

## A MESSAGE RECEIVED FROM LINCS COUNTY COUNCIL ON 5<sup>TH</sup> JAN 2024 ABOUT FLOODING

This is an overview of the flood investigation process:

Section 19 of the Floods and Water Management Act ("the Act") imposes a duty on a Lead Local Flood Authority, in our case Lincolnshire County Council, to investigate (to the extent it considers necessary or appropriate)-

- 1) which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions; and
- 2) whether each of those risk management authorities has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood.

Whilst this is the legal requirement of an investigation, the investigation will also look into the causality of flooding alongside proposing recommendations for consideration by those relevant risk management authorities to enhance future resilience to flooding. Note that no risk management authority is duty-bound to implement the recommendations proposed; nevertheless, those risk management authorities named in any report often undertake those actions recommended.

The general process for completing a Section 19 report is as follows-

- 1) evidence gathering - by undertaking a site meeting(s) with those affected by flooding, contacting partner organisations etc.
- 2) review and analysis of evidence - to determine the mechanism of flooding and contributory factors, identification of relevant risk management authorities, and proposing of recommendations,
- 3) write-up of findings into a report, and
- 4) circulation of report findings - to both those affected and relevant risk management authorities. A redacted summary of investigations is also uploaded onto LCCs website. Please note that the master records have yet to be updated on the website and as such you will not currently be able to find the above reference number.

Although shown in a linear format above, the process is more cyclical in nature; however, the extent to which is dependent on the complexity and scope of each case.

As you will most likely be aware Storm Babet (alongside subsequent rainfall) has caused / is still causing widespread flooding issues not only across Lincolnshire but also the whole of the midlands region. Due to the extent of the flooding realised (and by virtue the number of Section 19 reports which need to be undertaken, (which currently sits at over 170)) we are currently working with our procurement department to engage suitably qualified third-party consultants to conduct these investigations on our behalf. This is to ensure that they can be completed in a timely manner. Subsequently, and at the time of writing, I am unable to provide any specific details with regards timescales; however, we are hopeful that investigations will commence in earnest by the end of January 2024, subject to the specific agreed details of the relevant contracts.