

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**7 NOVEMBER 2024**

**BRECHIN RECOVERY AND REGENERATION UPDATE**

**REPORT BY SHARON FAULKNER, DIRECTOR OF HR, OD, DIGITAL ENABLEMENT, IT & BUSINESS SUPPORT**

**1. ABSTRACT**

This report sets out the current position and the assessment of the events and impact of flood damage caused by Storm Babet in the Brechin River Street Area (BRSA), detailing the work and studies undertaken by the Council since then and an overview of additional work required. The report also sets out the proposed approach and timescales for decision-making for the recovery and regeneration work and seeks approval to work alongside the wider community as well as those directly affected within the Brechin River Street Area to inform future recommendations to members on a long-term recovery plan and identified actions.

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES**

The content of this report relates to the following Council priorities

Caring for our People

- Provide the best start in life for children
- Create more opportunities for people to live well and achieve their personal goals
- Improve physical, mental health and wellbeing

Caring for our Place

- Protect and enhance our natural and built environment
- Enable inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe communities across Angus
- Make our local services accessible
- Improve connectivity in and around Angus

**3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Council:

- i. Notes the activity undertaken to date, the update provided in relation to the two specialist technical reports now available and proposed information sessions with the community;
- ii. Notes that further work is underway to develop final proposals for members' determination as set out in section 9.3;
- iii. Notes that the Director of HR, OD, Digital Enablement, IT & Business Support will bring a further report to a meeting of the Communities Committee on 26 November 2024 to set out the next stage of work to develop the shortlist of options, proposed governance arrangements and approach to engagement with the community that will inform the recommendations as to the preferred options in relation to flood protection, mitigation and the BRSA.

**4 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Storm Babet impacted Scotland between Wednesday 18 and Saturday 21 October 2023, causing widespread and devastating damage and flooding throughout Angus. The Met Office issued two red warnings for rain with exceptional rainfall to parts of eastern Angus, especially Brechin with 150 to 200mm falling in the wettest areas. Thursday 19 October was, by a

considerable margin, the wettest day in Angus on record (records dating back to 1891), following an exceptionally wet August and September.

- 4.2 Due to the unprecedented rainfall and the scale of the water flow in the River South Esk, Brechin's Flood Protection Scheme (FPS) defences were overtopped in the early hours of 20 October 2024. It is estimated that the flow rate of the river reached 30% above the FPS design capacity with river levels rising to around 4.6m. Analysis indicates that the defences were overtopped when the water depth reached approximately 3.7m.
- 4.3 In addition to rain, two Met Office Amber warnings for wind were also issued for a sustained period. This caused power outages and other significant structural damage across Angus.
- 4.4 Of the approximately 350 homes within the Brechin River Street Area (BRSA), over 138 residential properties suffered significant flood damage. This included 58 council-owned properties, 23 Registered Social Landlord (RSL) properties, 14 private rented sector properties and 43 privately owned homes. Up to 40 businesses or employment related premises were significantly damaged, as was the caravan park in the area, with many static caravans irreparably damaged. Many of the homes impacted have since been repaired and re-occupied, however, many others remain damaged and empty. This includes 58 council-owned properties which remain empty, the tenants who previously lived in these properties having been rehoused elsewhere.
- 4.5 For the purposes of the Housing report commissioned to Arneil Johnston as detailed in Section 8 of this report, the BRSA is defined as a more modest geographical area within the wider River Street area. The BRSA are zones containing flood damaged Council housing stock. For clarity the BRSA includes Council properties located on River Street, Nursery Lane, Nursery Park and Meikle Mill.
- 4.6 Several bridges were badly damaged, including Brechin Bridge and Bridge of Dun, which partially collapsed. The 240-year-old bridge remains closed while it undergoes major investigation, preservation and reconstruction works and will remain closed until at least Spring/Summer 2025.
- 4.7 While Brechin was a focus of activity due to the extreme flooding, other areas of Angus were also severely affected including Tannadice, Finavon, Monifieth and Montrose where Trail Drive had large sections washed away, preventing access to the Coast Guard station.
- 4.8 It should also be noted that Storm Babet was the first of nine storms of the 24/25 season and Angus was additionally impacted by Storms Ciaran, Gerrit, Isha and Jocelyn which placed further demands on the same council services.
- 4.9 The flood recovery process for Brechin, and the BRSA, started in the immediate aftermath of the flood event with identification and provision of emergency accommodation, clean-up support and the council allocating additional funds, workforce and resources into efforts to assist affected residents and businesses. Various actions and services, such as advice drop-in sessions, insurance reclaim support and mental health support, were made available to residents. The council also distributed support funding received from Scottish Government and contacted businesses to aid where possible, including meeting some clean-up and damage removal costs and offering temporary alternative premises for affected businesses while recovery and repair was ongoing. Housing Associations with properties in the area initiated repairs and private homeowners, through their insurance companies, commenced repairs as soon as claims were approved. Given the comparatively poor pre-flood performance of the BRSA housing stock, Angus Council, initiated a comprehensive options appraisal to inform decisions on the future of the stock
- 4.10 A further key step in the longer-term flood recovery process was to determine the technical specifics of what happened during the Storm Babet flood event, to identify any key learning from the disaster that may inform protection or resilience measures for any future flood events, as well as to inform decisions on the various recovery options available for the area.

