

Report to:

TOURISM ECONOMY AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Relevant Officer:

Mr John Greenbank, Senior Democratic Governance Adviser
(Scrutiny)

Date of Meeting:

14 April 2021

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF FLOOD RISK STRATEGY

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To update on the work undertaken by scrutiny members on the review of Flood risk Strategy.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To consider the update , the recommendations made and identify any further work to be undertaken on Flood Risk.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure the Committee has an overview of ongoing work.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

6.1 On 11 February 2020 members of the Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee held a Review Panel meeting to consider the Flood Risk Annual Report and the draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Lancashire 2021-2027.

Councillor Gerard Walsh chaired the meeting with the following Members in attendance:

Councillor Paula Burdess

Councillor Fred Jackson

Councillor Jane Hugo

Councillor Paul Wilshaw

Councillor Paul Galley

Councillor Jim Hobson, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment, Mr John Blackledge, Director of Communities and Environment and Ms Clare Nolan-Barnes, Head of Coastal and Environmental Partnerships, were also in attendance.

Mr Blackledge and Ms Nolan-Barnes presented the draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Lancashire 2021-2027 to the review panel.

The review panel heard that officers were looking to increase public engagement to address flood risk issues in local communities. As part of this forums in Anchorsholme and Valencia had been contacted and volunteers had come forward to offer input into planning to manage future flood risk.

Members of the review questioned when the Local Flood Risk Forums would be established and were informed that their implementation had been delayed by Covid-19 but that it was intended that work on starting them would begin in February/March 2021. But it was recognised that flooding was a subject of particular public concern and that many people were willing to come forward.

The review welcomed the establishment of Local flood Risk Forums and asked that an update on their establishment be provided to the TEC Scrutiny Committee's June meeting.

The Strategy also outlined that great resources will be allocated to flood risk management by the Council, including some officers from Development Management. An Asset Register of flood management infrastructure was also being developed. A copy of which would be circulated to members once it had been completed.

Standardised reporting of flooding events had also been looked at and the format for reporting was now the same across the north west. This would make the sharing of information and easier and clearer for partners. Officer also worked closely with Housing Developers to help identify potential issues and that the correct planning approvals are being sought. It was hoped that this approach would reduce flooding

events by preventing issues before they occur.

Officers also stressed that in future the Council would seek to focus on work that was less 'piecemeal' and instead look to understand how to join-up projects to achieve a greater impact. In order to accomplish this Officer would be looking at understanding how flooding occurred in Blackpool, and what assets were available to address it.

Greater pooling of expertise and resources of Flood management was also discussed, with the Lancashire wide approach to preparing and reacting to flooding planned. Partners included Lancashire County Council, United Utilities, the Environment Agency, Fylde Borough Council and Wyre District Council.

The details of a number of bids to help fund flood management projects were outlined at the meeting. Blackpool was reported as leading on a bid for funds from the Innovative Resilience Fund, for a portion of the £50m available on behalf of Lancashire. If this was successful the funding would be of benefit to authorities across the county. The Council had also bid for £10m from the Government for 18 schemes to help flood management in Blackpool. One of these schemes involved the dredging of the Stanley Park Lake, which would also improve the quality of the lakes water.

It was expected that the Government would identify 20 schemes nationally to receive funding. Officers confirmed that they would report back on the outcomes of these bids to members.

Members of the review also discussed the changes that were occurring to beach topography caused by reduction in sand. Mr Blackledge explained in response that funding had been received for 2021-2022 to do a review of the topography and that the results would inform future flooding work.

The Review agreed to recommend that an update on Flood Risk Work be provide to the 16 June 2021 meeting of the TEC Scrutiny Committee. In this report members asked that the following information be provided:

- Details on the implementation of the strategy,
- The establishment of Local Flood Forums; and
- Progress on bids submitted (the potential work at Stanley Park Lake in particular).

6.1 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 None.

8.0 Legal considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Human resources considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Equalities considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Financial considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Risk management considerations:

12.1 None.

13.0 Ethical considerations:

13.1 None.

14.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

14.1 None.

15.0 Background papers:

15.1 None.