

Brighton & Hove City Council

City Environment, South Downs & The Sea Committee

Agenda Item 16b

Subject: Deputations referred from Full Council

Date of meeting: 19 September 2023

Report of: Executive Director for Governance, People & Resources

Contact Officer: Name: John Peel
Tel: 01273 291058
Email: john.peel@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: All

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

1.1 To receive deputations presented at the public engagement meeting held on the 20 July 2023.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the committee responds to the petition either by noting it or where it is considered more appropriate, calls for an officer report on the matter.

3. Context and background information

3.1 To receive the following:

(1) Deputation concerning Flooding at Park Crescent

Over the last few years, flash floods have repeatedly affected Park Crescent resulting in serious flood damage, with major costs to residents. House numbers 48-39 are especially vulnerable when flood water flows down Elm Grove and across Lewes Road, sometimes combining with flood water from Union Road.

With sudden heavy rainfall, current drainage arrangements are clearly insufficient. Floods are most frequent in the Autumn, but in June 2023 a major flood took place, when leaf fall was not preventing drainage. Widely shared dramatic videos of water flowing down Elm Grove and the floods in Park Crescent are available to illustrate the problem.

Residents have taken various measures to mitigate the impacts of flooding. These include: i) installing flood prevention barriers at pavement level; ii) formation of an early warning WhatsApp group; and iii) residents have purchased equipment to assist with opening storm drains and manhole covers to increase drainage. However, these are insufficient given the increasing severity of floods.

A number of factors have exacerbated the situation in recent years. These include:

- The removal of a barrier in Lewes Road during the road junction redesign in 2017, which means that water now flows from Elm Grove without getting diverted south towards the Level. This means that the full volume of water flows towards the houses in Park Crescent, with devastating consequences.
- Drains in the whole catchment area, and most notably around Park Crescent/Union Road/Lewes Road, fail to remove excess water as they become blocked with leaves during Autumn, but also are clearly insufficient given that flooding now occurs outside the high-risk season.
- The moving of car parking to the other side of the road in Park Crescent has meant that sometimes cars are parked over drain covers, reducing drainage and making leaf clearance challenging.
- We recommend that the Council undertakes a flood mitigation review for the area to explore different options to improve drainage. This should draw on wider expertise on flood management that may result in new solutions for the longer-term. More immediately, we propose the following urgent actions to complement residents' efforts:
 - Reinstating a barrier in Lewes Road to allow the water flow to be disrupted and at least be partially diverted towards the Level, with the water flow slowed and dispersed.
 - Increasing the number of storm drains along Elm Grove, Union Road, Lewes Road and Park Crescent to remove excess water into the mains drainage system.
 - Annual cleaning of the drainage system, including removing roots and other blockages to increase drainage efficiency.
 - Increasing the frequency and effectiveness of leaf clearing operations in the area from early October onwards.

Given that climate change is likely to continue to increase the likelihood of flooding, we believe that there is a need for a major review of flood management and drainage for this area of the city. This deputation requests that the Council urgently takes action across the areas outlined above. We believe that this provides an opportunity for the Council to pioneer an innovative response to climate change-induced flood impacts in Brighton, with this area as an important pilot.

Signed by:

Jamie Graham
 Tim Fleming
 Susan Garlick
 Ian Scoones
 Victoria Taylor/Al Taylor
 Adrienne Bloch
 Henrietta Dombey

Supporting information:

Images of the flooding June 2023 – more images and videos can be viewed [here](#)



