

Report to:	Cabinet	Date of Meeting:	24 June 2021
Subject:	National Flood Risk Management Plan approval		
Report of:	Head of Highways and Public Protection	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Health and Wellbeing Cabinet Member – Locality Services		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary: The Flood Risk Regulations 2009 require the publication of a strategy to manage flooding areas designated at high risk, in Sefton this includes Southport, Formby and South Sefton. As a Local Authority who had measures in the last strategy (2015-2021) Sefton must review progress on these actions, this review is detailed in this report. The Environment Agency are leading on an updated strategy and have developed a series of measures to address flood risk. Prior to public consultation these must be approved by the relevant Local Authority.

Recommendation(s):

That Cabinet:

- (1) Approve the review of 2015-2021 FRMP measures (Section 2).
- (2) Approve the new measures for public consultation by the Environment Agency (Section 3).
- (3) Delegate the monitoring of this work to Sefton’s Strategic Flood Resilience Group.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

New measures have been developed in conjunction with Sefton Council and seek to address key risks. Prior to the Environment Agency consulting on these measures they need to be approved locally by the relevant local authority. Progress on the previous measures are also reported to Overview and Scrutiny as part of the annual scrutiny of Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

The Measures went through several iterations, but it is a legal requirement that they be produced for the new plan and reviewed for the old plan.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs – There are no revenue implications associated with this report at this stage

(B) Capital Costs – Projects will need to secure capital funding to enable them to proceed. This will include the Environment Agency grant in aid funding and Regional Flood and Coastal Committee local levy funding.

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):	
The measures within the plan are subject to resources being available to deliver them. Grant funding will be sourced to deliver these action and fund and additional staff resources.	
Legal Implications:	
The development of these measures is a requirement under the Flood Risk Regulations 2009.	
Equality Implications:	
There are no equality implications.	
Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	N
Have a neutral impact	Y
Have a negative impact	N
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Y
<p>This report sets the strategic direction and publishes the national, regional and local measures, though it does not specify the method of delivery for these measures. The measures will be assessed on an individual basis for their climate impacts when they are taken forward for delivery. The Environment Agency has set itself climate impact targets with net zero by 2030 and this is being linked into delivery of actions.</p> <p>Many of the measures are in place to mitigate or adapt to existing impacts of climate change, whilst others are considering additional future climate change impacts. In this respect they will have a positive impact. However, the method of delivery isn't defined and as such the implications of this cannot be assessed. The measures will seek to be delivered in a climate sensitive manner and minimise any impacts. On balance the report has a neutral impact.</p>	

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: This report addresses flood risk management. Flooding is an issue that has potentially devastating impact on people, including vulnerable people.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: Sets the strategic direction for flood risk management in high flood risk areas in Sefton in line with the national flood risk strategy.
Commission, broker and provide core services: As Lead Local Flood Authority Flood Risk Management is a core service of the Council.
Place – leadership and influencer: N/A
Drivers of change and reform: N/A
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: N/A
Greater income for social investment: N/A
Cleaner Greener N/A

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6395/21) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.4595/21) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Environment Agency held several workshops with risk management authorities to discuss the risks and develop the measures. This included United Utilities, local Environment Agency teams, Sefton MBC Highways Maintenance and FCERM teams.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting

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Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

Enc. 1 for FRMP Formby – Draft description of risk and measures for the Formby Flood risk area

Enc. 2 for FRMP Liverpool and Sefton – Draft description of risk and measures for the Liverpool and (South) Sefton Flood risk area

Enc. 3 for FRMP Southport – Draft description of risk and measures for the Southport Flood risk area

Background Papers:

The following background papers, which are not available elsewhere on the Internet can be accessed on the Council website:

Preliminary flood risk assessment review Cabinet paper [Issue details - Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment Review](http://smbc-modgov-03/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=49009&Opt=0&LO=1) [http://smbc-modgov-03/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=49009&Opt=0&\\$LO\\$=1](http://smbc-modgov-03/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Id=49009&Opt=0&LO=1)

