

North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet 14 July 2014

ITEM 7(b)
North Tyneside Local
Flood Risk Management
Strategy

Portfolio(s): Housing & Environment

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr J Harrison

Report from Service Area: Environment and Leisure

Responsible Officer: Phil Scott, Head of Environment and Leisure (Tel: 643 7295)

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Purpose

Following the introduction of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, North Tyneside Council became a Lead Local Flood Authority. The Act places a duty upon the Authority to develop a strategy for local flood risk management.

The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the North Tyneside Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and to seek formal approval of the document and the specific policies developed for managing flood risk in the borough.

1.2 Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Notes the contents of the report; and
2. Formally approves the North Tyneside Council Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

1.3 Forward plan

28 days notice of the report has been given and it was published on the Forward Plan on 2 June 2014.

1.4 Council plan and policy framework

The report is relevant to the following priorities set out in Our North Tyneside, the Council Plan 2014 to 2018:

Our Places – the Council will develop a programme of surface water schemes to reduce the risk of flooding in the borough.

1.5 Information

1.5.1 Background

North Tyneside experienced extensive flooding in 2012 across the whole of the Borough with devastating consequences for residents and businesses. The 2012 floods, along with other historic events, demonstrate that North Tyneside is susceptible to flooding. Extreme weather events are expected to increase as the effects of climate change are realised.

Across North Tyneside over 900 properties were inundated by flood water on 28 June 2012 when over a month's rainfall fell in the space of just 2 hours. The widespread flooding affected not only homes and businesses but much of the Borough's transport infrastructure, preventing emergency responders from reaching vulnerable properties.

A considerable amount of the flooding occurred due to water running off agricultural land and into residential areas on the urban fringe which inundated housing, businesses and infrastructure. Weather events such as this have underlined the need to have clearly defined responsibilities with respect to flood risk management and for the Authority and its partner organisations to work together to reduce the risk of flooding and improve our emergency responsiveness.

In response to similar flooding issues throughout the country, the Government introduced the Flood Risk Regulations in 2009 and the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The Act introduced the concept of Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) where local authorities would take an active role in managing flood risk in partnership with other agencies. As a LLFA, North Tyneside Council has a number of duties under the Act, including the production of a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

1.5.2 The Strategy

The main objectives of the North Tyneside Flood Risk Management strategy (the **Strategy**) are as follows:

1. Introduce effective partnership working with key organisations and communities, including clear definition of roles and responsibilities.
2. Development of an effective emergency response plan to deal with flooding.
3. To target resources where they have the greatest effect, adopting a risk-based and sustainable approach to flood risk management.
4. To encourage and support communities and local landowners to take action and contribute to the reduction of flood risk.

Partnership working is the cornerstone of effective flood risk management and March 2013 saw the formation of the North Tyneside Surface Water and Drainage Partnership. This brought together the following key stakeholders:

- Elected Mayor
- Lead Cabinet Member (Chair)
- Deputy Chief Executive
- Heads of Service and officers from the relevant service areas
- Northumbrian Water Ltd
- The Environment Agency
- Tyne & Wear Fire Brigade
- The Police
- Nexus

The Partnership is able to share knowledge, best practice and identify sources of funding in order to drive forward the various programmes of flood risk reduction work. The Strategy will provide the strategic framework to support the Partnership's ongoing activity.

The Strategy will also clearly define roles and responsibilities, explaining who does what in each organisation. For example, the Authority is responsible for managing surface water risk from sources such as streams and highways, whereas Northumbrian Water Ltd is responsible for managing risk of flooding from public sewers. The Environment Agency is responsible for main rivers and coastal issues as well as having an overall remit for flood risk management nationally.

The level of service that residents can expect from the Authority is also set out in the Strategy. This is important as, although the Authority now has a duty to investigate all flooding issues, it has discretion over how it subsequently acts and must work within finite resources. A programme of drainage improvement works to support the Strategy has been developed using a prioritised approach with property inundation being given the highest priority for action.

A further feature of the Strategy, a new Operational Flood Action Plan, was introduced in May 2013 through the Council's Technical Partnership. It principally involves predeployment of sandbags and other protective measures at known flooding hotspots in advance of severe weather events.

Community engagement is a key objective in the Strategy and positive work is already being done in this area. The Authority is in the process of introducing community flood wardens to assist with the co-ordination of emergency response actions. There has also been a series of targeted community engagement events and Community Conversation meetings in areas affected by flooding. Regular newsletters and council magazine articles have been produced. Proactive community engagement will continue as part of the Strategy.

In summary, the North Tyneside Local Flood Risk Management Strategy is an important document that defines the Authority's role in flood risk management. It identifies the areas most at risk from flooding and provides a methodology for prioritising work. It supports an ongoing programme of flood risk measures and provides a focus for working towards longer term objectives, including improved community engagement to increase public awareness of flooding issues.

1.6 Decision options

The following options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

Approve the Strategy as recommended in section 1.2.

Option 2

Not approve the Strategy as recommended in section 1.2 and request that the Head of Environment and Leisure undertaken further work on the development of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option

It is recommended that Option 1 is approved to enable a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy to be put in place in accordance with the Authority's duty under the Flood Risk Management Act 2010.

1.8 Appendices

None. Copies of the draft strategy have been placed in the member group rooms and it has been available on the Authority's website since March 2014.

1.9 Contact officers

Colin MacDonald, Senior Manager, Technical & Regulatory Services, 0191 643 6620
Mark Newlands, Highways and Infrastructure Manager, 0191 643 6129
Alison Campbell, Financial Business Manager, 0191 643 7038

1.10 Background information

The following background information has been used in the development of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy:

Department for Communities and Local Government (2012) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Defra / Environment Agency (2011) Understanding the risks, empowering communities, building resilience: the national flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy for England

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-management-strategy-for-england>

The Northumberland and North Tyneside Shoreline Management Plan 2 (2009)

<http://northumberland-smp2.org.uk/download.htm>

North Tyneside Council Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) (2012)

http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/browse-display.shtml?p_ID=18286&p_subjectCategory=809

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

Funding for the development of the Strategy has been secured from the Authority's Capital Investment Plan. An accompanying 3 year implementation plan has been developed which will involve the design and construction of schemes to reduce flood risk. The Capital Investment Plan has £1.0m investment in 2014/15 on Surface Water Management Improvements with £3.5m investment in total during the life of the 2014-18 Investment Plan. Day to day activities such as investigations, routine maintenance and community engagement will be funded from service budgets.

2.2 Legal

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 places a statutory duty upon the Authority to lead the coordination of local flood risk management and to develop a local flood risk management strategy.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

The draft Strategy was first presented to the Surface Water and Drainage Partnership in late 2013 before being placed on the Authority's website for three months with a closing date for comments on the 2nd May 2014. Key stakeholders represented at the Drainage Partnership were sent individual copies of the draft document and were also invited to comment. Hard copies of the strategy were distributed to libraries and customer service centres. A number of amendments to the Strategy were made following the consultation.

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report.

2.6 Risk management

The Strategy adopts a risk-based approach to targeting resources to where they will have the greatest effect.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder issues directly arising from the report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

A key objective of the Strategy is to adopt a sustainable approach to flood risk management. For example, re-use of excavated materials and providing new habitats that improve biodiversity .

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive
- Head of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Strategic Manager – Strategic Services