

# Working collaboratively to manage flood risk in Maghull

## A statement of intent from Sefton Council, United Utilities & Environment Agency

### Context

Maghull has a history of suffering from flooding and in the last 10 years this has occurred from rivers, surface waters and sewers, or more commonly a combination of these.

All three organisations have sought to manage this risk through a range of means including routine maintenance; capital investments; improvements to warning and informing and planning control.

Previous work to assess the opportunity to deliver capital investments to reduce this risk have struggled to develop business cases that are deliverable within current government and organisational funding.

On Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021 Maghull experienced prolonged heavy rain that resulted in a small number of properties being flooded from a range of sources. More significantly though the Environment Agency had to issue severe flood warnings for flooding from Whinny Brook and Dover's Brook. It was feared that approx. 400 properties would be flooded. The Council declared a Major Incident and prepared for the evacuation of these homes. Fortunately, the flooding did not happen as forecast.

This was the stark demonstration of the risk that the town faces and hence the importance of all our organisations now focusing on what we can deliver individually and collectively to reduce this risk.

We will share understanding and will agree the flooding mechanisms with the community to ensure we are all in agreement. All three organisations strongly believe that working in partnership is essential to help communities and this is the approach we have been taking. This is, of course, in line with the expectations of the new FCERM strategy for England. Residents and businesses in Maghull rightly expect that we have the highest quality relationships between us.

We have all reflected on our work together in recent times in Maghull and feel despite everyone's best efforts we have yet to find the deliverable improvements that make a significant difference for the

community. We know that all of us want to achieve the best for Maghull and that it has been frustrating for us all that we haven't been able to deliver improvements.

## Next Steps

We now want you to come together with any other specialist relevant help to quickly take stock and identify all possible actions – large or small, and to identify those that are deliverable and how.

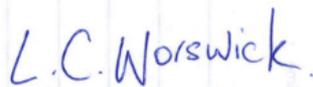
To achieve the best we can for flood risk management we need the best working relationships at all levels; we need to have a strong common understanding and that we are working collaboratively together.

We will convene regularly to take stock; provide direction and to help ensure we deliver collectively.

A working party is being established by Sefton Council and will be chaired by the Deputy Leader of the Council, Cllr John Fairclough and membership will include Cllr Patrick McKinley, Leader of Maghull Town Council and Sefton's representative on the Merseyside Strategic Flood Committee, as well as other Cabinet members. Representatives from United Utilities and the Environment Agency, along with Sefton Council officers will also sit on the group. This group will drive investment into flood risk management in Sefton. Whilst the near miss in Maghull has focussed everybody's attentions, the fact is that 1 in 7 properties are at risk of flooding in Sefton and it is a widespread issue across the borough. Many communities are at risk and investment and delivery of solutions is needed by all.



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