

Report of: Corporate Director of Environment and Regeneration

Policy and Performance Scrutiny Review Committee	Date: 24 January 2019	Ward(s): ALL
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**SUBJECT: Thames Water, Burst Water Main at Angel Upper Street
12 Month Progress Report**

1. Synopsis

1.1 The Executive received a report on 28 September 2017 from the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Review Committee on Thames Water's response to Burst Water Mains. The Scrutiny report proposed responses to the 28 recommendations (a to bb) to address the following review objectives:

- 1) To understand the risks we face in Islington and Hackney, as a result of our aging water supply, including but not limited to those caused by climate change
- 2) To review Thames Water response to reducing those risks and their progress on investment in new infrastructure
- 3) To understand the impact of flooding on individual residents and businesses in the Angel and identify measures which could be taken to reduce the damage and disruption caused in the future and to liaise with other London Boroughs suffering similar incidents
- 4) To review the responses to flooding caused by water mains bursts by public bodies, by Thames Water and by private sector bodies, such as insurance companies, covering both the immediate emergency and longer term support
- 5) To recommend improvements to the long term prevention and short term response to flooding in Islington and Hackney in liaison with other London Boroughs suffering recent flooding incidents
- 6) To identify any similarities between the recent flood incidents across London Boroughs and to recommend improvements that can be made by Thames Water to minimise the threat of flooding in the future
- 7) To investigate the position of residents/businesses in respect of claims made to Thames Water for uninsured loss and compensation that have suffered as a result of the recent flooding

This report provides a 12 month update on the actions taken in response to the Policy and Performance Scrutiny of Thames Water.

Recommendation (a) to (n) are directed to Thames Water.

Recommendation (o) to (u) are directed to the GLA, TfL and London Fire Brigade.

Recommendation (v) to (x) are directed to the Council.

Recommendation (y) to (aa) are directed to Ofwat (The Water Services Regulation Authority).

Recommendation (bb) is directed to the Police.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the recommendations and responses being taken forward by Thames Water, GLA, TfL, Fire Brigade, Ofwat and the Police, in response to the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee's recommendations (a-o, u-y and aa-bb)
- 2.2 To note that no further progress is possible with the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee's recommendation (z) and recommendation (aa).
- 2.3 To note that the Executive Member for Transport and Environment will continue to campaign to deliver the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee's recommendations (s) and (t).

3. Background

- 3.1 Following the water mains burst at the Angel on 5th December 2016, the Councils' Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee commenced a review of flooding, its underlying causes, and the response by public services at the Angel and at other major bursts throughout London. The purpose was to:
 - reduce the risk of future floods,
 - better protect homes and businesses from flooding risk, and
 - improve responses to future flooding situations.
- 3.2 Overall the Committee concluded that the response to the Thames Water burst at Angel and the general handling of burst water mains within Islington and Hackney is unacceptable. It recognised the causes of these bursts related to ageing infrastructure, climate change and the lack of ongoing investment by Thames water.
- 3.3 The Committee made 28 recommendations relating to the Review objectives. Several of the recommendations were directed to both the Council and external organisations (Thames Water, GLA, TfL, Fire Brigade, Police, Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat))
- 3.4 Whilst the Committee concluded that it was the responsibility of a number of organisations, there were actions that we as the Council can take to help reduce the risk of flooding.
- 3.5 The original scrutiny report from Committee was published in July 2017 and was received by Executive at the Policy and performance Scrutiny meeting on 28 September 2017. Following this meeting, the Executive published a second report in May 2018 which contained responses to address the proposed recommendations. The Committee recommendations and Executive responses are referred to in Section 4 of this progress update report.

4. Response and Progress Update to the Scrutiny Committee Recommendations

Recommendations (a) to (n) are directed to Thames Water

Committee Recommendation (a):

That improved emergency response arrangements be instituted; these should include the following: Procedures for identifying major leaks in the Thames Water control room and directing emergency response teams on site need to be more effective to ensure major trunk main bursts are dealt with more speedily.

