
Report to: Overview and Scrutiny
(Regeneration and Skills)

Date of Meeting: 8 November 2016

Subject: Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management – Annual Report

Report of: Head of Locality Services - Commissioned

Wards Affected: All

Is this a Key Decision? No

Is it included in the Forward Plan?

No

Exempt/Confidential

No

Purpose/Summary

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 requires 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. This annual report satisfies that requirement.

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 (Locality Services) for consideration.

How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Objectives?

	<u>Corporate Objective</u>	<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community	✓		
2	Jobs and Prosperity		✓	
3	Environmental Sustainability	✓		
4	Health and Well-Being	✓		
5	Children and Young People		✓	
6	Creating Safe Communities	✓		
7	Creating Inclusive Communities		✓	
8	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening Local Democracy		✓	

Reasons for the Recommendation:

To comply with the requirements of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 that requires Lead Local Flood Risk Authorities to report on progress on an annual basis to their Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

(B) Capital Costs

Implications:

The following implications of this proposal have been considered and where there are specific implications, these are set out below:

Legal	
Human Resources	
Equality	
1. No Equality Implication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Equality Implications identified and mitigated	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Equality Implication identified and risk remains	<input type="checkbox"/>

Impact on Service Delivery:

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

The Head of Corporate Finance (FD4347/16) and Head of Corporate Legal Services (LD3630/16) have been consulted and have no comments on the report.

Are there any other options available for consideration?

The Council could choose not to undertake its duties as set out in the Flood Risk Management Act 2010. This would reduce the Councils ability to manage flood risk in the Borough and may result in sanctions from Government for failing to delivery statutory functions. It will also reduce the Council’s ability to secure external funding.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee/Council/Working Group meeting.

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Background Papers:

The following papers are available for inspection by contacting the above officer(s).

Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Strategy, Investment Plan and Service Plan

<http://smbc-modgov-01/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=41245&Opt=0>

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (subsequently referred to as the Act) has placed a number of new duties on the Council as the Lead Local Flood Risk Authority; these have been previously presented to the committee. One of these is the requirement to make arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review the Council's progress and it was agreed that this would be achieved through the provision of an annual report.
- 1.2 This report sets out progress that has been made in the last year, highlights key issues and sets out priorities for the coming years. Key items of work are detailed below.

2 Progress

2.1 Sefton's Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Strategy

- 2.1.1 This Strategy is a requirement under section 9 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The Strategy was adopted by Cabinet on the 1st October 2015. This Strategy sets out how Sefton will deliver flood and coastal erosion risk management, what investment will be needed to deliver this and the manner in which this service will be delivered. It defines the outcomes, outputs and actions for this service area.
- 2.1.2 The Action Plan associated with this Strategy sets out the programme and nature of works. Progress made against the action plan is provided in appendix 1, please follow link the below to access the document:-

<http://modgov.sefton.gov.uk/moderngov/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD2080&ID=2080&RPID=13357992>

- 2.1.3 The Investment Plan sets out how the actions will be funded and identifies potential funding sources. The updated Investment Plan is provided in appendix 2, please follow the link below to access the document:-

<http://modgov.sefton.gov.uk/moderngov/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD2081&ID=2081&RPID=13358023>

2.2 Flood Risk Management

2.2.1 December 2015 Flooding

- 2.2.1.1 The widespread flooding across the North West of England during December 2015 had a significant impact across Sefton. There was widespread flooding in all areas of Sefton. The timing of the flooding was particularly bad as it occurred on Boxing Day during the Christmas shutdown period and the weather warnings were only issued during Christmas Day. Despite this Sefton were able to provide a good response with the Emergency Duty Coordinator following the emergency plan. Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) officers were not formally called out as contractors provided the

primary response, however, team members did attend several sites to assess the situation and provide support.

- 2.2.1.2 Sefton had 16 properties flood internally and significant highway and garden flooding at disparate locations across Sefton. These internally flooded properties were eligible for grants from Central Government to undertake surveys to establish potential protection measures and to install this property level protection on their homes. We have assisted by arranging the surveys and advising homeowners on options to protect their properties.

