



FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 29 MAY 2018

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR B ADAMS (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors P A Skinner (Vice-Chairman), W J Aron, T R Ashton, C R Oxby, C E Reid, R A Renshaw, C J T H Brewis and L Wootten.

District Councillors R Austin (Boston Borough Council), Mrs F M Martin MBE (East Lindsey District Council), P Vaughan (City of Lincoln Council), I Carrington (North Kesteven District Council), M D Seymour (South Holland District Council), B Russell (South Kesteven District Council) and I G Fleetwood (West Lindsey District Council).

Councillors C J Davie and E J Poll, Executive Councillor Commercial and Environmental Management attended the meeting as observers.

Officers in attendance:-

Deborah Campbell (Environment Agency), Katrina Cope (Senior Democratic Services Officer), David Hickman (Growth & Environment Commissioner), Warren Peppard (Flood Risk & Development Manager) and Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer).

27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs A M Austin, Mrs W Bowkett, B M Dobson, and Mrs C J Lawton.

It was noted that the Chief Executive, having received notice under Regulation 13 of the Local Government (Committee and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, had appointed Councillors L Wootten and C J T H Brewis to replace Councillors B M Dobson and Mrs A M Austin respectively, for this meeting only.

28 DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLORS' INTERESTS

It was noted that some members of the Committee were members of Internal Drainage Boards across the County.

29 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 FEBRUARY 2018

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Flood and Drainage Management Scrutiny Committee held on 26 February 2018, be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
29 MAY 2018****30 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS
AND LEAD OFFICERS**

The Chairman invited Executive Councillors and Lead Officers to provide the Committee with any announcements.

Councillor C Davie, Executive Councillor for Economy and Place advised the Committee of the following:-

- Flood Prevention Scheme at Middle Rasen – It was reported that the Flood Prevention Scheme would be getting underway as residents in Middle Rasen had experienced flooding on three occasions in the last ten years, particularly the Gainsborough Road area of the village where 11 properties had been flooded internally. The Committee was advised that the scheme would help reduce the risk of flooding and protect 51 homes. The estimated overall cost of the scheme was £600,000, to be jointly funded by Lincolnshire County Council, Anglian Water and the Environment Agency;
- Waterways Strategy – It was noted that Lincolnshire County Council was continuing to work with partners to unlock the visitor and economic benefits around the County's waterways; also taking advantage of strategic opportunities to join up with emerging thinking concerning the potential benefits arising from flood risk management and water resource planning; and
- National Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy – It was highlighted that the council was fully engaged with the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Environment Agency in the early stages of developing a new national Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy. It was highlighted further that there was a recognition of the need to accommodate local priorities and the extent to which effective water management could support delivery of a wide range of benefits, for example to facilitate growth through prioritised flood risk management. The Committee noted that discussions moving forward would make sure that a full range of local community, business and environmental priorities could be embedded within the emerging national approach to managing water.

**31 ANGLIAN WATER'S CONSULTATION DRAFT WATER RESOURCES
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Consideration was given to a report from David Hickman, Growth and Environment Commissioner, which provided the Committee with some key points proposed for Lincolnshire County Council and its partners' response to the Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) consultation.

A copy of the proposed Lincolnshire response document was circulated at the meeting. The Committee was invited to consider the response and comment on the proposal. It was highlighted that the response had to be made by 1 June 2018; and members of the Committee were also urged to make a response through their respective district councils.

FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
29 MAY 2018

In a short introduction, the Growth and Environment Commissioner made reference to key elements that had been identified in developing a joint response between partners, details of which were shown on pages 13 and 14 of the report. Also, attached at Appendix A was a copy of the executive summary of the Water Resource Management Plan for 2019 for the Committee's consideration.

During discussion of the draft proposals circulated at the meeting, the following comments were raised.

