

Report to: Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board

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FLOODING AND SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT ON THE FYLDE COAST

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To raise the issues of flooding and surface water management faced by the Fylde Coastal Authorities due to climate change and outline the assistance the Economic Prosperity Board can provide to increase community resilience.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

That the Economic Prosperity Board:

2.1 Notes the increasing risk of flooding and the importance of surface water management across the Fylde Coast.

2.2 Recognises the success that Fylde, Blackpool and Wyre Councils have had by working in partnership to replace coastal defences and improve bathing water quality.

2.3 Supports the respective authorities in addressing the challenge of flooding and surface water management through the Fylde Peninsular Water Management Partnership.

2.5 Invites the Heads of Service to investigate the potential to jointly establish a specialist drainage team (between the three districts and Lancashire CC) pooling existing resources and securing additional resources to allow greater integration of water management across the peninsular. This action is to be delivered as an action through the Fylde Peninsula Water Management Partnership and reported back to the EPB.

2.6 Supports the innovation bids as outlined in section 4.5 of the report.

2.7 Invites the Heads of Service to work with United Utilities to identify surface water schemes that will be mutually beneficial in reducing flood risk.

3.0 Background information:

- 3.1 There is growing concern as to the increased incidents of flooding occurring on the Fylde Coast, affecting both property and land. These concerns are driven by three main factors:
- Climate change is resulting in higher sea levels, increased storm events and increased rainfall which current systems and assets are not designed for,
 - more housing development across the authorities and
 - changes to farming practices which are exacerbating the problem.
- 3.2 The majority of the area is serviced by a combined surface water/foul drainage system which is under pressure at times of high rainfall. The majority of the system is historic and is managed/owned by United Utilities.
- 3.3 The Fylde Coast is low lying and the relatively flat topography means that water courses drain slowly and are often tide locked. The drainage of the Fylde peninsular is impacted by the tidal influence which daily inhibits surface water flow from the ditch system reaching both the Ribble & Wyre rivers and ultimately the sea. Surface water is held back by tide-controlled gates on most of the stream outlets.
- 3.5 There is concern that regular maintenance of the ditches/dykes across the Fylde Peninsula is insufficient and that weeds and debris impede proper water flow and that there is insufficient maintenance and upgrading of the pumping stations that drain the area.
- 3.6 Lancashire County Council have undertaken a scrutiny review entitled [Strengthening flood risk management and preparedness in Lancashire](#). It is essential that any lessons learnt from this are fully embraced in the management of surface water in the area. There are some best practice examples across the three authorities including the Fylde Peninsular Water Management Group and the Wyre Flood forum.

4.0 Detailed Information

- 4.1 The Three Authorities of Fylde, Blackpool and Wyre work in close partnership with each other to deliver major infrastructure improvements like the replacement Coastal Defences along the Fylde Coast and Bathing Water Improvements. Flooding and surface water management is an issue that faces all Local Authorities across the Fylde Peninsula and they are working with groups like the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee at a regional level and the Fylde Peninsula Water Management Group at a local level.
- 4.2 RFCC – Regional Flood and Coastal Committee

The Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) is a committee established by the Environment Agency under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 that brings together members appointed by Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFA¹) and independent members with relevant experience for 3 purposes:

¹ Lead Local Flood Authorities are upper tier or unitary councils. In Lancashire they are:

- Blackburn with Darwen Council
- Blackpool Council
- Lancashire County Council

1. to ensure there are coherent plans for identifying, communicating and managing flood and coastal erosion risks across catchments and shorelines
2. to encourage efficient, targeted and risk-based investment in flood and coastal erosion risk management that represents value for money and benefits local communities
3. to provide a link between the Environment Agency, LLFA, other risk management authorities, and other relevant bodies to build understanding of flood and coastal erosion risks in its area

4.3 Fylde Peninsula Water Management Partnership

The Fylde Peninsula Water Management Partnership is a sub-regional partnership that formed in 2011 in response to the changes in Flood Risk Management Legislation, Bathing Water standards and to address the delivery of the Coastal Strategies for the Fylde Coast.

The Partnership comprises Fylde, Blackpool and Wyre Councils, Environment Agency, United Utilities, Lancashire County Council and Keep Britain Tidy. The purpose of the group is to provide an holistic, sustainable and collective approach to the management of:

- Coast protection,
- Bathing Waters,
- Flood Risk and Surface Water Management.

The group have been highly successful in securing and delivering £188m of Coast Protection Schemes, protecting 23,500 properties along the Fylde Coast. In addition, the Partnership have provided significant bathing water improvements particularly through the £100m investments by United Utilities.

In 2011 it was predicted that 7 of the 8 bathing waters on the Fylde Peninsula would be classified as poor when the revised bathing water classifications were implemented in 2014, as a result of the work of the Fylde Peninsula Partnership significant progress has been made and since .