Identifying information received more effectively, in order to assess whether the leak is a major trunk mains leak, and if this is the case, effective communication channels be put in place with the Fire Brigade and other appropriate partners for them to attend on site as quickly as possible.

Improving the provision and location of emergency response team arrangements, so that they are more accessible in the event of major trunk main bursts – this could necessitate a team located in a control centre in inner London – and that the possibility of a ‘blue light’ service from the Police be investigated where a major incident is declared – see recommendation (w) below.

A dedicated emergency response line be instituted, in order that the Public can report leaks directly to Thames Water, if they wish to do so. There should also be a dedicated ‘emergency hotline’ introduced for the Fire Brigade to call in the event of major burst main.

Developing with the Police, TfL, Fire Brigade and Local Authorities an effective communications strategy for informing the Public where leaks can be reported, and that such leaks should be reported as soon as possible, in order that appropriate action can be taken.

Develop and publish performance and attendance standards, both in relation to major and minor pipe bursts.

Develop with the Fire Brigade, Police, TfL and Local Authorities an effective early warning system for residents at risk of flooding, so that when an incident occurs, the danger to residents can be reduced.

Response to Recommendation (a)

Following the Cuttill Report Thames Water undertook a Trunk Main Strategic Review (Appendix 1). This review addressed all the recommendations in (a) except the recommendation for blue light services to assist with emergency attendance which can only be done on a case by case basis.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (a)

Thames Water have advised that by improving and streamlining processes, their average response times have improved from two hours to one hour and nine minutes.

The size of the emergency response team has doubled in size and now includes 24hour coverage with aims to improve average response times to under one hour by 2020.

Dedicated response teams attend site immediately after a burst main to inform and give guidance to concerned residents, and as a result there were no significant complaints from two recent major bursts in Central London.

Committee Recommendation (b)

That improved technologies be investigated and be put in place to detect the likelihood of bursts on the major trunk mains in Islington, and in addition sensors be installed on the pipes in the major trunk mains in Islington, particularly Upper Street and Essex Road, with immediate effect.

Response to Recommendation (b)

As a result of Thames Water's Trunk Mains Strategic Review, Syrinix and Hydroguard monitoring sensor units have been installed as part of the water mains re-lining work on Upper Street, Islington High Street, Essex Road and Astey's Row. These monitors are now connected directly to Thames Water's control room and are monitored 24/7.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (b)

By the end of the current five year Asset Management Plan (AMP) ending 2019, seven percent of the highest risk trunk mains will be monitored by active monitoring units (Trunk minders and Hydroguard units), with a further twelve percent covered by other leak detection monitoring points, giving around nineteen percent coverage overall. Thames Water investment plans are to increase this coverage to twenty-five percent by 2025.

Thames Water have improved their trunk main modelling by incorporating 2D rolling ball flood modelling across their entire trunk mains network. This provides improved level of detail of outputs, giving a better prediction of the impact of a trunk main failure event.

During routine maintenance and repair of their trunk mains, Thames Water undertake testing of short lengths of pipe in situ and, where possible, remove sections of aging pipe from site for further testing. These samples are taken to their Kempton Park site in West London to be examined. This data is then used to calibrate models which infer the condition of the wider trunk main network, improving the understanding of the risk associated with the largest pipes. Thames Water are working closely with University of Surrey to improve knowledge base and to study the characteristic behaviour of ageing pipes. They are investing significantly in the research and development of new technology that will over the next five to seven years, aid in the analysis of pipes across their network. This work includes the construction of an industry-leading £4.5m pipe rig at their Kempton Park site. Working with the wider water industry, this rig will be used, amongst other things, to assess and develop technologies to undertake long-length pipe condition assessment of trunk mains.

