

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)	Date of Meeting:	Tuesday 7 November 2023
Subject:	Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Annual Report		
Report of:	Assistant Director of People (Operational In-House Services)	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Health and Wellbeing		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary: The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 previously required that arrangements be made to review and scrutinise the exercise by the Council as a Lead Local Flood Risk Authority of its flood risk management functions and coastal erosion risk management functions. Following the cessation of this requirement, O&S has requested that an annual Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) review be brought to them.

Recommendation(s): That Overview and Scrutiny (Regeneration and Skills);

(1) Review the report

(2) That any comments from this committee be referred to the Cabinet Member (Health & Wellbeing) for consideration.

(3) Note the future potential need for additional resources if Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act, 2010 is implemented.

(4) Review the need for future annual reports as it is no longer a requirement under the Flood and Water Management Act, 2010.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To ensure the committee's views are considered in the future delivery of the Council's Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management function.

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

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs. No additional resource implications.

(B) Capital Costs. Existing projects are being funded from grants from the Environment Agency. Grant aid will be sought for additional projects and schemes as required.

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): No additional resource implications to those required to deliver service.	
Legal Implications: There are no legal implications.	
Equality Implications: There are no equality implications.	
Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	Y/N
Have a neutral impact	Y /N
Have a negative impact	Y /N
The author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Y/N
<p>The content of this report sets out the work and project undertaken by the FCERM in managing flood risk. The nature of this work is to manage a climate impact on our communities. The approaches taken by FCERM are to adapt and mitigate the risks posed by climate change, from assessing planning applications to ensure future climate prediction are considered in designs, to designing in sustainable drainages systems within our sites. The schemes undertaken are designed to better understand and address flood risk now and into the future. Though over the short term some of the work, especially any construction can have a negative impact, its long-term goal is to provide improvements. It is therefore considered that the work has a positive effect on climate change.</p>	

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: not applicable
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: The work FCERM does is about informing and educating our communities about flood risk and ensuring they understand their role in managing flood risk.
Commission, broker and provide core services: not applicable
Place – leadership and influencer: We actively work in partnership with communities and other risk management organisations and authorities to ensure we can deliver our outcomes that tie into the 2030 vision.
Drivers of change and reform: by having an FCERM strategy in place and performance management systems in place we can ensure we are doing the right thing in the right way.

Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: Not applicable
Greater income for social investment: not applicable
Cleaner Greener: the assets we manage on the coast and inland as part of the Green Infrastructure service enable people to come and enjoy Sefton's natural beauty. The work we do to manage risk, understand risk, avoid increasing risk, reduce risk and reduce the consequences of flood risk both coastal and inland, directly supports Sefton's economy and people's health and wellbeing.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director Corporate Resources and Customer Services has been consulted and comments have been incorporated into the report (FD 7381/23)

The Chief Legal & Democratic Officer has been consulted and has no comments on the report (LD 5581/23).

(B) External Consultations

Not applicable

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee / Council meeting.

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Appendices:

Background Papers:

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

- [Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management strategy](#)
- [Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management business plan](#)
- [FCERM Flood Investigation Policy](#)

1. Introduction

The Annual Review covers a 12-month period from September 2022-2023 and details the following key areas:

- Information on **flooding & erosion incidents** experienced over the last year.
- Work progress relative to our **legislative responsibilities** as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), Riparian Owner & Coastal Authority.
- Work progress relative to our own **actions** set out in our Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) 2022-2030.
- Overview of annual finances

2. Overview of Flooding & Coastal Change Incidents October 2022 – September 2023

2.1 Inland Surface Water Flood events

The total flood incidents (all types) reported between Oct-2022 and Sep-23 was 68, 4 of which were the combined sewer at Crosby bursting. There were 7 reports of internal flooding (Internal flooding includes into the habitable part of a property, the main business and/or garages or outbuildings that are joined to the main property). The remaining 63 reports occurred on 8 separate dates, with the 23/7/2023 (27 reports) and 26/08/2023 (30 reports) being the most notable events. The large number of flood events occurring during the summer were due to July being one of the wettest on record. In comparison to 2021/22 which had one of the hottest summers on record. For Sefton the amount of rainfall increased by 11% from the previous year.

Out of the 64 flood incidents, 51 were attributed to surface water flooding, 5 to main river flooding, 7 were on the United Utilities systems and one requires further investigation to understand the flooding mechanism. Figure 1a highlights the distribution of flood incidents across the Sefton borough for 2022/23. The highest number of flood reports were received in the Sudell, Park and Molyneux wards (Maghull), as shown in figure 1b. Figure 1c highlights the land use of the areas that are experiencing flooding.

