

Open Report on behalf of Environment Agency

Report to:	Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee
Date:	17 September 2018
Subject:	Humber Strategy Comprehensive Review

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to update members on the current status of the Humber Strategy Comprehensive Review, which seeks to redefine the strategic approach to managing tidal flood risk on the estuary, setting the way forward for the next 100 years. The review is being undertaken by a partnership of 12 local authorities (of which Lincolnshire County Council is one) and the Environment Agency. The intention is that the review will be completed, and formally adopted by all partners, by 2021.

Actions Required:

Members of the Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee are invited to consider and comment on the update provided and highlight any future actions for consideration.

1. Background

The current Humber Strategy, Planning for the Rising Tides, was approved by government in 2007. Its intention was to set out the overall approach to managing the risk of tidal flooding around the estuary in a way that was sustainable for the people who live there, the economy and the environment. Since it was approved, the Environment Agency has completed more than £75 million of flood risk management schemes around the estuary – these schemes have reduced the risk of flooding to more than 40,000 homes, as well as businesses, industry and land. We are spending more than £86 million of government funding between 2015 and 2021, reducing the risk of flooding to 50,000 homes.

We began work to update the Strategy in 2011 to reflect changes in legislation and Government policy. Working with Defra, Government, local MPs and local authorities, following the 2013 tidal surge, it was agreed that the best way forward was a Comprehensive Review of the Strategy developed in partnership. This Comprehensive Review will seek to redefine the strategic approach to managing tidal flood risk on the estuary and set the way forward for the next 100 years. It follows the principles set out in Defra's National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk

Management Strategy, which gives communities a greater role in risk management decisions, with the Environment Agency having a strategic overview.

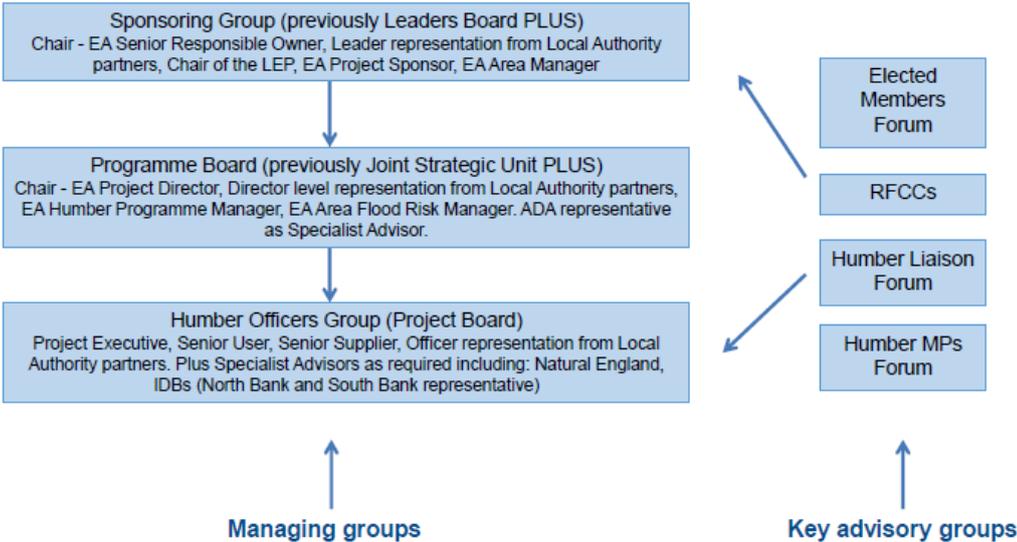
A key driver for the review is the recognition that rising sea levels as a result of climate change will have a significant impact, not only on existing communities around the estuary, but on the potential for future growth and sustainable development. The review provides an opportunity to work in partnership to ensure a robust strategy is in place for the long term to support sustainable development. The Environment Agency and local councils will work together to align the strategy and local plans around the estuary. This will support local priorities, strategy delivery and strengthen the regional case for investment in flood management.

Existing strategies and plans for managing flood risk around the Humber are also being taken into account as part of the Comprehensive Review process. In particular, there is a critical link with the Flamborough Head to Gibraltar Point Shoreline Management Plan, which overlaps with the Humber Strategy in the outer part of the estuary. There is a strong linkage between the SMP and the existing Humber Strategy, and we are seeking to maintain that linkage as the strategy is reviewed and the SMP is refreshed.

Governance

The original strategy area covered 6 local authorities, but the area covered by the Comprehensive Review has been expanded to include a further 6, in order to include all areas where tidal flooding is the dominant risk. All 12 local authorities are working in partnership with the Environment Agency to deliver the Comprehensive Review, under an agreed governance structure which is summarised by the diagram below.

