

**Decision Session – Executive Member for  
Environment**

**4 December 2017**

Report of the Director of Economy & Place

**York 5 Year Flood Plan Update**

**Summary**

1. The flooding in late December 2015 followed an intense period of rainfall across November and December due to the impacts of Storms Desmond and Eva. Record river levels were observed in many river catchments across the north of England. More than 4000 homes and 2000 businesses flooded across Yorkshire with 453 properties and 174 businesses flooded in York.
2. Funding has been allocated to the Environment Agency (EA) following the floods to renew existing and provide new flood defences across the city, £17m has been allocated to the Foss Barrier improvements and £45m to the wider flood defences across the city.
3. Defra approvals have been granted for the high level business case and the contract has been awarded to consultants to develop the detailed business case and consequent detailed design of packages of works, agreements are being sought with regard to the approach to climate change in the project.
4. An update on progress has been supplied by the Environment Agency, this can be seen in Annex 1.
5. High level options for each flood cell have been reviewed and are detailed in Annex 1 and the approach taken to prioritise the measures across the flood cells is discussed.
6. Meetings are scheduled with utilities companies to update on actions from the York Flood Inquiry and the National Flood Resilience Review. No further progress has been made by the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) to relocate the Tactical Command (Silver) Centre.

7. Work has commenced with the Integrated Catchment Solutions Partnership (iCASP) to further research into Natural Flood Risk Management processes and appraisals, City of York Council are fully involved in all aspects of this work.

## **Recommendations**

8. The Executive Member for the Environment is asked to note the update report and the evidence presented by the Environment Agency in the session, feedback is sought from the Executive Member on all content.

## **Background**

9. Following the development and publication of the York Five Year Plan (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/york-5-year-flood-plan>) the EA have developed the Defra Strategic Outline Business Case and financial approvals have been sought and obtained from Defra. This is a significant hurdle for any major project.
10. The Environment Agency continue to work closely with City of York Council on all aspects of the York Five Year Plan, an update has been provided by the EA at Annex 1.
11. The high level options identified for each community in the York Five Year Flood Plan have been considered further during the summer and an initial explanation of the methods and process used to identify the priority of action across flood cells was discussed at the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2017 Decision Session, an action was taken to further report on all methods used and plans to take forward these measures. The Environment Agency have made this information available at Annex 1.
12. The review of the York Flood Inquiry provided to the Executive Member in the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2017 Decision Session raised further questions on how utility companies are responding to the York Flood Inquiry and the National Flood Resilience Review and the progress that is being made by all partners in the development of a new location for the Strategic Command (Silver) Group.
13. All utilities companies are represented at the North Yorkshire LRF Lifeline Services Group quarterly meetings, the September Lifeline meeting was held before the actions of the 4<sup>th</sup> September Decision Session were confirmed but City of York Council Emergency Planning

Officers are scheduled to attend the next meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> December. All Category 2 responders attend the meeting, initial feedback of the discussion at the meeting will be provided for the minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> December Decision Session.

14. The work to identify alternative Silver Command locations is ongoing and sits with NYCC as the secretariat of the LRF.
15. Additional resources have been committed to develop and deliver the work identified in the inquiry, an Emergency Planning Assistant role is currently being recruited with interviews scheduled for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017, the development of community flood resilience measures is a core function of this post.
16. The role of natural flood risk Management / catchment scale measures was debated at the 4<sup>th</sup> September meeting, a core concern was the ways in which the effectiveness of such interventions can be measured to allow them to input into scheme appraisals and to identify flood risk or other funding opportunities. One of the key issues identified was the lack of telemetry and monitoring in the further reaches of catchments and small scale tributaries to show reductions in peak flood flows following the adoption of these measures.
17. The iCASP initiative has developed a workstream based around natural flood risk management and a workshop was held on the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2017 to co-develop a range of research topics to better understand these approaches, City of York Council attended the workshop and one of the outputs was the need for a better understanding of catchment scale monitoring. Further updates will be brought to a future decision session as this work develops.

## **Consultation**

18. Public consultation on the York Five Year Plan was held in late November 2016 and quarterly newsletters have been developed by the EA to further inform on progress. The Economy & Place Scrutiny Committee Scrutiny Committee received a paper detailing progress at their 4<sup>th</sup> March 2017 meeting and regular formal updates will be provided to the Executive Member for Environment and the Economy & Place Scrutiny Committee at quarterly and six month frequencies respectively.

19. Detailed public consultation events will be held in each community following the production of the long list of options and further refinement of the preferred options.

## Options

20. The principal options open to the Executive Member for Environment are to comment on and review the work undertaken to date and the future work identified to date and the representations made by the Environment Agency.

## Analysis

21. Ongoing liaison will continue between the Executive Member for Environment and the CYC Flood Risk and Asset Manager, future briefings to the Executive Member for Environment Decision Session will be made to ensure key outputs and decisions are supported by CYC and to provide formal opportunities for members and the public to consult. Further recommendations will be made for agreement at these sessions.
22. City of York Council Officers welcome the programme details provided in Annex 1 of this report and endorse the continued development a wide ranging programme as soon as practically possible.

## Council Plan

23. Improved provision of flood defences supports a prosperous city for all through safer communities for residents, businesses and visitors, a wide range of consultation events will ensure this is in line with the needs and expectations of local communities.

## Implications

24. **Financial** – Funding is allocated directly to the EA, the additional funding of £45M is available to be directed towards key flood risk projects in the city in the short term. The extent of required works may require wider funding and Defra funding bids will be developed. There are likely to be contribution requirements as part of this wider work. This will be developed further and consulted upon later in 2017.
25. **Property** – The Site Investigation programme will include sites under CYC ownership and/or control, consultation will be carried out with Estates teams and all relevant agreements will be put in place.

26. Human Resources (HR) – No implications  
One Planet Council/Equalities – No implications  
Legal – No implications  
Crime and Disorder – No implications  
Information Technology (IT) – No implications

### **Risk Management**

27. No known risks are identified at this time, detailed risk management work will be developed as the business case and detailed design works commence.

### **Contact Details**

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**Director of Economy & Place**

**Report**  **Date** 20/11/17  
**Approved**

**Wards Affected:** List wards or tick box to indicate all

**All**

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers: None**

**Annexes: Annex 1 York 5 Year Flood EA Briefing Dec17**