

Report of the Director of City Development

Report to Scrutiny Board – City Development

Date: 22nd March 2017

Subject: Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. Under the Flood & Water Management Act 2010, Leeds City Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority is required to have a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.
2. The Strategy for Leeds was adopted by Full Council on 26th March 2014.
3. At their meeting on 21st January 2014 the Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture) considered the Council's draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and it was agreed that they would review the Strategy on an annual basis.
4. The Scrutiny Board (City Development) last reviewed the Strategy on 30th March 2016. Storm Eva was discussed as part of that review further information has come to light since then so has been included for further review.
5. This past year and a half Leeds suffered a number of flooding events the most significant being Storm Eva at the end of 2015 bringing an extreme flooding event. With 4712 properties flooded or affected by the flooding and also causing major infrastructure damage such as to Linton Road Bridge as reported in the recently published Section 19 report for the event.
6. This report examines the implementation of the Strategy over the last 12 months and provides a summary of the measures that are set out for the years ahead.

Recommendations

7. That the Board reviews the progress made with regard to the Strategy and makes comments.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 Allow for the scrutiny of the Council's Flood Risk Management Strategy.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Following major floods during 2007, Government set up the Pitt Review to look into the way flood risk management agencies dealt with such a major event. This review came up with 93 recommendations, which Government accepted.
- 2.2 A number of these recommendations needed legislation to give the agencies the powers or duties necessary and hence the introduction of the Flood & Water Management Act 2010 (F&WMA). One of these duties was for all Lead Local Flood Authorities (Leeds City Council for this area) to prepare a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS).
- 2.3 Following Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture) review of the draft Strategy, on 21st January 2014, it was adopted by the Full Council on 26th March 2014.
- 2.4 The Strategy was last reviewed by Scrutiny Board (City Development) on 30th March 2016.

3 Main issues

3.1 Leeds Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

The Strategy is intended to outline the approach the Council and other agencies will take with regard to flood risk management. The Strategy contains:

- a. The Objectives for managing flood risk.
- b. The measures proposed to achieve those objectives.
- c. Timeframe for any measures.
- d. Costs and benefits of the measures and how they are to be funded.

The specific measures are contained in Appendix C of the Strategy, which is to be updated regularly to ensure it is reactive to latest priorities.

Progress against priority measures identified in Appendix C of the Strategy for 2016 is included in Appendix 1.

Other actions that have been taken and continue to be taken are

- Ongoing maintenance of watercourses and flood alleviation features
- Partnership working with other key agencies
- Close working with Flood Groups – increase awareness of flood risk
- Develop and maintain a comprehensive Register of flood risk features
- Manage flood risk generally

- Investigate flooding events – where necessary producing a Section 19 Report – most notable the recently published Storm Eva Section 19 Report
- Promote sustainable development – particularly with regard to Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
- Support Planning with determining the impact of development on flood risk and securing contributions from developers to support the delivery flood risk management measures.

3.2 South East Leeds Flooding in August 2015

In the report considered by Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture) last year it was noted that the South East of the District had been suffering a disproportionate impact from flooding over a number of years and that during heavy rain on 8th August 2014 in excess of 100 properties were internally flooded. Unfortunately the same area was affected again with a similar event during heavy rainfall on 22nd August 2015.

A Section 19 (of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010) Report examining the cause of the flood and its impact in August 2014 was published in 2015 and found the rainfall overwhelmed all drainage systems in the area.

Assessments of work that could potentially be done to reduce the risk of flooding continue, some schemes have been delivered and further schemes identified and have been added to the specific measures contained in Appendix C of the Strategy.

3.3 Flooding Across Leeds in Winter 2015

Storm Eva on December 25th/26th caused widespread flooding across all of Leeds with 4712 properties flooded or affected by the flooding (2826 internally flooded) from the rivers Aire, Calder and Wharfe coming out of their course and affected surface water systems. This was following storms in November and early December which also caused flooding across Leeds.

The cause and scale of the flooding is not thought to be due to the size of storm Eva, or it having the heaviest rainfall, but was from the accumulation of continual wet weather from November being the third wettest month on record and December being the wettest month on record (since 1910) in the north of England to make the ground wet and impermeable.

The full impact of the Storm Eva flooding has been quantified in the recently published Section 19 report, particularly the potential long term reputational impact and the hard felt commercial damage to Leeds. Of the 4712 properties some businesses still indicate they will not reopen or move away from Leeds, some homes are still to be reoccupied.

Following a meeting in January 2016 of the Leader of Council and the Leeds MPs with the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, a commitment was made by the then Secretary of State to fund the feasibility study and subsequent works for the next phase of the Leeds (River Aire) Flood Alleviation Scheme. Funds were announced by the Chancellor in the March 2016 budget to

support the development of this scheme totally £35m this spending review period (to 2021) with further funds being made available after this to complete the scheme. This would aim to provide Kirkstall the same level of protection as the scheme in City Centre which is currently under construction, but on track to complete in Summer 2017. Work has now started on the feasibility and modelling work for Phase 2, which is looking across the whole catchment upstream of Leeds for ways to reduce flooding impacts in the city.

Impacts across the Wharfe catchment in Leeds have also been well documented and £2m of funding to better protect properties in Otley was announced as part of the Autumn 2016 statement in November. Further clarification is being sought on how this can be utilised and a target completion date has been indicated as 2021. Work on modelling and initial feasibility studies for Otley and a number of communities along the Wharfe being led by Leeds City Council has started, supported by a catchment flood partnership including the EA and a number of other organisations.

