

Report Title:	<b>Resident Scrutiny Suggestion – River Thames Scheme and flood relief in Wraysbury</b>
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Meeting and Date:	Place Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 14 November 2022
Responsible Officer(s):	Chris Joyce, Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability & Economic Growth Ben Crampin, Flood Risk Manager
Wards affected:	Datchet, Horton & Wraysbury

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

- The report outlines a suggested topic submitted by a resident for consideration by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Topics can be suggested by residents and then considered by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel for further consideration (criteria outlined in paragraph 1.1.) Residents are able to access the criteria on the [council's website](#).
- Details of the resident who has submitted this topic have been anonymised.
- The suggested topic received as follows: “A review should be carried out as to why, despite promises, nothing has been done to alleviate potential flooding in Wraysbury. Why has the River Thames Scheme not been funded by RBWM?”
- It is recommended that this topic is considered by the Place Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

### **1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Place Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the report and:

- Develops the scope for an alternative future item to scrutinise the Datchet to Hythe End Flood Improvement Programme being developed by the Environment Agency and the Council.**

### **2. CRITERIA OF ASSESSMENT FOR SUGGESTED TOPICS RECEIVED BY RESIDENTS**

2.1 Residents should only submit topics that relate to **a service, event or issue** which affects the social, environmental or economic wellbeing of a group or community of people in the Borough.

2.2 What makes a good scrutiny topic?

- **Scope** – is it an issue of concern to our local communities and other associated organisations?
- **Significance** – could a review of this issue improve the Council's (or other organisations) processes or performance and make a positive difference to the lives of our residents?
- **Appropriate** – is this review timely and does it avoid duplicating other work?

2.3 Items that will not be considered include:

- Individual service complaints for which there is a corporate complaints procedure (please click [here](#) for more details)
- Topics outside of the remit of the council or where the council has no powers or influence to change an outcome
- Issues which scrutiny has considered in the last 12 months
- Areas relating to quasi-judicial functions e.g. planning, licensing and standards

### 3. INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF SUGGESTED TOPIC

#### **Scope:**

- 3.1 The issue is a significant one for the local communities in Wraysbury, Horton, Datchet and Old Windsor which are at risk of fluvial flooding from the River Thames. The scheme mentioned, the River Thames Scheme (RTS), is a large-scale flood alleviation scheme with the aim of mitigating flood risk to thousands of homes from fluvial flooding from the River Thames. The decision was taken by the RTS Strategic Management Group that RBWM would be removed from the scheme as the commitment to borrow the full funding required, £50 million, could not be provided by the Council in July 2020.
- 3.2 RBWM has committed to £10 million being secured to fund flood alleviation in this reach of the River Thames. This decision was taken by the RTS Strategic Management Group because the downstream parts of the scheme (Channel 2 and 3) were fully funded and were ready to progress so it was felt that the scheme could not wait for RBWM to secure funding.
- 3.3 As of July 2020, the Channel section 1 scheme no longer exists with the Environment Agency so there is currently no scheme that could be re-joined should the money required be found. This is not to say that a scheme could not be re-initiated but this would require the money to be made available and the Environment Agency to agree to initiate a new Channel Section 1 scheme. This is one of the options being considered by the EA under the Datchet to Bells Weir Project.

#### **Significance:**

- 3.4 A review of this is unlikely/will not change council processes as the decision to withdraw from the original River Thames Scheme was based on the level of funding required not being achievable. As above, there is also no current scheme that could be re-joined meaning that even if the money was made

available a new scheme would need to be initiated with the Environment Agency to progress Channel Section 1.

**Appropriate:**

3.5 A review of this would duplicate responses previously put out by the Council on this subject by both officers and Members as well as the Environment Agency. Full information for the public can be found on this through a dedicated gov.uk webpage: [Datchet to Hythe End flood improvement measures - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/datchet-to-hythe-end-flood-improvement-measures)

**4. CORPORATE PRIORITY AREAS**

4.1 When assessing a topic it is important to understand whether this item would fall under one of the key objectives set out in the Corporate Plan 2021-2026, which has the overarching vision of ‘Creating a sustainable borough of opportunity and innovation’. It has been assessed that this topic would fall under the following objectives and priorities:

- **Inspiring Places:** Supporting the borough’s future prosperity and sustainability.
- Taking action to tackle climate change and its consequences and improving our natural environment.
- Invest in prevention and intervene early to address problems before they escalate.

**5. CONSULTATION**

<b>Name of consultee</b>	<b>Post held</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date returned</b>
Ben Crampin	Flood Risk Manager	16/08/22	06/09/22
James Thorpe	Service Lead – Sustainability & Climate	16/08/22	
Chris Joyce	Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability & Economic Growth	16/08/22	06/09/22
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place Services	16/08/22	
Councillor David Cannon	Cabinet Member for Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Public Protection	07/09/22	07/09/22

**REPORT HISTORY**

<b>Decision type:</b>	<b>Urgency item?</b>	<b>To follow item?</b>
For the Panel to consider if further scrutiny is required.	No	No

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