

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE

6 September 2022

North Yorkshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

Report of the Corporate Director Business and Environmental Services

1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To provide an update on the consultation and the process associated with the publication of the revised North Yorkshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS)
- 1.2 To seek approval of the Executive Committee, in relation to the revision of the North Yorkshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, ahead of consideration by Full Council.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 North Yorkshire as Lead Local Flood Authority is required by the Flood and Water Management Act (2010) to “*develop, maintain, apply and monitor a local flood risk strategy*”.
- 2.2 North Yorkshire first published the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) in 2016. The County Council is required to review and update the Strategy every six years.
- 2.3 The previous Strategy document has been reviewed and updated by officers to reflect national priorities as detailed in the updated Environment Agency National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England.
- 2.4 The draft revised document has been circulated to Risk Management Authorities (RMAs), key stakeholders and neighbouring Lead Local Flood Authorities for their input which is key to the Strategy, given the number of interested organisations, with key roles, which have to work together to deliver flood risk mitigation.
- 2.5 An engagement event was undertaken with RMA’s and key stakeholders on the 27 April 2022. This session focussed on the objectives and action plan, capturing the key targets and deliverables which it is considered will add value to flood risk management in the local authority area.
- 2.6 A draft revised document was produced which incorporated the feedback from the engagement. This was presented for public consultation, which commenced on 13 May 2022 and closed on 12 June 2022. Feedback has also been sought from members of the Yorkshire Association of Local Councils.
- 2.7 A draft document was presented to the Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 July 2022. Changes to the strategy following comments from the committee have been incorporated into the strategy documents. In summary the committee requested the following:

- Strengthen the strategy to reflect the need for the LLFA to take into account local communities local knowledge of drainage and flood risk issues when responding to consultations, strategies and local plan allocations in relation to the planning process.’
- Provide a user friendly and accessible document that summaries the local Flood Risk Management Strategy

2.8 Key changes to the draft Strategy include a review of the action plan (Section 2) setting out what has been achieved since 2015. Furthermore, a revised set of actions for the next period of the plan (2022 -2027) have also been included. In addition, the strategic objectives have been updated following an internal review and consultation with Risk Management Authorities and key stakeholders.

3.0 Key proposed objectives in the revised Strategy:

3.1 The key objectives that are proposed to take forwards in the revised Strategy are:

1. A greater role for communities in managing flood risk, an opportunity that can also be developed further through LGR
2. Improved knowledge and understanding of flood risk and management responsibilities within NYCC and amongst partners, stakeholders, communities and the media
3. Sustainable development utilising sustainable drainage where ever possible
4. Improved knowledge of watercourse network and drainage infrastructure
5. Flood risk management measures that deliver social, economic and environmental benefits
6. Best use of all potential funding opportunities to deliver flood risk management measures

3.2 The action plan will include work which supports the achievement of these objectives which can be found in Section 2 of the Strategy.

3.3 The draft Strategy is included as Appendix A to this report.

4.0 Results of the Public Consultation

4.1 The public consultation received views from 26 individuals and six organisations. The feedback from the public consultation has now been incorporated into the revised Strategy. A detailed report of responses and comments is included in Appendix B and will be published as part of the Strategy later this year. A summary of the responses and some key highlights are set out below:

4.2 Overall the majority of respondents (80%) believed that the draft Strategy sets out the most significant flood risk issues for North Yorkshire, which is very positive. Of those that did not think so, the reasons identified included the lack of detail on main river flooding (e.g. Tadcaster), flooding from agricultural surface water (e.g. Filey), coastal flooding and flooding from new developments. Taking into account that the definition of ‘Local Flood Risk’ does not include flood risk from main river or coastal sources, this is to be expected. None the less, a number of projects are in high-risk areas where the risk may be from main rivers, for example, and the County Council will continue to work in partnership with the relevant agencies/organisations in these situations.

4.3 In relation to the public’s views on the objectives set out in the Strategy, 42% ‘definitely agreed’ and 39% ‘somewhat agreed’ with the objectives. Of the objectives, the highest scores related to:

- a) *‘Best use of all potential funding opportunities to deliver flood risk management measures’* (81% ‘definitely agreed’)

- b) *'Improved knowledge of watercourse network and drainage infrastructure'* (81% 'definitely agreed').
- c) *Sustainable and appropriate development utilising sustainable drainage where ever possible* (75% 'definitely agreed')

4.4 In response to the options presented on the key themes for managing flood risk; natural flood management and the promotion of sustainable drainage systems (both 84%) were chosen as the most important followed by climate change (63%) and community involvement (59%).

4.5 The responses from the public consultation in relation to these themes are grouped together as below:

4.5.1 **Sustainable Drainage Systems, planning process and development** - The theme of sustainable drainage and in particular new developments was highlighted. Comments included the need to avoid passing risk elsewhere in relation to planning permissions; the need for greater detail on flood risk prior to planning permission being approved; no building on flood plains.