## 5. RESPONSE

- 5.1 The initial response during the storm involved the local resilience partnership including council staff across a range of services, ANGUSalive, AHSCP, emergency services, partner, and voluntary organisations. Rest centres were rapidly established at Brechin and Forfar Community Campuses as well as Montrose Sports Centre. Various actions and services were established including a drop-in service which provided support, advice, and guidance on housing services, welfare payments, insurance reclaim as well as mental health support to residents. Officers contacted affected businesses to assist, including meeting some clean-up and damage removal costs and offering temporary alternative premises for affected businesses while recovery and repair was ongoing.
- 5.2 The community of Brechin and indeed Angus also came forward with support for affected people, including dry clothing, bedding, food, and over 100 offers of emergency accommodation were received. Community groups and organisations, including many local businesses, contributed goods and services to support those impacted.
- 5.3 In the year following Storm Babet, council officers have continued to provide individual support to a number of residents in relation to a wide range of emotional and practical challenges they continue to experience. The drop-in service established at The Crickety in Brechin continues to be available to all those impacted and makes available support, advice or simply a place to chat with fellow residents. In total, 575 residents have accessed direct support through the drop-in service, or through partner agencies. 2,039 residents were supported through the emergency centre for urgent support during the storm.
- 5.4 As well as the practical and emotional support described above, the council also distributed financial support from both its own funds as well as acting as a conduit to distribute funds made available by Scottish Government. A summary of payments made is detailed in table 1 below.

Type of Grant	Number of Grants	Total
Community Recovery Grant (£1500 per affected household)	201	£301,500
Business Recovery Grant (£3000)	40	£120,000
Scottish Welfare Fund	88	£50,000

- Angus Council received an additional £100,000 homelessness funding from the Scottish Government, of which £50,151 was used to fit carpeting and flooring in 49 properties enabling householders to settle more quickly into their homes and in time for Christmas.
- The remaining amount was directed to support Crisis Grant and Welfare Fund applications for those residents impacted by the flooding. 56 crisis grants were provided (totalling £8,000) to assist with household bills and 32 community care grants (totalling £16,594). The remainder is available for future support needs of those who remain in temporary accommodation.
- The Angus Welfare Rights Service provided direct support to 72 households, distributing £6,148 from Angus Council's LACER discretionary fund, providing emergency food/clothing and other personal items where other statutory support was not possible.
- 27 bus passes were issued through the LACER bus pass initiative.
- LACER Business Grants were set up within two weeks of the storm to support impacted businesses. In total, 24 awards of £1,000 have been made along with one award in excess of £10,000.
- Private donations totalling more than £5,000 were made by individuals, churches and other groups and organisations. These funds are separate to the donations made to the 'Gofundme' that has been facilitated by the Brechin Buccaneers.

## 6. CURRENT POSITION

- 6.1 As well as continuing to offer individualised support and initiating cleanup activities and critical infrastructure repairs, given the type and scale of storm Babet's impact in the BRSA in particular, two specialist reports were commissioned. One report relates to broader matters of flood prevention and mitigation in the BRSA and the other analysed options relating to the Council's impacted housing stock. These reports will inform protection or resilience measures for any future flood events, as well as help inform decisions on the various recovery options available for the area.
- 6.2 A report titled 'Brechin Post Flood Options Appraisal' (hereby referred to as the Flood Protection Options Appraisal), was commissioned in February 2024 from JBA Consulting, a leading international environmental and engineering consultancy. JBA Consulting brought significant knowledge and understanding of flood risk in Brechin, and on this part of the River South Esk, having supported previous studies and research on the river and the Brechin Flood Protection Scheme ('FPS').
- 6.3 The key aims of this Flood Protection Options Appraisal were to assess the condition of the FPS; to use hydrological modelling to estimate the flow rate of the River South Esk through Brechin during Storm Babet; to determine the current level of protection provided by the FPS taking account of updated rainfall data and flooding events; and to identify and provide a cost benefit analysis on a range of engineering-focused options to enhance flood protection.
- 6.4 The [Flood Protection Options Appraisal technical report](#) is now complete and highlights several considerations for the council, which are summarised below. In the interest of transparency, the full technical report will be made available at the same time as this report to Council.
- 6.5 A second report, entitled 'Option Appraisal Outcome for Brechin River Street Area (BRSA) Council Housing Stock' (hereby referred to as the AC BRSA Housing Options Report) was commissioned in March 2024. Arneil Johnston Consulting is a specialist public sector housing consultancy with significant experience in appraising public sector housing performance and conducting economic appraisals and cost benefit assessments. They were appointed under a competitive tender process and commissioned to consider the council-owned housing stock in the BRSA and to seek to explore the best value approach for both tenants and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
- 6.6 This analysis is required to support the council in meeting its direct statutory housing provision duties and wider duties to maintain a strategic overview of housing across Angus, consider current and future housing requirements, risks and issues and financial challenges, all with due regard for community perspectives.
- 6.7 The purpose of this options appraisal was to provide evidence to inform plans for the future of council-owned stock within the BRSA with consideration given to the following options:
- Reinstatement - return all damaged council properties in the BRSA to their original state;
  - Remodelling – full or part demolition of council properties and construction of new homes in a remodelled arrangement stock within the BRSA; and
  - Relocation – demolition of directly impacted council properties and all current occupants relocated to new homes to be built by the council elsewhere in Brechin.
- 6.8 In addition to robust financial and investment assessments of the three identified options, the AC BRSA Housing Options Report considered the social impact of the future investment options and conducted a stakeholder and community engagement process.
- 6.9 The [AC BRSA Housing Options Report](#) is now complete. Its considerations and recommendations are summarised below. The full report will be published along with the Flood Protection Options Appraisal at the same time as this report to Council.

