

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 26th March 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Policy and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Transportation

SUBJECT: Halton Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report to the Board the development of Halton's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS), which is a Statutory Document required under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (F&WMA).

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Halton be approved and adopted in accordance with the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 Section 9.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Under the Local Flood and Water Management Act, as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), Halton must produce a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. At its meeting of 28th January, the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board considered a report on the development of a Local Strategy for Halton and resolved that the Executive Board be requested to approve the Strategy for adoption

3.2 The Strategy, included as Appendix 1 to this report, has been prepared in accordance with informal guidance published by the Local Government Association, and using a common template that has been developed and agreed in conjunction with our neighbouring LLFA members of the Cheshire Mid-Mersey Regional Sub Group, to ensure a consistent approach to flood risk management across the sub-regional catchment areas.

3.3 The aim of Halton's LFRMS is to provide a coherent plan to demonstrate how Halton will work with partners and others to manage flood risk in a holistic and sustainable way. It brings together information from:

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessments;
- Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment;
- Surface Water Management Plan; and
- Procedures and policies for managing flood risk in Halton;

set out under five themed objectives, and supported by relevant graphical information, funding and work programmes contained within appendices to the Strategy document.

- 3.4 In accordance with the legislation, a formal consultation on the draft LFRMS was undertaken during November and December 2014. Comments received by the consultation closing date of 22nd December have been considered and where appropriate, incorporated into the LFRMS which is now proposed for adoption.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct policy implications arising from this report, however, once the Local Strategy has been adopted, it can inform specific policies, for example in relation to use of enforcement powers or the provision of flood protection measures etc.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Resource Implications.
Defra currently provide funding to LLFAs to prepare for their flood risk management duties. For 2015/16, the illustrative settlement funding assessment for Halton is £114,000, of which £13,000 is via direct grant allocation. Section 4 of the LFRMS describes the revenue funds which have typically been allocated to FRM and land drainage in Halton's budget.
- 5.2 Halton has the ability to bid for capital funding from Defra to assist with managing and improving flood risk across the Borough, including for schemes and interventions identified within the plan and works programmes appendix. The success of any bid is dependent upon evidence of past flooding, and the potential reduction in risk of flooding. The LFRMS will help to demonstrate Halton's ability to prioritise and manage flood risk and thereby assist in future bids for capital funding.
- 5.3 Securing capital funds is also dependent upon the availability of locally found contributions to enable the delivery of schemes collaboratively in accordance with Defra's 'Partnership Approach', as outlined in section 4.3 of the LFRMS. Relatively modest sums have been used in the past to secure funding for works and investigations through Defra's FDGiA budget and from Local Levy. It is vital that financial resources continue to be made available if delivery of programmed and prospective FRM schemes is to be maintained.
- 5.4 Sustainability
The sustainability themes of economy, community and the environment are all key factors in developing a successful local strategy for flood risk management and they are considered in the relevant sections of the document which is proposed for approval.

5.5 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report. The preparation and adoption of the Local Strategy by LLFAs is a requirement under the F&WMA and its development must take account of a framework of related legislation which is outlined within the LGA Guidance.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

There are no specific implications for children and young people in relation to this report.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

There are no specific implications for employment, learning and skills in relation to this report.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The Local Strategy will help to manage flood risk through the adoption of prevention and protection measures and help mitigate the impacts of flooding when it does occur, which should contribute to the health and well-being of communities that may be affected.

6.4 A Safer Halton

The Local Strategy will help to manage flood risk through the adoption of prevention and protection measures and help mitigate the impacts of flooding when it does occur, which should contribute to the safety of the community and potential users of affected land areas.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The Local Strategy will help to manage flood risk through the adoption of prevention and protection measures. The Strategy deals with land use considerations and the environmental aspects of sustainable development contained within the Strategy will help contribute to the creation of attractive, safe places and amenities and enhance Halton's physical and natural environment.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The Council, as LLFA, regularly reports to the Environment Agency on the progress being made to deliver the range of functions and legislative requirements under the F&WMA. Progress on the preparation and adoption of the Local Strategy is one of the areas covered in the report and whilst no date was set within the legislation for the adoption of a Local Strategy, Government's expectation was that local strategies would be adopted within a reasonable period of time following the introduction of the Act.

7.2 Dan Rogerson, under Secretary of State at Defra, recently wrote to the Leaders of LLFAs who had yet to publish their Local Strategy, stressing

the importance of having this in place to target future investment and to demonstrate to other risk management authorities and the public that FRM is being taken seriously. There is a clear reputational risk to the Council if adoption of the Strategy is delayed unduly.

7.3 Elements of Halton's LFRMS will be referenced in the EA's Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP) covering the whole of the North West river basin area and, therefore, it is essential that the Strategy is approved and adopted in time for the publication of the FRMP.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 There are no equality and diversity issues in relation to this report.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Preliminary framework to assist the development of the Local Strategy for Flood Risk Management. (LGA Feb 2011)	Municipal Building, Highway Development Division	D.A.Cunliffe
Draft Halton's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (and Appendices)	Municipal Building, Highway Development Division	D.A.Cunliffe
SEA screening opinion, Letter and analysis. (URS, December 2014)	Municipal Building, Highway Development Division	D.A.Cunliffe