

Report of the Strategic Director of Place to the meeting of Bradford East Area Committee to be held on Thursday 19 March 2020

AE

Subject:

Bradford East Area Flood Prevention

Summary statement:

This report will provide an overview of the flood prevention strategy for the Bradford East Area. In addition, the report also provides an outline of the role and responsibilities of the Environment Agency in terms of flood prevention.

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Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Regeneration and Environment

1. SUMMARY

This report will provide an overview of the flood prevention strategy for the Bradford East Area. In addition, the report also provides an outline of the role and responsibilities of the Environment Agency in terms of flood prevention.

2. BACKGROUND

The Council do not have a specific Flood Risk strategy for the Bradford East Area however they do have a district wide Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) as required by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The LFRMS is developed and maintained by the Council and it sets out the Councils objectives and measures for managing local flood risk and aims to guide effective Flood Risk Management activities undertaken by Risk Management Authorities operating within Bradford District. The LFRMS is a strategic document to cover Bradford District and its drainage catchments. Objectives within the LFRMS are applicable to the whole of Bradford District. As Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), the Councils objectives for managing district wide flood risk, subject to resources, are to:

- Improve understanding of flood risk
- Reduce the impact of flooding on a priority basis
- Communicate flood risk to partners and stakeholders
- Carry out targeted maintenance on a priority basis
- Ensure appropriate development
- Improve flood response and post flood recovery

Working within these objectives and following the flooding in December 2015, the Council worked with partners across the West Yorkshire region to learn and adapt best practice approaches into its ways of working. Recognising the need for a long term strategic approach to managing flood risk across our district, The Council worked with the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water to scope and develop a Bradford Flood Programme Board ('the Board'). The approach to develop a Board was designed to ensure that the important work that was already underway was formalised, with clear accountability. This provided reassurance for elected members and increases the confidence and engagement of the communities they serve.

The Board agreed that alongside ongoing scheme development, it was a priority to focus on identifying and delivering cost-beneficial solutions for communities at risk of flooding within the district. The Board were able to secure £850k of Local Levy funding from the Yorkshire Region Flood and Coastal Committee at the January 2017 meeting, to help progress a Local Levy funded capital flood risk programme of works. This Local Levy was to provide essential funding to enable the development of a strong programme of projects, to be complemented by a catchment approach, supported and enabled by community projects and river stewardship work.

Further to receiving this funding The Bradford Aire Flood Alleviation Study was commissioned by the Board with an aim of investigating the use of direct interventions and more catchment wide solutions to reduce flood risk for communities along the River Aire including Keighley, Bingley, Baildon, Shipley, Esholt and Apperley Bridge. The study has investigated the use of upstream storage solutions within Craven and the western parts of the district at Holden Park and Marley Sewerage Treatment works at reducing flood levels along the River Aire. The early results show levels can be reduced however the cost of implementing these measures are proportionally high and therefore current funding arrangements sourced through DEFRA do not fully fund any of the measures. The final study outputs will be available in the Autumn but the early calculations indicate a forecasted funding gap of circa £15m across all the schemes along the River Aire. To help close the funding gap, Bradford Council are actively monitoring other funding streams such as Local Growth Funds through the LEP and European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). Further catchment wide discussion are taking place with the Environment Agency to see where multi benefit schemes across the catchment could help fill the funding gaps.

Funding for Flood Risk Management works and activities to achieve LLFA objectives is limited and the available funding comes from a number of different streams; the largest proportion coming from central government. Funding for flood risk mitigation favours areas where the concentration of risk is high (e.g. large numbers of residential properties and individuals at risk in any given area) and is weighted by other indicators such as poverty and deprivation. Furthermore, contributions from the beneficiaries of defence schemes are also sought, in particular significant business interests. Obtaining funding when risks and benefits are widely distributed is difficult but the Council is working to secure both internal and external streams of funding.