## 7. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS - Flood Protection Options Appraisal

- 7.1 Confirming early surveys undertaken in the immediate aftermath of Storm Babet by council engineers, the Flood Protection Options Appraisal report states that the current FPS remains fully operational against flows of up to 335 m<sup>3</sup>/s (cubic meters per second). This is the same level of protection that the FPS was designed (in 2011) to provide. At that time, this equated to a 1 in 200-year event level of protection.
- 7.2 The hydrological modelling, carried out in consultation with SEPA, has concluded that the peak flow of the River South Esk through Brechin during Storm Babet was around 434 m<sup>3</sup>/s. The figure is an estimate because the gauge at the Brechin monitoring station was overwhelmed by flooding. For historical context, the water flow of the River South Esk reached an estimated 300 m<sup>3</sup>/s in the 1852 flood event, with the next highest being 270 m<sup>3</sup>/s in 1912. This record was exceeded in 2022 at an estimated 322 m<sup>3</sup>/s, when the FPS protected the BRSA area from extensive flooding.
- 7.3 The standard of protection for any FPS is periodically reassessed and updated based on new data from recent flood events. The Flood Protection Options Appraisal has concluded that due to changes in the level of flooding being experienced, evidenced through recent years' data, the Brechin Flood Protection Scheme now provides a 1 in 50-year level of protection. The 2011 rating was based on an assessment of the conditions and data available then and was an accurate reflection of the assessed flood risk. At that time, there was no requirement for schemes to include an allowance for climate change, as there is now. However, as climate change projections continue to suggest increasing storm intensity, it is anticipated that the level of protection may reduce further in future years.
- 7.4 The Flood Protection Options Appraisal assessed nine short-listed options in detail. These were:
- construction of a new FPS
  - increasing the height of defences of the existing FPS
  - lowering adjacent land to form a new floodplain
  - consideration of the benefit of demountable defences
  - lowering of the gravel bar in the River South Esk (to the approximate water level).
  - the remainder of the options considered various combinations of the options listed above.
- 7.5 The appraisal process also considered, and discounted other options including:
- The potential for a large flood water storage area further up the catchment (similar to the solution used at a smaller scale for Arbroath's flood protection scheme). This was discounted because the area required for flood attenuation would be too vast with land acquisition and development costs unaffordable and the costs assessed as significantly outstripping economic benefits.
  - Dredging the section of River South Esk in the BRSA area, removing significant amounts of gravel and sediment from the riverbed. This was discounted as evidence shows this has minimal lasting effect on water levels of larger rivers and the natural dynamics of the river would quickly replace any material removed, necessitating continual and costly maintenance with minimal impact on long-term water levels. Moreover, the disruption caused by dredging would severely affect the river's ecology.
  - Creating a secondary river channel. This was discounted as it would involve significant cost and disruption to both the local community and ecology and would not deliver significant flood protection benefits at high flows.
  - Replacing Brechin Bridge with a single span bridge. This was discounted as it would deliver modest improvement against flood risk, it would be very costly, and it is acknowledged that Brechin Bridge is of historic significance.
- 7.6 The Flood Protection Options Appraisal found that from a technical perspective, five of the short-listed options have the potential to deliver a positive cost benefit ratio as follows:
- To raise the height of the full extent of the existing Brechin FPS by 0.5m which would increase protection to 423 m<sup>3</sup>/s water flow (1 in 124 years flood event), with an estimated cost currently of £2,070,000
  - To purchase and use demountable defences as an interim measure which would increase protection to a 354 m<sup>3</sup>/s flow (1 in 62 years) and estimated cost of £401,000

- To lower the BRSA part of the gravel bar to water level which would increase protection to a 356 m<sup>3</sup>/s flow (1 in 64 years) and estimated cost of £959,000
- To uplift the FPS by 0.5m and lower the gravel bar which would increase protection to a 460 m<sup>3</sup>/s flow (1 in 172 years) and estimated cost of £2,953,000
- To only uplift part of the defences at the Inch alongside the lowering of the gravel bar which would increase protection to a 384 m<sup>3</sup>/s flow (1 in 90 years) and estimated cost of £1,923,000

7.7 The option to replace the existing FPS with a new and larger FPS was not proposed due to the excessive cost. From a technical perspective, a new FPS could be designed to reach protection to a 479 m<sup>3</sup>/s water flow (estimated currently as a 1 in 200-year standard of protection), however, the cost of such a development is estimated at approximately £34.2m (at current values). Time for design, planning and construction would see this figure increase. This does not offer a positive cost benefit, as the improvement in protection is modest compared to the excessive cost.

7.8 The preferred action proposed by the Flood Protection Options Appraisal recommends the combined option to raise the FPS by 0.5m and lower the gravel bar for further design and analysis work. This would bring protection against a water flow of 460 m<sup>3</sup>/s, representing a current standard of protection for a 1 in 172-year event. This level of protection would prevent flood damage against an event mirroring the severity of Storm Babet. The current cost for this option is estimated to be £2,953,000 with the ability to avoid potential damages of c. £4,897,000.

7.9 It is important to note that the cost benefit analyses for all options are based on the existing number of properties within the BRSA, as the calculation is partially based on the value of damages avoided. If fewer properties are occupied, the value of the damaged area decreases.

