

Report of the Director of City Development

Report to Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure and Investment)

Date: 21 March 2018

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 (LFRMS) 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 22nd March 2017.
5. This past year Leeds suffered a small number of flooding events the most significant being the heavy rainstorms in May and August.
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.
7. The LFRMS itself will be reviewed and updated during late 2018 and taken to Full Council in December 2018 for review and subsequent approval.

Recommendations

8. That the Board reviews the progress made with regard to the Strategy and makes comments to further inform the wider review of the LFRMS due to take place in late 2018.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 Allow for the scrutiny of the Council's Local 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 (Sustainable Economy and Culture) on 22nd March 2017.

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 2017 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 Community 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, 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 Recovery from major flooding – Post Storm Eva 2015

The devastating and widespread impacts of the Boxing Day (storm Eva) flooding continue to be felt in Leeds. Businesses and residents are now back in refurbished properties on the whole, however a number of businesses have not re-opened (16 have not re-opened, 11 relocated), some premises have still yet to be fully repaired. Many properties were able to take advantage of post flood recovery funding in the form of grants. The councils teams supporting the administration of this funding made every effort to simplify and support the application process, but for a number of reasons described below there was in the region of £1m of flood recovery funding handed back to DCLG in early 2018. That said, not including financial support provided by the Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership, LCC provided a total of £3,522,519 in financial support in a number of ways summarised briefly below:

- Community Support Payments - £354,000
- Property Resilience Grants - £1,236,170
- Business Grants - £677,992
- Council Tax discounts - £110,681
- Business Rate Relief - £1143676.04

As described above not all flood recovery funding was drawn down, many properties, especially those within high rise buildings although affected by the floods weren't directly heavily impacted and therefore did not claim additional financial support, some properties and businesses didn't feel they had the time, support and information to complete applications.

Insurance for flood damage still remains a national issue particularly for businesses, with many businesses and residents experiencing very different services from their insurers, some even finding that they weren't adequately covered or even insured at all, especially tenants where arrangements between tenants and landlords can be complicated. The knock on effects of insurance claims, many substantial, as a result of Storm Eva damage are still being felt as premiums and excesses increase or insurance cover becomes difficult to attain as policy renewals occur.

The council now has an established governance structure around flood risk at all levels across many directorates and services. The Flood Resilience Programme Board established in early 2017 and chaired by the Director of City Development includes Chief Officers from a range of directorates as well as officers from the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water. This group provides strategic leadership on flood risk in very broad terms covering major schemes, community resilience, stewardship and cultural elements relating to the Waterfront. The lessons learnt following Storm Eva have been reviewed in late 2017 and cross referenced with the LCR Flood Review and National Flood Resilience Review conducted by the Government, progress on these and related actions are tracked

and coordinated by the FRPB and its sub-group the Resilience and Stewardship Group whose strategic group is chaired by Councillor Lucinda Yeadon.

Significant infrastructure damage was sustained across Leeds as a result of Storm Eva leaving railway lines, roads and bridges closed for many days and even months in the case of Linton Bridge. Linton Bridge reopened on 2nd September 2017 after an extensive rebuilding of the main structure within the existing historic structure had been completed, costing £5.1m. The construction of Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme Phase 1 (LFAS1) was also very badly affected and subsequently made repairs and undertook additional works totaling £3.8m. Now substantially complete the work on LFAS1 has greatly reduced flood risk in the city centre.

Parts of Leeds along the river Aire affected by Storm outside the LFAS1 area are still at high risk of flooding. Work on Leeds FAS 2 to progress feasibility and early modelling and design work have been accelerated following the announcement in March 2016 that additional funding would be provided to give Leeds a 'good' standard of protection, with £35m committed within this current spending period to 2021. The Outline Business Case submitted to the Environment Agency and Treasury in late January 2018 saw an extensive scheme being put forward with a cost of £112m, which would seek to provide a 1 in 200year (0.5% Annual Exceedance Probability (chance of happening in any given year)). This would be achieved through a range of advanced works, with works at Stourton due to start imminently, linear defences from the train station up through Kirkstall, a large storage area on the upstream boundary of the city near Calverley and a range of Natural Flood Management measures across the upper catchment aiming to increase tree canopy cover in the catchment from 7% to 15%.

