1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1. To seek committee’s views on whether to revisit the above scheme to investigate any developments and identify any new funding opportunities since the scheme was last put forward for discussion in 2004.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Approximately 6 – 8 properties at the above location are prone to internal flooding during heavy rainfall. The Council has previously designed a flood alleviation scheme, which was never implemented due to insufficient sources of funding. Previous committee reports and resolutions are attached as follows:

Appendix 1 – Report to Cabinet of 12th July 2004
Appendix 2 – Record of Decision of Cabinet 12th July 2004
Appendix 3 – Call in of Cabinet Decision to E & E Committee of 21st July 2004 including the resolution on this item

2.2. Also attached at Appendix 4 is the current Flood Alleviation Policy adopted in Nov 2005.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

Current Policy

3.1. In summary, the key points of the resolution of the Cabinet at the time, and as affirmed by the E & E Committee, were as follows:

- That, via Kings Sutton Parish Council, agreement should be sought from affected property owners that they will contribute towards the cost of any scheme;
- That, subject to the above assurance from residents about contributions and DEFRA grant subsidy being forthcoming, SNC would contribute £10,000 towards the cost of undertaking the Project Appraisal;
- That the Council would accept no responsibility for any ongoing maintenance costs.

3.2 Unfortunately, there was no commitment from residents to contribute towards the proposed scheme and the question of ongoing maintenance also remained unresolved. At present, there is nothing to indicate that there is any change in position of any party to that which existed as outlined in para 3.1 above.

3.3 In adopting the revised Flood Alleviation Policy in November 2005, the Council fully outlined its position with respect to the funding of new or improved flood defences within section 5 of the policy as attached at Appendix 4. The full list of considerations in this respect is included in paragraph 5.6 of the Policy and this again reaffirms in general terms the stipulations outlined in 3.1 above.

**Reasons for Reconsidering the Flood Alleviation Scheme**

3.4 In July 2007, at least 5 properties in Windsor Close were again flooded internally, which has prompted the residents and the Parish Council to request that the Council look into the implications of resurrecting the scheme. This would involve updating the process relating to obtaining grant aid, identifying any new sources of funding and reconsidering the possible options for flood alleviation. It has also been requested that officers of the Council attend an open meeting organised by the Parish Council to report on the Council’s position in respect of this matter.

3.5 It may be that there have been changes in the level of grant aid available or other changes that may make this scheme more viable. For example, there may be other sources of funding available or newly developed methods of flood protection that may assist in relieving the flooding.

3.6 In researching for this report, changes have already come to light concerning the grant process. Apart from coastal flood defence schemes, this is now managed by the Environment Agency as opposed to DEFRA.

3.7 Grant aid is also available ‘up front’ to undertake feasibility studies, as opposed to being applied retrospectively on approval of the grant application. This is of benefit in the case of this project in that it may be possible to obtain grant aid to fund, or partially fund a completely fresh look at this area and possibly determine an innovative method of providing flood relief for the effected properties.

3.8 It would be necessary to report back on this once such feasibility work had been completed. This report would include details of proposed options with costings and information on potential funding sources including amounts.

4. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Taking the project up to feasibility stage can be undertaken by internal resources and within existing budgets. However, the implications of this will be to cause delay to certain other projects. The most relevant of these is the project to produce a prioritised overview of potential flooding areas across the district. To date other demands on time have meant that progress on this has been minimal.
4.2 Although there is no particular programme for completing this prioritisation project, it was hoped to produce a report on this by August 2008. Should the Committee decide to go ahead with the Kings Sutton feasibility project, this effect would be to delay this report until November 2008.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Committee’s views are sought on whether the flood alleviation scheme for Windsor Close and Hampton Drive, Kings Sutton should be reconsidered and taken up to feasibility stage.

Head of Property & Direct Services
February 2008

Contact Officer: Tom Livingstone (ext 2353)
Background Papers: