
Report to: Place Panel

Date: 28 July 2020

Subject: **Flood Risk Management Update & Pipeline Refresh**

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1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Combined Authority's Flood Risk Management (FRM) work across Leeds City Region. This include updating the Combined Authority's pipeline of priority flood risk management schemes, the Leeds City Region Flood Review Recommendations and the City Region's Growth Deal Three supported capital flood programme.

2. Information

Background

Context

- 2.1 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority, working in partnership with the Leeds City Region Economic Partnership (LEP), plays a leading role in improving the resilience of the City Region to flood risk.
- 2.2 In collaboration with partners the Combined Authority developed the Leeds City Region Flood Review following the 2015 Boxing Day flood events. The organisation also works in collaboration with key stakeholders such as Partner Councils, the Environment Agency (EA) and Yorkshire Water the Combined Authority has supported delivery of ambitious and innovative flood schemes.

Climate Change

- 2.3 The resilience of the City Region to flood risk is vitally important to tackling the climate emergency. Our communities need to be helped to become more resilient to current and future weather events, which will only increase as our climate continues to change. The work undertaken to improve FRM provides an important contribution to the City Region's work to address the Climate

Emergency, supporting the commitment made by the City Region and all its Partner Councils to become net zero carbon by 2038 at the latest with significant progress by 2030.

- 2.4 Flood management is also an important component to our Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and Delivery Plan. Specifically, Natural Flood Management approaches including peat restoration, tree planting and natural dam measures.

Leeds City Region Flood Review

- 2.5 In response to the 2015 Boxing Day Floods, which caused over £500m of damage, the Combined Authority undertook a Flood Review, published in December 2016. The Review was prepared with contributions from the LEP, the ten City Region council partners, North Yorkshire County Council, the Combined Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the EA, Yorkshire Water, Canals and River Trust and the West Yorkshire Local Nature Partnership. The Review set 19 recommendations to help reduce the impact and likelihood of flooding and help us respond effectively across the City Region. Appendix 1 lists a summary of the 19 Flood Review recommendations which are arranged in the following broad thematic groups:
- a) Economic Impact of Flooding
 - b) Emergency response and recovery
 - c) Planning, risk reduction and mitigation for future events
- 2.6 All the actions in the flood review are ambitious and challenging. They require all parties involved to make commitments at all levels, changing how we do things in partnership. Progress has been made on most. A phased approach to their delivery is considered, in order to progress the actions of highest priority and await proposed changes to national legislation, policy of guidance where required. A summary of successes and progress across all 19 recommendations is listed below:

Successes:

- Developed a consistent definition of critical infrastructure to be protected in the event of floods and included within a database
- Developed a single Integrated Recovery Plan for all 10 LAs based on shared local best practice
- Created a strategic working group of local partners, drawing from existing governance structures and reporting to Combined Authority.
- Developed guidance across the City Region to mitigate flooding and improve resilience, through the publication of the updated Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Guidance document.

Next Steps:

- Continue to work with partners to leverage additional funding for capital flood projects across the City Region.
- Develop a whole catchment approach to flood risk and resilience e.g. emerging work in the City Region Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy

- Collaborate with research led by the Universities of Leeds and York to enhance the ability of businesses to access flood insurance and better understand the indirect economic impacts of flooding events.

Flood Events in 2020

- 2.7 The heavy rainfall accompanying Storm Ciara and Storm Dennis in February 2020, led to several floods throughout West Yorkshire affecting homes, businesses, schools and infrastructure across large parts of our area. The heavy rainfall caused flooding to properties from a combination of sources, including surface water and river water.
- 2.8 It was estimated that up to 800 businesses were flooded across Calderdale, with parts of Wakefield (Horbury) and Bradford (Shipley, Bingley, Keighley and Haworth) districts also severely impacted. It is estimated that £122m of damage was caused to buildings and infrastructure.
- 2.9 Storm Ciara and Storm Dennis follow on from the devastating impact of floods in our area in Boxing Day 2015 and the recent incidents in neighbouring South Yorkshire on 7 November 2019. There is now a consistent pattern of wet winter periods, with saturated land and consistently high river levels making communities vulnerable to the increased frequency of intense storms.