Committee Recommendation (c)

That Thames Water, when submitting their case to Ofwat for their future 5 year investment plans, should prioritise the phased improvement of ageing Victorian pipe replacement on major trunk mains in Islington, this to be completed within a specified period to be determined and published by Thames Water, but we propose 15 years, given the problems that major bursts on these roads cause to businesses and residents. Any replacement programme should take account of any increase that may result in increased costs for customers. In the interim Thames Water should ensure that monitoring takes place to minimise the risk of future flooding.

Response to Recommendation (c)

Thames Water have a duty to consult the Council on their five year investment plan, the Council will respond to the consultation and will ensure that the Scrutiny Committees recommendations are incorporated in the response.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (c)

Thames Water have ownership of their budgets and decide where funding is best invested. Following the consultation, a five year investment plan was written and submitted to Ofwat in September 2018. This plan includes prioritisation of the replacement of the worst performing pipes as part of a comprehensive investment strategy to achieve what Thames Water consider to be a challenging target of fifteen percent leakage reduction by 2025.

Committee Recommendation (d)

That relevant policies regarding clean-up / insurance/compensation and goodwill payments should be properly communicated and most importantly be available on the company website. Policies should set out clearly what businesses and residents affected by flooding due to burst mains can expect. Compensation for inconvenience should be formally recognised and a corporate policy be established to ensure that this is fairly and consistently applied. This should cover goodwill payments, expenses and indirect business losses (e.g. from reduced footfall in a flooded area)

Response to Recommendation (d)

As a result of the burst water main at Angel, Thames Water produced an information booklet, based on customer's experiences (Putting Things Right - Appendix 2), laying out claimants' options following flooding and explaining the claims process. The draft booklet was consulted with Islington customers affected by flooding and further refinement were made, particularly in relation to clarity on insurance and goodwill payments.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (d)

As a result of the Angel flood, the "Putting Things Right" booklet (Appendix 2) has been published and is now issued to residents and businesses affected in the event of a flooding incident. This became available in February 2018.

Committee Recommendation (e)

That, given residents and businesses concern at the insensitive handling of some insurance claims, there should be improved communication with residents and businesses in dealing with insurers and the handling of claims (possibly by the provision of a laminated information sheet) following flooding incidents

Response to Recommendation (e)

This is addressed through the new Thames Water customer booklet 'Putting Things Right' as detailed in response(d)

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (e)

As per recommendation (d), the "Putting Things Right" booklet (Appendix 2) has been published and is now issued to residents and businesses affected in the event of a flooding incident.

Committee Recommendation (f)

That Thames Water should also issue guidance to businesses and properties on the remedial measures necessary, following flooding incidents, in order to ensure properties are properly dried out and residents and businesses can move back in to their premises as soon as possible

Response to Recommendation (f)

This is addressed through the new Thames Water customer booklet 'Putting things right' as detailed in response (d) and (e).

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (f)

As per recommendation (d) and (e), the "Putting Things Right" booklet (Appendix 2) has been published and is now issued to residents and businesses affected in the event of a flooding incident.

Committee Recommendation (g)

That Thames Water adopt a suitable communications policy, including the use of social media, in

order to inform residents and businesses and other interested parties, of developments when leaks occur, and to give any appropriate information needed

Response to Recommendation (g)

The Thames Water Trunk Mains Strategic Review addresses this recommendation through its new customer experience programme.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (g)

Thames Water have reviewed and improved contact centre practices, media engagement, social media response and event broadcasting.

This has been achieved by increasing their social media team from 12 to 26 staff, including 24hour coverage, with more frequent updates through social media such as Twitter and their website.

The Thames Water website also includes an Interactive Map for customers to report incidents.

