

Report of the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Planning & Sustainability

York Flood Risk Management Strategy

Summary

1. Following the flooding of 2007, which affected over 55,000 homes and businesses across the UK and caused £3 billion worth of damage, the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA) was introduced to provide legislation for the management of risks associated with flooding and coastal erosion. This gives City of York Council major new responsibilities as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for its area, with a range of new local flood risk management duties.
2. Section 9 of the FWMA requires LLFAs to “develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for local flood risk management in its area”. Local flood risk is defined as flood risk from surface runoff, groundwater and ordinary watercourse flooding. Due to the interactions between flood risks from a variety of sources, our strategy looks at all flood risks in the Council area.
3. The strategy is included in full at Annex 1 of this report. Comments and recommendations for its content and approaches to public consultation are sought from councillors of the Cabinet.

Background

4. We have a long association with flood risk and future risks are predicted to increase due to climate change. It is essential that we continue to develop ways to minimise current risks and ensure future development is managed to ensure that risk is not increased. Our work in this area to date means we are already recognised as a leading council in the delivery of our flood risk role. Flooding is a

natural process and while it is not technically, economically or environmentally feasible to prevent all flooding, a risk based approach targets resources to those areas where they can have the most beneficial effect in reducing its impact. Several bodies have responsibility for flood risk management and historically it has been difficult to take a coordinated or strategic approach in its management, particularly at a local level.

5. We already have a good level of understanding of flood risks from our Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Management Plan, both form the core evidence that the Strategy draws upon and references. The aim of the strategy is to clarify understanding of flood risk from all sources in the city, reduce its likelihood and impact on residents and visitors and take the opportunity to improve the city environment. It is a living document which will provide an ongoing comprehensive framework for managing York's flood risk. As new technical information associated with flood risk management evolves, and real events occur, it will need to change to take this new information into account.
6. The York Flood Risk Management Strategy comprises a collection of six guidance documents which aim to advise and direct the reader to further information to increase knowledge and understanding of flood risk management. These are bound together by the Policy Framework and Strategic Action Plan sections.

Consultation

7. This is a draft strategy for consultation with internal and external partners, prior to public consultation. Public consultation documents will be compiled following review of all comments and a period of public consultation events will follow.
8. It is proposed to publish the full strategy in 2015 and it will be fully reviewed in line with the six year Flood Risk Regulations cycle. It is intended that changes and updates to the individual guidance notes (Sections 3-8) would be agreed and endorsed through the relevant committee, scrutiny or member decision making session. Any changes or updates to the Policy Framework or Strategic Action Plan would be brought to Cabinet for approval. The Strategy and its action plan will be monitored by the North Yorkshire Flood Risk Partnership.

Options

9. We have a duty under the Flood and Water Management Act to develop and maintain a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. The Strategy is presented at Annex 1 for councillors to make comment on its content and format prior to public consultation.

Analysis

10. Advantages – the strategy delivers the Councils duty as part of the Flood and Water Management Act (2010) and forms an important tool to identify and attract future flood risk funding.

Disadvantages – the form and content of the Strategy is partly fixed by the requirements of the Act and its supporting guidance, wider opportunities for input through the consultation process will be sought.

Council Plan

11. Through the safeguarding of existing and protection of future communities, the strategy supports the following priorities:
 - Create jobs and grow the economy
 - Build strong communities
 - Get York Moving
 - Protect the environment

Implications

12.
 - **Financial** – The Strategic Action Plan at Section 2 of the strategy includes estimated costs for interventions. This is a needs based assessment based on varying existing investment programmes from a range of partners. Delivering the individual interventions will require formal funding bids and assessments to be developed by all partners. Individual appraisal studies will be commenced to take these forward.

Flood Defence Grant in Aid funding will be unlikely to fully fund all required schemes and partnerships and funding strategies will need to be formed, these may look towards the capital and revenue budgets of the Council and others in the public and

private sector in the Council area or beyond – Local Enterprise Partnership / EU funding.

- **Human Resources (HR)** – none.
- **Equalities** - none.
- **Legal** – The realisation and delivery of the range of flood risk management interventions is underpinned by a range of flood risk legislation and guidance. This is detailed in Section 5 of the strategy and all individual appraisals and studies will be progressed within this legislative context.
- **Crime and Disorder** – none.
- **Information Technology (IT)** – none.
- **Property** – Failure to safeguard and enhance the levels of protection in the Council area will lead to an increased flood risk to a wide range of Council property and assets, mainly (but not exclusively) in the city centre. Future defence improvements are reliant on the delivery of investment programmes of all risk management authorities and the Strategy will be a key tool to support their delivery.
- **Other** – none.

Risk Management

13. The strategy deals with a range of responsibilities, permissive powers and partnership delivery, the detailed responses and interventions to be carried out by all Risk Management Authorities will be at the scrutiny of their own decision making processes. The actions are needs based and accept that there may be some interventions that cannot be justified or supported.

Recommendations

14. Cabinet is recommended to approve the Strategy at Annex 1.

Reason: to ensure the Council is compliant with its duties in the Flood and Water Management Act (2010) and to ensure that we have a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy that can drive future flood risk investment needs.

Contact Details:

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Wards Affected: All			√
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Background Papers: None**Annexes****Annex 1** – York Flood Risk Management Strategy