



**FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
11 FEBRUARY 2019**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR B ADAMS (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors P A Skinner (Vice-Chairman), W J Aron, T R Ashton, Mrs A M Austin, Mrs W Bowkett, Mrs C J Lawton, C R Oxby, C E Reid and R A Renshaw.

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

External Agencies –

Councillors C J Davie and D McNally (Executive Support Councillor for Commercial and Environmental Management), attended the meeting as observers.

Officers in attendance:-

Paul Brookes (County Flood Risk Manager), Deborah Campbell (Environment Agency), Katrina Cope (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Steve Eason-Harris (Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Officer), David Hickman (Growth & Environment Commissioner), Adam Robinson (Boston Barrier Project Director, Environment Agency), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer), Warren Peppard (Flood Risk & Development Manager) and Adrian Clack (Local Delivery lead, Environment Agency).

55 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B M Dobson and I Carrington (North Kesteven District Council).

56 DECLARATION OF COUNCILLORS INTERESTS

No declarations of members' interest were received at this stage of the meeting.

57 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2018

RESOLVED

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

58 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS

AND LEAD OFFICERS

The Chairman invited Executive Councillors and Lead Officers to make any announcements:-

The Growth & Environment Commissioner advised the Committee that progress across the Water Resources East area, would be presented to the next meeting on 28 May 2019; and that Anglian Water would be invited to attend the meeting to present the update.

The Chairman advised the Committee that agenda item 9 – Wrangle Bank Flood Defence Project had been deferred to the 29 May 2019 meeting.

59 UPDATE ON SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE AND DESIGN AND
EVALUATION GUIDE

Warren Peppard, Flood Risk and Development Manager advised the Committee that the Sustainable Drainage Design and Evaluation Guide was continuing to be promoted with district councils and that once work on the website was completed (approximately 3 months time), formal consultation of the guide would commence; as links would then be in place to the hosting site.

60 ENVIRONMENT AGENCY UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report from the Environment Agency, which provided an update of the Environment Agency activities, including progress made on key schemes.

Deborah Campbell from the Environment Agency updated the Committee on the following issues:-

- That for the Lincoln defences, approval had been given to take the scheme forward and accelerate it to ensure the protection of houses. It was noted that the scheme would be completed by 2021;
- That the Interim Beach Management Scheme would be starting during the first week of May;
- That the Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Strategy Review public consultation would be commencing after the local elections; and
- A question was asked whether the National Flood Risk & Coastal Erosion Management Strategy was being delayed as a result of Brexit. Confirmation was given that public consultation on the Strategy had been delayed until after March 2019.

During a short discussion, the Committee raised the following issues:-

- The Wainfleet Relief Channel – A question was asked regarding works to improve access. The Committee was advised that works on the relief channel were going to go ahead as planned;

FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
11 FEBRUARY 2019

- A request was made for the Committee to be able to see the final budget figures for the Louth and Horncastle Flood Alleviation Schemes. The Committee was advised that the contract had not been finalised yet; and that until the process had been completed, the budget information was unable to be shared. A request was also made for a final debrief meeting of the project board. Confirmation was given that arrangements for a debrief meeting of the project board was in hand;
- The effect of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report on Lincshire. The Committee was advised that the Environment Agency did not agree with the findings of the report to open the Lincolnshire coast; as information and remodelling data available to the Environment Agency disagreed with said report. A suggestion was made for the report to be considered by the Committee at a future meeting. A further suggestion made, was for a letter of support to be written from the Committee, supporting the Environment Agency's stance in relation to the beach nourishment scheme; and
- A question was asked as to why the Haven Banks scheme had been delayed. The Committee was advised that it was the intention for the Haven Bank Scheme to be completed alongside the Boston Barrier works. It was highlighted that there had been the opportunity to increase the standard of protection, as funding had been available; and that the delay had been caused by the procurement process.

RESOLVED

1. That the Environment Agency Update report be received.
2. That a letter be sent from the Committee in support of the Environment Agency's strategy for the coast.
3. That an item concerning the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report be considered by the Committee at a future meeting date.

61 LINCOLNSHIRE OPERATIONS REVENUE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME

The Committee gave consideration to a report from Peter Riley from the Environment Agency. The report outlined the approach of the Environment Agency to asset management; and explained the Annual Revenue Programme for Flood and Coastal Risk Management assets in Lincolnshire.