Thames Water Trunk Mains Strategic Review addressed this as part of the "Social media and communications improvement plan"

Committee Recommendation (h)

That the Committee welcome Thames Water commitment to share with the Fire Brigade and the appropriate Local Authority, information on the location of the major trunk mains in the borough. This will assist, not only in major flooding situations, but in mapping GIS information on the Local Flood Risk Management strategy and afford the Council a better overview of the risks of flooding in the borough and to take any appropriate measures. Thames Water should also develop a GIS application that will enable staff and other partners to identify the level of risk that a major burst main will cause in order to inform staff responsible for handling and assessing incidents of flooding

Response to Recommendation (h)

The Executive accepts this recommendation and the Public Realm Highways Team will monitor the implementation of the new GIS application.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (h)

Thames Water have liaised with TfL, The London Fire Brigade and other Local Authorities and offered to share the location of their Trunk Mains and High Consequence Valves with Islington Council officers. This data is supplied in a GIS format that can be used for integrated mapping. Thames Water are also aiming for a more collaborative approach, sharing road space, synchronising work with local authorities and other utilities to minimise disruption to the public and road users and have developed a tool, Thames Connect, which is being piloted with Croydon currently, with a view to rolling it out into other boroughs.

Islington has agreed to enter into a mutual confidentiality agreement with Thames Water as the location of their equipment, and likelihood and impact of failures is sensitive for security reasons. This will enable the sharing of data between Thames Water and Islington to improve understanding of the consequence of failures in the borough and assist collaborative working.

Committee Recommendation (i)

That the Committee welcome Thames Water commitment to ensure businesses and residents are materially not worse off, as a result of the Upper Street flood. The Committee hope that relevant payments of compensation and other appropriate losses take place as soon as possible

Response to Recommendation (i)

The Executive accepts this recommendation the Angel BID Working Group has been set up to

address this recommendation and will continue to monitor Thames Water's actions to ensure that any adverse impacts on the Angel Flood victims are rectified.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (i)

Following the Angel flooding and ongoing discussions with those affected, Thames Water have changed their replacement policy from "like for like" to "new for old". This means that any damaged items will be replaced with brand new ones rather than ones of similar condition.

From the Angel flooding incident, as at September 2018 there were a total of 139 claims of which 102 have been settled with 37 outstanding. Of the 37 outstanding, 31 of these are being dealt with through customer's own insurance and 6 are being dealt with by Thames Water. From the 31 being dealt with privately, 13 have uninsured losses which Thames Water have agreed to pay out for. Timescales to complete all of the claims cannot be defined as majority of outstanding claims are from residents / businesses claiming through their own insurers.

Thames Water also offered Distress & Inconvenience payments to 41 households. Further to this Thames Water offered billing rebates for 87 customers, household and non-household who were affected.

Committee Recommendation (j)

That Thames Water work with the Angel BID and local businesses to organise a suitable programme of reopening events, including the provision of capital and revenue investment in the Camden Passage area, together with appropriate publicity, to ensure residents and visitors are aware that businesses are open for trading.

Response to Recommendation (j)

The Angel BID Working Group and colleagues in Public Realm will continue to liaise with Thames Water to take forward community projects funded by Thames Water.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (j)

Thames Water have provided Islington with £100k which will be used to fund community improvement projects. Currently the Public Realm Team are consulting with local residents and businesses to identify areas where they feel the funding would be best spent.

Potential projects already identified through these discussions include:

- Entrance features to Camden Passage
- Support for the London in Bloom entry, planters etc. in strategic locations around the area, including Charlton Place.
- Improved signage around Camden passage.
- Gate to entrance of Shalford Court.
- Increased provision of litter/recycling bins.
- Bicycle storage areas.
- Improvements to local school.

In addition to the £100k, Thames Water have also liaised with representatives of the local business community and in recognition of the disruption caused, have funded promotional activities to the sum of £56k. which included;

£10k advertising for antiques businesses

£30k investment in Christmas lights

£7k opening event + publicity

£8,800 for signposts to Camden Passage

Committee Recommendation (k)

That Thames Water take account of resident's concerns, surrounding the security of premises in the aftermath of major flooding, and that such security measures should be improved in future – this should form part of a major incident protocol or standard operating procedure.