Capital Schemes

Growth Deal 3 FRM Programme

- 2.10 In 2017 £20 million from Growth Deal Three was approved at programme level by the Combined Authority to reduce the flood risk of businesses (1,345 target), and safeguard jobs (11,000 target) within the city region.
- 2.11 To date £17.85 million (£15 million spend) has been awarded to 8 projects with a total value of £195 million; programme costs of £138,000 are forecast:
- Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme #1 (FAS1) and Scheme #2 (FAS2)
 - Skipton Flood Alleviation Scheme
 - Mytholmroyd Flood Alleviation
 - Wyke Beck Flood Alleviation
 - Natural Flood Management Upper Aire
 - Natural Flood Management Colne Calder
 - Hebden Bridge Flood Alleviation Scheme
- 2.12 The remaining funds of the Growth Deal will be awarded during 2020/2021. The outline business case for the Brighouse FAS, with a Growth Deal ask of £1.5m is expected in September 2020, with the full business case due before the end of March 2021.

Future Funding

- 2.13 Building on the success of the Growth Deal Three funded programme, the Combined Authority has been working with partners to develop a programme

of priority schemes for the 6-year programme for post 2021 delivery. These schemes have been selected on the basis of a combination of the following points:

- Strategic value in terms of flood protection, economic or environmental value;
- Enhanced protection to business areas that have generally struggled to gain access to funding from other sources.
- Include an element of innovation or emerging best practice that could be used to drive forward FRM delivery across the City Region and UK.

2.14 During 2019 partners arrived at a package of 27 priority scheme with a funding ask of £119m. A further ask of £6m was identified to support a Natural Flood Management programme. This programme was beneficial in engaging with Government as part of the our Devolution Deal discussions and Spending Review rounds. The programme has supported partner efforts to draw in c.£30m of additional Government funding for identified priority FRM schemes in Calderdale and Tadcaster during 2019 and £22.32m for Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS) & Natural Flood Management in July 2020¹.

2.15 Circumstances have changed since the programme was agreed with partners in early 2019. This includes the current COVID-19 health crisis and related recovery process, the development of separate workstreams and knowledge of NFM; the conclusion of the West Yorkshire Devolution Deal and clarification of the Combined Authority/LEP geography.

2.16 It is proposed that a light refresh is undertaken to reflect the points above and to account for potential changes to the priority schemes in terms of the range of schemes and costs. It is anticipated that a new national DEFRA funding formula will be agreed, which will impact potential funding gaps for priority schemes in Autumn/Winter 2020. This will be reflected in the updated programme when more detail is known. Given the scale of the other proposed changes to the programme, it is proposed that is it updated now rather than wait for any changes to the funding formula. This will allow for a robust submission to be available when engaging with Government.

3. Clean Growth Implications

3.1 Clean growth is a cross cutting theme and is an integral part of FRM activities, particularly in relation to natural flood management, tree planting and peat restoration which provide flood protection and wider environmental benefits.

3.2 Other implications are set out above at paragraph 2.3.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

¹ These schemes are now understood to be fully funded and will be removed from the Combined Authority's priority programme. A further £12m was awarded to Hebden Bridge in July 2020 but this scheme was not listed in the post-2021 priority programme of schemes.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

6. Staffing Implications

6.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

7. External Consultees

7.1 A programme of external engagement has been undertaken to support our emerging FRM programme. This includes engagement with partners, central government departments and the media.

8. Recommendations

8.1 That the Panel notes the progress made and supports the proposals to update the Combined Authority's programme of priority FRM schemes for investment.

9. Background Documents

None.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Leeds City Region Flood Review Recommendations