

Geoff Raw – Chief Executive
Brighton & Hove City Council

22nd September 2019

Dear Geoff

We are submitting this letter under Council Procedure Rule 23.3 to be included on the agenda for the Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee meeting of 8th October 2019.

We fully support the deputation requests submitted by residents regarding flooding issues in Warmdene Road and hope that the Council will provide full answers to the questions raised.

Whilst gratefully recognising officers have allocated circa £250,000 to provide protection to several properties in Patcham and Hollingbury that have previously flooded, this is just the “sticking plaster”. Southern Water have been investigating the issues since at least 2006. We hope those 13 years have been well spent and they are now ready to deliver a permanent solution that is long overdue and necessary.

In the meantime, there are three things that can and should be done: -

1. Southern Water and the Council should without delay, agree a protocol such that residents do not have to chase around and be pushed between pillar and post to get sewage cleaned from their homes, gardens and the street. With every flood comes sewage discharge. This public health risk should not result in Southern Water and the Council arguing about who should go and clean up. Residents should not have to wait. Residents need one contact that will organise the necessary response. If the Council and Southern Water have to contra-charge each other later then so be it but sewage being left on the streets for days on end should not be allowed to happen.
2. There appears to be a constant debate about the cleaning of soakaways. Residents say it isn't happening and the Council say it has. Residents anticipate that in this flooding hot spot, cleaning will be a priority. It also seems that what cleaning is done, doesn't appear to coincide with the almost predictable periods when flooding will occur. We have seen flash flooding in June, July and August and in the Autumn, we will see gullies blocked with leaves and other detritus. It would seem reasonable until a permanent solution is found to mitigate the impact of flooding that the gullies and soakaways are cleaned in May and October or thereabouts.
3. There has been discussion about how Patcham High School's playing fields might be utilised to disperse flood water and how the proposed development might adversely impact flooding in the area. Whilst flood water is contaminated with sewage it

should not be dispersed anywhere and in any respect, the solution should be for Southern Water to deal with and not the school. However, we would request that the Council's flood risk management team are fully engaged with the design for the school's development so that residents can be assured that their circumstances are not made any worse and where possible, improved by the development.

We would be grateful therefore if this Committee would act on the request in the deputation and this letter.

Yours sincerely

Cllrs. Lee Wares, Carol Theobald and Alistair McNair