
REPORT TO:	FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 12
DATE OF MEETING:	17 MARCH 2011	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	KEVIN EXLEY / CHRIS PAYNE 01283 228717 / 01283 595756 kevin.exley@south-derbys.gov.uk	DOC:
SUBJECT:	LOWER DERWENT FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ASTON	TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM

1.0 Recommendations

That:

- Members note the proposals set out in the Lower Derwent Flood Risk Management Strategy including the Environment Agency's preferred option to maintain existing flood defences in South Derbyshire on the Lower Derwent:
- The Environment Agency is requested to consult this Council on any significant changes to the proposed programme of works which could significantly alter flood risk in South Derbyshire or any proposed mitigation measures which will affect local communities in the Lower Derwent catchment.
- That the Environment Agency provide an assurance that local villages will not be affected by increased flood risk as a result of flood alleviation works in Derby City.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 To formulate a response to the Environment Agency's proposals set out in the **Lower Derwent Flood Risk Management Strategy** and highlight the current timetable for implementing the strategy.

3.0 Detail

3.1 The Environment Agency (EA) is currently consulting on a strategy to reduce future flood risk on the lower reaches of the River Derwent over the next 100 years. This strategy is called the Lower Derwent Flood Risk Management Strategy (FRMS) and is available to view on the EA's website:

<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/38465.aspx>

3.2 In identifying their preferred option to control flood risk within the Lower Derwent catchment the EA have considered a range of options. These include:

- **Do nothing** - no longer maintaining flood risk assets or the flood warning service with current activities in respect of flood risk management, river maintenance and flood warning.

- **Changes to land use management** - applying best farming practices, buffer strips along watercourses to reduce sediment run off and reducing upland grazing, moorland restoration and increasing forest cover to reduce runoff in the upper catchment.
- **Storage options** – including upstream reservoir storage, online storage next to the river channel or offline storage away from the river or the pumping of water into underground tanks or local ground water reserves.
- **Conveyance improvements** - for example river reprofiling, dredging or regrading or flow diversion.
- **Flood defences** – includes flood proofing of individual properties; the installation of temporary defences; the development of permanent defences along the current alignment through the City or the creation of a new alignment of flood defences through Derby City (the blue corridor).

3.3 Having considered the various options in detail the EA has discounted a number on technical or cost grounds and specified its preferred approach to managing flood risk in the lower Derwent. This approach consists of a combination of measures as follows:

- Continue with existing flood risk management activities such as the flood warning service, channel maintenance and the maintenance of existing flood defences and review them to ensure that they are best value for money.
- Promote the change of upstream land-use and management where this reduces downstream flood risk.
- Construct flood defences to an optimum standard of protection and along an alignment which allows for increased water levels under climate change and does not increase flood risk significantly elsewhere.

3.4 A key component of the Environment Agency's preferred option is the creation of a 'blue corridor' through Derby City. The blue corridor would create a wider floodplain along a new alignment of defences within the City, which would be around 120m wide. It would still narrow the existing overall floodplain compared to the existing scenario where flood waters overtop the existing flood defences immediately adjacent to the river and flood areas of the floodplain behind.

3.5 However, whilst many properties in Derby City could benefit from a reduced risk of flooding, properties in downstream communities such as Ambaston, Shardlow and Great Wilne could experience some increases in flood risk - although EA modelling indicates that any increases in flood risk south of Derby City are unlikely to be significant. It should be noted, however, that some local residents contest the EA's view that this scheme will not significantly increase flood risk on affected communities in South Derbyshire.

3.6 In order to deal with future flood risk in South Derbyshire the EA's preferred option is to maintain the existing defences and mitigate any adverse flood risk impact of any upstream works. The EA have indicated that they will continue to investigate likely flood risk impacts throughout their ongoing work and will mitigate any impacts should they arise.

3.7 In light of the above it is recommended that Members seek assurance from the EA that the villages of the lower Derwent will not be affected by increased levels of floodrisk as a result of flood alleviation works in Derby City.

3.8 Following on from this consultation the EA are seeking to achieve 'broad scale agreement' on the realignment of the blue corridor through Derby City and

identification of funding sources. This is expected to take until March 2012, and by the end of 2012 the EA expect the business case for their proposals to be approved. The delivery of the strategy is expected to take place over the next 30 years or so depending on the state of the economy and when sites within the flood corridor are redeveloped.

- 3.9 During the next stage of project development the EA propose to set up forums to work with local communities and to ensure that communication and local engagement is maintained. Whilst this commitment to local engagement is welcomed, it is recommended that the Council request to be consulted on any significant changes to the proposed programme of works which could significantly alter flood risk in South Derbyshire or any proposed mitigation measures which will affect local communities in the Lower Derwent catchment.
- 3.10 For the avoidance of confusion Members should note that the EA has also been undertaking work on preparing the **Lower Dove Flood Risk Management Scheme**. This scheme began as the River Dove Flood Risk Management Strategy. However, in preparing the Lower Dove FRMS it became clear that it was not viable to implement a strategic level flood risk management solution (such as that now being considered on the Derwent). As such the EA have adopted a non-strategic flood risk management scheme that does not have catchment wide implications, and for this reason the project has been revised to move straight to the production of a stand alone Project Appraisal Report (PAR). In dealing with this scheme as a PAR Members should note that strategic options for dealing with flood risk will not be consulted upon (as with the Lower Derwent Strategy) as these have effectively been discounted.
- 3.11 The proposed change in scope will improve delivery of the flood defence and environmental benefits to the affected communities by reducing the overall scheme implementation programme by approximately 12 months. The PAR study is due to be completed in April 2011. It is proposed that a planning application be submitted to South Derbyshire District Council and East Staffordshire Borough Council at this time.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 None

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 The Lower Derwent FRMS could help the Council achieve corporate priorities related to flooding. In particular it could assist in the delivery of flood resilience measures in homes at risk from or with past history of flooding.

6.0 Community Implications

6.1 The Lower Derwent FRMS could help the Council achieve objectives set out in the community strategy to deliver improvements in the management of open space and local sites to the benefit to people and wildlife.

7.0 Background Papers

7.1 Lower Derwent Flood Risk Management Strategy

7.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report

7.3 Statement of Environmental Assessment detailing how comments collected in the consultation phase of the strategy have been incorporated into the final strategy.