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.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):
To comply with 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.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)
The Council could choose not to undertake its duties as set out in the Flood Risk Management Act 2010. This would reduce the Council’s 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.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs. Costs can be contained within existing budgets
(B) **Capital Costs.** Existing projects are being funded from grant from the Environment Agency, the main element of which has been secured until 2021. 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:** |
| Sefton Council will comply with the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 that requires the work of the Lead Local Flood Risk Authorities be scrutinised. |

| **Equality Implications:** |
| There are no equality implications. |

### 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 a 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 Head of Corporate Resources has been consulted and comments have been incorporated into the report (FD 5819/19)

The Chief Legal & Democratic Officer has been consulted and has no comments on the report (LD 4043/19).

(B) External Consultations
Not applicable

Implementation Date for the Decision
Immediately following the Committee / Council meeting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Officer:</th>
<th>Michelle Barnes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Email Address:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:michelle.barnes@sefton.gov.uk">michelle.barnes@sefton.gov.uk</a></td>
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Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

FCERM Time and Billing review 2018/2019

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 Strategy, Investment Plan and Service Plan
Introduction/Background

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. Whilst the legislation has recently been changed, no longer requiring us under the Act to report to Overview and Scrutiny it has been agreed that we will continue to do so on an annual basis.

This report sets out progress that has been made in the last year, highlights key issues and sets out priorities for the coming years. It also details how we are delivering our duties under the Act. Key items of work are detailed below.

Delivery of duties under the FWMA 2010

Duty to cooperate with other Risk Management Authorities
Continue to work in partnership with other RMAS on specific projects but also across the region. We are part of the Merseyside Flood risk partnership and hold operational, tactical and strategic meetings to enable progress to be reported to the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. We also participate in a Liverpool City Region flood risk group to ensure flood risk is considered across the city region in the Combined Authorities development of the region. As a coastal Authority we report to the Liverpool Bay Coastal Group and Northern Coastal Group. These groups enable us to share best practice, lessons learned, data and information and look for efficient ways of delivering our outcomes on a prioritised basis with other RMA’s.

Duty to have an up to date Local Flood Risk Strategy
The national FCERM strategy was released for public consultation earlier this year and the closing date for consultation comments was the 4th of July. A revised strategy will be published later this year. As our local strategy must take into consideration the national strategy we have delayed updating ours. Also, the formation of the new Green Sefton service and the development of its service plan and vision has enabled us to revise our outcomes and link them into the 2030 vision. We are therefore re-structuring the existing strategy to more clearly link into the Green Sefton service plan and national strategy and hope to have a draft completed towards the end of the year.

Undertake our duties as a Riparian owner
We have undertaken maintenance in:

Crossens
Removed trees from bank of watercourse to enable EA to perform maintenance.

Birkdale
Watercourse that runs from Clovelly Drive (golf course) to Sandy Brook via Farnborough Road cleansed and inspected.

Ainsdale
Coastal Road, removed blockage from inside a watercourse under highway.

Maghull
A59, inspected and cleansed the culvert running under the A59 to alleviate a highway flooding issue.
Waddicar
Watercourse behind Satinwood cleared of vegetation and desilted.
Watercourse under Prescot Road inspected and cleared

Aintree
Watercourse from Mostyn to Sedburgh CCTV and cleanse.
Sherwoods Lane, watercourse cleansed and inspected.

Formby
Culverted section of Hogshill watercourse cleansed and inspected, open section cleared by EA.
Dobbs Gutter cleansed in line with programme and relatively in June with bad weather and blockage reported.
Moss Side manhole collapse rectified.

Southport
Railings repaired on Southport Seawall
Victoria Park drainage cleansed

Maintain a public register on Flood Risk Management Assets
We have an asset register from Capita but has not been updated since they moved in house 2010. We have taken the data fields and are creating a new data set in GIS but is not publicly available but can be shared if requested. We are looking into a portal or platform to make the information more accessible such as using Simon plus which is the councils public GIS platform.

Respond to major planning applications checking the Suds design
Over the past 12 months we have responded to 21 major planning applications. We have also developed a proforma to ensure developers are providing all relevant information before we will spend time assessing it. This has been seen a best practice methodology in the region with others following suit. We have also discharged conditions on a further 8 major planning applications. 4 site inspections on major developments have taken place since our last report.

Flood and Coastal Erosion events

Inland Flood events
September the 24th 2019, prolonged heavy rainfall led to Dovers Brook in Maghull breaching its bank. Three residential properties were at risk and a garden centre flooded internally. The road was closed for approx.14 hours. Further reported external flooding incidents occurred in Formby, Norburn Drive, due to a civil matter of overland flow being hindered. Sefton Drive in Maghull also experiences garden and outhouse/garage flooding in the following days due to persistent rainfall and a potential breach/overtopping of a watercourse, but we have not yet determined which due to high water levels remaining. We also had issues with a pumping station at Sefton Meadows, whereby delays in upgrading the pumping station and issues with access meant the pumps were operating under capacity and they became overwhelmed with water. We are still investigating and compiling a report on the incidents at the time of writing but will provide a more verbal update at the meeting.

Coastal Flooding
Some overtopping on the 28th of September occurred at Crosby due to a high tide and strong westerly winds.

Progress

Sefton’s Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Strategy Update

This Strategy is a requirement under section 9 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. Sefton’s first strategy was adopted by Cabinet on the 1st October 2015 and covers the period 2015-2018. 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. Due to delays in the release of the draft national strategy to which our local strategy should align we have therefore also delayed the rewrite of our local strategy but have been developing it in line with the draft national principles and approach. We are therefore hoping to adopt and publish ours early 2020.

The Strategy is currently being updated and is due to be adopted in early 2020.

The updated strategy will:

- consider changes in risk, including improvements in understanding, flooding events and future developments.
- align with Sefton 2030
- consider Defra’s 25yr Environment Plan
- consider the Environment Agency’s National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy
- seek to address recommendations made by Cabinet Member and Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The strategy will be structured to clearly support the work programme of the team ensuring that operation procedures and practices are developed in line with the strategy. This will support staff clarifying workloads and expectations.

Green Sefton Service delivery

The FCERM team have heavily supported the development of the new Green Sefton vision and service plan which was adopted in early 2019. As a team we have been working to ensure the work we do aligns to this and demonstrate through work programmes and quarterly reports to management how we are actively delivering this vision and service plan to support the Council’s delivery of Sefton 2030. FCERM have developed a work programme directly linked to the vision to ensure the work we undertake is focussed and delivers the vision. Each person in the team then has their own work programmes that provides more detail of specific tasks and activities.

As a service we have been looking at ways to better integrate and work as one team. We were able to realise the benefits of the new way of working as Green Sefton during the heavy rainfall mid-June 2019. Prior to a weather warning of prolonged heavy rainfall, it was identified that a critical asset (Dobbs Gutter) in Formby was blocked by vegetation, debris and fence panels. We were able to mobilise a gang from our land management team to go out and clear the ditch effectively and efficiently keeping work that’s would have previously gone to a contractor in house. We were able to learn from this experience and provide training for a different method of working within a watercourse for
some staff who had not done this before. We identified the need to buy a slightly different piece of machinery that will make the process even more efficient in the future and have secured funding to purchase this equipment.

The grounds maintenance team also helped us on site during the flooding at the end of September helping to distribute sandbags that the Environment agency delivered to build up the embankment where Dovers Brook had breached.

**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 theme of Resilient People and Places. We have found the process resource heavy and whilst we thought it was the right thing to do for the service we are delivering we found it began to impede progress and disproportionally consumed resources meant for the delivery of potential solutions to some of the issues within the community on the ground. We are looking to take an alternative approach to communication in providing some generic messages across the borough working with partners. Part of this is facilitated through the new flood hub website [www.floodhub.co.uk](http://www.floodhub.co.uk) which is a regional website funded by the regional flood and coastal committee.

**Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment**
We undertook the review as per the guidelines of the Environment Agency which will now be fed into the revision of the Flood Risk Management plans which is currently underway.

**Working with the Planning Authority**
As a statutory consultee for major planning applications (>10 properties or 0.5ha) we have commented on 21 major planning applications and discharged conditions on 8
major applications. In 2015/16 we commented on 382 minor planning applications, 2016/17 was 433 and 2017/18 was 169 and 18/19 96 applications. The introduction of standing advice has enabled us to spend significantly less time on these and re allocate resources to major applications and the inspection of major applications on site during construction. 4 inspections have taken place since our last report.

We have undertaken a significant review of how we work with the planning department to ensure we are delivering an efficient and robust service. The changes to the process were approved by Cabinet on 26th July 2018. This included a Pro Forma for Sustainable Drainage Systems document, Guidance notes on SuDs and Flood Risk Information Notes for developers of major sites. The cabinet report can be viewed at http://modgov.sefton.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MId=9375 and the documents can be viewed within the information notes at https://www.sefton.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-policy-including-local-plan-and-neighbourhood-planning/adopted-supplementary-planning-documentsguidance.aspx  The proforma for developers has now been included on the validation check list in planning and should see our workload dramatically decrease as it will reduce the dialogue needed by the team in ensuring developers have submitted the correct information first time of asking.

The RFCC supported the development of a suds task and finish group which brings together the Risk Management Authorities to ensure suds features are designed to the latest guidance and would be acceptable for adoption by United Utilities under future legislation to commence March 2020. Representatives from Sefton FCERM, Highways and Planning attend the meetings. The Suds proforma will be updated to include the recommendation from this group ensuring that planning applications are to the agreed standard for adoption by UU.

S106 agreements in development with planning and legal for future maintenance of unadoptable suds.

Asset inspections
Coastal defence inspections:

Annual inspection carried out Autumn 2019

Inland assets visual inspection:

Brooms Cross Road Ponds, A, B, C and D
Brooms Cross Road watercourses
Formby Dobbs Gutter
Formby New Park watercourse
Formby KGV Field watercourse
Formby Larkhill Lane Watercourse
Ainsdale Willowbank Caravan Park watercourse
Ainsdale Sands Lake outfall
Birkdale Sandy Brook
Birkdale Westbourne Road Watercourse
Birkdale Nile Outfall
Birkdale Taggs Island
Birkdale Southern Outfall
Capital schemes

Pool Project, Southport
Progress has been made by the consultant and they have developed a short list of options to alleviate flooding in Churchtown. Working with United utilities and the Environment Agency we are looking into the feasibility of the preferred option and securing funding to undertake the works.

Crosby Coast protection and flood alleviation scheme
Work is progressing on reviewing options to seek a preferred option and secure funding to undertake the works. The public consultation on the outline designs and principles is included in the wider Crosby Seafront Consultation that runs to the end of September.

Fouracres Project, Maghull
Work is continuing to find a viable option as the work the consultant did on developing options came back with no viable options. We are now working closely with United Utilities to seek alternative methods of slowing the flow further up the system and potentially using flying start money from UU. (This is from a pot of funding created by shareholders to the value of £56M to be spent in the North West)

Surface Water Management Plan Level 2
JBA consultants have been appointed to undertake a detailed optioneering exercise in three key flood risk areas in Sefton, Maghull, Formby and Seaforth & Litherland. This project will identify, assess and develop outline business cases for a range of measures to reduce flood risk in the areas.

Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme
Work has been ongoing delivering the programme. Bathymetric surveys have been completed and data has been processed. A tender was awarded for land-based remote sensing systems that can operate around the clock and collect data in all conditions and locations are being identified to install them. Working on developing a business case for the continuation of the programme post 2021. We have also been working on developing an asset management programme for the North West to be consistent with the Environment Agency’s standards.

Gormleys
Work on replacing the piles on the Gormley statues has commenced and is due to finish on the 31st October.

Partnership Working
We have provided comments on the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees new business plan which has now been adopted and published on the flood hub website.

We are continuing to work with the Liverpool City Region to ensure flood risk is considered on their emerging agendas and we have a consistent mapping tool to assess
flood risk in proposed strategic development sites and key route networks across the region.

Sefton's Operations groups have re commenced which provides operational staff a forum to discuss on the ground issues with partners across the borough. We now have a live actions and issues log to aid our communication and ensure issues are resolved.

Some of the team also attended an event that UU held to talk more about sustainable drainage and future development. The event was a proactive approach by UU to develop their partnership working with Local Authorities.

**Merseyside Strategic and Flood Risk Partnership**

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 and chairs Merseyside Strategic Partnership and represents the Merseyside Strategic Partnership at the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee as an elected member. We fed into the development of a new business plan for the group which is now being used to aid our reporting from the operational groups through to strategic.

**North West and North Wales Coastal Groups**

Sefton Council sit on the North West and North Wales Coastal Group to report progress on the Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme and the Shoreline Management Plan. 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 Sefton Council is a member of the Liverpool Bay Coastal Sub Group attend this group and the Northern Coastal Sub Group to report on progress of the Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme 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. Sefton Council host the Shoreline Management Plan coordinating officer, who is working with all coastal authorities in the north west and is representing them at the national SMP review.

**Finance**

FCERM has a team of 7 posts, 4 capitally funded to deliver coastal schemes for the NW, 1 post that must deliver capital work to recharge their time which leaves 2 posts revenue funded to deliver our role and duties as Lead Local Flood Authority. We have a revenue budget of £90k to undertake maintenance on our assets for the whole of the borough. We have a planned and prioritised programme of works for this budget both coastal and inland. We have an income target of £46k which we need to achieve via charging for our services and advice and undertaking work on capital schemes.

We are incredibly stretched as a service for the flood risk that we face as a borough with 1 in 7 homes being at risk one of the highest risk boroughs in the county to surface water flooding due to our low-lying nature. The knock-on consequences of being unable to maintaining our assets such as sea walls, watercourses and culverts due to lack of
resource will see major consequences to people, place and productivity locally and regionally.

**Priorities for the next year**

**Service plan**
Work will be continuing to further refine our service plan and gain consistency across the Green Sefton Service.

**Supporting the delivery of the Local Plan**
Continue to work with the planning authority to ensure flood risk and sustainable drainage systems are designed and delivered in accordance to the National Planning Policy Framework and Sefton’s Local Plan.

**Crosby Coastal Scheme**
The Crosby Coastal Scheme is underway with Mott McDonald awarded the contract to support the development of the business case. The scheme aims to gain planning permission by Autumn 2020 and be on site during summer 2021/22.

This project requires significant financial contributions and Sefton is working with partners in the Environment Agency and United Utilities to secure additional funding.

**Surface Water Management Plan level 2**
Undertake a level 2 Surface Water Management assessment on key flood risk communities to identify options for reduction of surface water flood risk. This will involve more detailed modelling of the system and risk.

**Fouracres flood risk scheme**
Continue to work with UU to identify areas where we can slow the flow.

**Pool watercourse**
Secure funding and commence on site construction of the preferred option.

**Develop new investment programme post 2021**
The Environment Agency’s current 6-year funding cycle ends in 2021 and it is expected that a new 6 year programme will be agreed. This programme is likely to have additional criteria to be satisfied to secure grant in aid. It is anticipated that this will look at wider multiple benefits, better incorporation of surface water flood risk. We will aim to have identified schemes ready to submit when needed.