7.10 It should also be noted that the estimated standard of protection of the preferred action (i.e. a 1 in 172-year event) reflects the current climate conditions and analysis of flood data to date. Predictions by SEPA show an anticipated increase in peak river flow, peak rainfall intensity and sea level rise caused by future climate change. Such increases would further reduce the assessed standards of protection of any FPS going forward.

7.11 Overall, the appraisal recommends that the council further examines and considers the following actions:

- Maintenance of existing scheme and updating of emergency plan.
- Raising the level of the current defences and lowering the gravel bar.
- Consideration of the deployment of demountable defences in the interim.
- Development of a long-term adaptive plan.

## **8. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS - Housing Options Appraisal**

8.1 The Angus Council BRSA Housing Options Report was prepared to assist the council's Housing Service in appraising its approach towards the Angus Council's properties it owns within the BRSA.

8.2 There are at present 70 Council-owned, unoccupied, properties within the BRSA, 58 due to flooding impact and 12 considered void. There are currently 65 occupied Council properties within the BRSA, meaning total Council stock amounts to 135 units. The ongoing position of vacant stock impacts rental revenues, as well as the local housing system where people have reduced housing choice and opportunities to move.

8.3 The Angus Council BRSA Housing Options Report has examined in detail, and undertaken cost benefit analysis on, the following three housing options:

- Option 1 – Reinstatement. Full reinstatement of Angus Council housing stock in the BRSA, meaning 58 ground floor properties that were flooded come back into use.
- Option 2 – Remodelling. Would require the demolition of a proportion of the current Angus Council housing properties (118 properties – this comprises of properties that were directly impacted by the flood, along with adjoining upper floor properties) and associated privately owned properties (27 properties) that are located within or adjacent to Council stock, followed by the construction of new homes in a remodelled arrangement within the BRSA.

The technical and legal options available to the Council for progressing this option would require to be comprehensively considered but may include voluntary acquisitions or potentially Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO). The assessed option envisaged the building of 77 new properties in the BRSA in a remodelled arrangement. The allocation of 77 units is based on the site's estimated capacity. It is proposed such properties would be on a raised platform matching the height of properties that did not suffer flood damage in Storm Babet, with fewer properties close to the river.

- Option 3 – Relocation. This would also require demolition of a proportion of the current Angus Council properties (118 properties, as Option 2) with remaining tenants relocated to new homes built by the council elsewhere in Brechin. This option would require the demolition of 21 privately owned properties. The volume of privately owned properties is less than that outlined in Option 2 (27) because of a block of properties located on River Street where there are 7 properties in total, but only 1 is owned by the Council. The Council may explore the potential to demolish or relinquish ownership of the single gable-end unit. If this were to be the preferred option, the Council would need to acquire any private properties that required to be demolished. As noted at option 2 above, the options available to the Council for acquiring properties would require to be comprehensively considered but may include voluntary acquisitions or potentially Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO). The assessed option envisaged the provision of 65 new build Council properties units elsewhere, aligned to the number of displaced households.