- The need to include in the response any other emerging strategies;
- That the introduction of smart meters should be accompanied by a public awareness campaign. Also, officers agreed to look into the issue raised with regard the procedures taken in relation to leaks when a meter had been installed;
- The need to stress the engagement of all stakeholders at a local level regarding the infrastructure to ensure future water availability;
- The need for investment to accommodate climate change impacts at an early stage to mitigate any problems coming forward and to also reduce the impact on the bill payer;
- Ensuring that future housing development included a water plan and water disposal plan. The need for more to be done regarding rain water harvesting, particularly with new housing developments. It was highlighted that Lincolnshire County Council was working hard with regard to grey water and rain water harvesting. It was reported that currently there was flexibility for developers, if it could be shown that the introduction of these initiatives would make a development financially unviable. It was highlighted that to enforce the harvesting of rain water; and the use of grey water, there would need to be changes made to Building Regulations;
- One member highlighted that electricity supply was also a pinch point effecting economic growth within the County. The Committee was advised that the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership was conducting a study regarding electricity supply;
- A question was asked as to whether the costs associated with future proofing had been checked. The Executive Councillor for Economy and Place confirmed that the figures had been discussed at the customer engagement forum; and had been the subject of robust challenge; and
- Proposed Water Storage facilities in the south west of the county. The Committee was advised that there were no specifics at this time and that a number of ideas were being developed with regard to water security. It was noted that there were no definitive plans for the storage of water at this moment in time. It was agreed that whatever plans were being developed should involve close engagement with local partners to ensure that any proposals benefitted Lincolnshire as much as possible.

The Committee was invited to comment on the Lincolnshire response to the Consultation Draft Water Resource Management Plan (This document was circulated at the meeting; details of which are shown below)

FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 29 MAY 2018

"Lincolnshire response to Consultation Draft Water Resource Management Plan (due 1 June 2018)

Lincolnshire County Council, the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership and our partners welcome the opportunity to engage with the development of Anglian Water's Water Resources Management Plan 2019. We recognise, and fully support, the need to plan strategically and proactively for future water resource management. This approach is entirely consistent with our established joint strategy for flood risk and water management, and with the aims of the GLLEP to ensure that effective flood risk and water management supports and promotes growth throughout the area, as set out in its Water Management Plan.

1 Growth is a key challenge our WRMP sets out to meet. We have used the latest local authority growth targets to develop our strategy, ensuring there will be enough water to meeting these targets. We have taken this approach because housing growth is regularly cited as a top priority for national and local Government. Of course, targets do not always turn into achieved growth and, currently, local growth targets are not quite being met.

Given this, do you agree with our approach of planning to meet local authority growth targets, or should we switch to an approach of using trend-based projections?

It is essential that planning for future water resource requirements is undertaken in close consultation with Local Planning Authorities and with county councils where there are two-tier local government structures. It is also important that growth aspirations set out in Strategic Economic Plans are considered alongside formal growth targets in local planning policy. Ideally, and recognising the need for a consistent and rigorous evidence base, it would be preferable to take a flexible approach that fully engages in local growth aspirations rather than determining a single fixed approach that is applied across the board. It is especially important that water resource planning is able to take account of changing circumstances and emerging opportunities for promoting growth that may be more nuanced than previously set growth targets or broader trend-based projections.

The Committee agreed to the draft response prepared in relation to question 1.

2 We are proud of the ambitious, cost beneficial demand management strategy that we have developed in the WRMP and are confident that this will more than offset the effects of growth in the region. Using the very latest technology and innovation, our strategy will unlock estimated water savings of around 43million litres a day by 2025, and 123million litres a day 2045. This strategy relies on more than just technology though – it requires collaboration with our customers, stakeholders and businesses to help bring down water demand.

Do you agree with this approach? Are we right to prioritise demand management?

We fully support this approach. Technological solutions to demand management are important elements in developing a more sustainable water resource infrastructure

for the future. Equally, helping to develop attitudes towards water use that complement these solutions is a key part of a strategic approach to managing demand for water in the long run. We consider demand management to be an essential part of a wider suite of approaches that is appropriate for the immediate five year period of the draft WRMP, however it is unlikely to remove the longer term need for planning for significant infrastructure improvements in line with local and national growth needs and should be considered alongside these.

The Committee agreed to the draft response prepared in relation to question 2.

