

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND
NEIGHBOURHOODS**

REPRESENTATION ON REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEES

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To consider options for representation on Regional Flood and Coastal Committees.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 brought into place the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (RFCC) to succeed Regional Flood Defence Committees (RFDC).
- 2.2 The committee consents the Environment Agency's (EA) regional programme of works on flooding and coastal erosion and any levy placed on lead local flood authorities (LLFA). The committee is responsible for the regulation and improvement of designated main river watercourses. Council flood defence projects seeking EA funding are also considered by the committee.
- 2.3 There are 11 RFCC's covering England. North Lincolnshire is covered by two. The Anglian Northern committee covers the eastern part of North Lincolnshire. The Severn Trent committee covers the western part of North Lincolnshire including Scunthorpe.
- 2.4 Committees consist of a chair, appointed by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, persons appointed by a constituent authority, or representing a group of authorities, and persons appointed by the EA. The committee must total at least 11, but no more than 25, unless approved by the Secretary of State.
- 2.5 As previously with the RFDC, North Lincolnshire Council is allocated a shared place with Doncaster MBC and Rotherham MBC on the Severn Trent Committee. However, a new shared arrangement has been proposed and agreed in the Anglian Northern Region whereby North Lincolnshire Council now shares a voting seat with Lincolnshire County Council.

- 2.6 The Chairman of the Anglian Northern Committee has written to the council encouraging North Lincolnshire Council to attend this Committee on a permanent basis, participating in the discussion and sharing the voting place on an annual basis with Lincolnshire County Council.
- 2.7 On the Severn Trent Committee, the former Lead Member for Markets and Partnership Development attended for the shared place. Recent discussions with Rotherham and Doncaster confirmed their acceptance of North Lincolnshire Council continuing to represent all three authorities for a three year term.
- 2.8 These discussions with Doncaster and Rotherham Councils also proposed maintaining links between all three authorities, to provide feedback and input to meetings.
- 2.9 Even if an authority does not hold a voting place, LLFA representatives are encouraged to attend and participate in meetings.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 **Option 1** – Decline attendance at RFCC's and consult with shared place partner authorities accordingly.
- 3.2 **Option 2** - Accept attendance at quarterly meetings for one or both regions/committees.
- 3.3 **Option 3** - Consider representatives from elected members, officers or any other appropriate person.
- 3.4 It is recommended that North Lincolnshire Council appoints a representative to attend the Anglian Northern RFCC and the Severn Trent RFCC, and that attendance at the latter committee continues to be on behalf of Doncaster and Rotherham councils as well.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 Not attending RFCC's will mean North Lincolnshire Council will not be able to contribute to the work of the Committee, and our ability to influence decisions in the best interests of North Lincolnshire would be severely restricted.
- 4.2 In light of the above, attendance at the meetings will enable the North Lincolnshire area to have an effective voice in the Committee's activities.
- 4.3 Assuming it is accepted that attendance or formal representations are necessary, there will be a need to identify Elected Member and/or officer representation and for appropriate briefings and training to be provided to those representatives, prior to attendance.

- 4.4 Voting representation on RFCC's needs to be considered and discussed with adjacent authorities in respect of the two committees, however the council is encouraged to participate in discussions in any event. The constituent authority can appoint any person satisfying the eligibility criteria with the relevant knowledge and experience.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 Financial

5.1.1 Meetings are held quarterly at EA offices in Peterborough, for Anglian Northern, and Solihull, for Severn Trent, requiring a day's attendance, appropriate travel costs and authorisation for out of area travel.

5.1.2 It is estimated that the cost of attending the Anglian Northern and Severn Trent Committees on four occasions in 2011/12 would be £1,000. This should not increase significantly if more than one person attends as it is assumed that, in those circumstances, transport would be shared.

5.2 There are no staffing, property or IT implications associated with this report.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 – CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 Statutory

6.1.1 North Lincolnshire Council has statutory responsibilities as an LLFA under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The council has a duty to develop and maintain a strategy for flood risk management in its area. The strategy must be consistent with the national strategy and the council must consult other flood risk management authorities, including the EA.

6.2 Risk

6.2.1 Recent national and local flooding events have highlighted the increasing risks flooding poses for communities and businesses. The RFCC's are an important vehicle for managing flood risk and approving measures to mitigate that risk. It is felt important that North Lincolnshire Council is represented on both RFCC's, either directly, or through a joint arrangement with other local authorities.

6.3 There are no other implications arising from representation or attendance at meetings.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

- 7.1 At a recent meeting with colleagues at Rotherham and Doncaster Council's, both indicated their agreement to being represented on the Severn Trent RFCC by North Lincolnshire Council.
- 7.2 In light of the recent decision to amend the council's shared place on the Anglian Northern Committee to an arrangement with Lincolnshire County Council, consultation with Lincolnshire County Council is required to advise on the council's representation and future voting arrangements at meetings.
- 7.3 Regular consultation takes place with relevant EA flood risk managers on matters which are considered by the RFCC's.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That North Lincolnshire Council appoints a representative to attend the Anglian Northern RFCC and Severn Trent RFCC, and that attendance continues to be on behalf of Doncaster and Rotherham councils as well.
- 8.2 That discussions take place with representatives of Lincolnshire County Council as to voting arrangements on the Anglian Northern Committee.
- 8.3 That the EA and partner authorities are advised of the decision.
- 8.4 That Cllr R Allcock, Lead Member for Highways be appointed to represent North Lincolnshire Council on the Anglian Northern RFCC and Severn Trent RFCC.

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

- Statutory Instrument 2011 No 695 The Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (England and Wales) Regulations 2011
- The Flood and Water Management Act 2010
- Email from Chairman of Anglian Northern RFCC dated 14 June 2011