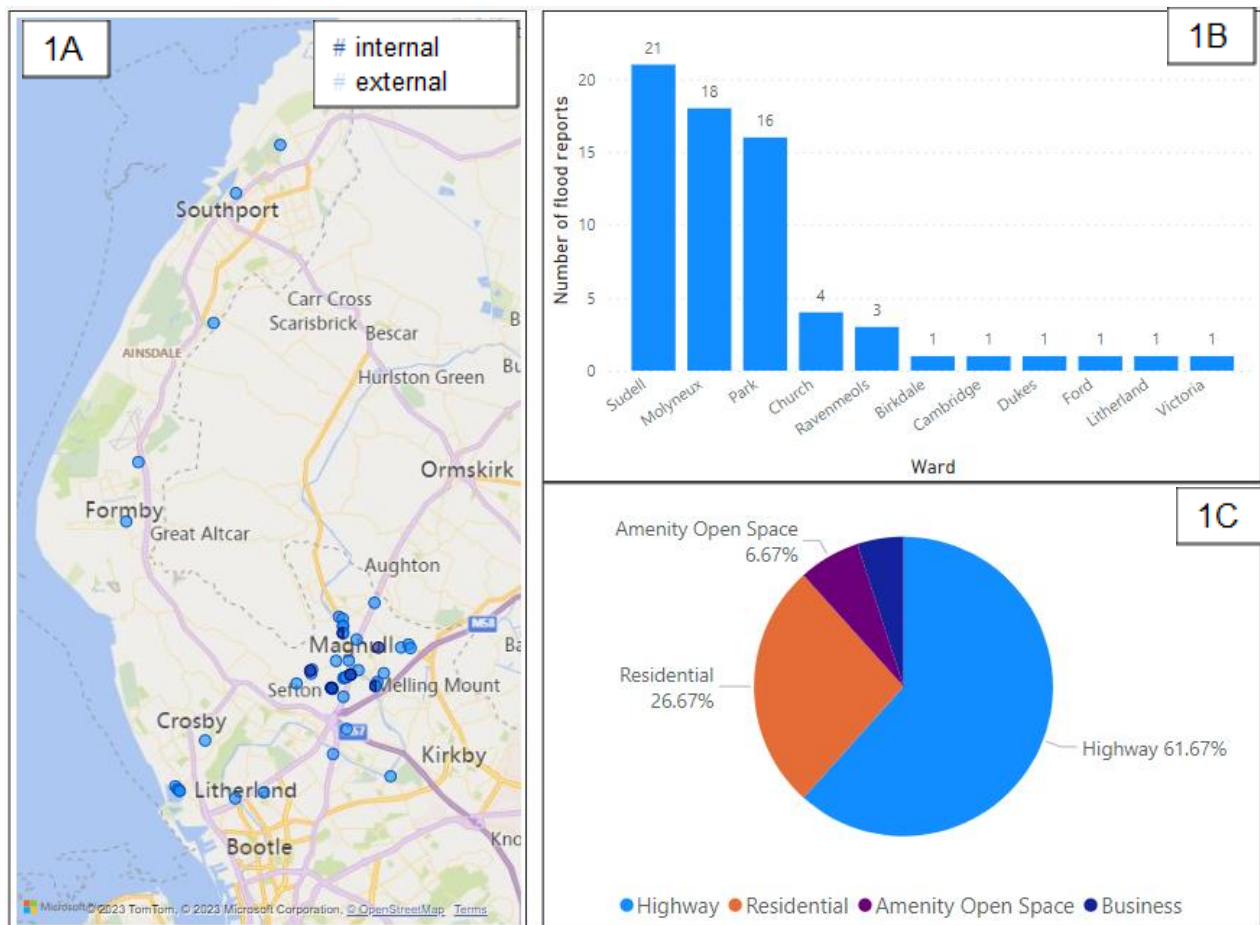


Figure 1a-c: This figure highlights the flood incidents across the Sefton Borough between Oct-22 to Sep-23. a.) Distribution and type of flooding incident - internal or external b.) Flood incidents reported by ward c.) Flood incident reports relating to land use type.

Since the introduction of the Flood and Water Management Plan in 2010 there has been 623 reports of flooding covering 204 events with 175 being reported as internal flood events. Of these events, 69 reports were made due to during Storm Christoph (January 2021), 38 Storm Eva (December 2015) and 41 August thunderstorms 2020 and 30 August thunderstorms 2023. This shows that the large storm events do cause a significant impact and are very hard to predict and manages. Figure 2 shows the distribution of events covering the borough, with 61% of all flood reports from residential properties and 6% from businesses. Figure 3 shows the flood reports by settlement with Maghull reporting the most floods (233) followed by Formby (69) and Southport (65). The reasons why Maghull seems particularly badly affected are not clear and work continues to investigate this. Whilst it has received more rainfall over this last reporting period (table 1) it isn't significantly higher than the other catchment areas. Maghull does have a complex network of watercourses, public sewers and highway drains, but so does Formby and Southport. It has a relationship with water levels in the main rivers that flow out via the River Alt, as does Formby. It also receives similar maintenance to the other areas. There may be higher community awareness in Maghull due to significant flooding in 2012 that may be contributing to the community being more willing to report incidents.

Catchment	Southport	Birkdale	Formby	Crosby	Maghull
Total rainfall mm	892	1026	987	963	1049

Table 1: Total catchment rainfall (mm) 1/10/2022-4/09/2023 derived from radar.