1. Introduction/Background

1.1. The Environment Agency has been updating the national Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMP), as required in the [Flood Risk Regulations 2009](#). They explain the risk of flooding from rivers, the sea, surface water, groundwater and reservoirs and set out how risk management authorities will work with communities to manage flood risk over 6-year periods. The plans emphasise impacts on people, the economy and the environment, including cultural heritage and they must:

- focus on communities and partnership working
- co-ordinate across catchments and coastlines
- consider sustainability issues
- take a proportional, risk-based approach
- look to achieve multiple benefits for the environment and society
- encourage beneficiaries to invest in flood risk management

The objectives should be consistent with the [National FCERM Strategy for England 2020](#) and should cover:

- the risk to life, residential properties, services and infrastructure, vulnerable communities, and any other relevant aspects (social objectives)
- agricultural economy, commercial properties, leisure and tourism, and any other relevant aspects (economic objectives)
- biodiversity, geology and soils, geomorphology / hydromorphology, water quality, historic environment, and any other relevant aspects (environmental objectives)

The FRMP focuses on the areas identified in the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA). The PRFA identified the following areas as being at high flood risk within Sefton:

- Southport to Ainsdale
- Formby
- South Sefton - Maghull, Crosby to Bootle (continued across the boundary into Liverpool)

- 1.2. Where a Lead Local Flood Authority had measures in the first cycle FRMP, they are required (under the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 [FRRs]) to review progress made in implementing the measures.

2. Review of 2015-2021 FRMP measures

- 2.1. The [2015-2021 FRMP](#) identified measures for the whole northwest flood risk area to be led by the Environment Agency and specific measures for the Sefton Flood risk area. The FRRs require a review of the implementation of the measures in the last FRMP. This review looks at the measures that are specific to Sefton Council.

- **Measure: Flood Risk Educational Resource Pilot** - Produce an interactive educational resource for North West schools to raise public awareness of flood risks.

Review: A proposal was developed for this measure but this action was superseded by the development of the [Flood Hub](#) by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee which contains a variety of accessible material and resources.

- **Measure: Crosby Marine Lake to Formby Point Strategy Delivery Programme.** The strategy study recommended a mixture of capital and revenue maintenance to extend life of defences with rebuild deferred to later in the programme. The defences will need some form of replacement or significant capital maintenance to extend lifetimes.

Review: The Crosby Flood and Coastal Defence Scheme business case for the additional defences and replacement of life exceeded defences is in development. However, the scheme hasn't scored high enough to attract grant-in-aid to enable delivery. Due to significant gaps in funding the delivery of the project has been delayed whilst partnership contributions are explored and secured. It is anticipated that this action can proceed in 2027.

- **Measure: Sefton Strategic Surface Water Management Plan Delivery Programme.** The first generation of the surface water management plan modelled flood risk using available data. There were several assumptions made as data wasn't available, such as culverts, canal and railway. As and when data is available the model will be updated and refined to provide better focus to reduce surface water flood risk and look to deliver appropriate schemes. The initial strategy will explore a variety of options and identify and prioritise several different schemes at different locations across the borough.

Review: The Level 2 Surface Water Management Plan is underway to update and refine modelling and is continuing after being delayed due to access to external datasets and impacts of covid. The review will identify where options can be developed to manage surface water flood risk.

- **Measure: Fouracres, Maghull Asset Management Plan** – Identify and prioritise options for managing the residual flood risk of the community at risk in Fouracres Road. These options will be developed with the local community whilst supporting them to become more resilient to potential future events.

Review: Investigations were undertaken, and options assessed but these were practically and financially unviable through the grant-in-aid process. The project is being carried forward and aligned with other proposals within the Maghull area, to seek to develop a viable programme of works. Measure to address flooding in Fouracres, and wider in Maghull, were also central to the unsuccessful Innovation Bid made in January 2021.

- **Measure: Northwest Strategic Coastal Monitoring Programme** – Address the inconsistent manner by which coastal monitoring has historically been undertaken along the north west coastline and to ensure a complete coverage along the entire length. Also ensuring that a coherent package of monitoring data collection, collation and analysis is undertaken.

Review: Project completed 2016-2021 – All the datasets identified in the programme were captured and made available through the programme's [web portal](#). Analysis and interpretation of these was undertaken and provided to the relevant authorities across the North West. A continuation of the project has been approved for 2021-2027 by the Environment Agency and grant in aid has been allocated. The programme will continue to collect data to inform strategic coastal monitoring decisions and is being aligned closer to the Shoreline Management Plan.

