

**Open Report on behalf of Executive Director for Environment and Economy**

Report to:	<b>Economic Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>08 December 2015</b>
Subject:	<b>Water Management Plan for Greater Lincolnshire</b>

**Summary:**

Greater Lincolnshire considers that the effective management of flood risk and water resources is a critical factor in enabling economic growth in our area. It is a crucial part of our infrastructure needs. The overall aim is for water management to act as an incentive for investment and for effective management to be a positive contributor to economic growth. Partners across Greater Lincolnshire through the Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Water Management Board have commissioned a Water Management Plan. This report outlines progress with the Water Management Plan.

**Actions Required:**

The Economic Scrutiny Committee is asked to note progress to date and comment on the approach being taken.

## **1. Background**

Greater Lincolnshire considers that the effective management of flood risk and water resources is a critical factor in enabling economic growth in our area. It is a crucial part of our infrastructure needs. The overall aim is for effective water management to act as an incentive for investment and to be a positive contributor to economic growth.

Investment in water management and infrastructure can be seen as a good economic investment. A report commissioned by the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GL LEP) and Local Partners during 2014 at the time of the government's growth deals suggested that a £20.5m contribution to 11 water infrastructure projects in Greater Lincolnshire could unlock approximately 5,440 FTE jobs in total. In terms of the benefits to business, this investment could unlock over £120m over 100 years which approximates to £7 of business benefits for every £1 contributed.

Partners across Greater Lincolnshire through the LEP's Water Management Board have commissioned a Water Management Plan as a means of enabling economic growth. The intention is that the Plan will be published by the end of 2015.

### **Why do we need a water management plan?**

Globally and nationally, the pressure on water is growing. Water will further become a valuable commodity and there will be increased pressures caused by changes in climate change, sea level rises, extreme rainfall events and population growth and development. For example, water use has been growing at more than twice the rate of population increase in the last century. The water challenge is not unique to Greater Lincolnshire, but addressing it earlier than other areas may provide a competitive advantage and enable our ambitions for growth in the longer term.

Together in Greater Lincolnshire, our actions will create 13,000 new jobs, help 22,000 businesses and increase the value of the Greater Lincolnshire economy by £3.2 billion by 2030. In order to do this and work towards sustainable economic growth, we also need to maintain and seek creative funding solutions for flood risk management in the longer term, along with solutions for solving water stress for economic growth.

On flood risk management, the GLLEP's area is one of the lowest lying and vulnerable areas to flooding in the country. This is especially the case along the coast (but does not exclude inland areas) where much of the agri- food, visitor and port infrastructure is located. Security from flooding is a key infrastructure requirement for these sectors, and the housing growth sector. On the back of this economic growth, Greater Lincolnshire should make the case for additional investment in our water infrastructure. Lincolnshire is recognised nationally as having developed a best practice partnership for food risk management. There is currently no such partnership in place for water resource management, nor is there any strategic approach to integrated water management.

On water resource, the GLLEP's area is one of the driest in the country and is prone to drought. The availability and security of water supply is fundamental to agri-food, housing and manufacturing growth. With our ambitious plans for growth longer term, this water stress is set to increase and will need a different operating and investment model. Some companies have cited access to water as being a barrier to growth currently, particularly in manufacturing and agri-food. Our housing growth alone of 100,000 homes will require an additional 12 million cubic metres per year equivalent to 4,800 Olympic swimming pools.

The existing "business as usual" solutions are not enough because the pressures on water are growing, the public sector cannot fund all of the work that would be needed, and therefore it is likely that new partnerships will be needed for collaborative and multiple benefit solutions.

## **Who has been involved in the Water Management Plan?**

In 2014, a Water Management Board was formed by the LEP to look at integrated water management in Greater Lincolnshire. The Board, led by Mark Tinsley, a LEP board director, has members drawn from the local authorities, the LEP, the Environment Agency, the regional flood committee, the Internal Drainage Boards and Anglian and Severn Trent Water. An officer group supports the Water Management Board.

In scoping the Water Management Plan, two workshops have been held during the summer of 2015. Both workshops were well attended with over 70 different organisations, and had representatives from key sectors such as manufacturing, construction, housing, visitor economy and agri-food in our area. The Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Drainage Management Partnership has been engaged throughout this process, and is supportive of the approach which is intended to incorporate the strategic objectives of the Joint Lincolnshire Flood Risk & drainage Management Strategy, established in 2012.

## **What is in the draft Water Management Plan?**

Lincolnshire County Council is drafting the Water Management Plan on behalf of the Greater Lincolnshire LEP, and a draft version is planned for late November. The Water Management Plan will:

- promote integration between flood risk and water resource management
- set out the GLLEP aims and objectives for water management as a driver for economic growth
- integrate the three lead local flood authorities flood risk management strategies
- identify key current, emerging and future projects

This will be used to underpin further discussions with government, including Defra and BIS, to promote the case for investment in infrastructure to promote growth in the GLLEP area.

## **2. Conclusion**

The Committee is asked to consider the impact of water on economic growth, and to comment on the approach taken in the water management plan.

## **3. Consultation**

### **a) Policy Proofing Actions Required**

n/a

#### 4. Background Papers

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Drainage Management Plan	<a href="http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/44398">www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/44398</a>
Greater Lincolnshire Strategic Economic Plan	<a href="http://www.greaterlincolnshirelep.co.uk/sep">www.greaterlincolnshirelep.co.uk/sep</a>

This report was written by Ruth Carver, who can be contacted on 01522 550515 or [Ruth.Carver@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:Ruth.Carver@lincolnshire.gov.uk).