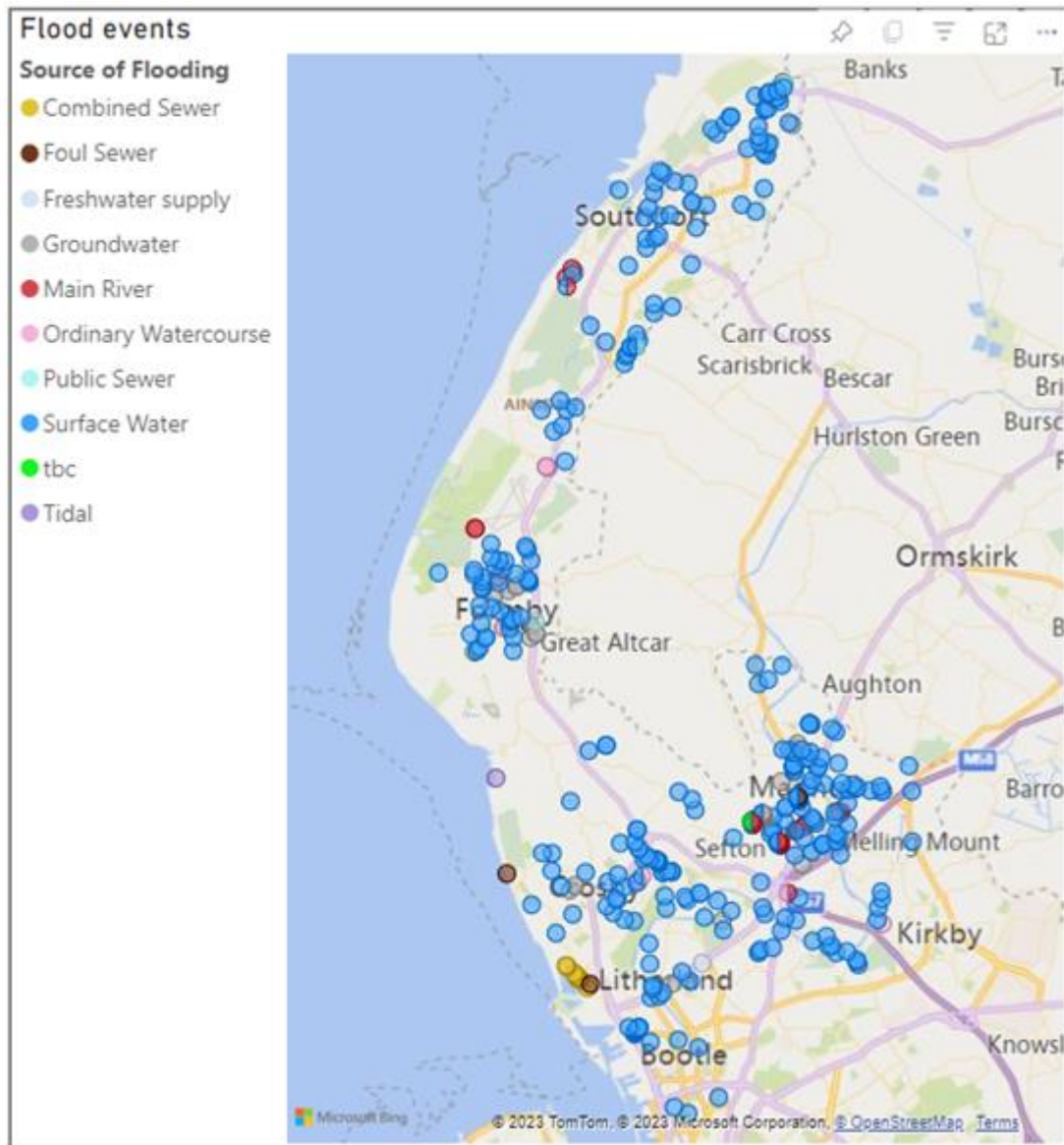


Figure 2. Sefton flood reports by source 01/04/2010 to 18/09/2023

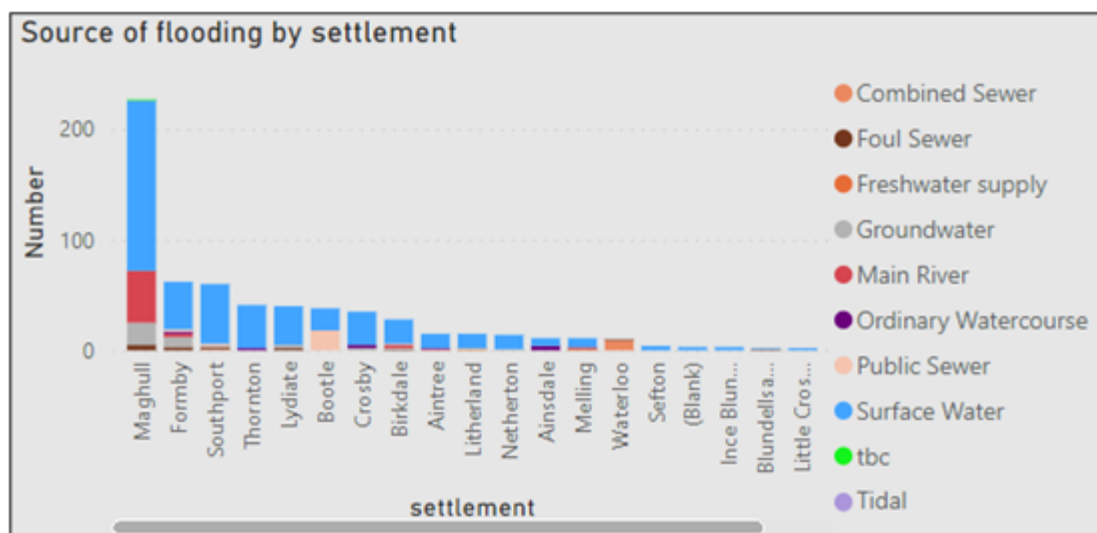


Figure 3. Source of flooding by settlement 1/4/2010-18/09/2023

2.2. Coastal Flooding & Change

During the 2022/2023 period there were no significant flooding or erosion events along the coast.

3. Legislative Responsibilities

Sefton's statutory duties and legislative responsibilities have been integrated into the actions of the FCERM business plan which is reported in section 4. However, it is useful to separate these actions out here for clarity to demonstrate how they are being delivered.

3.1. Delivery of Duties Under the Flood and Water Management Act (2010)

The Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010 established Sefton Council as a LLFA making it responsible for the management of 'local flood risk'. 'Local Flood Risk' refers to flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses (ditches, stream and smaller rivers). **As an LLFA, Sefton Council has several responsibilities (a-f).** The delivery of these responsibilities is outlined beneath each subtitle:

a. Prepare and maintain a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy which manages surface water runoff, groundwater & ordinary watercourses.

Under Section 9 of the FWMA, an LLFA has a duty to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. In January 2022, Sefton Council adopted its new [Local Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy 2022-2030](#) (see background papers to this report) which aligns with Sefton Council's 2030 Vision and takes into consideration the National FCERM strategy.

The local strategy provides information on who the risk management authorities are in Sefton, their relevant functions and how our approach to flood risk management is

coordinated. It offers information on how wider environmental objectives will be achieved in Sefton and provides timescales of when our approach will be reviewed.

The strategy is supported by a [Business Plan](#) which outlines Sefton’s future actions for managing flood and coastal erosion risk and provides detail on the process, timescales, benefits and costs associated with any proposed actions. This strategy provides local communities and stakeholders with clarity on flood risk management in Sefton.

b. Co-operate with other Risk Management Authorities (RMA) and work closely to ensure local and national plans are linked.

Over the past year Sefton Council has continued to work in partnership with other RMAs to reduce flood risk across the borough on a national-, regional- and project-scale. Sefton Council’s interests have been represented at the working groups displayed in Table 2 (both virtual and in-person, where suitable).

The attendance of these meetings has allowed RMAs to share examples of best practice, exchange data & information and examine more efficient & prioritised ways of achieving our actions in collaboration with our RMA partners.

Table 2: Meetings & Working Groups attended during the past 12-month period.

Meeting	Scale	RMAs Attending	Frequency	Outcomes
The Merseyside Flood Risk Partnership: Operational, Tactical and Strategic	Regional	EA, UU, Merseyside LLFAs	Quarterly	Worked in partnership to resolve local flood issues. Administered quick win funding
The NW Regional Flood & Coastal Committee	Regional	EA, UU, Regional Strategic Partnerships	Quarterly	New business plan approved. Increased quick win funding to £100k per partnership.
The Liverpool Bay Coastal Sub-Group	Regional	EA, maritime authorities	Biannually	Supported PhD studying coastal sediment dynamics from Great Orme to Formby Point
Northern Coastal Sub-Group	Regional	EA, maritime authorities	Quarterly	Supported and provided feedback to the coastal monitoring programme
The North West and North Wales Coastal Group	Regional	EA, UU, maritime authorities	Quarterly	Advancement of SMP action plan, funding secured for Eco buffers project.
Alt Crossens catchment Partnership	Regional	EA, UU	Quarterly	Coordination of project activity across catchment inc. several bids for watercourse improvements, studies on Alt and Melling Brook
National Network of Regional	National	EA, national regional	Quarterly	Exchange of knowledge across network – defining

Coastal Monitoring Programme Steering Group		monitoring programmes		specification for survey work
Flood Resilience Strategic Working Group	Sefton	EA, UU	Bimonthly	Reviewed options for Maghull and Lunt Meadows
The Maghull Operational Officer Group	Local	EA, UU	Monthly	Catchment based flood map, programme of works

c. Establish and maintain a register of structures or features which have a significant effect on flood risk.

Currently, we have a standard, excel-based asset register, however, this year we have been investigating new ways of cataloguing and maintaining our assets. The use of new software will allow an overhaul of our asset register, making it easier to record new asset locations and update records in real-time. The software will provide a collaborative and inclusive system that can be used across the team for inspecting and maintaining our assets. We aim to get the software running in 2022/23, making data available across the team and, where suitable, to the public. This move to an updated system will provide clarity to our record keeping and improve our ability to organise and manage future inspection/maintenance timetables.

d. Undertake the role of a statutory consultee to Sefton planning authorities by providing technical advice on surface water drainage.

Sefton Council, in its role as LLFA, is a statutory consultee and, therefore, provides technical advice on surface water drainage for major planning applications (≥ 10 dwellings/ ≥ 0.5 Ha). Figure 5 shows the number of different types of applications that were received.

