

Wednesday, 31 July 2024

FLOOD MANAGEMENT STRATEGY TASK AND FINISH GROUP

A meeting of the Flood Management Strategy Task and Finish Group was held on Wednesday, 31 July 2024 at Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council Civic Centre.

PRESENT Councillors J Joy (Chair), B Hunt (Vice Chair), C Cawley, P Salvin, and P Thomson.

OFFICIALS R Asadi, C Fraser, A Lynch-Brown, J Smuk and R Wren

12. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Fairley, C Morgan, D Powlay, C Quartermain and S Smith.

13. **To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2024**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Flood Management Strategy Task and Finish Group held on Wednesday, 10 July 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

14. **Declarations of Interest**

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

15. **Scope and Terms of Reference**

The document was summarised. Members and officers were invited to contribute to the Terms of Reference with suggestions of what may be added or removed.

16. **Flood Management Strategy Objectives**

Members discussed the objectives contained within the Flood Management Strategy:

Objective 1. Improving flood risk to communities severely affected by recent flooding.

Objective 2. Reducing the incidence of surface water flooding.

Objective 3. Ensuring flood risk is managed in new development.

Objective 4. Keeping our highways safe and passable.

Objective 5. Delivering wider benefits.

As part of the ensuing discussion the following questions/comments were made:

CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY & IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

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- Members asked what happened with investigations of flood incidents, planning for pinch points, relationships with Northumbria Water and opportunities to engage with multi-agency groups. Officers advised that there is a need to engage more proactively. 80% of the network is combined sewer. The EA have lengthy lead in times with up to 2 years to complete a study plus further time to address issues. A joint comms piece will be put out regarding the current Loftus project.
- Infrastructure development to cope with climate change.
- Making use of outside body feedback, in particular meetings with the Environment Agency.
- A member asked if the council were able to make use of flood incident reports that had been prepared previously. Officers advised that information previously gathered was archived and not many reports were filed digitally. The approach that has been adopted is to create new data layers so that moving forward will enable a better understanding to manage capacity restrictions and resource implications that impact investigations. The use of GIS mapping layers with supporting data support the approach and housing and highways are prioritised.
- A member asked what extra resources were needed and what was being done to address this issue. Officers advised that the service review would provide costs for the extra resources but funding streams being for limited time periods there can be challenges recruiting. Financial constraints are in place throughout Teesside and there needs to be scope to investigate efficiencies across the Tees Valley, especially around housebuilding and infrastructure.
- Chair suggested that this group can help, and members should scrutinise policies for effectiveness and to inform recommendations.
- A member asked if telemetry systems were still in place in drains. Officers advised that Northumbria Water had 24-hour systems that alerted operators and the Environment Agency had beck telemetry. This data would not help the council to monitor silt levels but the survey being undertaken can determine silt and the programme of gully clearance.
- A member asked about the Council's position regarding unadopted highways. Officers advised there were difficulties as they fell under the remit of developers but with time and dated evidence a profile can be built and taken to the developer.

The following actions were identified:

1. A member suggested a common multi-agency platform that can be accessed to view flood reports.
2. Invitation to Environment Agency and Northumbria Water to present to the group.
3. Update on the Beach Management Plan.
4. Carry out an annual public communications exercise.

17. **Next Meeting: 21 August 2024**