

Penny Thompson – Chief Executive
Brighton & Hove City Council
Grand Avenue
Hove

26th August 2014

Dear Penny,

Blocked Drains and Gullies

Please could this letter be placed on the agenda of Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee for its meeting on 7th October.

The storms and rainfall of 28th July were unquestionably exceptional weather events. However I was disappointed that the leader of the council was so quick in denying that the subsequent floods in Portslade were caused by several gullies and drains being blocked.

I had been looking into the issue of blocked drains and gullies across South Portslade for a number of my ward residents in the weeks leading up to the storm. An email I received from an officer contained a report showing that in Sharpthorne Crescent Portslade, which flooded at number 35, of 6 drains in the Crescent, 4 were 75% blocked and 2 were 100% blocked. Elm Road had a similar report as did Lincoln Road and the Old Village all of which flooded. In the case of Sharpthorne Crescent this report was made in mid-June, a month before the heavy rain caused so many problems.

All these drain and gullies have since been cleared. My questions to the Chair of the Committee are:

- if the council knew some drains were 100% blocked why were they not cleared?
- If some drains were 75% blocked at what point would the council consider it necessary to unblock these drains and how long?
- If it had not rained so heavily would these drains have remained blocked?

Given the likelihood of heavy rainfall and storms over the winter period, could the Chair of the Committee also update members on the decision making process used to determine what drains and gullies are cleared by Council Staff.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Alan Robins
Labour Transport Spokesperson