

<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>		
Title	Thames Water Strategic Review and Response to Scrutiny Recommendations	
Contributor	Executive Director for Resources and Regeneration (Overview and Scrutiny Manager)	Item 4
Class	Part 1 (open)	31 October 2017

## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with information on the Trunk Mains Strategic Review (Appendix A) carried out By Thames Water.
- 1.2 To ask the Committee to note the response from Thames Water to the joint recommendations arising from pan-London scrutiny on burst water mains (Appendix B).

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the content of this report.
2. Note the findings of the Strategic Review.
3. Consider the response to the joint recommendations arising from pan-London scrutiny of burst water mains and question Mark Mathews, Local and Regional Liaison Manager, Thames Water; and Tim McMahon, Head of Water Networks, Thames Water.

## **3. Thames Water incidents**

- 3.1 Eight major bursts occurred in London between October and December 2016. The bursts were significant both in terms of the number of people affected by the flooding caused, and the number of road closures necessary to repair the pipes.
- 3.2 In Lewisham there was a major burst on 26th November 2016 in Lee High Road. 52 properties were flooded and customers in the surrounding area were without water or experienced low pressure for a short period. In addition, a coach got stuck in the collapsed carriageway. The burst was from a 24" diameter pipe laid in 1900.
- 3.3 A further event on 10 December 2016 in Lee Road, Blackheath, flooded 10 businesses and 8 homes in Meadowcourt Road. This was a distribution main, not a trunk main, and the burst was caused by accidental contractor damage.

## **4. Reports**

- 4.1 Following these major bursts, Steve Robertson, Thames Water Chief Executive, commissioned an independent forensic analysis review. This was completed at the end of March 2017 and was made public on 25 April 2017. The report can be found here: [\[link\]](#)

<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/sitecore/content/Corporate/Corporate/About-us/Investing-in-our-network/Trunk-mains-review>

- 4.2 A strategic review of trunk mains was then carried out by Thames Water and published on 2 October 2017. This can be found at Appendix A. The report builds on the recommendations of the preceding independent forensic analysis review, led by Paul Cuttill. The strategic review makes 15 commitments, across five key areas: operating model; monitoring; asset information; risk management and event response. Thames Water has said it will deliver these commitments over the next 18 months.

## **5. Scrutiny of the incidents**

- 5.1 Four of the London boroughs affected by these bursts (Islington, Hackney, Lewisham and Lambeth) conducted scrutiny investigations into the incidents. The boroughs also agreed, following a meeting held at Lewisham on 3 February 2017, to pursue a coordinated approach to providing their findings to Thames Water, in consultation with the London Assembly Environment Committee, which also investigated these matters.
- 5.2 At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 11 July 2017, The Committee endorsed a series of joint recommendations. A response to these recommendations can be found at Appendix B. Mark Mathews, Local and Regional Liaison Manager and Tim McMahon, Head of Water Networks, from Thames Water are attending the meeting to present the response.

## **5 Financial implications**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report per se.
- 6.2 The engineering response to Thames Water incidents is generally directly managed so the cost to the Council should be limited to staff time managing the incident through to recovery and providing community assistance and accommodation etc. if required.
- 6.3 Highway costs for Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders etc. are recoverable. The number of Thames Water incidents, although the majority are small, still result in a significant workload in terms of Street Works co-ordination and noticing etc. and the cost of these works are also recoverable.
- 6.4 Individuals and the wider community may be adversely affected and incur costs as a result of more serious incidents also affecting insurers etc. Larger Thames Water incidents also impact on traffic movements leading to delays and congestion with associated lost output to individuals, the community and wider London with associated financial and economic implications.
- 6.5 Flooding incidents on the public highway can have a significant impact on the durability and lifecycle of both footways and carriageways. This can result in the need for earlier programmed maintenance and potentially also reactive works which have an ongoing cost to the Council in terms of both capital and revenue budgets.

## **6 Legal implications**

- 7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

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