- 8.4 These indicative options were selected to enable a reasonable comparative assessment to be undertaken. Further to community engagement, and wider technical, financial and strategic considerations, the specific proposals in relation to the extent of refurbishment or scale of remodelled or new build will be further refined to inform specific proposals to members.
- 8.5 The overall intended outcome of the Angus Council BRSA Housing Options Report was to determine broad options that have the potential to deliver a positive outcome for the council's BRSA residents, make a positive contribution to the HRA, maximise the council's ability to meet housing need, whilst presenting acceptable level of risk and being operationally deliverable. These considerations formed criteria for a scoring process used to select a recommended option from the consultants.
- 8.6 As part of the assessment and scoring process, the AC BRSA Housing Options Report also featured stakeholder and community engagement via surveys and 1:1 interviews of residents in order to help understand the current local sentiment and how they had been affected by the flooding, as well as providing the opportunity to express their views on the options.
- 8.7 The initial online survey targeted both council tenants and other residents in the BRSA area and was launched via the Engage Angus platform. There were 104 survey responses – an overall response rate of 38%. In-person resident interview sessions were also held at The Crickety and resulted in 33 interviews being held with private owners and/or private let tenants representing approximately 50% of respondents. Both parts of the engagement included questions on which of the three housing options of reinstatement, remodelling or relocation would be preferred by residents. The responses to the survey are shown in Appendix 1.
- 8.8 The online survey results revealed that almost two thirds of respondents (64%) would prefer not to remain in the BRSA area long-term given concern over future flooding. A majority (45%) of survey respondents expressed support for the general concept of the remodelling option, a third (33%) preferred the relocation option and 22% showed preference for reinstatement. During the more in-depth face to face interviews, 46% showed preference for relocation, 30% for remodelling and 24% for reinstatement. It should be noted that some of those indicating preference to stay within the BRSA area were subject to works being carried out to prevent the risk of repeat flooding. There are differences in the preferred option between the survey and the 1-1 interviews. One possible reason for the difference is because the interviews provided the opportunity for a fuller discussion and a fuller appraisal of options. It is important to note that those who participated in interviews were largely private households rather than council tenants. Owners and private householders may have different priorities and perspectives.
- 8.9 It is important to restate that the scope of the report was to analyse indicative options relating to only the council-owned parts of the BRSA (including privately owned properties in the same physical buildings as council-owned properties). Analysis based on the pre-flood asset

performance, Net Present Value (NPV) modelling and social housing demand for BRSA highlighted important Housing Needs and Asset Performance trends relating to the council-owned stock within the BRSA. The NPV models are the 30-year cashflow showing the impact of cashflows associated with the BRSA properties on the 30-year business plan. The approach allows for changing assumptions (such as rents, bad debts, voids, management and maintenance costs and other investment costs) then projects cashflows over a 30-year period and converts this back to today's money value. If stock has a negative NPV, removing from our housing stock it can add value to the HRA business plan. The NPV approach is used to assess the financial cost and benefit considerations, assessing the extent to which the pre-flood BRSA housing stock would have made a positive or negative financial contribution to the HRA of the Council over 30 years.

- 8.10 In terms of this financial appraisal of the options, it was identified that the existing properties would have represented a total cost to the HRA of £15m over 30 years if Storm Babet had not happened. This figure provides elected members with a comparison when considering the financial impacts of the options provided below. It is important to note estimated pre-flood market values were used to calculate the potential cost related to any potential acquisition of properties to enable comparison of each indicative option. As indicated above, if property acquisition is considered necessary, this aspect would be subject to thorough financial and legal consideration to determine the appropriate mechanisms.
- 8.11 Option 1 – Reinstatement is estimated to cost the HRA £16.7m over 30 years. This would have low initial / upfront capital costs since flood damage repair would mostly be met by insurance cover, although money would need to be spent in the short to medium term on required net zero related building performance improvements, roof replacements, rewiring, and fixtures upgrading for all properties over a 30-year period.
- 8.12 Option 2 – Remodelling is estimated to cost the HRA £14.9m over 30 years. In addition, acquisition of properties, demolition and rebuild costs would be required, although some grant funding contributions could be expected to be made available for the provision of new build stock and there would also be savings on the reduction of loss-making stock and the higher maintenance costs of old stock.
- 8.13 Option 3 – Relocation is estimated to cost the HRA £7.7m over 30 years. This makes it the most cost effective of the three options assessed in detail by the AC BRSA Housing Options Report. Again, in addition, the acquisition of properties, demolition and rebuild costs would be required, although some grant funding contributions could possibly be made available for the provision of new build stock and there would be savings on the reduction of loss-making stock and the higher maintenance costs of old stock.
- 8.14 Whilst it should be acknowledged that some options involve a significant reduction in Council stock numbers, recent waiting list application data demonstrates that the BRSA (covered by Brechin South letting area) has low housing demand and stock experiences high turnover and void rates in comparison to other lettings areas. Of the 366 applicants who had chosen Brechin as their preferred housing location, only 4 had chosen Brechin South as their preferred location.
- 8.15 The low demand is further highlighted by the fact that there are 43 households currently living in the wider BRSA (22 are Council tenants) who want to be rehoused and only one household seeks to remain in the Brechin South letting area. The undesirability of the area is therefore evident, as suggested through the engagement undertaken as part of the options appraisal.
- 8.16 Following the scoring process, the AC BRSA Housing Options Report found that Option 3 – Relocation resulted in a materially higher overall score based on the review evidence, with a score almost double that of the other two options. Therefore, the report sets out that Option 3 presents the greatest opportunity to meet the agreed assessment criteria and reduces the drain on the HRA by over £7m. Whilst there are potential deliverability considerations, it is the only option that completely mitigates the risk of future flooding were any Angus Council tenants to remain living in the BRSA. Currently, there is low housing demand in Brechin South. Therefore, reinstating the 58 flood-damaged properties is not cost effective to the HRA and does not significantly address the housing emergency across Angus, as this area is not a preferred location for our applicants. The housing pressures we face are more acute in other areas of Angus.



