that there is a mechanism in place to communicate with other parties working on flood risk e.g. planning officers developing strategic flood risk management.

§ To agree an action plan for the delivery of Catchment Flood Management Plans on cross boundary issues.

Bi-monthly briefings with Cabinet Member for Resources had been established

RESOLVED that

1. the response to the draft Flood and Water Management Bill and the implications that this proposed legislation had for the authority be noted

2. that the impact upon resources that the proposed legislation may have be noted and the implications be highlighted in the service planning and budget setting process.

3. Reasons for the Decision

The response to the draft Bill expressed concerns over the resources needed to meet our obligations as well as highlighting the lack of skills within local authorities to deal with those issues since the majority of drainage engineering staff were absorbed into the water authorities over ten years ago when the agency agreement was ended.

Flood risk management was to become a key issue for local authorities following the floods of 2007, the Pitt Review and the draft legislation that was set to implement the recommendations of that review.

As yet the full resource implications were unknown but there were going to be resources needed to develop a surface water management plan, to adopt and maintain sustainable urban drainage systems and to up skill staff within the organisation.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not applicable

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Not later than Midnight on Friday 13th November 2009

Proper Officer  
10 November 2009