

From: Roger Gough, Leader of the Council

To: Kent Flood Risk Management Committee – 14th November 2023

Subject: Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: The development of a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy is a statutory duty for KCC as Lead Local Flood Authority, which sets out how local flooding (flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses) will be managed in the county over the next ten years. It presents the aims and objectives for local flood risk management and how the delivery of these objectives will be monitored. The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy will be formally adopted by the council following public consultation.

Recommendation:

The Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the report and draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy; and
- b) Provide any comments or feedback prior to it going to public consultation.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 As the Lead Local Flood Authority, KCC must prepare a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (Local Strategy), as required by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.
- 1.2 KCC must prepare a Local Strategy that sets out how local flooding will be managed in the county. Local flooding is flooding that arises from surface runoff, ordinary watercourses and groundwater.
- 1.3 This is the third Local Strategy KCC has prepared. The previous [Local Strategy](#) was adopted in 2017. and covered a period of six years. Prior to that KCC adopted the first Local Strategy in 2013.

2 Approach

- 2.1 The previous Local Strategy was shorter than the first, it was a more focused document that centred on the strategic approach to local flood risk management, whereas the previous version had been broader in scope, as the Lead Local Flood Authority role was new. The latest version continues this trend and is shorter and more focused still.
- 2.2 The previous Local Strategy was supported by other policy documents, including the [Land Drainage Strategy](#) and the [Section 19 strategy](#), which set out how we will exercise some of the powers and duties we have as a Lead Local Flood Authority.
- 2.3 It is also supported by the [Flood Risk to Communities Documents](#) that set out the flood risks in each district and borough council in Kent. This allowed the Local Strategy to be shorter than the first one, as detail about flood risk management authorities and flood risk in the county was covered in another document.

2.4 The Flood Risk to Communities Documents will be refreshed and will continue to support the Local Strategy. The Environment Agency is due to release new flood risk data that the Flood Risk to Communities documents rely on next year, so major updates will wait until then.

3 Aim and objectives

3.1 The work we have done over the previous Local Strategy period has led to further progress and improvements in local flood risk management. In particular, there have been improvements in our understanding of how to get funding for local flood risk management schemes and our ability to deliver them. This is partly due to changes in funding rules for flood projects. The projects that we have delivered can be found on KCC's [Flooding Project webpage](#). There have also been improved opportunities for partnership working, particularly from Southern Water, who are focussing on partnership opportunities to help reduce storm overflows.

3.2 Challenges remain in delivering local flood risk management schemes. In particular, funding and resources available to deliver local flood risk management measures affects the scale of the flood risk management we can achieve. Climate change is also having a significant effect on surface water flood risks. Heavier and more frequent rainfall events are leading to more surface water flooding.

3.3 This Local Strategy will build upon this progress and try to address the challenges we have identified, where we can.

3.4 The aim of the Local Strategy is:

to improve the safety and wellbeing of Kent's residents and the economy of Kent through appropriate local flood risk management.

To do this we will:

work effectively with communities and partners, incorporate climate adaptation, and utilise natural processes to provide multiple benefits, where possible.

3.5 The Local Strategy has four objectives, which are similar objectives to the previous Local Strategy. They are:

3.5.1 Understanding flood risks

Risk Management Authorities in Kent have a clear understanding of local flood risk mechanisms including risks resulting from climate change, and will share these with partners to create an evidence base for flood risk and climate adaption.

3.5.2 Reduce the risk of flooding

To protect the people and businesses of Kent from flooding through the delivery of flood risk management projects and programmes using new or innovative techniques where appropriate.

3.5.3 Resilient planning

Development and infrastructure delivery in Kent takes an active role in flood risk management, taking opportunities to manage on-site and off-site flood risk.

3.5.4 Support resilient communities

Residents and businesses of Kent are able to help themselves to understand and manage their own flood risk, as appropriate, by having access to relevant flood risk information and support from risk management authorities.

Communities and individuals are empowered to act to protect themselves from flooding through individual efforts, partnerships and joint working.

3.6 These objectives each have measures set out in the Local Strategy that will help to deliver them.

4 Monitoring the delivery of the Local Strategy

4.1 KCC will provide an annual monitoring report of the Local Strategy. Metrics and other activities that will be reported on are based on the measures set out to support the delivery of the objectives. These are set out in Section 6 and Appendix 1 of the Local Strategy.

4.2 The measures that support the delivery of the objectives will be reviewed as part of the annual report, as will the metrics and activities we report on.

5 Consultation

5.1 The Local Strategy will be consulted on publicly over the winter. The consultation is due to start on 22 November 2023 and run to 30 January 2024. Once this has been completed and the responses have been considered, it will be taken to the Environment and Transportation Cabinet Committee prior to a key decision by the Cabinet Member for Environment.

6 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the report and draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy; and
- b) Provide any comments or feedback prior to it going to public consultation.

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