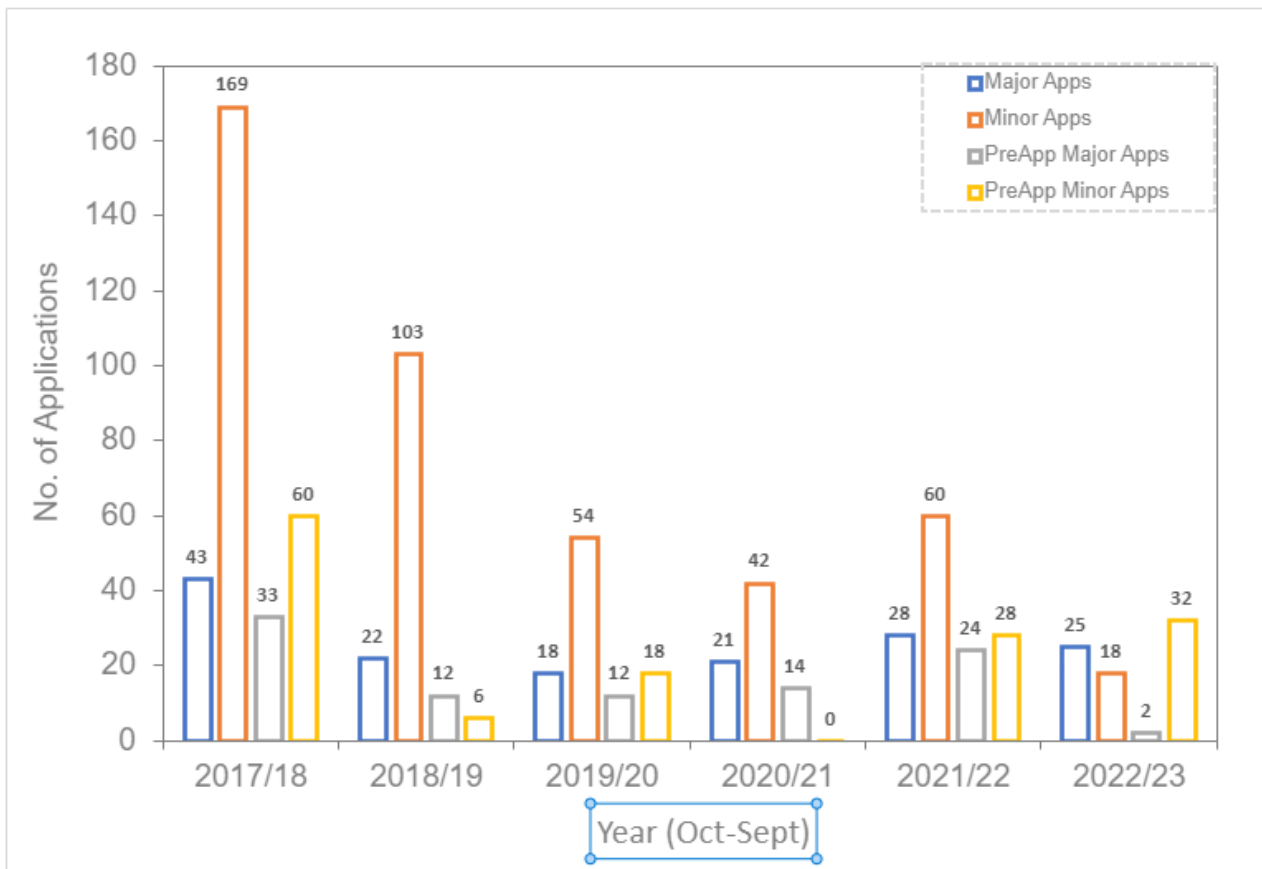


Figure 5: The annual (Sep-Sep) number of planning applications (Major, Minor, Major Pre. App, Minor Pre. App) received by the FCERM team from 2017-2023.

As reported in 2022 we were beginning to again receive an increasing number of minor planning applications which are outside the consultation duties of a LLFA. Discussions were undertaken with the planning Department to reiterate the use of standard conditions on all minor applications. This has resulted in a decrease in the numbers of minor applications being received.

To streamline response times, a SuDs (Sustainable Drainage) Pro-forma was developed in 2018/2019 and made a mandatory part of the checklist expected from applicants which should not be validated by planning until all documents requested in the checklist are submitted. The Pro-forma helps the Planning Department to ensure any major planning application has the required information before being passed to the LLFA for consultation. The Proforma has been revised and updated in Summer 2023 and includes an increased allowance for climate change from 40% to 45% and updated text to reflect the changes to the National Planning Policy.

We continue to face challenges with meeting the statutory deadlines, mainly due to discussions with developers taking an extended period. We have looked at options for bringing in additional resource to speed up our responses but have been unable to secure funding for this.

e. Investigate and publish reports on significant flooding in Sefton

Sefton Council has a duty to publish flood investigation reports under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The FCERM Flood Investigation Policy defines what is considered to be a 'significant flood event' and the criteria for triggering a Section

19 report. Section 19 reports provide an overview of the circumstances of the event for public record with the objectives of the report being to:

- Identify and explain the probable cause of flooding
- Identify which authorities, communities and individuals have relevant flood risk management powers and responsibilities
- Provide recommendations for each of those authorities, communities, and individuals
- Outline whether those authorities, communities or individuals have or will exercise their powers or responsibilities in response to the flooding incident.

The report does not include analysis of flood mechanisms or hydraulic modelling as it is not intended to provide solutions or mitigation options in relation to the event.

The LLFA cannot:

- Resolve the flooding issues or provide designed solutions
- Force authorities to undertake any of the recommended actions.

f. *Regulate ordinary watercourses through consent and enforcement powers to ensure riparian owners are undertaking their duties*

The Land Drainage Act 1991 and amended by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 requires anyone wishing to alter an ordinary watercourse to obtain consent from the Council prior to undertaking the work. Failure to do so can result in the enforcement action being taken by Sefton Council to ensure the capacity and condition of the watercourse are not compromised.

Where the flow of an Ordinary Watercourse is impeded, Sefton Council also has permissive powers to undertake enforcement action which are set out in the Land Drainage Act 1991 in three key sections:

- Section 21: Enforcement of obligations to repair watercourses, bridges, etc.
- Section 23 & 24: Prohibition on obstructions etc. in watercourses.
- Section 25: Powers to require works for maintaining flow of watercourse

Enforcement action will be considered within available resources, by serving notice, where it is in overriding public interest and efforts of negotiation have failed to resolve. Sefton Council will prioritise enforcement action as set out in table 2:

Priority	Likely consequence of flooding
1	Internal flooding to a dwelling or business premises
2	Flooding to highways defined as part of Sefton’s Key Route Network or critical infrastructure*
3	Flooding to highways defined as classified roads or local distributor roads.
4	Flooding to outbuildings, gardens, open space and farmland that is not on part of the functional floodplain

Table 3: Flood risk prioritisation

*Critical infrastructure refers to:

- Railway lines and stations.
- Police, ambulance and fire stations and command centres.
- Hospitals.
- Universities, colleges and schools.
- Local authority main offices.
- Residential institutions supporting vulnerable people.

Whilst there haven't been any formal enforcement action, we are undertaking negotiated actions with a number of Riparian owners.