2.2.2 *June 2016 Flooding*

- 2.2.2.1 Thunderstorms brought torrential downpours to Birkdale on the evening of the 5th June. It resulted in 6 properties being flooded in the area. Four of these were on Essex Road and have flooded previously. These properties have subsequently received some mitigation from United Utilities in the form of Property Level Protection. The Council is also looking at sustainable options to manage surface water in the area to reduce flood risk. Another property that has also previously flooded in the area will benefit from any works we undertake on Essex Road as it is further down the system. The other property that flooded was in a different catchment and flooded as the result of debris carried by the flood water, blocking a gully, preventing free drainage.

2.2.3 *Resilient Communities*

This area of work has been developed to help deliver Sefton Council's priorities to create Resilient Communities and Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening Local Democracy. These projects aim to support communities to become more resilient during flood events and to have an input in the decisions made about flood risk management. This has been extended to align with Sefton's 2030 Vision themes of Resilient People and Places.

2.2.3.1 Formby Flood Group

- 2.2.3.1.1 We have worked with Formby Parish Council to establish a community flood group to try to jointly manage flood risk and improve the health and wellbeing of the community of Formby supported by grant in aid secured from the Environment Agency. A number of initial meetings with the wider community were held to share understanding of the risk in Formby and identify key priorities the community wanted pursuing. From these initial meeting the community agreed that a smaller group should be set up to represent the wider community views and take actions forward.

- 2.2.3.2 The Formby Flood Group is currently working towards establishing itself as a constituted group, which will enable it to source a wider range of funding opportunities to work towards achieving the community priorities. This group haven't met since Spring, due to members other commitments taking priority, which has hindered progress but we have been assured meetings will re commence in the Autumn.

- 2.2.3.3 The group's main priority is community resilience and it is looking at administering a community stock of flood sacks and a mechanism to warn residents of potential flooding from rivers or rainfall in the area.

2.2.3.4 Maghull Flood Committee

2.2.3.4.1 We have worked with Maghull Town Council to establish a community flood group in area supported by grant in aid secured from the Environment Agency. An advert was placed in the local newspaper inviting interested residents to help form a flood committee early in 2016. The committee has since met several times and a number of public engagement sessions have been run;

- Sefton Council held a drop in session specifically for riparian owners to raise awareness of their role and responsibility (example material is included in appendix 3), please follow the link below to access the document:-

<http://modgov.sefton.gov.uk/moderngov/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD2082&ID=2082&RPID=13358085>

- The Committee undertook an online questionnaire to gather information from the community. This was followed by a meeting to discuss the results (appendix 4), please follow the link below to access the document:-

<http://modgov.sefton.gov.uk/moderngov/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD2083&ID=2083&RPID=13358108>

- A public event discussing community resilience and how to prepare for flooding was undertaken in conjunction with United Utilities, the Environment Agency and the flood committee.

2.2.3.5 Thornton Parish Council

2.2.3.5.1 The main urban area of Thornton has a piped watercourse running underneath properties, roads, schools and farmland. A number of issues related to the maintenance of the watercourse by the riparian owners have been raised, especially where it passes under individuals' property. We have been working with the Parish Council to engage with these riparian owners to work towards an effective maintenance programme.

2.2.3.6 Blundellsands Ward Councillor

2.2.3.6.1 Cllr Roscoe approached the FCERM team for advice and assistance in developing an approach to community flood risk management in Blundellsands after becoming aware of the work in Formby and Maghull. We have provided advice and shared experiences of our work in Maghull and Formby to enable her to develop this theme in her area. Unfortunately due to resource commitments we are unable to provide further support at this time.

2.2.4 Staffing

2.2.4.1 The FCERM team have recruited to the vacant post of Principal Officer. This post supports the team leader in the delivery of the service. They provide the key link between strategic planning and operational delivery. A key piece of work undertaken has been clearly communicating the Council's vision, corporate priorities and Sefton's 2030 Vision to the team and demonstrating how our service area supports these. This supports staff during challenging times and ensures the service is outcome focussed. This work has provided a

clear line of sight and sense of purpose to tasks undertaken in the team and how everything we do ties into a much bigger picture and positive direction of travel.

2.2.4.2 As this was an internal candidate from within the team, this has left a vacant post that has resulted in a cascade of recruitment exercises due to subsequent internal recruitments. The team should have recruited to all vacant posts by the end of 2016.

