

## Not Protectively Marked

### Regional Flood and Coastal Committee meeting

Meeting date: 9 October 2012

Item Number: 9

**Paper by: Director of Flood and Coastal Risk Management**

**Subject: October flood action campaign**

#### Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the Environment Agency's planned flood action campaign is starting next week (15 October 2012).

#### 1.0 Introduction

The Environment Agency's work on local flood resilience continues to be successful in promoting and encouraging community-based action on flooding at a local level. However, our most recent flood risk market research report tells us that it has had a less obvious effect on general awareness of flooding..

The same research recommends that our broader 'nationwide' communication initiatives need to be maintained in order to have a continued effect on general public awareness of flooding and to encourage a broad acceptance of the issue and increased likelihood of people at risk taking action in the event of a flood. The research demonstrates that our communications need to scale up to have the necessary reach to achieve this.

Our flood communications campaign in October will support our current engagement approach with some low cost activity to help increase awareness of flood risk over the winter months.

#### 2.0 October flood action campaign plan

2.1 The Environment Agency FCRM and communications teams are planning a sustained communications campaign for four weeks starting w/c 15 October. Each week represents one of our key flood risk messages:

- Damage and safety
- Risk and warnings
- Resistance and resilience
- Community preparedness

2.2 FCRM and Communications staff across national and local teams at the Environment Agency will work together to deliver a range of communications activity across all our key channels during this period. Activity includes:

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- **Digital / social media** – homepage takeover, launch and promotion of our new ‘before, during and after a flood’ videos, animated demonstration of how to prepare your property for flooding.
- **Media** – 30 floods in 30 months feature, ‘drop by drop’ damage article, real life case studies of flood victims for lifestyle magazines.
- **Marketing** – digital ads across Facebook, Sky and other national news sites. Posters and advertising in local community locations. Contacting existing FWD customers via telephone, text and email to promote key resistance and resilience actions.
- **Partnerships** – possible link up with B&Q to promote flood preparedness and resilient homes.
- **Internal** – posters around our offices encouraging involvement of staff, message from Chairman and Chief Executive supporting the campaign, lunch and learn sessions.

2.3 Timings – from beginning w/c 15 October 2012 until end of w/c 05 November 2012

### 3.0 Local communications plan

3.1 In the Midlands we will be focusing mainly on the urban areas of Gloucester, Leamington, Coventry, Leicester and also south and east Derbyshire (around the city).

Working with partners we will encourage people to prepare for the risk of flooding and take action themselves to lessen those risks.

### 4.0 Measuring success

- 4.1 We plan to measure the success of our communications in the following ways:
- 20% more people access our flood risk information than in October 2011.
  - 47% people agree that their area is at risk from flooding (5% increase compared to 2011/12).
  - 63% people have taken at least one of the Environment Agency key actions to prepare for flooding (5% increase compared to 2011/12).
  - 1-2 national partnerships are trialled.

### 5.0 Implications for Wales

5.1 Environment Agency Wales runs its own successful ‘Flood Awareness Wales’ communications programme so are not planning to participate in the campaign.

We will be sharing all our planned activity and communications materials with the Wales communications team to use as required

### 6.0 Conclusions and recommendations

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- 6.1 The Committee is asked to note the Environment Agency's planned flood action campaign starting 15 October 2012.

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September 2012