

## NOTE OF MEETING OF FLOODING SCRUTINY WITH L.B.LEWISHAM AND L.B.LAMBETH – FRIDAY 03 FEBRUARY 2017

Present: Councillors: Richard Greening, Una O'Halloran – L.B.Islington  
Alan Hall, Alan Smith, Kevin Bonnavia, Amanda De Ryk  
LB.Lewisham  
Andy Wilson- L.B. Lambeth

Officers from all the boroughs were present.

During discussion Members from the respective boroughs outlined details of the recent floods in their respective boroughs

The following main points were made –

- Thames took some time in all boroughs in turning the valves off to stop the trunk mains leak – consequently the emergency response being completed took longer than it should
- There appeared to have been previous leaks in many of the areas that had been subject to recent major bursts
- There appeared to be insufficient funding to provide the necessary improvements to infrastructure
- Concern was expressed that Thames often used the excuse of requiring permitting permission from Local Authorities to carry out works, however this is not necessary in an emergency situation
- In terms of getting to an emergency it was felt that Thames should have a 'blue light' system in the same way as the emergency services as a major burst could constitute a threat to life
- Thames were reluctant to share information in relation to their piping network and this needed to be addressed
- There needed to be improved communication channels by both Thames and Local Authorities when bursts took place
- Information on the recent 8 major bursts that Thames have referred to needs to be collected so that a Pan London approach can be taken
- Members felt that there the Council and Fire Brigade should be made aware by Thames of where the turn off valves were located

Members agreed the following –

- That whilst individual Councils would progress their own separate scrutiny investigations there should be a Pan London report produced through London Councils to highlight the common factors experienced by all Councils affected by major bursts and this be taken up through the LSN. Case studies could be used to support the report
- Details of the 8 recent major bursts should be requested from Thames in order to identify which boroughs should liaise on this report
- OFWAT should give evidence
- Evidence should be taken from other public utilities about flooding on their services
- Information on siting of valves on major trunk roads should be made available to Councils and the Fire Brigade

- Thames idea of smart metering to reduce leakage would take a number of years to implement and would not deal with the issue of leakage on trunks roads, only with customer leakages
- It was noted that in Lewisham Thames applied for over 1900 permits in the last year but ended up cancelling over 1000 of them which caused a lot of unnecessary work for the authority