Response to Recommendation (k)

Thames Water are developing an Emergency Management system which should address this recommendation.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (k)

To address the concerns of the residents, Thames water send a dedicated response team to site immediately after a flooding incident, to provide information and guidance to those affected. In the case of a minor flooding incident, these premises are usually locked up in an ordinary manner, and arrangements are made with the resident's own insurers. In the case of a major flooding incident, or one where the premises cannot be locked securely, Thames water will remove value goods and safe store them to reduce risk of theft. If multiple properties are flooded, security staff are deployed to further secure the premises.

Committee Recommendation (l)

That the Committee welcome the findings of the Cuthill Review and be kept informed of progress of implementation of the recommendations and the Strategic Review that they are undertaking.

Response to Recommendation (l)

The Executive accepts this recommendation and the Public Realm Highways Team will monitor progress and report back.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (l)

Thames Water Trunk Mains Strategic Review was published on 2nd October 2017. Thames Water have attended Policy and Performance Committee meetings during the year to provide an update on progress and implementation of the recommendations. Public Realm Officers have also held regular meetings with Thames Water to monitor progress and discuss future plans.

Committee Recommendation (m)

That Thames Water should reduce the number of customers affected by water mains bursts and publish the numbers of bursts that have occurred and a performance target for such bursts.

Response to Recommendation (m)

This is addressed in the Thames Water Trunk Main Strategic Review.
The Executive accepts this recommendation and the Public Realm Highways Team will monitor.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (m)

Thames Water release data on the numbers of mains bursts and the number of customers affected by supply interruptions of greater than four hours as a condition of their licence to operate. These are published on their website annually.

Both are key measures for their business and have targets set as part of each Asset Management Plan's (AMP) Price Review process. Overall, Thames Water's reported burst numbers have reduced since 2011 from 9268 to 8530 in 2017.

Committee Recommendation (n)

That Thames Water, in conjunction with TfL, (and other public utilities), review the current arrangements for co-ordination of works, with a view to establishing a more effective means of collaboration across London. This should include sub-regional and borough-by-borough working, as appropriate.

Response to Recommendation (n)

The Executive accepts this recommendation and the Public Realm Highways Team will work with Thames Water to review and improve current arrangements.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (n)

An Infrastructure Development Communication Unit (IDCU) has been set up by the GLA and will be used to encourage more effective working across London. The IDCU is initially being funded by TfL and is expected to be running by April 2019.

Thames Water are carrying out pilot workshops with Croydon, TfL, and other utility companies, with aims to share future investment data, programmes and challenges, to enable a more collaborative way of working.

The pilot will last for 2 years and focuses on high growth areas. The long term goal is to expand across all London boroughs and be self-funding going forward.

Workshops were held on the 28 August and 5 September 2018 between the Public Realm Highways Team and Thames Water to discuss collaboration through sharing data.

Recommendations (o) to (u) are directed to the GLA, TfL and London Fire Brigade

Committee Recommendation (o)

That TfL ensure, when future flooding incidents occur, that there is a better communication process in place to make the Public and businesses aware of diversions in place following such incident.

Response to Recommendation (o)

This will be reviewed, tested and improved as part of future Emergency Planning exercises arranged by the Councils Emergency Planning Team through 2018.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (o)

Islington Council have not been invited to any emergency planning exercises by TfL to date. Communication channels were tested during the Upper Street murder in May 2018, where on this occasion, information was not provided to Islington Council and the Emergency Planning Team had to make first contact with TfL and buses.

Islington Council's Emergency Planning Unit will invite TfL to a table-top exercise being held in early 2019 and have agreed to attend any TfL exercises.

Committee Recommendation (p)

That TfL, when planning major construction schemes, such as the Bridge works at Holloway Road and the gyratory scheme at Highbury Corner, should consult with other Public utilities and the

Council to co-ordinate any works that are necessary, such as major trunks mains replacement, to minimise any future disruption to residents and road users – see also recommendation (n) above.

Response to Recommendation (p)

The New Roads and Street Works Act Council coordination meetings should address this recommendation.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (p)

The Council's New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) team carry out quarterly coordination meetings with TfL, major utility companies (including Thames Water) and neighbouring boroughs. In addition to this, weekly or fortnightly meetings are held during the delivery of major highway projects with TfL and appropriate utilities as required.

