

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**NEIGHBOURHOOD, ENVIRONMENTAL AND
COMMUNITIES CABINET MEMBER**

HUMBER RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT PLAN

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 The Environment Agency is carrying out a consultation about the Humber River Basin Management Plan- which forms our area's response to the Water Framework Directive.
- 1.2 The Plan details how the Environment Agency intends to improve the chemical and biological quality of the water environment in partnership with organisations such as Local Authorities up to 2015 and beyond.
- 1.3 The report is urgent because the deadline for responses to the consultation is 22 June 2009.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The European Union Water Framework Directive was adopted in the year 2000. The directive replaces the duties enshrined in seven previous directives. It seeks to improve the quality of all waters by set deadlines, including drinking water, groundwater, bathing waters and other surface waters. The directive will be delivered through improved management of river basins by a wide range of people, including local authorities and local communities.
- 2.2 The Environment Agency is carrying out a consultation about the Humber River Basin Management Plan- which forms our area's response to the Water Framework Directive. The Plan is very large, running to over 2000 pages. However, the implications for North Lincolnshire are confined mainly to the Idle and Torne Catchment and the Louth, Grimsby and Ancholme Catchment.
- 2.3 Each catchment has been divided into a number of water bodies- which might be rivers, drains or still water. The ultimate aim is to improve water management until each waterbody achieves at least "good" status over a range of 30 different measures. This is a very challenging target. For

much of our area, the waterbodies have not yet been assessed and the Environment Agency does not feel that good status can be achieved by 2015 as the actions required would be disproportionately expensive. Where problems are known, they generally relate to excessive nutrients, low dissolved oxygen levels in the water and a poor diversity of invertebrates.

2.4 Measures needed to improve water quality in our area include controls on agricultural pollution and abstraction, controls on industrial discharges and the promotion of Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SUDS).

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Option one- Do not respond to the Environment Agency Consultation
- 3.2 Option two- Respond to the consultation encouraging the Environment Agency to assess the waterbodies in our area and carry out improvements where possible.
- 3.3 Option three- As Option two, but also offer Council support in measures such as promoting SUDS and offering landowners advice on environmentally sensitive farming. Ensure that the water environment is considered in Planning decisions.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 Option one- There is a tight deadline for responding to the consultation and there is a lot of work to be carried out in reading through all the Environment Agency documents. However, it is important to respond if possible, as the Environment Agency is seeking support from a wide range of partners. This option is not recommended.
- 4.2 Option two- It is important that waterbodies in our area are improved in our area, as elsewhere. However improvements will require action from a wide range of bodies, not just the Environment Agency. This option is not recommended.
- 4.3 Option three- Delivery of the Water Framework Directive depends on the involvement of a wide range of bodies. The Council is not able to influence some activities that affect water quality, but can help in the ways described in 3.3 above. This is the recommended option.

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

- 5.1 Financial

There should be no financial implications, as the Council already provides the services described in 3.3 above.

5.2 Staffing

There should be no staffing implications, as the Council already provides the services described in 3.3 above.

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

6.1 Statutory

A positive response to the consultation will help with implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive.

6.2 Environmental and Other

Implementation of the Water Framework Directive will help to improve the physical and chemical qualities of local waterbodies, as well as their value for wildlife.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

7.1 The Environmental Protection Team and the Spatial Planning, Housing and Development Team both support the recommendation. Other teams consulted offered no objection.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Respond to the consultation encouraging the Environment Agency to assess the waterbodies in our area and carry out improvements where possible. Offer Council support in measures such as promoting SUDS and offering landowners advice on environmentally sensitive farming. Ensure that the water environment is considered in Planning decisions.

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: none