

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 20 July 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Transportation

SUBJECT: Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment Update

WARD(S) Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 As part of its duties as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) Halton Council must undertake a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA). This is a high level screening exercise to determine whether there is a local flood risk within the LLFA boundary based on historic and potential future flood risk data.
- 1.2 The PFRA must be reviewed on a six yearly basis. Halton's first PFRA report was submitted to the Environment Agency (EA) on 22 June 2011, following Executive Board Approval, and the EA has requested a review be submitted by 22 June 2017. The Council has produced an updated Preliminary Assessment Report (PAR), along with a Review Self-Assessment Form and submitted these as a draft to the EA. This report outlines the findings of the draft PAR, which was endorsed by the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on 28 June 2017. Executive Board approval is now sought. The PAR and Self-Assessment will then be subject to a 6 month review period with the EA, prior to final publication by 22 December 2017.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board notes and approves the findings of the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment Review.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 An updated draft PFRA has been prepared by Halton Borough Council as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) in order to meet the duties to manage local flood risk and deliver the requirements of the Flood Risk Regulations (2009) and the Flood and Water Management Act (2010). The production of the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) is imposed by Sections 10-12 of the Flood Risk Regulations (2009) and it is the first step in the management of local flood risk. The PFRA process is aimed at providing a high level overview of flood risk from local flood sources through a review of historic flooding incidents and the predicted future extents of flooding, based

on the outputs of computer models from both Halton Borough Council and the Environment Agency.

- 3.2 In January 2017 the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Environment Agency (EA) replaced its guidance on significant risk for the identification of flood risk areas for Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) about the criteria for assessing and reviewing whether a risk of flooding is significant. The Regulations require LLFAs to determine whether any part or parts of their area face significant risk of flooding and to identify any such areas as Flood Risk Areas (FRAs). This was produced under regulation 14(3) of the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 (FRR), and replaced the previous guidance published in 2010. LLFAs are only required to do this in relation to local flood risks which include flooding from surface water, ground water and ordinary watercourses. LLFAs do not need to consider risks of flooding from the sea, main rivers or reservoirs, except where these may affect flooding from another source. Flood hazard and risk maps and flood risk management plans must subsequently be prepared for the FRAs identified. The PFRA will provide a baseline for a full update of the Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, the first edition of which was published in 2015.
- 3.3 The EA have already produced indicative Flood Risk Area maps for England and Wales, and identified a number of FRAs including Liverpool. These Indicative Flood Risk Areas occur where clusters of population of greater than 30000 people are located within an area of flood risk that is above prescribed national thresholds.
- 3.4 The PFRA uses a consistent prescribed approach to review the national Indicative Flood Risk Areas, using the most up to date locally available evidence. The data gathered and considered in the assessment is summarised and cross referenced in a self-assessment review form which forms part of the submission to the EA. Where relevant and necessary the updated PFRA must set out the need for any amendment to the indicative areas, providing a rationale behind the proposal.
- 3.5 The updated PAR, which is attached to this report as Appendix 1, sets out how the assessment has been undertaken and provides a robust evidence base to help support the full update of the Flood Risk Management Strategy. The PAR is based on data held by a wide variety of sources, but primarily the Environment Agency, United Utilities and Council data.

Key findings of the PFRA are as follows:

- In relation to historic flooding the previous PFRA flagged up some issues with missing or incomplete data, and the new duties now placed on Halton as LLFA have meant that Council records have improved. United Utilities and Cheshire Fire logged flood event data has also been analysed, with appropriate events relating to surface water flood risk being filtered out for review and presented in the report. However, there are still some limitations with the detail and

consistency of data.

- As with the previous PFRA, based upon the data and evidence collected, in relation to local flooding, no past flood events were considered to have had significant harmful consequences (as defined in the national guidance criteria). Annex 1 of the Preliminary Assessment Spreadsheet therefore does not contain any records of past flooding (local flooding) within Halton. Of course, there have been instances of past flooding at several locations in Halton, although the most significant of these have been related to main river or sewer flooding, for example at Halebank, Peel House Lane and Halton Brow.
- In relation to future flooding, there does remain a risk of flooding from local sources, particularly from surface water at various locations across the Borough. Based upon the Environment Agency (EA) 'Risk of Surface Water Flooding' modelling it is estimated that approx. 809 residential properties and 127 non-residential properties across the whole of Halton are at risk from flooding to a depth of 0.3m during a rainfall event with a 1 in 100 annual chance of occurring. This does not, however meet the EA's threshold of 30000 people within a 'cluster' of significant areas that is required to identify a Flood Risk Area (FRA). Consequently Halton does not propose to declare any new FRAs within Halton (and none were identified within the previous PFRA).
- The indicative FRA for Liverpool encroaches slightly onto Halton's administrative area and this has been reviewed as part of Halton's PFRA. The area concerned is part of a cluster on the periphery of the Liverpool conurbation. Within Halton, however, the land is predominantly rural, to the west of Hale Village and does not coincide with any areas of flood risk identified in Halton's PFRA review. It is proposed that the EA be requested to amend the boundary of the Liverpool FRA, to coincide with the administrative boundary between Halton and Liverpool City.

The outcome of the first two stages of flood risk assessment review required by the Regulations (described in 3.1/3.2) is that no Flood Risk Area is proposed for Halton. This means that the next two stages, the production of Flood Risk Maps and preparation of a Flood Risk Management plan for FRAs are not triggered.

However there is still a requirement for Halton to keep its Local Flood Risk Management Strategy under ongoing review with a complete update every six years (due 2021).

Whilst the draft updated PAR and Self-Assessment is due to have been submitted to EA for review by 22 June 2017, it is proposed that the Board endorse the report and its presentation to the Executive Board for approval prior to publication by the EA by 22 December 2017.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific policy implications in relation to this report or within the PAR. The PFRA will inform a review of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Halton, which must be consistent with the National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management. The Board will continue to be further appraised of progress in relation to flood risk management activities and the implementation of the Council's duties and functions as these develop.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Legal Implications - Halton as a LLFA has a statutory duty under the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 to produce a PFRA update and submit a Review and Annexes to the Environment Agency by 22nd June 2017.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton - There are no implications associated with this report.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton - There are no implications associated with this report.

6.3 A Healthy Halton -There are no implications associated with this report.

6.4 A Safer Halton -There are no implications associated with this report.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal - The PFRA will be of considerable value to the spatial planning and development process. The analyses undertaken and outputs from the assessment will help to promote sustainable development and support a more strategic approach to implementing sustainable surface water drainage solutions.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 If Halton defaulted in its duty to undertake a PFRA and submit a Preliminary Assessment Report within the timescales set by Defra, under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the Government may direct another risk management authority to exercise those functions and recover the costs of compliance from Halton.

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

- Halton Borough Council - Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment Review Document and Self-Assessment Form
- Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) Final Guidance (Environment Agency)

- Place of Inspection - Highways Division, Municipal Building, Widnes
- Contact Officer – Jonathan Farmer

Appendix 1 PFRA Review Preliminary Assessment Report (Note: 46 page report including PFRA Analysis plus figures/maps)