

**Committee: Environment**

**Date: 4 September 2007**

**Title: Flooding at Ashdon 14 June 2007**

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**Agenda Item**

**6**

Item for  
decision?

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### Summary

This report advises members of the flood event in Ashdon on 14 June 2007 and the proposal to undertake further investigations into alleviation measures.

### Recommendations

Members agree to vary the criteria for the use of the flood risk management fund to allow the council to procure hydraulic modelling of the River Bourne without obtaining matched funding.

### Background Papers

Ashdon Parish Council Flood Report

Notes of meeting at Ashdon Village Hall – 13 July 2007

### Impact

Communication/Consultation	Relevant officers have been consulted
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Finance	Budget exists
Human Rights	N/A
Legal implications	N/A
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	N/A
Workforce/Workplace	N/A

## Situation

- 1 Heavy rainfall during the 24 hours prior to the evening of Thursday 14 June 2007 caused flooding in Ashdon, Hempstead and Radwinter. Ashdon in particular was seriously affected with flood water entering fourteen properties to a depth exceeding one metre in some cases. Seven families were forced to leave their homes and all are still living in temporary accommodation.
- 2 There is a history of flooding in Ashdon with numerous recorded events in the past 20 years. The flooding is the result of the River Bourne overtopping its banks at a number of locations as it passes through the village. The Bourne is classed as an ordinary watercourse for which the District Council is the "operating authority", with powers under the Land Drainage Act:1991 to enforce maintenance by riparian owners and also to carry out works.
- 3 At a meeting of stakeholders held to review the event, a number of actions were identified to be carried out by riparian owners and the Parish Council in particular, but in order to achieve a holistic approach it was agreed that mathematical modelling of the watercourse would be the best way to progress matters. The survey would be similar to that carried out in 2002 on the Madgate Slade in Saffron Walden after the October 2001 flooding in the Bridge End area. It would enable the causes of flooding to be identified and predict the effectiveness of improvements to the watercourse.
- 4 The cost of the modelling and associated survey work is estimated to be in the region of £22,000 which could be funded from the council's flood risk management budget. The criteria for use of this fund require that the council's contribution is matched by other parties. In this instance the parish council are not in the position to contribute significantly and, while they have offered technical assistance, the Environment Agency have indicated they would not be able to offer financial support as their resources must be concentrated on main river issues. The council has in the past funded flood risk management projects independently, as indeed it did the Madgate Slade project. Members are requested to consider relaxing the criteria in this case. In the meantime officers will continue to investigate the possibility of financial assistance from other sources.

## Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
<b>Flooding to property</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Serious</b>	<b>Determine flood risk management measures</b>

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