

## Local Flood Risk Management Strategy – Annual Scrutiny Review

Date: 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Report of: **Executive Manager- Flood Risk and Climate Resilience**

Report to: **Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth Scrutiny Board**

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

Under the Flood & Water Management Act 2010, Leeds City Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority for Leeds is required to have a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS).

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. A comprehensive briefing is provided in Appendix one of this report and in summary the headlines for works in 2023 and in progression are.

- FAS2 will complete this year and is protecting 1048 residential properties and 474 businesses. FAS1 assets managed and maintained, mock events have taken place to build resilience. Over the past 6 years the teams have mobilised to operate the weirs over 100 times.
- FAS compound established to store bespoke valuable spare appropriately.
- Capital scheme completed at Farnley Wood Beck protecting 12 properties, two major schemes at Wortley and Meanwood making significant scheme progress.
- Sheepscar scheme start on site April 2024 and scheme at Thorner due to start on site in 2025.
- Hotspot clearances of 1925 (April – Dec 23)
- 135 Beck Inspections (April – Dec 23)
- 1860 planning applications consultations (551 Major, and 1309 Minor) regarding surface water flooding.
- Maintenance and inspect of 12 flood alleviation schemes, 23 SuDS schemes and 65 other bodies of water.
- As part of the FAS1/2 maintenance works, inspect and maintain 135 trees along the River Aire

Flood risk reduction and increased awareness and climate resilience supports all three pillars of the Best City Ambition – Health and Wellbeing, Inclusive Growth and Zero Carbon. The key outcomes of the strategy are related to improving the resilience of the City's infrastructure and the natural environment by reducing flooding and other risks from future climate change. Through reduced risk of flooding, businesses and jobs are protected in areas of flood risk which promotes inclusive growth and residents health and wellbeing (in particular mental health).

### Recommendations

- a) That the Board review the implementation of the strategy and provides comments to help inform its further development and be considered at the next strategy update due to take place in 2024/25.

## What is this report about?

- 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 (LFRMS). 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. This also allows the scrutiny of the implementation of the Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. A more detailed review of FRM activities is included as Appendix 1.

## What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 The report will provide an update to the Board on the implementation of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy along with an opportunity for Board members to provide comment and scrutiny.

## 3. How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

- 3.1 Ongoing work to reduce the risk of flooding is a key activity within sustainable infrastructure and reflects the councils 2019 declaration of a climate emergency and its intention to work towards being a carbon net zero city by 2030. Delivery of the LFRMS will help to reduce the impacts of flooding and therefore deliver managed adaptation to the future impacts of climate change. In delivering the capital programme for flood alleviation the carbon impact of these schemes is considered and we promote lower carbon solutions. Prevention of flooding also positively impacts carbon emissions by avoiding the need to rebuild, repair and refurbish properties impacted by flooding, we are able to demonstrate this using carbon calculator tools developed with the Environment Agency.
- 3.2 Inclusive Growth is promoted by the prevention and amelioration of flooding to properties and businesses and the resilience of the city to flooding is enhanced. Business is confident that its property will be protected, are encouraged to remain and invest. The increased resilience of infrastructure networks and structures also supports inclusive growth.
- 3.3 The threat of and experience of flooding can impact on peoples mental health and general health and wellbeing, schemes to prevent flooding can have a very positive impact on improving peoples mental health by enhancing peoples ability to feel safe in their home and not under threat of flooding.

## 4 What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: ALL

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes       No

- 4.1 A wide consultation was carried out for the adoption of the Strategy. Further local consultation and engagement has been undertaken across the flood risk management service from the development control functions, day to day investigations, the maintenance of our flood risk assets, to the specific events and updates undertaken by the Strategy and New Works team in relation to the Flood Risk Management Capital Programme. Further information on the service can be found at [How we are reducing flood risk \(leeds.gov.uk\)](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/how-we-are-reducing-flood-risk) .
- 4.2 **Strategy and New Works:** undertake a wide range of consultation and engagement with those residential properties and businesses directly impacted by flooding, ward members, stakeholders and the general public (including raising awareness of flooding issues). Each scheme develops a consultation plan which identifies key stakeholders and a programme of

engagement/ consultation so that ward members and communities can input and have visibility of the scheme as it evolves. This has involved the utilisation of the Commonplace website which allows consultees to have transparency of the engagement.