Damage to infrastructure such as roads, structures, paths, flood alleviation assets and Canal and Rivers Trust (CRT) assets are estimated to have cost around £9m. Linton Road Bridge being the single largest asset affected in Leeds. Temporary stabilisation work was completed at the end of 2016, the main works to fully reopen the bridge to its 40T limit are due to complete in summer 2017 with the total cost likely to be £4.1m. Repairs and additional works to stabilise phase 1 of the Flood alleviation scheme in the city centre along with associated CRT assets have seen additional costs of £3.8m which was secured from the EA/ Defra recovery fund, further funds from CRT have also been added to complete the work.

Community engagement events have taken place in affected areas with councillors, officers and relevant partners. To date engagement events or flood investigation visits have taken place in all areas of the city that were affected. There was also a three day event organised by the Flood Advisory Service together with the Garforth Flood Support Group held in central Leeds.

Leeds City Council as the lead Local Flood Authority has recently published a Section 19 report into the causes and impact of Storm Eva. Further assessments and investigations are now underway to update the measures in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy that can be taken to reduce the impacts of flooding, some measures have been identified and have been added to the specific measures contained in Appendix C of the Strategy. A copy of the Executive Board Report that accompanied the Section 19 full report¹ can be found in Appendix 3¹.

3.4 Flood across Leeds in 2016

2016 has thankfully been a comparatively quiet year in terms of flooding incidents in the city given how dry the weather has been in contrast to 2015. Having said this 492 flooding incidents were reported and investigated during 2016 which is still close to the average across the last decade (1857 in 2015). A number of these were as a result of Storm Eva hitting very late in 2015, however it also shows that the city is still very vulnerable to a wide range of flooding impacts with surface water impacts continuing to be seen across the city.

¹ Full Storm Eva Section 19 Report found at <http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=102&MId=7527&Ver=4>

Storm Angus, the first officially named storm of 2016 didn't hit Leeds until the 21st November and although its impacts were hardly felt in the rivers across the city there were widespread impacts on properties and infrastructure. A number of properties, roads and businesses were again badly affected, in some cases this has led to repair work and also investigations that have led to improvements being made to local drainage alongside Yorkshire Water.

Once again the Garforth area was affected with largely completed flood alleviation works at Glebelands playing field close to the flooding hotspot of Ninelands lane was tested and provided valuable flood storage for the area. A number of other recently completed schemes in the area were also tested and provided valuable protection.

3.5 Proposed and recently completed Capital Works on Flood Alleviation

Appendix C – The List of Measures in the Strategy (included as Appendix 2 in this report) has been updated on the progress made and includes new priorities already identified following the flooding events in 2015 and the investigations that took place during 2016.

Also these Measures are being used to form the Medium Term Programme, for bids to the Environment Agency for Grant in Aid and Local Levy funding. The Environment Agency administer a 6-year flood risk investment programme on behalf of Defra, over the current six years to 2021 this has an estimated value of £2.9bn nationally across all sources of funding. Within Yorkshire this figure is around £568m, and across Leeds this is around £65m. Some of these schemes are led by the EA themselves, however in Leeds the city council are leading the majority of the investment as indicated in our List of Measures.

In 2015 Leeds included £1m in the Council's Capital Programme to be spent over three years in the bidding process as partnership/match funding to secure financial support and to deliver flood mitigation works that would not be eligible for other funding. This continues to prove an extremely useful way to maximise the councils ability to be flexible in how it delivers schemes and has attracted match and partnership funding that would not otherwise have been available.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 A wide consultation was carried out for the adoption of the Strategy. Further local consultation will be undertaken on individual schemes.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 An EDCI screening has been completed and indicated that an Equality Impact Assessment is not required for what is being proposed.

It should be noted that by carrying out flood alleviation works the Council will be ensuring the safety of the local community and particularly those residents that have children and members of the families that have a disability, where these benefits will be greater – as currently these individuals may struggle to get to safety if flooding occurred.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The approach to flood risk management is in keeping with Council Policies and City Priorities - to reduce the risk of flooding to various communities, industrial premises and the environment.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 The implementation of the LFRMs will potentially have an impact in the Council's budgets but the Strategy will ensure that any expenditure is prioritised. Furthermore it will allow stronger cases to be built for future Grant applications

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 The F&WM Act places a requirement on Leeds to prepare and manage the LFRMs.

4.5.2 The Act requires Scrutiny of the Council's activities in this area

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 The Strategy allows the Council to prioritise its work on Flood Risk, leading to reduced overall risk of flooding.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Flood Risk is a key threat to the wellbeing of the residents across Leeds and in order to ensure action is taken it is important that Council continues a proactive approach to mitigating the impact of flooding.

5.2 There has been good progress in the delivery of projects identified in the Strategy in 2014. However priorities will need to be reviewed following the evaluation of the exceptional flooding events in 2015 and subsequent Section 19 report.

5.3 The allocation of a Capital budget in 2015 is already helping in achieving the proposed aims set down in the Strategy by securing match funding for works to be delivered this year and in to the future.

6 Recommendations

6.1 That the Board reviews the progress made with regard to the Strategy and make comments.

7 Background documents²

7.1 None

² The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 - Progress on LFRMS Appendix C (2016)

8.2 Appendix 2 – Updated version LFRMS Appendix C (i) Measures (2017)

8.3 Appendix 3 - Storm Eva Flood Investigation Section 19 Report, Executive Board
8th Feb 2017