The Fylde Peninsula Partnership also delivered the Fylde Coastal Programme that brought together the key partners delivering coastal defence schemes across the three authorities. The programme shared best practice and shared staff across the three authorities. The programme has secured and delivered £188m worth of Coastal Defence work across the Fylde Coast with further schemes planned over the next 6 years.

The Partnership is now focusing on the proposed business plan for 2021 – 2027 that will be published in Summer 2021 following the consultation process for the Lancashire Flood Risk Management Strategy

4.5 Innovative Flood Resilience Fund

In the 2020 Budget, the government announced a programme to test and demonstrate ways to help communities become more resilient to flooding and coastal change. The programme will allocate £150 million of the £200 million to 25 areas in England. Each of the selected partnership projects will receive on average £6 million between 2021 and 2027. The Environment Agency have allocated £50m to other flooding and coastal resilience activities including the development of long-term investment pathways in the Thames and Humber Estuaries, Yorkshire, and the Severn Valley. This fund will provide a fantastic opportunity to develop and test new and emerging approaches and ambitions set out in the new [Government Policy](#)

[Statement](#) and [National Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy](#) and the 25 Year Plan

The programme called for bids from Lead Local Flood Authorities and or Coast Protection authorities. The emphasis was to work with Partners on the submission of the bids. Subsequently two Lancashire bids were submitted, Wyre Council on behalf of the Coastal Authorities submitted a bid and Blackpool Council submitted a Bid as a Lead Local Flood Authority on behalf of Lancashire.

The project objectives are set out below: -

Project 1 Submitted by Blackpool Council on behalf of a wider Lancashire Partnership to create a multi layers resilience for Lancashire.

The project objectives are -

- Objective 1 - Deliver 18 intervention projects through innovative resilience actions that will address flooding in communities who have a history (and are expected to continue) of not being able to be supported through traditional flood risk actions. Delivered in a phased approach across the project life.
- Objective 2 - To deliver multi layered resilience - property and infrastructure through integrated water management that will also deliver wider environmental (including [Water Framework Directive](#), [Bathing Water Directive](#), and other 25-year plan goals) and social benefits (that include building social capital and health and wellbeing, through connecting communities and natural capital data sets), throughout the project life.
- Objective 3 - create a 5-year plan starting from 2025 (but trialled in locations prior to this) that will deliver integrated infrastructure resilience benefits through combined cross sector and cross organizational working.
- Objective 4 - Complete a Lancashire wide policy review to produce recommendations that address the three key policy areas and focus on facilitating ongoing innovative working to see long lasting innovation, and delivery of resilience to ensure long term programmes, through agriculture, new developments and re-development improving urban areas flood resilience.
- Objective 5 - Through an Investment Strategy Officer, combine the work of Objective 3 and 4 to create a long-term adaptive project pipeline that will unlock innovative finance, such as green finance and private investment, to support longer term delivery of projects and sustainability of all projects.
- Objective 6 - Provide demonstrator projects and dissemination of community-based action to demonstrate best practice for communities to lead on community level resilience.
- Objective 7 - Deliver a Land Management programme with new innovative payment by results that will support improved community and infrastructure resilience, whilst increasing the business sustainability of farm businesses who need to adapt to meet current, and future flood resilience issues, through changing practices or diversification of business income, linked with Private sector investment (to achieve multiple outcomes), existing and the new Agri-environment scheme – Environmental Land Management Schemes.

Project 2 Ecological Community Owned Coastal Buffer Strips submitted by Wyre Council on behalf of North West Coast Protection Authorities - Natural Coastal Buffer Strips for Risk and Carbon Reduction

The project objectives are -

Creating a natural buffer strip around the coast has multi benefits, including reducing flood risk, coastal erosion, biodiversity, recreation and carbon capture.

The buffer strips proposed include:

- Developing salt marsh,
- Managed realignment,
- Reclaiming redundant brownfield sites,
- Dune systems and
- Intertidal lagoons to effectively drain the hinterland

Understanding the morphological system is essential to develop and retain this buffer strip, the coastal group partners have developed best practice in monitoring including: Autonomous radar, Wire Wall, satellite, and Drone photogrammetry. The proposal seeks to build upon these technologies to provide a single learning model of the coastal nearshore informed by autonomous monitoring.

The project will be documented as a practical user guide and disseminated through established portals.

The Ecological Community Owned Coastal Buffer Strips submitted by Wyre Council on behalf of North West Coast Protection Authorities - Natural Coastal Buffer Strips for Risk and Carbon Reduction was successful. The roll out of this project is currently being worked up by Wyre and the Coast Protection Authorities.

The multi layered resilience for Lancashire bid was unsuccessful. The development of the scheme proposed are of significant importance to ensure that they are developed through alternative funding sources.