Otley suffered widespread flooding in the area to the north of the Wharfe around Billams Hill where 58 properties were flooded internally and more affected by flood water. A study to develop a better understanding of the flood risk in Otley was already underway when £2m of 'booster' funding was announced in the September 2016 Autumn Statement by the Chancellor. This had led to the development of the Otley Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS), led by the council working closely with the Environment Agency. The OFAS is currently at modelling and options development stage with construction planned to complete by December 2020, work to date has seen an extensive re-modelling of the whole catchment providing benefits to Otley but also other communities up and down stream along the Wharfe. The total cost of the scheme and final programme will be subject to the results of the work currently ongoing. Residents and local groups continue to be closely engaged with the scheme.

3.3 Flood across Leeds in 2017

2017 has thankfully been a comparatively quiet year in terms of flooding incidents in the city. Having said this, 352 flooding incidents were reported and investigated during 2017 which is still close to the average across the last decade (1857 in 2015), graphs showing incidents in 2017 and previous included in Appendix 3.

The two most significant flooding incidents occurred as a result of unforecasted extremely localised and heavy rainfall on both 27th May and 23rd August 2017 caused by surface water flooding (1 property affected directly from Wyke Beck).

Although neither of these incidents triggered the need to produce a Section 19 report (due to the scale of their impacts and their typical nature) there were still isolated pockets of properties badly affected. Some properties suffered internal flooding on both occasions and a small number of properties were still not able to return to their homes until December 2017.

Works to provide property level protection, repair and clear damaged culverts and drainage assets and undertake improvements works have reduced the risk of future flooding in a number of the locations affected. Surface water flood risk remains a complicated source of flooding to residents and businesses in Leeds, with the responsibility for assets and infrastructure that affect this spread across a number of council departments and other organisations, as well as also being privately owned in many places.

It 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. 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, but more work is needed to reduce this likelihood of these events in future.

The Garforth area remains a particularly vulnerable to heavy rainfall with largely completed flood alleviation works at Barley Hill and Glebelands playing fields providing valuable flood storage for the area. A number of other recently completed schemes in the area were also tested and provided valuable protection.

3.4 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 and 2017.

3.5 Capital Works Completed

In 2017, 4 major schemes were completed:

- **Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme Phase 1**

This covers the Central Section of the River Aire where it passes through the City Centre and involves the incorporation of moveable weirs as well as linear fixed defences. The scheme was officially opened on 4th October 2017 by Cllr Judith Blake and Emma Howard-Boyd, chair of the Environment Agency.

- **Westfields Flood Alleviation Scheme, Allerton Bywater**

This was the construction of a bypass culvert and new watercourse to reduce the risk of flooding to properties in the Westfields area of Allerton Bywater.

- **Glebelands Flood Alleviation Scheme, Garforth**

This is a flood water storage area at the top of the Garforth culverted water course and reduces significantly the risk from flooding to downstream properties. It is also a feature of the ongoing Lin Dike Options strategy.

- **Barley Hill Recreation Ground Flood Storage**

This is an expansion of the proven existing flood storage area and further protects properties downstream. It is also part of the ongoing Lin Dike Options Strategy.

3.6 Capital Works Proposed

- **Otley Flood Alleviation Scheme**
- **Killingbeck Naturalised Flood Management Scheme**
- **Leeds FAS 2**
- **Mickletown (Pit Lane) Flood Embankment**

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.

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. The time period for spending this funding has been extended as it has successfully attracted match and further funding from a range of sources enabling a larger capital FRM programme to be delivered.

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. The 2018 review and update of the LFRMS for Leeds will involve further consultation with neighbouring local authorities and key communities.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

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 documents¹

Leeds Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 - Progress on LFRMS Appendix C (2017)

8.2 Appendix 2 – Updated version LFRMS Appendix C (i) Measures (2018)

8.3 Appendix 3 – FRM Incidents Report 2017

¹ 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.