3.2 Delivery of Duties as a Riparian Owner (Land Drainage Act, 1991)

Under the Land Drainage Act (1991), riparian landowners have a legal responsibility to maintain the free passage of water through the section of watercourse that flows across their land. A riparian owner possesses land which has a watercourse running next to, underneath or through it. As a landowner, and a riparian owner, Sefton Council has a legal obligation to actively maintain watercourses across its land. Figure 6 shows the proportion of spend as a Riparian owner and on Critical ordinary watercourses

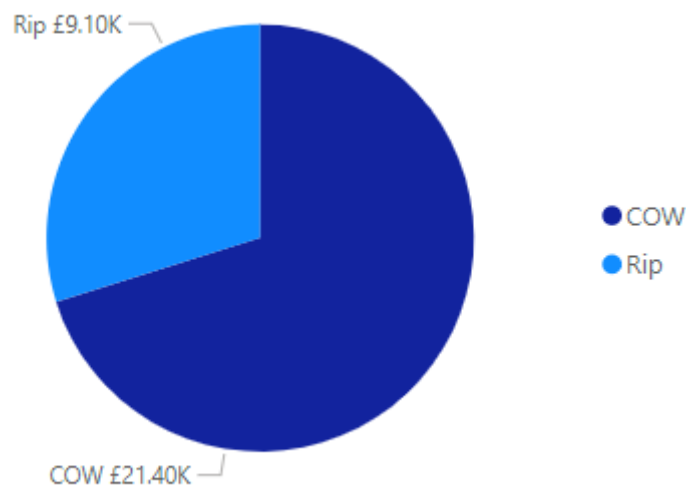


Figure 6: Revenue spend on watercourses as a riparian owner, on a critical watercourse or investigation.

3.3. Delivery of Duties under the Coast Protection Act (1949)

Under the Coast Protection Act (1949) Sefton Council was designated as a Coastal Protection Authority and as such has powers to protect and maintain the Sefton coast.

To ensure we are fulfilling our obligations the following maintenance has been undertaken:

- Crosby Seawall

Repairs are underway to the railings and promenade, both of which are ongoing issues. Railings are regularly damaged during storm events.

- Crosby Navigation Markers

The Trinity House inspection flagged the need to replace a navigation marker on the Alt training bank, this has been commissioned along with painting of a marker on Far Moss Pool outfall, Hightown.

- Coastal Defence Inspection.

Both hard and soft defences have been inspected.

4. Delivery of Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) Actions (2022-2030)

In 2021/22, the FCERM produced and adopted a new LFRMS and Business Plan. To ensure we are deliver on our actions our progress will be measured relative to the actions set out in the LFRMS Business Plan which were based on the Sefton 2030 Vision themes (Figure 7). The table below provides an update on the actions.



Figure 7: Themes of the Sefton Council’s Vision 2030

Together a Stronger Community
<p>Develop a FCERM communications plan to support the Local Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Strategy</p> <p>What we said we would do 2022/23: The 2022/23 Communications Plan is completed and will be in effect from September 2022. This year there is a greater emphasis on partnering with the Flood Hub Campaigns and releasing seasonally relevant information to the public to inform them of flooding and erosion in Sefton.</p> <p>What we have done 2022/23: The various monthly Flood hub monthly campaigns were supported through the Councils media sites.</p> <p>What we will do 2023/24: Continue to promote and support the regional Flood Hub campaigns and seek to add local issues to make more relevant to residents, if resources allow.</p>
<p>Engage with riparian owners about their responsibilities (Highways Maintenance</p>

to work with FCERM on this)

What we said we would do 2022/23: Following the inspection of riparian-owner ordinary watercourses, letters containing recommended actions will be sent to owners of poorly maintained watercourses to ensure the watercourse is able to receive water and discharge water across their land. This will be done on a risk-based priority.

What we have done 2022/23: Two area were targeted with advice about maintaining watercourses in private property with 64 letters being sent out.

What we will do 2023/24: Continue to engage with residents and provide advice when necessary with some targeted activity around the Pool Watercourse if the planned project goes ahead there.

Exchange knowledge and best practice with wider partners to ensure improvements, efficiencies and effective ways of working

What we said we would do 2022/23: Continue to attend partnership meetings and seek to co-develop, co-fund and co-deliver projects. Work with colleagues from Highways and Emergency Planning to review emergency response plans for flooding.

What we have done 2022/23: Over the past year Sefton Council has continued to work in partnership with other RMAs to reduce flood risk across the borough on a national-, regional- and project-scale. Sefton Council's interests has been represented at the working groups displayed in Table 1 in Section 3.1b. An officer from Sefton Council now chairs the Liverpool Bay Coastal Group. Officers contributed information to the Council's weather emergency plan.

What we will do 2023/24: Continue to attend existing meetings and further develop partnerships, with the Crosby and Pool Schemes being a key co developed project with the EA and UU that will begin to be delivered this year is approved.

Work with other Risk Management Authorities to identify viable options for Maghull

What we said we would do 2022/23: Seek to co-develop, co-fund and co-deliver projects with partners based on the outcomes of investigations and feasibility studies.

What we have done 2022/23: Quick win funding was secured to install flood doors on a number of businesses in Maghull and improvements were made to the local drainage system and a flow pathway was reestablished. In addition, works have been undertaken to improve highway drainage that was leading to property flooding. Options for Fouracres have been assessed and reviewed by United Utilities and further modelling and option assessment is underway.

What we will do 2023/24: Complete works to improve highway drainage network. Complete optioneering and modelling for Fouracres and seek funding to implement preferred solution. Review options for joint operational response plans with other RMA. Seek property level mitigation measures for Fouracres alongside options for a temporary or permanent pump with UU.

Ensure council-delivered SuDs schemes achieve multiple benefits

What we said we would do 2022/23: Continue to seek opportunities to incorporate SuDs schemes in projects being delivered by Green Sefton and Sefton Council.

What we have done 2022/23: The SuDS scheme in the Bootle Golf Course has operated as designed. Whilst no schemes have been delivered this year discussions have broadened to include highways and opportunities of using highway verges etc.

What we will do 2023/24: Continue to seek opportunities to deliver SuDs to support council assets and seek planning and funding approval to deliver the 'Making space for water scheme in Churchtown and Crossens' which will be constructed on Sefton owned green spaces. Review the SuDS opportunity mapping report by Atkins for Formby and Maghull to see what measures are feasible to be implemented.

Engage with communities about the broader issues of FCERM, climate change and flood risk awareness (Highways Maintenance to work with FCERM on this).

What we said we would do 2022/23: Engage with wider teams across the Council to create a Council communications plan that covers, climate, weather related hazards and emergency response.

What we have done 2022/23: Begun engagement with communities in Churchtown and Crossens about flood risk through a public consultations exercise. Writing case studies for the Flood Hub website.

What we will do 2023/24: Re engage with Emergency planning and highways to review emergency response plans and share with wider partners. Begin consultation with the communities of Crosby and Hightown with proposed coastal erosion mitigation measures.

Engage with communities where FCERM projects will be undertaken

What we said we would do 2022/23:

- **Crosby:** Communication with users and residents of the cycle path north of the coast guard station at Hall Road where some interim works to shore up the coastline should take place this year.
- **Maghull:** Liverpool Road North and Sefton Lane depending on the outcome of investigations and options development.
- **Churchtown:** Depending on the outcome of feasibility and funding confirmation for the Pool Project engagement with the community will be needed.

What we have done 2022/23:

- **Crosby:** communications are planned for Autumn 2023 to align with proposed works.
- **Maghull:** residents were advised of the work to the area to manage the flood risk.
- **Churchtown:** consultation live – running from September 23 to November 23.

What we will do 2023/24: Engage with communities at the appropriate times through the consultation process and planning consent to keep communities up to date with progress and gather their thoughts. Consultation response reports will be produced following any consultation or engagement campaigns.