3 Studies show that the public are more in favour of the introduction of compulsory water meters than ever before. We believe that this higher level of support reflects the fact that we now have a much larger proportion of customers paying using a meter compared to those who do not. We know there is still little support from customers who still pay unmeasured charges and so we have decided against the inclusion of compulsory metering in our WRMP.

Do you agree with this approach or think that we should consider compulsory metering in our upcoming business plan (2020-25)?

The voluntary introduction of metering is a good example of a mitigating solution that is best achieved by working with customers as mentioned in the previous question. Compulsory introduction risks bypassing the development of a broad understanding and acceptance of the need to manage demand, and risks engendering a greater level of resistance than might be the case if it were applied in line with public acceptance and support. In addition, it is possible that a rapid introduction could reduce the capacity of people to adopt satisfactory lower water behaviours in time, and lead to some facing significant increases in their bills without being able to adapt in advance. A consensual, voluntary approach would appear to offer the best opportunity in the long term to promote water-saving behaviours alongside the introduction of technical solutions that could take advantage of them.

The Committee agreed to the draft response prepared in relation to question 3.

4 We have used Adaptive Planning to identify opportunities to ‘future proof’ our Plan against potential environmental regulations by increasing option capacity. The cost of this future proofing is £88 million, which equates to a cost increase of around £1.70 per year on average customer bills by 2025.

Should we include this additional investment to future proof our plans?

Effective demand management and future infrastructure planning is unlikely to fully succeed without also considering potential environmental impacts and associated regulation. While it is difficult to predict the course of future environmental regulation following the UK's exit from the European Union, it is reasonable to assume that a strong regulatory framework will remain in place and will need to be accommodated. For this reason, it seems preferable to include a realistic provision for remaining abreast of – and helping to influence - regulation, rather than incurring potentially greater costs in the future by reacting to it retrospectively.

FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 29 MAY 2018

The Committee agreed to the draft response prepared in relation to question 4.

5 Our Plan is designed to increase our resilience to drought, so that no customers are exposed to the risks of rota-cuts and standpipes in a severe drought event. The investment required to increase resilience to drought is, we believe, relatively modest and equates to approximately £2.20 per year on the average household bill by 2025 (assuming the other factors that influence bills remain unchanged).

Do you support this approach?

We would make similar comments to those above. It is good risk management to forward plan and identify appropriate resources to increase the resilience of the public supply, particularly in view of the existing projections for water availability in the east of England. Therefore, we would support this approach, especially with regard to maintaining access to water for those households most likely to be challenged by access to affordable utilities.

The Committee agreed to the draft response prepared in relation to question 5.

6 Climate change is one of the key strategic risks our business faces. As a result, we have decided to adopt the Environment Agency's 2017 method for calculating climate change impacts, which results in a large impact in 2024-25.

It would, however, be possible to defer these impacts, and the associated investments, until 2029-30. Doing so would remove approximately £300million from the investment programme between 2020-25, a bill impact of around £6.10 per year on average customer bills by 2025.

Should we defer this investment until 2029-30?

Further to our comments made above, while it is desirable to keep bills as low as practicably possible, it would seem preferable to spread the investment in climate change resilience over a longer period to avoid a much larger requirement for adaptation later on. The risk of deferring such investment is that a relatively short term benefit in bill levels could be counterbalanced by significantly greater increases to manage the accumulated impacts of climate change by 2029, with consequently higher impacts on households and businesses at that point.

The Committee agreed to the draft response prepared in relation to question 6.

Planning for the future

Effective water management is essential to economic and housing growth, and therefore for sustaining and growing Lincolnshire's economy. Key sectors in this regard are represented by food production and processing, as well as the visitor economy and the supply chain that supports it. This is also true for our neighbouring areas in eastern England. Careful planning for the water resources that will be needed to sustain and develop these sectors into the future is essential for the area's economy and also to continue to grow the contribution that they make to the national economy and the UK's capacity for growth.

FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 29 MAY 2018

For these reasons we would wish to be fully engaged with our key stakeholders in all stages of decision-making about the nature, scale, scope and location of long-term solutions and any interim steps that may be required in preparation for them. In particular, we would wish to support a strategic approach to water management infrastructure in the longer term by playing a leading role in developing proposals through the WRE initiative that may be located in Lincolnshire or could offer significant benefits to the area.

