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FLOOD MANAGEMENT STRATEGY TASK AND FINISH PANEL

Wednesday, 10 July 2024

FLOOD MANAGEMENT STRATEGY TASK AND FINISH PANEL

A meeting of the Flood Management Strategy Task and Finish Panel was held on Wednesday, 10 July 2024 at the Civic Centre.

PRESENT Councillor J Joy (Chair)
Councillors B Hunt (Vice-Chair), C Cawley, M Fairley,
D Powlay, C Quartermain, P Salvin and P Thomson.

OFFICIALS R Asadi, L Hall, N Hill, C Fraser, and A Lynch-Brown.

6 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Brown, C Morgan, L Myer, V Rider, and S Smith; **NOTED**.

7 **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 JUNE 2024**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Flood Management Strategy Task and Finish Group held on Tuesday, 18 June 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

8 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest; **NOTED**.

9 **FLOOD MANAGEMENT STRATEGY PRESENTATION**

Officers delivered a Flood Management presentation covering the following main points:

- Extreme weather events are becoming more frequent leading to more intense rain fall and the current drainage network isn't able to cope.
- Cyclical Maintenance Programme. Survey and data analysis through XAIS asset management system will support the gully clearance programme.
- Reactive Maintenance. Bronze/Silver/Gold system in place to manage call outs, cannot offer an emergency response.
- Drainage Improvement Programme.
- Flood Defence Schemes works in progress and Environment Agency initiatives.

As part of the ensuing discussion members raise the following issues:

- Gullies overflowing – the mapping process from the survey and use of AI will support programme of works.
- Timescale for completion of surveys – survey has commenced with an expected three-month process to completion when the outcomes will be assessed to determine programme.
- Impact of tree planting, especially on residential streets – the survey will include this data, but the team are also working with colleagues in Neighbourhoods regarding the sweeping programme.

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- Vehicle parking can prevent gully clearance – survey data will help planning and enable notifications to be issued, text messaging service being considered along with closer working with Beyond Housing. Using new tools and technology to improve communication with residents.
- The percentage of ‘hotspots’ under the council’s remit – discovering that general maintenance over several years has been lacking and as resources are stretched the programme has been more reactive than proactive.
- Interaction with Wildlife Trust around the issues pertaining to Coatham marsh.
- Coastal erosion and changes to the beaches – officers working closely with lead authority and have funding to work on South Gare and Saltburn. Current issues not affected by longshore drift or groynes, but the way storms have hit the coastline. Maintaining land retention and only losing that which is allowed to naturally regress. The Beach Management Plan to be ready by autumn 2024. There is a need to balance costs and engineering works need to be done in a way that does not create potential long-term problems.
- TVCA involvement – focus on transport with an aim to develop active travel. Council receive a block of funding from TVCA.

The following actions were identified:

1. Chair requested data on pinch points where gullies have flooded and streams overflow.
2. A member asked for an invitation to be extended to officers from the neighbourhood team to gain their perspective.
3. A member suggested that council use BBC Weather instead of the Met Office when preparing.
4. A member asked for clarification of where waterway pollution sits within the priorities and strategies.
5. A member suggested exploring funding opportunities that may be available.
6. A member asked for the data showing impact of new developments.
7. A member requested a precis of the government requirements for the strategy.
8. A member asked what could be done about the Environment Agency in Darlington holding the key to Skinningrove floodgates.

10 **SCOPE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

This item was not covered.

11 **NEXT MEETING: 31 JULY 2024**

Friday, 2 February 2024

FLOOD MANAGEMENT STRATEGY TASK AND FINISH GROUP

A meeting of the Flood Management Strategy Task and Finish Group was held on Tuesday, 18 June 2024 online via Teams.

PRESENT Councillors C Cawley, M Fairley, J Joy, B Hunt, D Powlay, V Rider, P Thomson, and P Salvin.

OFFICIALS R Asadi, L Hall, N Hill, C Fraser, and A Lynch-Brown

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S Smith.

2. **STRUCTURE OF MEETING**

Officers outlined the structure of the initial meeting and members were invited to come forward with their ideas on progressing the work on the group to address the strategy.

The timeframe of the group was set for three months, and it was explained that the Terms of Reference would be developed and agreed by the group.

Members were reminded that the recommendations must be achievable and made considering current resource limitations.

Members were asked to nominate a Chair and agree the frequency of meetings.

Officers shared the policy and strategy document and asked members to provide recommendations that would inform the development of the next strategy. There were multiple strands to be covered as well as duties and responsibilities.

Members were advised that the strategy would need to conform to government requirements.

3. **LOCAL ISSUES**

Members gave initial feedback reflecting issues that had impacted areas within the borough and their wards.

A member commented that there were issues with the number of gully suckers being generally available. Officers advised that an initiative was being introduced to make use of AI to determine the frequency of works

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and better target areas in a timely manner. A member expressed an interest in how prioritisation was determined.

A member asked about the cost of AI. Officers advised that it was in budget and carrying out a survey will determine silt levels that will support AI data and ongoing data collection to discover other issues such as grass cutting and autumn leaf fall. Once the AI data has been analysed the approach can link with the sweeper programme. This proactive, joined up approach has been communicated with the Neighbourhoods Team.

A member asked if the council was working closely with the Environment Agency to keep becks clear and better access for members to the duty officer. Officers advised that there becomes a hierarchy of problem to prioritise when there are heavy rainfall events. The volume of calls can be significant, and it is important to use the call centre to accurately record and respond to issues.

A member asked about issues where council land and private land border. Officers advised work with other council departments would be needed to make progress in these areas.

A member highlighted the varied geography within the borough and the need for a proactive approach looking at new strategies. Officers advised that 80% of the borough is combined drainage. The Lead Local Flood Authority has among its duties a requirement for private landowners to hold back water to prevent the system being overwhelmed. New developments must build a separate system and work continues with Northumbrian Water.

A member asked about the Teesworks flood barrier, and another member suggested that it would be useful to have sight of the Teesworks flood strategy.

A member stressed the need for a strategy timetable review process and offset arrangements in place for developers. There was also a need to look at reed beds, coastal erosion, and existing design challenges such as Cat Nab car park. Officers advised that the Environment Agency governs sea issues and shoreline management. Cat Nab can be tide locked at times and there is a draft beach management plan although the impact from winter storms continued to be felt.

A member suggested the need to plan for river reed beds and ongoing issues with Eston Hills run off and a strategy to assist cleaning the water.

4. **CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

Councillor Thomson nominated Councillor Joy as Chair and Councillor Hunt as Vice Chair. The group unanimously agreed.

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5. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be scheduled to take place in three weeks and every three weeks thereafter. The scope of the group and Terms of Reference would be brought forward for members to consider.