

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

DATE: **26TH JUNE 2013**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT**

SUBJECT: **FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To seek comments on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy prior to formal submission to Cabinet and then Welsh Government.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) came into force in 2010 and gives Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFA) such as Flintshire County Council new duties and responsibilities in relation to flood risk management.

2.02 Flintshire County Council, as a Lead Local Flood Authority is required to prepare a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. The purpose of the Local Strategy is to address potential flood risks arising from local sources which are those within the boundaries of the Authority area.

2.03 Under the Water Resources Act 1991, main rivers are defined on the main river map and previously Environment Agency Wales (now part of Natural Resources Wales), retains their powers relating to them. Fluvial flooding from main rivers is outside the scope of the strategy, as it only deals with flooding from ordinary watercourses. However, as the main rivers have an impact on ordinary water courses the strategy does take the flooding issues into account where appropriate.

2.04 An important part of the Local Strategy will be to ensure that our communities are aware of what risks exist, aware of what the County Council and other risk management partner's responsibilities are in terms of flood risk and what communities can do to involve themselves.

2.05 The County Council has been working collaboratively with Conwy County Borough Council to produce a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) as required by the FWMA and in accordance with the National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management in Wales.

2.06 Section 10(4) of the Act, specifies what must be included within the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy:-

- the Risk Management Authorities within the Local Authority's area;
- the flood and coastal erosion risk management functions that may be exercised by those authorities in relation to the area;
- the objectives for managing the local flood risk (including, when available, any objectives included in the LLFA flood risk management plan prepared in accordance with the Flood Risk Regulations 2009);
- the measures proposed to achieve those objectives;
- how and when the measures are expected to be implemented;
- the costs and benefits of those measures, and how they are to be paid for;
- the assessment of local flood risk for the purposes of the Strategy;
- how and when the Strategy is to be reviewed;
- how the Strategy contributes to the achievement of wider environmental objectives.

2.07 To assist in the development of the Strategy and its subsequent ongoing delivery of these new responsibilities, Welsh Government has made grant funding available to LLFAs; this is detailed in section 5.00 of this report.

2.08 The LFRMS outlines 10 outcomes/strategic objectives (see 3.04) for managing local flood risk along with a series of measures to achieve the objectives.

2.09 The Strategy identifies the Risk Management Authorities e.g. in Flintshire, and describes their Flood and Coastal erosion Risk functions and responsibilities, some of which are additional responsibilities designated in FWMA.

2.10 The Strategy is supported by a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment.

2.11 Following Cabinet approval in December 2012 the draft LFRMS was sent out to Public consultation. Public consultation for the LFRMS closed on 24th April 2013. In total there were 14 response received and all relevant comments have been reviewed and considered

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The Local Strategy will complement and support the National Strategy published by Welsh Government, which outlines a national framework for flood and coastal risk management, which aims to balance the needs for communities, the economy and the environment. The National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (Wales) sets the following objectives:

- a) Reducing the impacts on individuals, communities, businesses and the environment from flooding and coastal erosion;
 - b) Raising awareness of and engaging people in the response to flood and coastal erosion risk;
 - c) Providing an effective and sustained response to flood and coastal erosion events; and
 - d) Prioritising investment in communities most at risk.
- 3.02 The implementation and funding of some of the proposed actions is not clear at this stage, as they involve sections of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 which are still to be implemented.
- 3.03 The LLFA has a responsibility to consider the flood risk management functions that it may exercise to reduce the impact and risk from flooding. In support of the aim of a general reduction of flood risk across the County, the Council will prioritise investigations and works identified in this Strategy, based on perceived and evidenced risk and within the resources made available to it.
- 3.04 Flintshire's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy recognises the following 10 outcomes/strategic objectives:-
- i. To improve the understanding of local flood (surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses) and coastal risks;
 - ii. Increasing individual and community awareness and preparedness for flood and coastal erosion events and the impacts of climate change on flood risk;
 - iii. To work together (both FRMA, stakeholders and public) to reduce flood and coastal risks, sharing data and resources to the greatest benefit;
 - iv. To reduce the impact and consequences for individuals, communities, businesses and the environment from flooding and coastal erosion;
 - v. To ensure that planning decisions are properly informed by flooding issues and the impact future planning may have on flood risk management and long term developments;
 - vi. Improve and/or maintain the capacity of existing drainage systems by targeted maintenance;
 - vii. Take a sustainable approach to flood risks management balancing economic, environmental and social benefits;
 - viii. Increase approaches that utilise the natural environment;
 - ix. Ensure the development of skills required to implement effective and innovative flood risk management measures; and
 - x. Identify projects and programmes which are affordable, maximising capital funding from internal and external sources.
- 3.05 The delivery of the Strategy rests primarily within the Assets and Transportation Service Area, however, the support of other relevant services within the Council, more specifically Streetscene and Emergency Planning will be required.

- 3.06 When Ministerial approval is received for the LFRMS, Flintshire County Council has a duty to work towards the objectives set out in the strategy, as well as to comply with statutory duties as LLFA outlined in the Flood & Water Management Act
- 3.07 The LFRMS has been produced in conjunction with a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA).
- 3.08 A copy of the LFRMS and other supporting documentation can be found in the Members Library.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That Members note and comment on the report and Strategy.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 A breakdown of the grant funding allocated to this workstream is set out below:
2010/11 £22,727
2011/12 £90,000
2012/13 £90,000
2013/14 £100,000
- 5.02 For 2014/15 and beyond WG have confirmed in writing that the level of funding allocated is likely to be £90k (minimum) for the foreseeable future, which will be provided through the RSG provision on an annual basis to all Local Authorities.
- 5.03 There is a budgetary provision within the Capital Programme for drainage and coastal protection work which is used to deliver major programmes of work and seeks, where opportunities arise, to use this to lever in additional funding support through Welsh Government.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 None as a direct result of this report, however, some actions flowing from the work linked to the application and delivery of the act are likely to take properties out of flood risk in the future funding resources permitted.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 Positive in that it will lead to greater understanding and activity around flooding and flood risk so that a comprehensive picture of areas of risk can be developed and planned remedial activity undertaken.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 Should be positive in that it will seek to support local communities, identify areas of risk and seek to mitigate this risk.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 Additional resources have been allocated to this work stream and as noted previously we are working with Conwy County Borough Council who are jointly developing a number of strategies for Local Authorities within North Wales.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Key stakeholders and the local communities including Town and Community Councils.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Initial report to Cabinet on the 10th July 2012.

11.02 Key stakeholders and the local communities including Town and Community Councils.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 - LFRMS Non Technical Summary - Strategic Environmental Assessment Environment Report
Appendix 2 - LFRMS Strategy Document Draft
Appendix 3 – LFRMS Draft Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Report
Appendix 4 – LFRMS Strategic Environmental Assessment - Environmental Report

These are available to view on the website and in the Members Library.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Flood and Water Management Act

Contact Officer: Neal Cockerton
Telephone: 01352 703169
Email: neal.cockerton@Flintshire.gov.uk