



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY, POLICY AND GOVERNANCE**

**to
PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE
18 JULY 2019**

**CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT NATIONAL FLOOD AND
COASTAL EROSION RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

1. TO PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To make Members aware of a national consultation undertaken by Environment Agency on the Draft National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England. (Strategy) which aims to create a nation resilient to flooding and coastal change to the year 2100.
- 1.2 To advise Members that a response, as set out in **APPENDIX 1**, has been submitted on behalf of Maldon District Council. Due to the limited timescales of the consultation this has been shared with the Chairman of this Committee as the consultation ended prior to the date of this Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That Members note the formal response to the consultation as set out in **APPENDIX 1** on behalf of Maldon District Council and any further comments from Members are forwarded to ECC for inclusion in Maldon District Council's response.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Environment Agency has a statutory duty to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a national flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy. This is a requirement of Section 7 of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010.
- 3.2 The Act also lists what the strategy must cover, states it requires public consultation and the Secretary of State must approve it.
- 3.3 The consultation was undertaken with the public, partners and businesses and the Environment Agency aims to publish the final Strategy in 2020.
- 3.4 The Strategy is a commitment outlined in the government's 25 year environment plan released in January 2018. It sets out how the nation together will reduce the risk of harm to people, the environment and the economy from flooding and coastal change.
- 3.5 The Strategy outlines roles and responsibilities for those managing flood and coastal change. In particular District Councils who are key partners in delivering local flood

risk management. The consultation response makes it clear that along with these responsibilities there needs to be appropriate access to funding from either national or local sources to fulfil the aims of the Strategy.

- 3.6 The Strategy suggests that Local Authorities' can carry out flood risk management works to ordinary watercourses however, since the amendment to the Land Drainage Act 1991, without the enforcement provisions any works that the Council undertakes would be at its own costs. As there are no current budgets for this type of proactive or emergency works this has been reflected in the consultation response.
- 3.7 The Strategy looks at various tools to be tailored to the worst flood risk areas Cumbria, Thames Barrier, Norfolk Coast, Leigh, Humber and Future Fens.
- 3.8 A range of new funding tools are also discussed which include getting beneficiaries, the people, businesses, infrastructure providers and others who benefit from Coastal Change action to contribute towards the costs. The consultation response pays reference to the requirement of funding if these plans are to be successful.
- 3.9 The response is set out in an online questionnaire split into five sections as detailed in **APPENDIX 1** including the Council's response by question.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Strategy is high-level document and sets out some enthusiastic aims for future flood risk management which are clearly supported. The focus is heavily directed towards resilience rather than protection and places reliance on partnerships to deliver this. Whilst funding tools are discussed it is unclear how these will be applied. The Council's response clearly refers to its concerns about the availability and allocation of funding. Without the clarity on this, it is difficult to see how the Strategy will achieve the vision, the steps along the way and what it is hoping to achieve to implement them.

5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 5.1 There is likely to be an impact on the thematic strategies of Place, Community and Prosperity. If funding and funding tools are not accessible within the District the outcomes within these strategies could be restricted. The Strategy relies on working in Partnership with Risk Management Authorities and the Council will need to carefully target its resource to ensure we maximise any opportunities that arise.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – None at this stage as this is only a consultation response at this stage.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.
- (iii) **Impact on Resources (financial)** –None.

- (iv) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None.
- (v) **Impact on the Environment** – None.
- (vi) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** – None.

Background Papers: None.

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