Work collaboratively with wider partners to identify opportunities to deliver multiple benefits and ensure Sefton's interests are considered

What we said we would do 2022/23:

The 'Merseyside Partnership Quick Win' (MPQW) money has recently doubled in value to £100k per year, consequently, Sefton Council has recommended several projects to be used by partners across Merseyside. Projects that have previously not qualified for 'Grant in Aid' funding can request funds from the MPQW which would be allocated based on discussions and need as a partnership. Projects that would be beneficial to Sefton for this year would be the contribution to a pump at Fouracres and increased water level monitoring across the region. We will therefore seek to secure this funding and deliver projects this year.

Working with Mersey Rivers Trust and the Alt Crossens partnership to identify opportunities to improve the water quality of our watercourses and tap into alternative funding sources that whilst primarily are there to fund improvement to water quality they have multiple benefits, including flood risk alleviation.

What we have done 2023/23: A quick win bid was secured for flood doors. Bid for Fouracres wasn't made as solution wasn't approved by United Utilities. Assess the need for QW funding to deliver SuDS options in Maghull and Formby.

Grant In Aid Funded programme:

Every year in early Summer, Sefton Council can submit new schemes into the grant-in-aid funded programme managed by the Environment Agency. This is the opportunity for the Local Authority to indicate what potential investment they will be seeking over the next 6 to 20 years. Sefton Council still must develop and have approved business cases to secure and draw down the funding. The schemes submitted in 2023/24 are:

Scheme	2023/24 Allocation
Hightown Coastal Protection Investigation	£80,000
Merseyside Strategic Groundwater Flood Risk Pilot Strategy	£0
Sefton Strategic Surface Water Management Plan Delivery Programme	£100,000

Schemes with funding already available and built in to the council's budget are:

Scheme	2023/24 Allocation
North West Strategic Coastal Monitoring Programme	£1,058,000
Sefton Strategic Surface Water Management Plan Delivery Programme	£14,563
The Pool, Southport	£57,163

Local Levy Funding:

Scheme	2023/24 Allocation
Shoreline management plan regional officer (hosted by Sefton)	£50,000

Highway Funding:

Scheme	2023/24 Allocation
Liverpool road North Maghull drainage improvements	£150,000

What we will do 2023/24:

Look for further opportunities to use quickwin funding to support our communities most at risk.

Deliver capital schemes and seek multiple benefits during delivery.

Support Mersey rivers Trust with funding applications.

Strengthen links with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority on managing flood risk.

Work with land managers and NW coastal group on the delivery of the Our Future Coast (Eco buffers) project at Formby Point

What we said we would do 2022/23: Set up a workshop with partners to scope the outcomes and actions for the project at Formby and commence actions.

What we have done 2022/23: Partner meeting taken place and scope agreed. Research questions identified and work underway. Site surveys started.

What we will do 2023/24: Deliver project to programme, focussing on research and evidence collection.

A Borough for Everyone

Seek funding to deliver the Crosby Flood & Coastal Defence Scheme

What we said we would do 2022/23: Deliver interim works, continue to monitor bird life, review costs and seek funding contributions to deliver the whole scheme with enhancements in later years.

What we have done 2022/23: Consultants appointed to take forward interim emergency work and main scheme review and enhancements. Bird surveys undertaken in-house by Green Sefton

What we will do 2023/24: Deliver emergency protection works Summer 2024
Complete review of main scheme to identify funding gaps and opportunities.

Assess deliverability and seek funding to deliver the Pool Scheme (Making Space for Water in Churchtown/Crossens)

What we said we would do 2022/23: Finalise design and develop business case for submission and approval.

What we have done 2022/23: Ecological surveys and Biodiversity Net gain assessments completed. Technical design and landscape design completed for consultation.

What we will do 2023/24: Review plans following public consultation, submit planning application and business case, if all approved commence works on site Spring 2024.

Support the delivery of the Climate Emergency Action Plan

What we said we would do 2022/23: Continue to develop work streams to deliver actions set out in the Climate Emergency Plan.

What we have done 2022/23:

Climate Emergency: Green Sefton sits on the working group and has helped develop

the strategy and action plan. Within the action plan, three key actions have implications to flooding and/or coastal erosion that we will either be leading on or actively involved with as detailed in Table 4.

Table 4: actions within the corporate climate emergency that have implications relating to flood and coastal erosion risk management.

Local Action	Impact	Phase
Improve knowledge and understanding of how the Council is affected by extreme weather events in terms of providing its services and financial impacts.	High	Phase 1 - 3
Complete a full risk assessment of Climate Change impacts, identifying threats and how they can be managed as well as realising the opportunities (such as offsetting emissions and assessing carbon capture).	High	Phase 1
Work with the Planning Authority on developing guidance for development, that includes climate benefits, for the built and natural environment.	Medium	Phase 1

The FCERM team has had the coastal erosion predictions updated and begun sharing this information within the Council, in order for it to be brought into Council plans, strategies, and policies.

The FCERM team has established a Green Sefton Climate Emergency working group and has been working with team members from across the service to ensure climate risk is considered and embedded in all ways of working. An assessment of the various climate changes and the impact that may have has been undertaken across operational activities for the service. Progress has slowed in 2022/23 due to resource demands.

What we will do 2023/24: Continue to develop work streams to deliver actions set out in the Climate Emergency Plan.

Review FCERM policies & develop new policies where necessary.

What we said we would do 2022/23:

National Flood Risk Management Plans: Review policies against the FRMP when published to identify any requirements to update our local policies.

What we have done 2022/23: Considered the introduction of a floodsac/sandbag policy, but it has been difficult to align this with resources. The review against the national FRMP hasn't taken place due to workload prioritisation.

What we will do 2023/24: Review all existing FCERM policies and identify the need of any new ones.

Inspect Council-owned assets (Highways Maintenance to review highway drainage asset).

What we said we would do 2022/23: Continue with inspections, improve planning of inland inspection. Seek additional software to improve data collection in the field

What we have done 2022/23: The annual coastal defence asset inspections were completed in summer 2023. The inland asset inspections have a more structured approach but there are still a number of reactive inspections. ArcGIS software has been trialled by Green Sefton and has allowed improved data access and collection. Corporately, an alternative product has been purchased, though it has yet to be

distributed to teams for implementation.

What we will do 2023/24: Continue with planned programme of inspections.

Living, working & having fun

Reactive inspection of private-owned assets following reports of flooding.

What we said we would do 2022/23: Inspection assets as and when flooding issues arise.

What we have done 2022/23: Inspections and maintenance work has been undertaken on a watercourse in Maghull where flooding to properties was occurring on Willow Hey. Undertaken inspections and advised landowners on Westbourne Road Birkdale with a watercourse that runs through back gardens.

What we will do 2023/24: Seek to inspect assets following reports of flooding as resources allow.

Explore opportunities to manage water differently by working with wider partners in order to support the work of Green Sefton

What we said we would do 2022/23: Continue to work with Mersey Rivers Trust. Seek opportunities within Sefton Council to manage water differently.