Committee Recommendation (q)

That, in view of the fact that a bus driver first reported a minor leak at the site of the Upper Street burst at 3:57a.m. and that Thames Water had not been alerted to this leak until notified by the Fire Brigade at 5:07a.m., there should be an improved method of communication established between TfL, Police, Fire Brigade and the Council. (See recommendation (a) above). The delays in Thames Water responding to this situation led to Thames Water not being on site for some hours and this had exacerbated the devastation caused by the major trunk mains burst.

Response to recommendation (q)

This will be reviewed, tested and improved as part of future Emergency Planning exercises arranged by the Councils Emergency Planning Team through 2018.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (q)

Islington Council have not been invited to any emergency planning exercise by Thames Water to date. Communication Channels were tested during St John Street flood (burst main) in May 2017 and City Road flood (burst main) January 2018. On both occasions, the Emergency Planning Team made first contact with Thames Water.

Islington Council's Emergency Planning Unit will invite Thames Water to a table-top emergency planning exercise in early 2019 and have agreed to attend any planning exercises that Thames Water wish to hold.

Committee Recommendation (r)

That support be given to the case for the major investment in replacing ageing Victorian pipework in London on major trunk mains, and work with Thames Water and other public utilities take place, to ensure this is managed in a way that causes least disruption, for as short a time as possible, to residents, businesses and commuters

Response to Recommendation (r)

The Public Realm Highways Team will lead on implementing workshops with Thames Water and TfL to gain an understanding of Thames Water's risk based approach to investment in its infrastructure and identify areas in Islington which may be at risk so that procedures can be put in place which are appropriate to the area.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (r)

The Public Realm Highways Team held workshops on 29 August 2018 and 5 September 2018 with Thames Water to discuss the process of sharing information with Islington and TfL on future

investment pipe replacement and collaborative working to minimise disruption, as detailed in recommendation (n).

Committee Recommendation (s)

That a Pan-London investigation be carried out on the frequency of leaks in London Boroughs, in order to establish the extent of the leaks, particularly major bursts, to strengthen the case for increased investment in the replacement of ageing pipes to Ofwat. Any recommendation should take account of the independent review undertaken on behalf of Thames Water into major bursts in London.

Response to Recommendation (s)

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport will continue to campaign for and work towards the instigation of a Pan-London investigation.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (s)

As mentioned in recommendation (n), Thames Water are carrying out pilot collaboration workshops with Croydon, TfL, and other utility companies, with aims to share future investment data, programmes and challenges. This pilot will last for 2 years and focus on high growth areas, with long term goals to expand across all London boroughs.

The Thames Water investigation into burst water mains has been raised by Islington at the Local Authorities Partnership Forum, hosted by London Councils, and it was agreed that this would be taken forward by the London Joint Authorities Group (LJAG). The Chair of LJAG has written to Ofwat on behalf of the 33 London Boroughs and TfL asking Ofwat to take much more robust action in light of the continuous disruption Thames Water are causing to local residents and businesses across the capital and the pressure they are placing on local authority resources in helping them manage these incidents.

Committee Recommendation (t)

That the Mayor, GLA and London Boroughs support the campaign for the Fire Brigade to become the statutory Emergency Response Service for flooding, as recommended in the Pitt review in 2008. This is in view of the recent major bursts resulting in severe flooding and given the fact that such occurrences are more likely in the future due to the ageing Victorian trunk mains network across London

Response to Recommendation (t)

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport will continue to campaign and work with the Mayor's Office to promote the changes necessary for the Fire Brigade to become the statutory Emergency Response Service for flooding.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (t)

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport has written to the Mayor's Office requesting support in the campaign for a legislative change in which the Fire Brigade will become the statutory Emergency Response Service for flooding.