We would strongly welcome close engagement to ensure that infrastructure systems that might be located within Lincolnshire provide the greatest possible clearly identified and costed additional benefits for Lincolnshire in terms of flood risk, economic uplift, development opportunities and water management. As such, we would also be very interested in helping to outline key requirements for determining locations of future infrastructure.

These are likely to involve ensuring that major initiatives arising from long term strategic planning should be capable of linking with and supporting existing programmes, such as the Joint Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Management Strategy, the GLLEP's Strategic Economic Plan, Local Industrial Strategy and Water Management Plan, and the Lincolnshire Waterways Strategy."

In conclusion, members the Committee were urged to ensure that district council's responded to the consultation.

RESOLVED

That the Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee agreed to the proposed draft response to the Consultation Draft Water Resource Management Plan as mentioned above, subject to the inclusion of the comments raised at the meeting.

32 REVIEW OF THE LINCOLNSHIRE FLOOD RISK AND WATER MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP

Consideration was given to a report from David Hickman, Growth and Environment Commissioner, which advised the Committee of recent developments in the Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Management Partnership; and invited comments on possible priority areas for development as part of the forthcoming review of the Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Management Strategy.

Appendix A to the report provided the Committee with details of the draft terms of reference for the Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Management Partnership.

The report highlighted that since 2012 flood risk management had increasingly been recognised as an integral part of a wider issue of managing water as a resource that was essential for economic growth nationally, particularly, in the east of England. Page two of the report provided a list of significant areas identified as needing updating.

**FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
29 MAY 2018**

It was highlighted that the first strategy was agreed in December 2012, and that since then flood risk and drainage management had increasingly come to be seen as a significant component in achieving a wider range of strategic objectives, particularly with regard to economic growth and infrastructure planning. It was noted that the establishment of Local Enterprise Partnerships, responsible for Strategic Economic Plans had particular relevance in Lincolnshire because of the importance of sustainable water supply and resilience to major sectors of the County's economy, with particular reference being made to agri-food and the visitor economy.

The Committee was advised that the review would look at parts one and two of the existing Joint Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Drainage Management Strategy. The review would look at all relevant areas that needed to be introduced into the strategy, as well as any material that was no longer required. The report provided a list of strategies and initiatives that had been developed since 2012, which would need to be taken into account.

It was reported that early discussions with partner organisations had suggested a number of themes that might be expected to feature in a revised strategy. These were:-

- Developing the linkages between water management and securing economic growth and environmental enhancement;
- Effective linkages with major regional and national strategic infrastructure initiatives, particularly involving water resources;
- Develop new, forward-looking suite of measures & indicators through development of second edition of the strategy;
- Develop public & stakeholder communications & engagement strategy; and
- Maintain awareness of partnership nationally, proactive engagement regionally and nationally in key policy developments.

The Committee was invited to comment on the broad themes as detailed above. During discussion, the Committee raised the following points:-

- Confirmation was given that the Environment Agency was keen to see the Strategy come forward; especially its dovetailing into wider issues;
- The need to ensure that all Internal Drainage Boards were consulted, as they had a wealth of local knowledge. It was also highlighted that information relating to IDBs would help also with the Environment Agency with their capital programme refresh;
- The success of joint working relationships within Lincolnshire and the need to build on these further;
- One member also highlighted the issue of ensuring that there was food security going forward;
- One member highlighted a flooding issue within their division concerning run off from a reservoir. Officers advised that the matter should be initially referred to the local highways manager;
- The implication of Special Levies for Internal Drainage Boards on District Councils; and the sustainability of this arrangement going forward. The

FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
29 MAY 2018

Committee was advised that the Local Government Association had set up a special interest group to look at the issue; which had arisen following re-organisation in the 1970s. The Committee agreed that it was not local authority spend. It was also highlighted that officers would be providing information to the LGA concerning the IDB issues in Lincolnshire; and

- The impact of increased council tax on the tax payer. A suggestion was made for each partner to put in a sum of money to help fund any flooding events.