What we have done 2022/23: We have continued to support the Mersey Rivers Trust with their programme and are awaiting outcomes of their funding bids. Progressed the Making space for water project Churchtown and Crossens. Commissioned Atkins to undertake a SuDS opportunity mapping report for Formby and Maghull.

What we will do 2023/24: Implementation of the Pool Project and other proposals that the MRT have in relation to the Alt and its tributaries and seek to implement SuDS opportunities in Formby and Maghull.

Clean, green, beautiful borough

Undertake consenting with Riparian owners as required

What we said we would do 2022/23: Continue to assess applications as and when they are received.

What we have done 2022/23: There was only one application received during this period.

What we will do 2023/24: Continue to assess applications as and when they are received.

Undertake enforcement with Riparian owners as required (Highways Maintenance to undertake this where it impacts on the highway drainage)

What we said we would do 2022/23: Undertake negotiation and enforcement action as required to ensure systems are operating as required, as resources allow.

What we have done 2022/23: we have engaged with a number of riparian owners in areas of Southport and Maghull and have sought to negotiate with them rather than move to formal enforcement.

What we will do 2023/24: Undertake negotiation and enforcement action as required to ensure systems are operating as required, as resources allow.

On the move

Ensure flood and coastal erosion risk is considered in all council-led projects.

What we said we would do 2022/23: Continue to engage at various meeting and raise the profile of flood risk management and sustainable drainage in all projects.

What we have done 2022/23: Green Sefton is represented on Strategic Land Use group, Climate emergency group and the biodiversity Net Gain working group regularly meetings with highways colleagues have been established and to seek opportunities for joint projects to reduce flood risk as well as achieve other benefits. The largest current project with multiple benefits is the Making Space for Water project at Crossens/Churchtown that will see climate and biodiversity net gain benefits.

What we will do 2023/24: Continue to engage at various meeting and raise the profile of flood risk management and sustainable drainage in all projects.

Ready for the Future

Review up-to-date climate change projections and consider how these may impact Sefton

What we said we would do 2022/23: Continue to undertake assessments on service delivery. Communicate internally these impacts and develop adaptation and mitigation approaches for them. Seek to have these recognised in updates to service plans etc.

What we have done 2022/23: We have shared Surface Water Flood Maps with partner agencies to improve their understanding of the risk. We continue to review risks to service delivery and adaptation opportunities and have shared this with the climate emergency working group, and this was raised as a business continuity challenge. The review of the Green Sefton strategy is underway with climate emergency being one of the key drivers.

What we will do 2023/24: Continue to undertake assessments on service delivery. Communicate internally these impacts and develop adaptation and mitigation approaches for them. Publish and have adopted the new service strategy.

Deliver actions set out in Shoreline Management Plan

What we said we would do 2022/23: Continue working with regional monitoring programme to deliver actions. Seek to take forward work at Crosby and Hightown, subject to funding.

What we have done 2022/23: We have further improved the relationship with the regional monitoring programme to support the SMP delivery. We have reviewed Sefton's actions and updated the plan accordingly.

What we will do 2023/24: Continue working with the North West and North Wales Coastal group to deliver actions. Seek to take forward work at Crosby and Hightown, subject to funding.

Undertake an annual review of resources to ensure Sefton Council (as LLFA) continue to deliver the actions set out in the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Management Plan

What we said we would do 2022/23: Await publication of the updated FRMP and confirmation of measures to cross reference against actions set out in the FCERM Business plan, identify any gaps and assess resource requirements.

What we have done 2022/23: Actions from both Sefton Council's flood risk strategy and the Environment Agency's Flood risk management Plan have been reviewed and programmed. The resource allocation needed to deliver is still being assessed.

What we will do 2023/24: Complete resource assessment and identify any resource needs and seek funding to provide additional resource.

Complete Surface Water Management Plan Level 2 and seek funding to deliver options

What we said we would do 2022/23: Finalise reporting and seek funding to take forward any options identified.

What we have done 2022/23: Report finalised but failed to identify any viable options. Additional analysis undertaken for SuDS opportunities and a workshop was held to review these. Potential sites undergoing technical assessments for suitability.

What we will do 2023/24: Complete option assessments and seek funding to deliver any viable options.

Deliver the North West Strategic Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme

What we said we would do 2022/23: Tender for vertical aerial photography of the North West coast. Develop web presence to improve community engagement and knowledge sharing. Quality check and share coastal process reports when received from consultant.

What we have done 2022/23: Trialled new software to improve web mapping capability and published new information on the coastal group website. Aerial photography tender was completed and only partial data capture was undertaken due to poor flying conditions. Tendering for new Remote sensing framework has been slow and delayed due to resource availability.

What we will do 2023/24: Complete aerial photography capture. Tender for bathymetric surveys. Tender for remote sensing work. Continue to improve information sharing with partners and communities.

Establish plan and triggers for works to Hightown Coastline

What we said we would do 2022/23: Secure grant in aid funding to enable a consultant to be commissioned to develop a detailed plan for intervention works.

What we have done 2022/23: Commissioned WSP consultants to undertake a review of both Crosby and Hightown.

What we will do 2023/24: Establish if it is beneficial for Hightown and Crosby to combined into one scheme, secure funding and undertake detailed designs.

Ensure we support the Planning Service in undertaking its duty as a Local Planning Authority through our role as a statutory consultee on major developments, and as an advisory consultee on significant minor developments.

What we said we would do 2022/23: Continue to comment on planning applications as required. Continue to work with planning colleagues to improve the process.

What we have done 2022/23: As reported in section 3.1.d

What we will do 2023/24: Continue to comment on planning applications as required. Continue to work with planning colleagues to improve the process.

Ensure we support the Planning Service in the preparation of evidence, other

documents and draft policies to support the review of the Local Plan (e.g. new Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Coastal Change) and any other development plan documents and supplementary guidance.

What we said we would do 2022/23: Continue to engage with planning colleagues and seek opportunities to support and influence content.

What we have done 2022/23: We have raised awareness of the potential implementation of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act, 2010 that would see the creation of a Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB) that would make the decision about the suitability of the drainage plans of a new development, taking it away from the Local Planning Authority.

What we will do 2023/24: Continue to engage with planning colleagues and seek opportunities to support and influence content. Prepare for the implementation of the SAB when guidance is issued.

Deliver improvements to the surface water outfalls along the Ainsdale/Birkdale coastline.

What we said we would do 2022/23: Inspect the watercourse and undertake maintenance as required.

What we have done 2022/23: Inspected the watercourse and planned maintenance to support the establishment of the new watercourses.

What we will do 2023/24: Inspect the watercourse and undertake maintenance as required.

Coordinate the delivery of groundwater monitoring across the Merseyside Authorities.