2.2.4.3 Sefton Council has also secured funding from the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee to support the delivery of the Shoreline Management Plan in the North West in the form of a staff resource. This post will support local authorities and organisations across the North West from the Dee Estuary to Solway on the Scottish Border, to plan for the delivery of actions as set out in the Shoreline Management Plan. They will also provide a crucial link between the Shoreline Management Plan and the Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme.

2.2.5 Developer's Pack

2.2.5.1 The FCERM team have worked with the Highways Design Team in the development of their updated developer's pack. This has allowed us to set out the Council's requirements for flood risk management and drainage related highway development. There is a strong emphasis on the requirement for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) to manage surface water and minimise impact on existing systems.

2.2.6 Local Planning Authority

2.2.6.1 As a statutory consultee for major planning applications (>10 properties or 0.5ha) we have commented on 50 major planning applications and, in addition, have commented on 266 minor applications since November 2015.

2.2.6.2 Over the last year we have reviewed our process dealing with planning applications and are making a number of changes to improve how we manage and respond to the increasing workload. This will improve response time and consistency.

2.2.6.3 We provided technical support and advice to the planning authority throughout the Local Plan enquiry. We attended the hearings and provided evidence to the inspector when required.

2.2.7 Nile and Pool Investigations, Southport

2.2.7.1 Grant in aid secured from the Environment Agency to undertake investigations and studies into the two watercourses that serve Southport and Birkdale. These watercourses have largely been piped/culverted over time and have had numerous connections and disconnections made to them. The investigation work is helping to identify where further work is required to maintain the system, opportunities to restore the open watercourse and reduce flood risk. The initial desktop phase of the studies is largely complete which reviewed historic maps and previous surveys. The second phase involving

CCTV surveys of the piped/culverted network has been delayed due to a change in contractor but is due to start in November.

2.2.8 Merseyside Natural Flood Risk Management

2.2.8.1 £30k funding has been secured from Environment Agency to undertake this project. Sefton has entered into partnership with the Healthy Rivers Trust to delivery this project. The Trust has recently carried out similar projects in Lancashire and has the computer modelling systems in place to efficiently deliver this work. Initial outputs are due in December 2016 with the potential for small scale schemes to be delivered later this financial year. This will help deliver the Sefton Council 2030 vision for resilient people and places.

2.3 Coastal Risk Management

2.3.1 There have been no significant incidents of flooding or erosion along the coast. There has been the ongoing maintenance work and planning for future works as set out in section 3.3.

2.4 Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme

2.4.1 Sefton Council coordinate the monitoring programme on behalf of maritime authorities in the North West. The programme has secured grant funding for the continuation of the programme, from the Environment Agency, for another 5 year period from 2016 to 2021.

2.4.2 The programme employs 3 full time equivalents posts that bring additional benefits and skills into the council. The team undertake the coastal surveys for the Sefton area and have worked with colleagues across the North West to support their survey programmes. The skills and equipment used for the monitoring programme is also available for inland survey work to the FCERM team and wider Council.

2.4.3 Several contracts for regional survey work are in the process of being tendered for to cover the five year programme. Beach topographic surveys and hydrodynamic surveys have already been awarded. Sefton Council is currently procuring new survey equipment to support the delivery of its survey programme and wider in the region.

2.5 Partnership Working

2.5.1 Merseyside Partnerships

2.5.1.1 Sefton Council continues to work closely with other partners in Merseyside through the Merseyside Tactical and Strategic Flood Risk Partnership meetings. These meetings look at improving cross boundary working and improved efficiencies through partnership working. The Merseyside Strategic group also prioritises the Grant in Aid bids through the Local Choices and administers a £50k support fund. Cllr McKinley represents Sefton at the Merseyside Strategic Partnership and represents the Merseyside Strategic

Partnership at the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee as an elected member.

- 2.5.1.2 Sefton's Making Space for Water group brings together service areas and organisations with a role in flood and coastal erosion risk in Sefton. The group works at both strategic and operational levels facilitating closer working and improved cooperation and data sharing.

2.5.2 *North West and North Wales Coastal Groups*

- 2.5.2.1 Sefton Council sit on the North West and North Wales Coastal Group to report progress on the Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme. This group reports on the progress of the actions of the Shoreline Management Plan to DEFRA. It is also represented on the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. The group oversees two sub groups both of which Sefton Council are represented at.
- 2.5.2.2 Liverpool Bay Coastal Sub Group is now chaired by Denbighshire Council as Sefton Council stepped down due to other work priorities. The group supports the exchange of best practice and partnership working.
- 2.5.2.3 Northern Coastal Sub Group is attended to enable Sefton Council to report on progress of the Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme. It also enables the wider understanding of coastal issues and exchange of best practice.

