

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**HIGHWAYS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS  
CABINET MEMBER**

**ISLE OF AXHOLME FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To update the Cabinet Member on progress in the development of a flood risk management strategy for the Isle of Axholme.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 In January 2011, the Environment Agency consulted the council on options for the development of a flood risk management strategy for the Isle of Axholme. The strategy concentrates on flood risk from the Rivers Torne and Idle where they flow across the lowland area. The area contains some 28,000 properties, 30,000 hectares of high-grade land, significant infrastructure and many businesses.
- 2.2 At previous discussions the council supported proposals that are designed to safeguard property, infrastructure and farmland with sustainable long-term investment and on going maintenance. The council also supported an appropriate standard of protection taking into account climate change whilst managing any over-capacity.
- 2.3 In September 2011, the Environment Agency set out its preferred option. The Agency are committed to continuing to provide a high standard of protection for the area in relation to both flooding and tidal defences and maintain terminal pumping stations. There was also a commitment to work with partners and local communities to develop detailed plans.
- 2.4 The preferred option was to provide and maintain flood defences to the 1.3% (1 in 75) chance of flooding happening each year. The report highlighted an aspiration to provide a higher protection to the 1% (1 in 100) level. However, this would require additional funding contributions. The Leader of the Council subsequently confirmed support for the higher protection standard to provide a soundly based cost effective standard of protection. The additional capital funding contribution required amounts to around £60k per annum, as determined by the approved strategy timetable.

- 2.5 The Regional Flood and Coastal Committee approved the Strategy in March 2012. However queries raised by DEFRA have delayed the sign off of the strategy. The Environment Agency has subsequently responded to these queries and determined a way forward to complete the strategy. As such, they have now resubmitted the business case to DEFRA.

### **3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 The Cabinet Member notes the progress on the development of the Strategy.
- 3.2 The Cabinet Member formally endorses a decision to support the enhanced 1 in 100 strategy to maintain and provide flood defences to the higher standard of protection.

### **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

- 4.1 The preferred option is to support the enhanced level of protection for the Isle of Axholme.

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

#### **5.1 Financial**

5.1.1 The council has committed to providing contributory funding to support the preferred option strategy. As the strategy is developed the level of this commitment will become clearer.

5.1.2 The option report indicated a requirement for contributory annual funding in the order of £60k. At the appropriate time, an internal capital bid for the funding will be made.

#### **5.2 Staffing**

There are no significant staffing implications arising from this report.

#### **5.3 Property**

None arising from this report.

#### **5.4 IT**

None.

## 6. **OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

6.1 None arising from this report.

## 7. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

7.1 The Isle of Axholme Flood Risk Management Strategy was the subject of an extensive consultation. Discussions have taken place between relevant officers, elected members and the Environment Agency.

7.2 The Agency has confirmed that it now wishes to move onto detailed discussion with the council and other flood risk management partners. These include the Isle of Axholme and North Nottinghamshire Water Level Management Board. The purpose is to further develop the strategy to achieve the desired outcome.

## 8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 That the Cabinet Member notes the current position in relation to the Isle of Axholme Flood Risk Management Strategy.

8.2 That a further report is brought to the Cabinet Member when the strategy is signed off by DEFRA and the financial commitments are clear in order to achieve a higher standard of protection.

8.3 That Cabinet Member considers how to support the strategy, as it develops, with the necessary funding.

DIRECTOR OF PLACES

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### **Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

- Isle of Axholme Flood Risk Management Strategy Options Consultation
- Isle of Axholme Flood Risk Management Strategy – Preferred Option Document
- Letter from NLC Leader to EA , supporting 1 in 100 Standard of protection – dated 29 February 2012