4.5.2 **Community Involvement** - We noted several comments with regards to community involvement. One response suggested that there was a need for a more streamlined and integrated response to support communities before, during and after flood events (including the development of action plans and the need for emotional support). Respondents highlighted 'the lack of influence that communities can have on flood risk' and the need to enable communities to 'influence decision making'. Some of the practical examples that were suggested in terms of supporting communities in this way included:

- the need for one point of contact and trained personnel to provide guidance and leadership to communities affected by flooding due to the multi-faceted and complex set of organisations involved;
- better coordination between agencies;
- single point of contact for emergency flooding situations and reporting flooding;
- provision of specific flood prevention equipment.
- Luttons Parish Council illustrated a community/North Yorkshire County Council project as a best practice example to clear a local watercourse.

In terms of ongoing work with the communities, North Yorkshire County Council will build on the community engagement work that has recently been undertaken in the Dales, following significant flooding. There are also a number of best practice examples of community involvement across North Yorkshire that will be used to form the basis of further community work. Actions relating to community engagement and a more integrated response to flooding have been included in the Strategy Action Plan.

4.5.3 **Preventative methods** – A number of respondents identified the need for greater emphasis on prevention which included:

- clearing of watercourses/rivers (dredging) and improved maintenance of existing infrastructure
- natural flood management measures (tree planting), introduction of beavers, permaculture methods
- work on land management techniques to stop agricultural run-off e.g. Filey.

Natural flood management is a particularly strong theme within the consultation. Projects such as the central government funded 'Innovation Resilience Fund' with York City Council are an example of the innovative projects that will look to incentivise landowners in the upstream catchments to deliver benefits to downstream communities. Where opportunities

exist elsewhere in the County North Yorkshire County Council will utilise these and work with communities and partners in high risk areas.

4.5.4 **Climate Change and Zero Carbon.** Comments included the need to challenge central government on planning laws and the need for a robust strategy on zero carbon; and NYCC should act on its own climate change strategy.

4.6 In relation to the action plan set out in section 2 of the Strategy 39% 'definitely agreed' and 39% 'somewhat agreed' with the actions. A summary of comments not covered in this report so far are included below:

- Greater awareness raising of the support that is available e.g. flood doors.
- Need to involve the internal drainage boards in actively managing waterways.
- Need to focus on areas of flooding regardless of number of buildings flooded.
- Need to build in emergency relocation plans and build in direct assistance for those affected by extreme weather events.

5.0 Outline of the issue that a decision is being sought on

5.1 Approval and recommendation by the Executive is being sought to ensure that North Yorkshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority comply with the legal requirements to "*develop, maintain, apply and monitor a local flood risk strategy*". This legal requirement has been achieved by carrying out a review of and updating the strategy in accordance with current national, regional and local policies alongside extensive consultation with key stakeholders

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 In conclusion, the objectives and actions within the Strategy have been updated to reflect the themes/issues brought up by key stakeholders/respondents consulted. This is positive and ensures that the Strategy is focussing on the relevant areas important to key stakeholders and those communities affected by flooding over the period of the strategy up until 2027. There is a need for the comments from the public consultation to be shared and discussed with partner organisations to incorporate and update existing or planned projects to better reflect the needs of those high-risk communities.

6.2 Pending approval and recommendation from the Executive, the draft Strategy will be submitted to and seek approval and adoption from the following:

- Full Council Meeting (17 Nov 2022)

6.2 Once approved the Strategy will be placed on the North Yorkshire County Council website.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 This report to the Executive is submitted for approval and recommendation to the Full Council. Notwithstanding this, the action plan includes indicative costs for a series of proposed actions relating to the County Council's functions. The allocation of funds towards specific projects will however be submitted for approval to the relevant decision maker when more detailed information is known and at the appropriate stages of project development. There is therefore no financial implication associated with the Strategy review at this stage, although decisions will be required during its delivery.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 As Lead Local Flood Authority, North Yorkshire County Council is required under the Flood and Water Management Act, 2010 Section 9: Local flood Risk Management strategies: England) to ‘develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for local flood risk management in its area (a “local flood risk management strategy”). This report and the appended draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy have been prepared in order to comply with the legal requirement.
- Further consideration of whether any legal implications arise will be required during any delivery of key projects within the proposed Strategy.
 - Proper consideration as outlined in Appendix C is being given to equalities issues that are pertinent to the Strategy.

9.0 Equalities Implications

- 9.1 See Appendix C.

10.0 Climate Change Implications

- 10.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any adverse climate change impacts arising from the recommendations of this report. It is the view of officers that the recommendations included in this report do not have any adverse impacts and/or they will be mitigated during the lifetime of the Strategy. A copy of the Climate Change Assessment is available in Appendix D.

11.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The endorsement of the strategy by the committee will ensure that the County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority can be effective in supporting communities to be more resilient and better protected from flood risk.

12.0 Recommendations

- 12.1 The Executive is asked to approve and recommend the proposed draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.
- 12.2 Subject to any views expressed at the meeting, the Executive is asked to recommend the draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy to Full Council for approval and adoption.

KARL BATTERSBY
Corporate Director - Business and Environmental Services

Author or report: Mark Henderson

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A – Draft North Yorkshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
Appendix B – Report on Consultation Responses and Comments
Appendix C – Equality Impact Assessment
Appendix D – climate Change Assessment