4.6 Lancashire Flood Risk Management Strategy 2021 -2027 (Local Strategy)

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 requires Lead Local Flood Authorities to prepare and maintain a local strategy for flood risk management in their area. Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council as lead local flood authorities and as a Lancashire Partnership have refreshed the existing local strategy. The refreshed local strategy and business plan has now been consulted upon. The closing date was the 19th March 2021, with the final strategy due to be published in September 2021.

The Strategy has been drafted to meet the ambitions of the [National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England](#) which was published in Autumn 2020. The Local strategy will be reviewed again after the current spending review period 2021 - 2027

This Local Strategy sets out how Lead Flood Authorities will work with partners, businesses, and the Community to manage risk of flooding in Lancashire. The strategy is a document that sets out objectives and actions to manage local flood risk. The strategy also describes who will deliver the objectives and actions, and how they will be funded and coordinated. It also explains the role of the partners, including District and Borough Councils, Water Companies, Parishes and Town Councils.

The business plan describes in detail the objectives, the actions and how and when these will be delivered, the business plan will be monitored by the Lancashire Strategic Partnership and annually by the LLFA's Scrutiny process.

The business plan will also align to the recently published National Flood and Coastal erosion Risk management Action Plan 2021.

4.7 Specific Flood Risk Projects at Fylde, Blackpool and Wyre

Fylde Council Coastal Schemes

- St Annes Sea Wall £11.7m replacement hard sea defence feasibility commenced November 2020
- Fairhaven to Church Scar Coastal Defence Scheme £22.8 m complete June 2020
- Estuary Scheme Delivered by the Environment Agency
- Lytham to Warton Tidal Embankment
- Freckleton Marsh Tidal Embankment

Fylde Council Surface Water Management Schemes

- Lytham Park Cemetery sustainable drainage system £500k
- Blackpool Road main culvert replacement £125k
- Park View Playing Field pumping station £40k
- Staining surface water Drainage Scheme £65k

Blackpool Council

- Little Bispham to Bispham Coast protection scheme £30.89m
- Bispham Capital maintenance scheme £6.246m
- Beach Nourishment scheme £12.262m
- Sea Bees realignment £7.000m
- Fylde sand Dunes £1.276m
- Anchorsholme and Bispham Study (recommended in the Section 19 report)

Wyre Council

- Coastal Scheme Delivered by Wyre Council
 - Wyre Dune & Beach Management Scheme: £42m rock groyne and revetment scheme commencing 2021/22.
- Estuary Schemes delivered by Environment Agency
 - Hambleton Tidal Estuary scheme
 - Fleetwood Docks estuary scheme.
- Surface Water Schemes delivered with Wyre Rivers Trust and United Utilities.
 - Hillylaid wetland and flood storage area. Commenced
 - King Georges Playing fields: Wetland and storage area.
 - Jubilee Gardens SUDs and wetlands.

4.8 Fylde Council Member Working Group Review of Flooding and Surface Water Management

Fylde Council are currently undertaking a review of flooding and surface water management across the Borough. The Review commenced in November 2020 and will conclude later in 2021. The purpose of the review is:-

- To review the roles and responsibilities of the various organisations involved in the management of surface water in Fylde to ensure greater coordination and effectiveness of resources to reduce flooding in the future.
- To ensure that arrangements for dealing/responding to emergency flood incidents in Fylde are robust and effective to provide reassurance to members, residents and landowners.

The intended outcome will be to reduce flooding and the impacts of it and ensure a sustainable surface water drainage system for Fylde that can cope with development growth and climate change

4.9 Conclusion

In conclusion, flooding and surface water management is an issue that faces all our communities across the Fylde Coast. The three authorities of Fylde, Blackpool and Wyre work in close partnership with each other to address flooding and surface water management across the Fylde Coast. This is through groups like Turning Tides and the North West & North Wales Coastal Group at a regional level and the Fylde Peninsula Water Management Group at a local level.

The Government's 2020 National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England is a long-term vision for: a nation ready for, and resilient to, flooding and coastal change – today, tomorrow and to the year 2100.

It has 3 long-term ambitions, underpinned by evidence about future risk and investment needs. They are:

- Climate resilient places: working with partners to bolster resilience to flooding and coastal change across the nation, both now and in the face of climate change.
- Today's growth and infrastructure resilient in tomorrow's climate: making the right investment and planning decisions to secure sustainable growth and environmental improvements, as well as infrastructure resilient to flooding and coastal change.
- A nation ready to respond and adapt to flooding and coastal change: ensuring local people understand their risk to flooding and coastal change, and know their responsibilities and how to take action.

To deliver the Government's strategy locally will require a continued partnership approach, support for the programmes and activities to be delivered, support for the partner organisation and the potential formation of specialist drainage resources with the right skills, knowledge and experience to be able to address the issues in the long term.