Governance reflecting Major Project Status



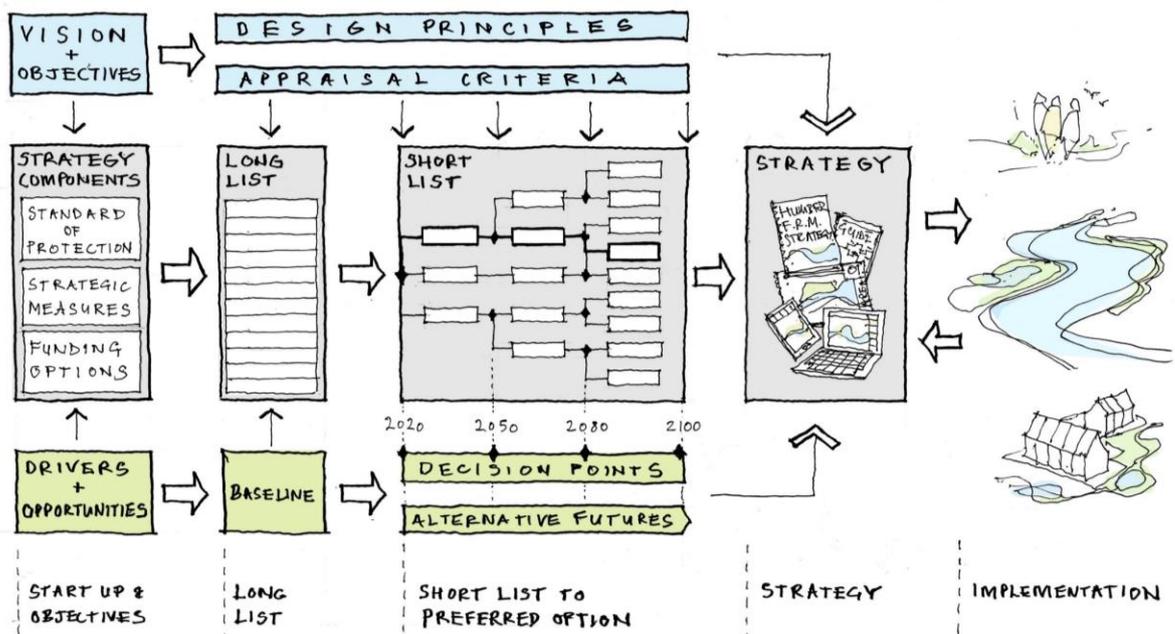
Consultancy firms Jacobs and Arup are also involved to provide technical expertise. The partnership is working to publish a final, agreed strategy by 2021.

Progress of the review

During 2017, work was carried out to set objectives for the project and establish a long-list of potential strategic approaches for managing tidal flood risk. The options on this long-list have now been through an appraisal process three strategic approaches have been identified. Throughout the process, consideration will be given to:

- A number of potential approaches to addressing the **standard of protection** provided across the estuary
- A range of **strategic measures** for managing tidal flood risk such as raising current defences, flood storage areas and community resilience measures and;
- **Funding and investment opportunities** and approaches

The review will take a managed adaptive approach, to allow the revised strategy to be resilient and responsive to future challenges and opportunities. The diagram below summarises the review process and illustrates how the managed adaptive approach will generate a range of potential pathways, which will shape the development of the final strategy. As key decision trigger points are reached, the pathways will be revisited and consideration will be given to whether the strategic approach should be reviewed. Triggers could include factors such as increase in risk, and especially including the extent to which risk increases as sea levels rise, policy changes and economic factors.



2. Conclusion

Next steps

At present, the partnership are reviewing the proposed strategic approaches, and once these have been agreed a further more detailed appraisal process will be undertaken. Three baseline options (do nothing, do minimum and maintaining the status quo) are also being considered.

Once the potential strategic approaches have been agreed, wider engagement with key stakeholders will begin during autumn 2018. The first opportunity for consultation with wider groups and communities is expected to occur in spring 2019 when the Interim Sustainability Appraisal report is published.

The preferred option will be identified and agreed during autumn 2019, with full public consultation on the draft strategy scheduled for autumn 2020. Once this has concluded, and any necessary alterations have been made to the draft strategy it will be agreed by partners, approved by Defra and published in 2021.

Throughout this process we are continuing to progress an extensive programme of capital works around the estuary. Future capital schemes will be developed in line with the chosen strategic approach, but also with a view to potential future scenarios. The partnership will be fully involved in developing any proposals for securing additional funding, and this will be a key consideration, whichever strategic approach is ultimately selected.

3. Consultation

a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

No

b) Risks and Impact Analysis

Risk and impact will be considered as part of the review.

4. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Laura Hopton, who can be contacted on 07789944802 or laura.hopton@environment-agency.gov.uk.