2.6 **Key actions by other Flood Risk Management Agencies**

2.6.1 *The Environment Agency*

- 2.6.1.1 The Environment Agency haven't taken any significant actions in Sefton over the last year as they have largely been dealing with the significant flood events that occurred during December 2015 in Lancashire, Cumbria and Manchester. They have continued with their annual maintenance programmes and have provided support when requested to the Maghull Flood Committee.

2.6.2 *United Utilities*

- 2.6.2.1 United Utilities have entered into their new financial programme that covers the period 2015-2020. There is a switch in emphasis from large engineering schemes to providing mitigation measures to properties. The new programme allows for more flexibility in funding and opens more opportunities for co-operative schemes.
- 2.6.2.2 They have provided mitigation to a number of properties across Sefton to improve resilience to flooding.
- 2.6.2.3 They have undertaken a review of coastal erosion risk to their assets between Hightown and Hall Road, Crosby following the erosion events in winter 2013/2014. They are working with us to identify a way forward for this area and are likely to make a significant financial contribution to any works.
- 2.6.2.4 They have also provided advice and support to the Maghull Flood Committee when requested.

2.7 Performance Management

- 2.7.1 The inclusion of performance management into our delivery plan has been delayed. It was anticipated to have taken place earlier this year but has been delayed to align with departmental service reviews. These reviews are currently underway.

3 Priorities for 2017

3.1 *Supporting the Local Planning Authority*

- 3.1.1 With the anticipated adoption of the Local Plan the number of major applications is expected to increase in the coming months. A number of pre-application discussions have already commenced. As the LLFA we are statutory consultees on these major planning applications. As there are flood risk issues with the majority of the sites in the Local Plan it is critical that we resource this area appropriately to ensure future flood risk is managed sustainably within the site and no negative effects are felt by surrounding areas.

3.2 *Community Engagement*

- 3.2.1 Working with the communities should support longer term sustainable solutions and lead to more resilient communities and improved environments. However, there is a significant resource required to engage with and support these groups. The level of engagement has to be carefully managed to be effective and efficient and ensure our resources are being targeted to the area with the highest flood risk.

3.3 *Crosby Coastal Schemes*

- 3.3.1 The Crosby seafront is subject of three coastal schemes that need careful management to deliver works in the appropriate manner in the appropriate timescale.

- 3.3.1.1 The Alt training bank at the northern end of Crosby beach diverts the River Alt out into the Mersey shipping channel. The training bank has degraded over time and there is the existence of a breach developing. Should the breach enlarge the River Alt could take a more southerly course across Crosby beach and increase the risk of erosion to the existing defences.

- 3.3.1.2 The MEPAS rising main sewer that serves a large portion of Crosby runs along the section of Hall Road West towards Hightown behind the artificial rubble defences and under made ground, which is contaminated with asbestos. We are in discussion with United Utilities with regards to contributions to protect their sewer asset. As the coast erodes it puts the sewer asset under increasing risk but also releases asbestos. Currently work is being programmed for 2018/2019. This project needs to closely align with the Alt Training Bank as their proximity means there is an interaction between them.

- 3.3.1.3 The Crosby coastal defences that run from Hall Road, car park south to Seaforth docks are nearing the end of their life. Analysis of options is being undertaken to identify future solutions for this stretch of coastline. These need to be taken in a timely fashion as the lead in time for securing funding can be around 10 years. Due to the nature of the area it is likely that we will be unable to secure a significant contribution under flood and coastal erosion grant in aid and consequentially we will need identify alternative funding sources.

3.4 *Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Strategy Review*

3.4.1 Our strategy runs for three years 2015-2018, as such the process of reviewing the strategy will begin in 2017. The review will include a consultation/engagement exercise and subsequent reports to this committee.

3.5 *Securing Capital Funding*

3.5.1 It is critical that a forward programme of capital investment is planned and bids for grant are made at the appropriate time. Sefton regularly bid into the Environment Agency 6 year programme for flood and coastal erosion risk management, but it is becoming increasingly hard to justify schemes. Other capital funding sources and partnership funding opportunities need to be explored and built into the forward programme.