- **Measure: Formby Strategic Flood Risk Management Programme** - Formby area has had a number of recent flooding incidents primarily from surface water. The area was identified within the SWMP and PFRA as being at risk of significant past and future flooding. Disparate schemes have led to limited benefit and a coordinate approach is needed to reduce flooding across Formby. A variety of options will be considered and implemented, including attenuation, resilience, re-routing watercourse and up-grading watercourses to deliver a reduction in flood risk.

Review: The project was working with Formby Flood Action Group, though progress has slowed due to resource levels in this group and covid impacts. The initial focus was better understanding the flood dynamics within high risk areas in Formby. The project is being carried forward and is awaiting the outcomes of the Surface Water Management Plan level 2 to inform options in the area.

- **Measure: Sefton Flood Storage and Wet Habitat Creation** - The programme will identify and deliver opportunities for habitat creation and

enhancements as part of flood/erosion works that using flood storage as the main delivery options.

Review: This project has been delayed whilst the ecological impacts were assessed and commented on by Natural England. The scope of the project has had to be significantly amended following the habitat risk assessment and will move forward as only maintenance activities to the watercourse that passes through the designated site.

- 2.2. In summary, many measures have been delayed but are still within Sefton's delivery programme. The delays largely fall into two categories – challenges in securing funding to deliver interventions and delays due to the complex interactions between different sources of flooding and different systems making it difficult to identify viable options.

Securing funding has been a significant issue for delivery of measures within Sefton. The grant-in-aid funding is a national, competitive assessment process based on the cost benefits of moving properties to lower flood risk banding. Benefits in the future are discounted and the dispersed nature of our flood risk makes it difficult to score high enough to secure enough grant-in-aid to deliver schemes.

A new funding scoring process has been introduced in April 2021 which may enable schemes within Sefton to score higher and attract more funding, though they are likely to need partnership contributions to secure enough funding for delivery.

3. New Measures 2021-2027 for public consultation by the Environment Agency

- 3.1. The FRMP sets out measures to address flood risk, across the PFRA areas and the region. Sefton Council has been working with the Environment Agency on the development of new measures for these sites within Sefton. These draft measures are set out below for each area and the description of the flood risk area is included in the enclosures.

3.2. Formby Flood Risk Area (Enc. 1)

- By 2023, Sefton Council and United Utilities will work in partnership to progress recommendations from the Surface Water Management Plan level 2 study, in the Formby Area to establish a priority-based programme for reducing the risk of surface water flooding to communities.
- By 2027, Sefton Council will support the Highways Authority and Network Rail to better understand flood risk to their networks in the Formby Area to help develop partnership working opportunities to aid in the management of flood risk to key transport routes.
- By 2023, The Environment Agency and Sefton Council will review maintenance standards of main rivers and ordinary watercourses in the Formby Flood Risk Area to better understand, prioritise and plan future maintenance needs to reduce the likelihood of flooding.
- By 2022, The Environment Agency will undertake wider partnership engagement on the Environment Agency Groundwater Management Study in the Formby Flood Risk Area to ensure all partners understand wider flood risk

interactions to ensure that any onwards investment in the area tackles combined flood risk issues.

- By 2027, the Environment Agency and Sefton Council and United Utilities will work with the Formby Flood Action Group to improve the uptake of flood warning services and improve community resilience mechanisms in the Formby Flood Risk Area to reduce the consequences of flood events to the local community.
- Between 2025 and 2027, the Environment Agency and Sefton Council, Lancashire County Council and United Utilities will work together to consider implications of revised climate change predictions and guidance and changes to other technical understandings in the Lower Alt Catchment to update the understanding of both fluvial and surface water systems with the intention to reduce the consequences of flood events and the risk of surface water flooding .