Committee Recommendation (u)

That the London Plan should include provision, when planning permission for basements is being requested, to ensure that a risk assessment is carried out prior to approval to ensure the risk to life of flooding is minimised

Response to Recommendation (u)

The Council has adopted a Basement Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which applies to any planning application for basement development. Policy D9 of the draft London Plan suggests that boroughs should establish policies to address the negative impacts (particularly cumulative impacts) of basement development. However, the draft policy offers little detail on implementation. Islington's response to the Mayor will request that the policy is expanded to require detailed investigation of impacts in line with the Councils' own policy.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport will request that the draft policy is expanded and incorporated in the London Plan.

The Executive accepts this recommendation and Public Realm Highways Team will monitor.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (u)

Islington Council have responded to the Draft London Plan requesting that the Mayor strengthens his policy on basement developments to include more detailed investigations into the negative (accumulative) impacts of flooding. This response was submitted in March 2018.

Recommendations (v) to (x) are directed to the Council

Committee Recommendation (v)

That the Council hold a stock of 350 sandbags, on an individual borough basis, and also investigate the provision of sandbags with neighbouring boroughs

Response to Recommendation (v)

The Councils' Emergency Planning Team have taken responsibility for this and will work with the adjoining boroughs with whom we have a mutual aid agreement if incidents occur. A minimum stock of 350 sandbags is now available at the Councils' Vale Royal Depot.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (v)

A stock of 350 sandbags is in place at Vale Royal and will be deployed in line with the Council's Highways emergency activation

Committee Recommendation (w)

That the Council involve public utilities with other partners in emergency planning sessions, including Thames Water, and that any non-attendance is recorded and reported to senior management within their respective organisations. This would result in increased liaison and information could be better co-ordinated and disseminated

Response to Recommendation (w)

The Council invites public utilities to relevant emergency planning sessions and the Councils' Emergency Planning Team will ensure that any lack of attendance by utility companies at planning sessions is addressed through the relevant organisations at senior management level.

The Executive accepts this recommendation and Public Realm Highways Team will monitor.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (w)

A Pan-London exercise took place in 2018 with utilities which all London Borough's attended. Islington Emergency Planning will invite both Thames Water and TfL to an exercise due to take place in 2019.

Committee Recommendation (x)

That the Council compile a list of high rise blocks (over 6 metres) that will be vulnerable to loss of water in the event of a flooding situation. In addition, liaison should take place with Thames Water as to whether any situation of a reduction in water pressure is likely to impact on properties so that the Council can put in place contingency measures to supply water to residents

Response to Recommendation (x)

The Council's Housing Team will work with Thames Water to address this recommendation.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (x)

A request has been submitted to the Shared Digital project prioritisation system to develop a database or amend an existing database to store the required information. Once the database has been completed data can be gathered on the vulnerability of blocks. Currently this project is prioritised by Shared Digital and it is expected the work will be completed in two to two and half years. This would include data collection and database set up.

The current evidence suggest that vulnerability is linked to the location of any leak rather than the specific block. Any unit over four stories will be vulnerable to a drop in pressure and only a few blocks have boosted water systems.

Recommendations (y) to (aa) are directed to Ofwat (The Water Services Regulation Authority).

Committee Recommendation (y)

That Ofwat ensure that in any future strategy that is agreed for the Thames Water 5 year investment plan, they prioritise ageing pipe replacement on major trunk mains in Islington to be completed within 15 years, and installation of new technologies to ensure that the risk of major flooding from major trunk mains is reduced.

Response to Recommendation (y)

This recommendation is addressed in the Ofwat document "PR19 Delivering Water 2020: Our final methodology for the 2019 price review" (Appendix 3). However, this is not specifically focused on Islington and provides no definitive timelines.

The Executive accepts this recommendation and Public Realm Highways Team will monitor.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (y)

Under obligation of the Water Resources Act 1991 (WIA91) as amended, section 37 Part 1b: Thames Water is responsible "For maintaining, improving and extending the undertaker's water mains and other pipes". As an official regulator, Ofwat ensure this is adhered to as part of "business as usual".