This past year has involved:

- Briefings and meetings on flood schemes to the Executive Member and ward councillors. This includes over 9 newsletter/briefings updates to local councillors and residents in 2023 include Meanwood Beck, Middle-Wharfedale, Wortley Beck & Sheepscar Beck, as well as the quarterly FAS2 email newsletter.
- Online engagement for Sheepscar Beck (August/September 2023) using the commonplace map tool - 45 comments received and over 300 letters sent to local business and residents.
- 8 Leeds City Council press releases featuring flood alleviation schemes in 2023.
- Monthly update for key stakeholders on the FAS2 project – which includes relevant ward members, both through newsletters and social media.
- The Leeds Flood Resilience account received 23.3K impressions and 1,834 engagements in 2023.
- Filming with volunteers when planting 1,000 whips at the FAS2 flood storage area site: <https://twitter.com/LeedsFAS/status/1639286278179921924>
- Upcoming engagements on scheme development in the next year of 2024/25 for Sheepscar Beck, Thorner Beck, Wortley Beck, Potternewton and Meanwood Beck.

**4.3 FRM Development Control:** We are a statutory consultee on Major planning applications and work closely with Planning Services on planning applications where there are drainage or flood risk issues. We advise on surface water discharge, drainage hierarchy, Minimum Development Control Standards, highway drainage issues associated with residential development, watercourse consenting and enforcement issues, and the maintenance and operation of above ground SuDS. The team also manage and engage with our equivalents from the other WY LLFA's as part of a Development Control network group to advise and support work across West Yorkshire. These are normally quarterly meetings, but with the impending implementation of Schedule 3 of the FWMA 2010 they are now meeting monthly to share information, guidance and advice. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was also part of the Leeds wide Local Plan update consultation and the Environment Agency have been extensively consulted and engaged with as part of that process.

**4.4 Investigations and Maintenance:** Are both very actively engaged with local Councillors, MPs, residents and businesses on the reporting of flooding issues (which are often related to Highways or Yorkshire Water) either via email, round table discussions or meetings on site.

## **5 What are the resource implications?**

5.1 The implementation of the LFRMS will continue to have an impact in the Council's revenue budgets but the LFRMS will ensure that any expenditure is prioritised. Furthermore, it will allow stronger cases to be built for future externally funded grant applications. A case has been made to the Strategic Investment Board for capital funding which has been shown to attract external funding at a rate of at least 1 to 7 (for every £1 of the council capital funding we have attracted at least £7 of external funding).

## **6. What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

6.1 The Strategy allows the Council to prioritise its work on Flood Risk, leading to reduced overall risk of flooding. The Significant Risks identified are:

- Financial pressures on the Flood Risk Management Revenue Account and wider Council and how this may impact on future service levels.
- Shared Corporate risk of not being a net zero carbon city by 2030
- Impact of changing climate risk, flooding is the greatest climate risk the city faces
- Funding availability for capital schemes
- Recruitment and retention of skilled technical staff

## **7 What are the legal implications?**

7.1 The F&WM Act places a requirement on Leeds to prepare and manage the LFRMS. The Act requires Scrutiny of the Council's activities in this area.

## **8 Options, timescales and measuring success**

**8.1 What other options were considered?** This is not a decision report and so consideration of other options was not required.

## **9 How will success be measured?**

9.1 Eight key monitoring indicators are used in the Flood Risk Management Strategy and are listed below and are reported on in more detail in Appendix 2.

1. The number of measures in the 'List of Measures' which have been completed.
2. Are there active measures in the 'List of Measures' which cover each of the six 'Objectives for managing flood risk'?
3. Improving engagement on flood risk - How many public engagement events have taken place? (School events, flood action group meetings).
4. The number of new developments where Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) have been installed? Such as, green corridors, rainwater harvesting, green roofs, land management (tree planting).
5. Are Property Flood Resilience (PFR) schemes reducing flood risk.
6. Number of Leeds City Council staff engaged in flood risk management activities.
7. Reliability of public transport – Number of Metro bus and train routes disrupted by flooding/drainage problems?
8. Is the LFRMS consistent with the plans and actions of partner organisations?

## **10 What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

**10.1** The implementation of the LFRMS is a continuous process. The next refresh of the LFRMS is scheduled for 2024.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Update on the LFRMS

Appendix 2 - Updated LFRMS Appendix C (i) Measures (2021/22)

Appendix 3 - FRM Incidents up to 2022

Appendix 4 - Equality, diversity, cohesion, and integration screening form

## **Background papers**

- Leeds, Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2018 Update.