3.3. **Liverpool and (South) Sefton Flood Risk Area (Sefton specific measures) (Enc. 2)**

- Between 2021 and 2027, the Environment Agency and Liverpool City Council and Sefton Council will undertake updates to the national flood risk maps in the Liverpool area to ensure that DEFRA is sharing the most up to date and validated information with regards to flood risk.
- By 2023, Sefton Council and Risk Management Authorities will take forward any recommendations from the Surface Water Management Plan level 2 study, on a priority basis, in the Liverpool area to aid in the long-term management of surface water flooding.
- Between 2025 and 2027, the Environment Agency and Risk Management Authorities will work together to consider implications of revised climate change predictions and guidance and changes to other technical understandings in the Lower Alt Catchment to update the understanding of both fluvial and surface water systems with the intention to reduce the consequences of flood events and the risk of surface water flooding.
- By 2027, Sefton Council and Liverpool City Council will support the Liverpool Combined Authority to identify flood risk to the designated Key Route Network in the Liverpool area to support critical transport network suppliers such as the Highways Authority, Highways England and Network Rail to risk assess and manage flood risk to key transport routes.
- By 2025, the Environment Agency and Liverpool City Council and Sefton Council will review maintenance standards of main rivers and ordinary watercourses in the Liverpool area to better understand future maintenance needs taking into consideration the impact of climate change to reduce the likelihood of flooding to communities.
- By 2025, Sefton Council will seek partnership contributions for the Crosby Coastal Erosion and Flood Risk Management Scheme in the Crosby area to promote works that reduce coastal erosion and flood risk along that frontage of the coastline.

- By 2027, the Environment Agency will investigate the viability of a flood alleviation scheme in Whinney Brook, Maghull to reduce the risk of flooding from both fluvial and surface water causes.

3.4. **Southport flood risk area (Enc. 3)**

- By 2022, the Environment Agency will engage with Sefton Council and United Utilities on the Crossen's Embankment Strategic Flood Assessment in the Southport flood risk areas to ensure that the interaction of the embankment with wider flood risk is fully understood and that all risks and opportunities are taken in to consideration when deciphering the assets future.
- By 2022, the Environment Agency will undertake wider partnership engagement on the Environment Agency Groundwater Management Study in the Southport flood risk areas to ensure all partners understand wider flood risk interactions to ensure that any onwards investment in the area tackles combined flood risk issues
- By 2023, the Environment Agency and Sefton Council will review maintenance standards of main rivers and ordinary watercourses in the Southport flood risk areas to better understand and programme future flood risk management maintenance needs.
- By 2023, Sefton Council and Natural England will determine relevant works required to maintain the free drainage of surface water coastal outfalls in an environmentally sensitive manner in the Southport flood risk areas, along Sefton's coastline from Ainsdale to Southport, to have positive benefits for inland flooding as a result of subsequent works to limit the accretion of sediments within outfall watercourses to reduce the likelihood of flooding.
- By 2026, Sefton Council will work with partners to review the feasibility of any options previously discounted for Birkdale and Hillside in the Southport flood risk areas to re-assess their viability as a product of the new funding rules to reduce the likelihood of flooding.
- By 2025, Sefton Council will, subject to cost viability, work with partners to progress a flood alleviation scheme in and around Pool watercourse at Churchtown to reduce flood risk to communities living in the area.
- By 2027, Sefton Council will support the Highways Authority and Network Rail to better understand flood risk to their networks in the Southport flood risk areas to help develop partnership working opportunities to aid in the management of flood risk to key transport routes.
- By 2025, Sefton Council and United Utilities will work in partnership to deliver updates to the Surface Water Management Plan and associated surface water flood risk modelling in the Southport flood risk areas to identify locations for future opportunities for managing surface water flood risk.
- By 2027, Sefton Council and partners will work to ensure that, and Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management works undertaken will not be detrimental to the wider policy unit area in the Southport flood risk areas to ensure that natural working processes are not hindered, which act to protect the coastline and provide a vital habitat.

- By 2027, the Environment Agency and Sefton Council and United Utilities will work in partnership to improve the uptake of flood warning services and improve community resilience mechanisms in the Southport Flood Risk Area to reduce the consequences of flood events to the local communities.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1. The Environment Agency will now be collating and assessing the measures as they prepare to consult on the plans in 2021. This consultation should take place in October 2021. To undertake this consultation the measures need to be approved locally by the relevant local authority.