RESOLVED

That the proposed changes to the Lincolnshire Flood and Water Management Partnership; and the possible priority areas for development of the forthcoming review be received.

33 ENVIRONMENT AGENCY UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report from the Environment Agency, which provided the Committee with an update on the progress made on key capital schemes.

Deborah Campbell, Coastal Manager, Environment Agency provided the Committee with further updates in relation to the following projects:-

- Boston Barrier – The Committee was advised that the scheme was underway; and members of the Committee were encouraged to have a look of the £100m flagship scheme. It was highlighted that lots of information had been posted on social media. It was highlighted further that the scheme was on programme; and on budget;
- Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Strategy Review – The Committee was advised that the consultation period had finished on 22 March 2018. The feedback had been evaluated and work was ongoing in preparation of the SGP Strategy with the SEA for formal consultation later in the year and that a further update would be received later in the year;
- Lincshore (Interim Beach Management Lincolnshire Coast) – The Committee was advised that the dredger had been on the coast over the last few weeks; working over two bank holidays. It was highlighted that the dredger would be there until 22 June 2018;
- Horncastle and Louth Improvements – The Committee was advised that both reservoirs had been in use over the Easter period; and that it had been great to see them in action. It was highlighted that positive comments had been received. The Committee was advised that it was the intention to remove both of these schemes from future reports going forward;
- Black Sluice Catchment Works – The Committee noted that the Rationalising the Main River Network pilot project had completed the formal consultation phase for the South Forty Catchment. It was noted further that the responses received had been lower than expected; but had been mainly positive for the local pilot (20 kilometres of network being transferred to Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board). It was noted further that the project was due to be completed in the summer of 2018;

**FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
29 MAY 2018**

- Lincoln Defences – It was reported that this scheme had been accelerated. The Committee was advised that the strategic outline business case had been submitted. It was highlighted that initial assessment of costs and benefits had highlighted a likely need for around £2.3m of additional partnership funding;
- Humber Flood Risk Management Strategy – The Committee was advised that the Humber Flood Risk Management Strategy set out how the Environment Agency and its partners would seek to manage flood risk around the estuary over the next 100 years. It was highlighted that a comprehensive review of the document had commenced in 2014, with a view to the document being signed off in 2020. The report advised that the review boundary had been extended to include all tidal flood risk below the seven metre contour line. Once the short list of options had been finalised, the Committee could expect to receive a further update; and
- Donna Nook Managed Realignment Site – It was hoped that the outcome would be known around the 27/28 June 2018.

RESOLVED

That the Environment Agency Update be received.

**34 TO REPORT PROGRESS ON THE INVESTIGATIONS MADE IN THE
COUNTY UNDER SECTION 19 OF THE FLOOD AND WATER
MANAGEMENT ACT 2010 (FWMA)**

Consideration was given to a report from Paul Brookes, County Flood Risk Manager, which invited the Committee to consider and comment on the investigations undertaken in the County under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

Warren Peppard, Flood Risk & Development Manager advised the Committee that in Quarter 4 (January to March 2018), there had only been one new Section 19 investigation started. The investigation related to chronic groundwater flooding of a single residence in Sibsey. It was noted that for the same period last year, no flood events had been reported.

Appendix A to the report presented provided the Committee with a record of current flood investigations in the County, that were being carried out in accordance with Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

RESOLVED

That progress made on investigations undertaken within the County under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 be noted.

**35 FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK
PROGRAMME**

The Committee gave consideration to a report from Daniel Steel, Scrutiny Officer, which enabled the members to consider and comment on the content of its work

**FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
29 MAY 2018**

programme for the coming year to ensure that scrutiny activity was focussed on areas of greatest benefit.

Pages 53/54 of the report provided the Committee with a copy of the work programme for the Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee up to 11 February 2018.

One member requested a further update in six months' time relating to the Special Levies for Internal Drainage Board's.

RESOLVED

That the Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee Work Programme, as presented, be agreed subject to the inclusion of the item mentioned above.

The meeting closed at 11.20 am

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