Also within the Committee Area, Leeds City Council (LCC) are currently promoting a Flood Risk Management scheme to defend parts of Leeds called Leeds Flood Alleviation Study Phase 2 (LFAS2). The primary aim of LFAS2 is to reduce flood risk to residential, commercial, industrial property and infrastructure assets along the River Aire in Leeds. As a result of flood storage works in Calverley, further interventions in Apperley Bridge have been proposed that would protect properties in the area as well. The scheme comprises the second phase of LCC's plans for managing current and future flood risk in the city, focused primarily on developed areas along the River Aire upstream of the city rail station to the ring road at Rodley and additional work in Apperley Bridge.

An objective of LCC is to achieve a standard of protection that would both protect existing communities/businesses and allow for future regeneration of the River Aire corridor through Leeds unconstrained by flood risk. LCC believe a good standard of protection would be to protect against another Boxing Day 2015 flood, as such the scheme aims to achieve a 1 in 200 year standard of protection, allowing for potential increases in flood flows from climate change that are projected over a 50 year period to 2069.

LCC received a decision from the Environment Agency's Large Project Review Group that at this time a 1 in 100 year scheme would be approved. The works proposed in Calverley and Apperley Bridge are part of the 1:200 year scheme and are therefore not funded at the moment.

As a result of the funding constraints, the LFAS2 project is split into two steps. Step 1 will deliver flood protection works to a 1:100 year standard from Leeds railway station upstream to beyond Kirkstall. This step is funded by a combination of Government money and Leeds City Council capital money. Step 2 of the project includes the flood storage area at Calverley and the defence works around Apperley Bridge bringing the whole scheme up to a 1:200 year standard. The current cost of funding Step 2 is circa £40m and it is understood LCC are committed to delivering a 1 in 200 year scheme and are seeking discussions with Government on how to achieve this.

The flood defences proposed in Apperley Bridge are direct defences such as flood walls and embankments. These types of defences generally only offer flood benefits, rather than noticeable environmental benefits for example, and are therefore funded largely by flood defence grant in aid allocated by DEFRA. Due to the relatively small amount of properties at risk compared to the cost of the scheme only a small proportion of the required money can be applied for through this funding stream therefore a stand-alone scheme, not funded by the LFAS2 project, has its challenges.

Bradford Council will also continue to support LCC in discussions with Government, in their bid to deliver Step 2 of the LFAS2 project.

Role of the Environment Agency

The Environment Agency has a strategic overview of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion (as defined in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010). It is also responsible for flood and coastal erosion risk management activities on main rivers and the coast, regulating reservoir safety, and working in partnership with the Met Office to provide flood forecasts and warnings. It must also look for opportunities to maintain and improve the environment for people and wildlife while carrying out all of its duties.

The Environment Agency's work includes:

- Developing long-term approaches to FCERM. This includes developing and applying the national flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy.
- Allocation of national Government funding to projects to manage flood and coastal erosion risks from all sources
- Delivering projects to manage flood risks from main rivers and the sea
- Working with others to prepare and deliver Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs). FRMPs explain the risk of flooding from rivers, the sea, surface water, groundwater and reservoirs, and set out how the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) and other Risk Management Authorities work with communities to manage those risks. The Environment Agency and Defra provide guidance to LLFAs on their role in developing FRMPs. FRMPs for England for the period 2016-2021 are published on GOV.UK.
- Providing evidence and advice to support others. This includes national flood and coastal erosion risk information, data and tools to help other Risk Management Authorities and inform Government policy, and advice on planning and development issues
- Working with others to share knowledge and the best ways of working. This includes work to develop FCERM skills and resources

- Monitoring and reporting on flood and coastal erosion risk management. This includes reporting on how the national FCERM strategy is having an impact across the country.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

None

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

None

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

None

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

➤ None

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

None

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

➤ None

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

➤ None

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

➤ None

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

➤ None

7.6 TRADE UNION

➤ None

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

Idle and Thackley

**7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS
(for reports to Area Committees only)**

None

7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

None

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

None

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. OPTIONS

Members are asked to consider the report and provide views and comments.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee consider the report and note its content.

11. APPENDICES

None

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None