What we said we would do 2022/23: Further engage with partners to install monitors

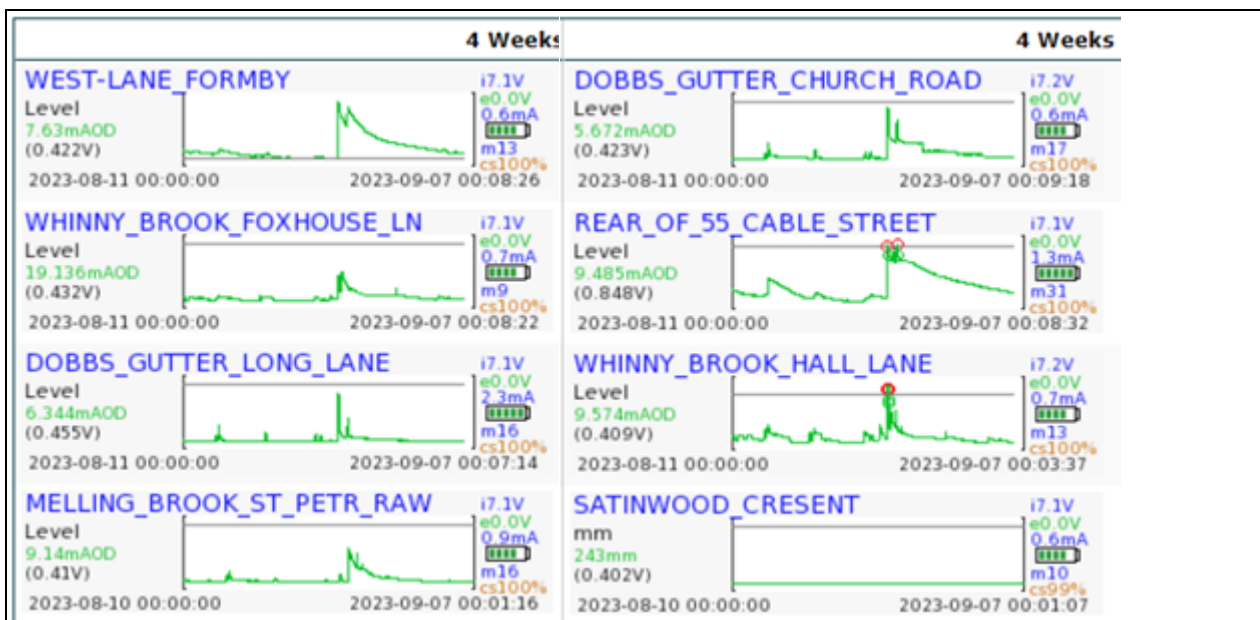
What we have done 2022/23: Raised the project at Merseyside Tactical and Strategic groups and sent out options for partners to consider.

What we will do 2023/24: Make a decision on the future direction of the project.

Pilot smart water level monitoring at key locations in Sefton.

What we said we would do 2022/23: Install monitoring equipment at key locations Autumn 2022.

What we have done 2022/2023: Systems were installed at eight sites (4 Formby, 3 Maghull, 1 Melling) across the borough and have been recording data since October 2022.



What we will do 2023/24: Install final station on Dover's Brook and seek funding to install another potential monitor on Rufford Road, Southport. Analyse data to identify key levels relating to flooding.

Undertake a programme of inspection for coastal assets

What we said we would do 2022/23: Undertake annual inspection for coastal defences in Autumn 2023. Continue Another Place statue inspections.

What we have done 2022/23: Annual coastal defence survey carried out Summer 2023.

Antony Gormley's Another Place, visual inspections have been undertaken each month and a full inspection in October 2022.

Southport sea front Obelisks, inspection undertaken in October 2022.

What we will do 2023/24: Continue with monthly and annual inspection programmes

Undertake a programme of inspections for Inland assets

What we said we would do 2022/23: Undertake inspections as per programme.

What we have done 2022/23: Undertaken a number of inspections, both visual and cctv as detailed in section 3.2

What we will do 2023/24: Continue with planned programme and reactive when required.

Undertake programmed and reactive maintenance for highways assets

What we said we would do 2022/23: Continue to flag blockages and flooding on the highway that affects properties and work with partners at an operational level to manage the risk to the highway.

What we have done 2022/23 Quarterly meetings held with all RMAs to discuss issues and several joint site visits undertaken, eg Willowhey

What we will do 2023/24 Work with highways to review Brooms Cross highway suds drainage maintenance programme

Develop asset management systems and a risk-based approach to maintenance

for the highway drainage asset - to be undertaken by Highways Maintenance and co-ordinated with FCERM

What we said we would do 2022/23: Continue to work collaboratively with the Highway team and share knowledge and expertise to support a risk-based approach to highway drainage maintenance.

What we have done 2022/23: Supported highways on asset management systems. Highways tendered for the work but costs were greater than the budget

What we will do 2023/24: Continue to support Highways and seek a more cost effective way or to take a phased approach to develop an asset management system.

5. Finance

The current revenue budget is £78,000, with an additional £3,000 for the maintenance and repairs of the navigation markers. The budget is split as detailed in Table 5. We have a planned and prioritised programme of works for both coastal and inland and have established a reactive/emergency works budget to try to better understand the demand for the service.

Repair & Maintenance of Land & Buildings – coastal assets	10,000.00
Reactive/Emergency Call Out	12,000.00
Land Drainage Works – inland assets	56,000.00

Table 5: FCERM maintenance budget

In addition, approximately £4,000 of this budget has to be used to cover software licence subscriptions.

6. Upcoming Policy or legislative changes

6.1 Biodiversity Net Gain

The Biodiversity Net Gain requirements for new developments as part of the planning approval process comes into force in January 2024. Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is a way to contribute to the recovery of nature while developing land. It is making sure the habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development.

Developers must try to avoid loss of habitat to a piece of land they plan to do development work on. If they cannot do this, they must create habitat either on-site or off-site.

Developer can buy credits for off-site biodiversity net gain sites and will need to contribute 30yrs maintenance. Sefton Council has been identifying sites where opportunities exist for biodiversity net gain and will offer these to developers.

There are opportunities to overlap flood management works with biodiversity net gain, such as the Making Space for Water in Crossens and Churchtown Scheme, which may increase the workload demand on the FCERM team.

6.2 Proposed enactment of Section 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

In January 2023, the government announced its decision to implement Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 in England to better control flooding and wastewater discharges.

The schedule is expected to be implemented in 2024 and will provide a framework for the approval and adoption of sustainable drainage systems to decrease the volume and/or rate of water flowing into sewers and storm overflow discharges. The core purpose of [Schedule 3](#) is to make the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) into new developments mandatory.

The introduction of a SuDS Approval Body (SAB), based within the Unitary Authority, will make the decision whether to approve a drainage plan for a development. This discussion currently sits with the Local Planning Authority. Critically, developers must ensure drainage approval is sought from the SAB before construction begins.

One of the most notable proposals is for the SAB to adopt new drainage systems, on the basis that they meet certain conditions, and be responsible for the ongoing maintenance.

To hit the criteria, developers must ensure they do the following:

- Build the drainage system in line with an [approved drainage plan](#) that complies with national standards
- Certify that the drainage system functions in line with the approved plan or non-performance bond if a certificate has been issued
- Ensure the system is a sustainable drainage system as defined by the Secretary's regulations

There are exclusions to this duty though; sections 18 and 19 of Schedule 3 state that the SAB's adoption duty does not apply to a drainage system which has been designed for a single property or publicly maintained roads.

Currently, no further guidance on funding arrangements, dates of enactment etc has been published. This will require additional resource within the Council to undertake the various aspects of this role, though it is unclear what level is required and where funding will come from to support this.