- 8.17 Overall, the Angus Council BRSA Housing Options Report recommends that the option to relocate council-owned properties via new built properties on a location elsewhere in Brechin should be progressed for further detailed analysis, costing and consideration.

## **9. SUMMARY OF NEXT STEPS**

- 9.1 As set out above, and in the detailed technical reports, there is a degree of complexity both in the content of the individual reports and in the interdependencies between them. Of critical importance are the views of those householders and businesses directly impacted, council housing tenants more broadly and the wider community.
- 9.2 Whilst some formal and informal community engagement has taken place over the course of the last year this has been limited to the housing options appraisal. An initial stage of working with the community in November 2024, will focus specifically on providing information on the technical reports and their limitations to residents and businesses in the BRSA. These information sessions will be held in person at different times/venues to maximise opportunities for parties to attend and provide an opportunity for specific questions to staff with the appropriate technical knowledge to support.
- 9.3 The next stage of work is to combine the options from the two technical papers with any other variations. This will allow officers to identify any information gaps, further work required to develop and undertake an initial evaluation/scoring process on options to shortlist. An overview of the programme, approach to engagement with the community and proposed governance will be reported to a meeting of the Communities Committee on the 26 November 2024. It is important to share the content of these reports with members of the community and to create structured opportunities for their views to inform the development of final recommendations to members alongside an assessment of the technical, financial and operational feasibility of options. The lead body for community development in Scotland, The Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC), have been engaged, to support delivery locally. This will provide much needed skilled, independent and impartial resource to directly work with and support the community.
- 9.4 As members are aware, Angus Council approved the prioritisation of Brechin in our rollout of a new framework for place-based working ([report 202/24](#) refers). This proposed approach fits within these aims and will combine with the consultation process outlined above.

## **10. PROPOSALS**

It is proposed that members:

- Note the activity undertaken to date, the update provided in relation to the two specialist technical reports now available and proposed information sessions with the community;
- Note that further work is underway to develop final proposals for members' determination as set out in section 9.3;
- Note that the Director of HR, OD, Digital Enablement, IT & Business Support will bring a further report to a meeting of the Communities Committee on 26 November 2024 to set out the next stage of work to develop the shortlist of options, proposed governance arrangements and approach to engagement with the community that will inform the recommendations as to the preferred options in relation to flood protection, mitigation and the BRSA.

## **11 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 The Flood Protection Options Appraisal Report and the Angus Council BRSA Housing Options Report referred to earlier in this report highlight the potential for significant financial implications to arise from all the options considered. However, as this report is mainly providing an update to the flood recovery workstreams and is not seeking approval of final options nor delivery of specific works at this stage, the financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report are limited to the costs of the further work required to engage with the local community and develop a final list of options. The cost associated with this engagement and any further technical work required will be detailed in a further report to committee. The cost of the two technical reports commissioned of £137,418 have been met from existing General Fund and Housing Revenue

budgets and £95,000 of funding provided by the Scottish Government for the Flood Protection Options Appraisal work.

## **12. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## **13. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached.

## **14. CHILDRENS RIGHTS AND WELLBEING IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

A Childrens Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment has been carried out within the EIA.

## **15. CONSULTATION**

The Chief Executive and all Directors have been consulted on the contents of this report.

**NOTE:** No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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List of Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Resident Consultation report

Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment