

Name of meeting: Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee

Date: 5 December 2023

Title of report: Flood Risk Management Strategy 2024 (Final)

Purpose of report: To note the new Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2024

<p>Key Decision – A key decision is an executive decision to be made by Cabinet which is likely to result in Council spending or saving £500k or more per annum, or to have a significant positive or negative effect on communities living or working in an area compromising two or more electoral wards. Decisions having a particularly significant effect on a single ward may also be treated as if they were key decisions.</p>	<p>Yes/ no or Not Applicable No</p> <p>If yes give the reason why N/A</p>
<p>Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u></p>	<p>Key Decision – No</p> <p>Private Report/Private Appendix – No</p>
<p>The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p> <p>If no give the reason why not</p>
<p>Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name</p> <p>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</p> <p>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?</p>	<p>David Shepherd</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Julie Muscroft</p>
<p>Cabinet member portfolio</p>	<p>Cllr Graham Turner</p>

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: Yes on Member's Bulletin.

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Summary

The Council's new Local Flood Risk and Management Strategy (Local Strategy) is programmed to be launched in 2024 to replace our existing 2012 strategy (revised in 2019). The report is seeking the committee to note the new Local Strategy (see Appendix 1).

An Executive Summary is also attached for Member's information (Appendix 2).

2. Information required to take a decision

Background

As the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), Kirklees Council is required to develop and implements a Local Strategy under Flood and Water Management Act 2010. It is required to be consistent with the Environment Agency's revised National Flood and Coastal Erosion Management Strategy (National Strategy).

The risk of flooding in England is predicted to increase due to factors such as climate change and growth in our demographic. A new strategy is seeking to adapt our approach in line with current science and thinking to give our communities the best chance.

To improve our opportunities and securing inward investment, we need to ensure alignment and best fit with the Environment Agency's National Strategy to manage flood risk.

There is a stronger need now to enhance the work we do with our Partners in a more collaborative way. We need to be focussed on encouraging more effective risk management by enabling people, communities, businesses and the private sector to work together to balance the needs of our places, environment and economy. By working together, we can increase local resilience.

The new Local Strategy need to have strengthened focus on:

- creating resilient communities with build-back better approach.
- increasing emphasis on nature based solutions.
- being adaptive in responding to new climate hazards.
- ensuring a strong focus on working inclusively with our local communities.
- our commitment in responding to severe weather events and support to our communities.

New Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2024 (Local Strategy)

The Council's new Local Strategy is programmed to be launched in 2024.

In 2022/23 a considerable amount of time was spent in data collection and reviewing existing reports/studies. Early engagement workshops began over the 2022 summer period with relevant services in Kirklees and key partners to help shape the strategy. These partners included the Environment Agency, Yorkshire Water and Highways who are legally designated as Risk Management Authorities within Kirklees district.

These discussions have led to a set of new Strategic Objectives within the strategy as:

Evidence	Using data, research and science to better understand flood risk.
Communities	Working closely with communities and businesses to better prepare.
Adapt	Be adaptive in our approach in responding to climate change.
Sustainable	Support our economic growth and environment net gain.
Partnership	Working with partners to foster a catchment-based approach.
Innovation	Identify new technologies and opportunities to mitigate flood risk.

These objectives will support four themes identified in the new Local Strategy:

Place	Making best use of land and development choices to manage flooding.
Protect	Flood defences that improve the standard of protection in our communities.
Respond	Preparing and responding to flood incidents.
Recover	Getting back to normal and support a build back better approach.

A mixture of themes will extend across conventional flood alleviation methods integrated with community resilience at the heart. The strategy recognises the need to have a balance and a collaborative integration of these in Kirklees.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

The new Local Strategy has now embedded Communities in ensuring they remain part of our core strategic approach. The strategy sets a clear vision to ensure community resilience remains an integral part of managing flood risk in our district.

This new Local Strategy will be supported by our Inclusive Communities Framework in the belief that communities can support solutions to problems. Hopefully leading to a stronger and meaningful Community Flood Groups with identified roles such as Flood Wardens.

We will continue to work with communities with the aim to provide a collective response to severe weather events and support to resident preparedness. This can involve information exchange with residents and businesses and encouragement of self-help to enable householders and business to understand and manage the flood risk they face. Work dedicated around this has been identified in the development of the Action Plan (Appendix F of the Strategy (which is attached at Appendix 1)).

3.2 Working with Partners

The new Local strategy firms up the need to work with Partners by setting a new Partnership strategic objective. The Partnership approach will support local solutions but also look at flood risk mitigation outside our district boundary using a catchment-based approach.

The Council will continue to work proactively with other Risk Management Authorities, including the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water, to share information and good practice with neighbouring authorities, develop joint initiatives and provide clarity on the responsibilities for the management of flood risk.

We will continue our important partnership arrangements with Aire River Trust, National Trust, Woodlands Trust and with the Peak District National Park Authority to work collaboratively for our communities. The strategy seeks to enhance our Partner relationships and look extend our Partner network to include health bodies. Work dedicated around has been identified in the Action Plan.

3.3 Place Based Working

The work we do continues to recognise the diversity of the district and the pledges made in the strategy pay regard to the needs of each community. The new Local Strategy will aim to prioritise the areas at higher levels of flood risk but recognise areas of social deprivation. It recognises the importance of understanding the capacity of people and places to respond to flooding.

A key focus of our approach is working with local Ward and Parish Councillors to understand the issues that exist in our communities. Going forward we will look to enhance the work around Flood Community Groups in our highest risk areas whereby regular communication lines can be maintained. Ensuring communities are best informed so they are best prepared.

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

The new Local Strategy notes that flooding in England is predicted to increase due to Climate Change. It recognises the unpredictability that surrounds this and therefore the need to remain innovative and adaptive in trying new ways.

A key strategic objective in the new Local Strategy is evidence to ensure we remain abreast with current climate science and research to inform decision making. It identifies the Kirklees Climate Change Risk and Vulnerability Assessment and the importance of Climate Resilience to help prepare for climate hazards.

We will deliver a county wide catchment approach to managing the impacts of climate change in relation to flooding. Development and mitigation improvement schemes will include uplift allowances for increased rainfall from the impact of future climate change.

Our approach will place further emphasis on the need for natural flood management techniques that can store and slow water running off land in response to rain to help reduce flood levels downstream. This can include ponds, tree planting and use of leaky dams which have wider sustainability benefits such as biodiversity and carbon sequestration.

3.5 Improving outcomes for children

No impact

3.6 Financial Implications for the people living or working in Kirklees

No impact.

3.7 Other (eg. Integrated Impact Assessment/Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

No impact.

Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

Initial screening complete with no Stage 2 IIA required.

4 Consultation

The consultation of the new Local Strategy included Parish Councillors, residents and business owners operating in the district.

The public consultation started on the 24th of July till 18th September 2023 (8 weeks). The consultation was listed on our Involve platform and on our dedicated Flood Risk Management webpage. The consultation was supported by an Online Survey which used Live Chat to provide any support to members of the public (e.g. sending out a hard copy if requested).

The consultation was promoted through our usual channels i.e. a press release, Council Bulletin, Next Door and also on our social media platforms. An Engagement and Consultation Feedback Report has been prepared (see Appendix 3) which summarise the comments received.

Known flood areas were approached directly on email or via letter to inform them of the public consultation and how to get it involved. A dedicated workshop was arranged with known flood communities to speak directly to Officers involved in the drafting the new Local Strategy.

The Flood Risk Management service will continue to consult with Members and our local communities and our partners when developing flood mitigation projects.

5 Engagement

Workshops around the four themes of Place, Protect, Response and Recover were held in 2022 with partners like the Environment Agency, Yorkshire, National Trust, River Trusts and local charities.

Separate workshops were undertaken with Kirklees services such as Planning Authority, Highways and Emergency Planning who have helped to shape the new Local Strategy.

The Flood Risk Management will continue to engage our local communities when developing flood mitigation projects/initiatives in delivery of the new Local Strategy.

6 Next steps and timelines

The new Local Strategy will set the strategic direction and will be used to inform our decision making and support our future funding applications.

Following a successful adoption at Cabinet, Officer's will promote it using our existing Partnership meetings to update our Partners of the Council's new Local Strategy.

Officer's will progress the new Action Plan starting in April 2024. Officers will provide an annual update (at the end of the financial year) at the March Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

7 Officer recommendations and reasons

To note and invite comments from Members to the new Local Strategy.

8 Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

Officer recommendations are supported.

9 Contact officer

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10 Background Papers and History of Decisions

None.

11 Service Director responsible

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