Ofwat has also published a "methodology for the next price review (PR19)", which sets out their approach and criteria for assessing company business plans for 2020-25. (Appendix 3)

Committee Recommendation (z)

That Ofwat ensure that Thames Water has adequate policies in place, in order that they can respond effectively in emergency situations and that their compensation policies, as a result of flooding, are clearly set out and easily accessible and that Thames Water deal with claims for compensation speedily and sympathetically

Response to Recommendation (z)

This recommendation is addressed in Ofwat's methodology for PR19 "Delivering Water 2020: Our final methodology for the 2019 price review" (see Appendix 3)

In addition, Ofwat's "Resilience in the Round" document (Appendix 4) challenges companies to consider how they can work with local partners to understand the impact of service disruptions and interactions with other wider services.

Ofwat does not have a specific statutory role in enforcing water companies to comply with their obligations under the Water Industry Act 1991 or to provide compensation for damage from water mains bursts. Ofwat have, however, written to Thames Water to confirm that they remain committed to meeting and (as promised) going beyond their obligations to compensate customers affected by the trunk mains bursts, and will continue to push them to meet these.

The Executive notes that only part of the recommendation is accepted, and PR will monitor.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (z)

Public Realm officers have started to hold more regular meetings with Thames Water to discuss and monitor performance and service delivery.

Ofwat are unable to progress part of the recommendation as they are unable to enforce policies for water companies to provide claims for compensation.

Committee Recommendation (aa)

That Ofwat should be given power to set targets for the number of people inconvenienced by water mains bursts per year/and or five-year period, (corresponding to the funding cycle) and a statutory compensation scheme covering inconvenience to customers be introduced

Response to Recommendation (aa)

Ofwat does not have the statutory powers to set targets however price controls are included in performance targets for companies, in the form of outcomes So Ofwat's ongoing strategy is for companies to work with their respective customers to set outcomes and targets that customers are willing to pay for.

The Executive does not accept this recommendation.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (aa)

Further progress is not possible with the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee's recommendation (aa) as Ofwat does not have the statutory powers to set suggested targets. Ofwat unable to set targets or enforce statutory compensation scheme.

Recommendation (bb) is the addressed to the Police

Committee Recommendation (bb)

That the Police, where there are major incidents of flooding, provide a 'blue light' service to Thames Water emergency teams to enable them to reach the scene, as quickly as possible. Thames Water should ensure that emergency response teams are located in appropriate locations to enable this to be possible (see recommendation (a) above).

Response to Recommendation (bb)

The Emergency Planning team will work with the Police to explore this recommendation.

The Executive accepts this recommendation and Public Realm Highways Team will monitor.

12 Month Progress Update for Recommendation (bb)

The Police do not generally provide blue light escorts.

The Emergency Planning Team have discussed this with the Police and they have confirmed that they will not be able to guarantee this service as it will be dependent upon the circumstances and the resources available at the time.

5 Implications

5.1 Financial Implications

The majority of the recommendations in this report do not have direct financial implications for the Council as they are the responsibility of other organisations or can be managed by existing budgets within the Emergency Planning service. There may be future financial implications with regard to recommendation (x) and these will be quantified at the time of implementation.

5.2 Legal Implications:

There are no specific legal implications arising out of this report. Legal advice and support will be provided as necessary regarding the implementation of the recommendations.

5.3 Environmental Implications

The recommendations in this report will have no adverse environmental impact.

5.4 Resident Impact Assessment

The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The Council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The Council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

The recommendations that require the Council to act have been reviewed and no significant impacts on residents have been identified.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Thames Water Trunk Main Strategic Review, 2 October 2017

Appendix 2 - Thames Water booklet "Putting Things Right"

Appendix 3 – Ofwat PR19 Delivering Water 2020: Our final methodology for the 2019 price review"

Appendix 4 - Ofwat's "Resilience in the Round" document

Appendices are available from the Democratic Services Team on request.

Background Papers – none.

Signed by:

Corporate Director of Environment and Regeneration

Date

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