Adrian Clack, Local Delivery Lead, Environment Agency, presented the report to members of the Committee and responded to questions raised, which included:-

- Paragraph 3.2 - A question was asked as to whether Figure 2 was fixed and whether there were any trends. The Committee was advised that most projects were stable in Lincolnshire; and would only vary slightly when driven by the inspection regime. It was noted that the vast majority of funding in figure 2 was allocated to Toe Stabilisation, which indicated the nature of the water courses in Lincolnshire; and

**FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
11 FEBRUARY 2019**

- The position relating to the use of chemicals – The Committee was advised that to catch vermin, the EA was licensed by Natural England to do control work. The Committee was advised that to reduce the number of rabbits a trial was being carried out using ferrets, which was proving to be very successful. It was reported that different methods were continually being looked at; as chemical resources were being reduced. The Committee was advised further that to help reduce weeds, a biological approach was being tested, which involved the introduction into a water course of a weevil that attacks weed.

RESOLVED

That the Lincolnshire Operations Revenue Maintenance programme be received.

62 BOSTON BARRIER UPDATE

The Committee received an update from Adrian Robinson, Boston Barrier Project Director from the Environment Agency relating to the progress being made on the Boston Barrier.

The Committee were able to see from a short pictorial presentation that the coffer dam was in place, and that this would provide a water tight workspace for the barrier.

The Committee noted that the fishing fleet had now moved into their temporary new home at the Port of Boston, which had put them downstream of the Barrier works.

It was reported that the gates for the barrier had been made and were soon to be painted.

It was highlighted that construction of the control building had commenced and was expected to be completed within 6 to 8 weeks.

In conclusion, the Committee was advised that work was due to be completed by the end of 2020.

A local member expressed thanks to the Environment Agency and the contractor for keeping local residents informed. A request was made for the most recent update information to be made available at the community hub; for people dropping in to view.

Confirmation was given that the project was on target. In response to a question raised, the depth of the coffer dam was also confirmed.

A request was made for the Committee to visit the site. Confirmation was given that a bespoke visit could be arranged for the Committee to visit the site. It was agreed that the Scrutiny Officer would look into arranging a suitable time and place for the said visit.

RESOLVED

1. That the update on the Boston Barrier be received.
2. That a visit be arranged for the Committee to visit the Boston Barrier site.

63 WRANGLE BANK FLOOD DEFENCE PROJECT

The Chairman had advised earlier in the agenda that this item had been deferred to the next Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee.

64 LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM - RESILIENCE COMMUNITIES PROJECT UPDATE

The Committee received a presentation from Steve Eason-Harris, Emergency & Business Continuity Officer, which provided the Committee with an overview of the Local Resilience Forum Resilience Communities project.

The presentation made reference to the evolution of the programme; and to the current programme, which was open to all community groups, parish, town and ward councils and councillors; and businesses.

The Committee was advised that 183 communities were engaged; and that there were 161 embryonic plans. It was highlighted that information flow was effective in small scale incidents/emergencies, and that it became more complicated when the incident(s) were spread over a larger geographical area.

The presentation highlighted that the Resilient Lincs Programme was about strengthening relationships between the community and emergency responders; and that the programme was looking to coordinate community action when and where it was needed the most. It was highlighted that the Volunteer Resilient Lincs Coordination Groups would help the flow of information and intelligence to and from emergency responders and the community. This approach would help with joint situation awareness. It was highlighted further that there would be a single point of contact for community emergency planning groups; county emergency responders; and resilient Lincs Steering and Governance. The Committee was advised that a pilot scheme was due to be launched in the Spring of 2019.

It was noted that there was a text alert system for warning and informing communities, once the County Emergency Centre had opened. It was noted further that 178 individuals had signed up across the county representing 74 communities.

The Committee was advised that a Resilient Communities Conference 2019 was going to be held in July 2019, which would be open to all community groups, and town and parish councils. The Committee was advised further that the theme for this year's conference was to be 'Understanding your Community'.

During discussion, the Committee enquired how recruitment was maintained, following the initial setup. The Committee was advised that governance procedures

**FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
11 FEBRUARY 2019**

were in place and that learning was continual. It was noted that parish clerks were instrumental in the communication process.

RESOLVED

That the Local Resilience Forum – Resilience Project Update report and presentation be received.

65 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.

The Flood Risk Manager advised the Committee that there had been no new Section 19 investigations started within the last quarter. It was noted that this had been the second quarter running during which no flood investigations had taken place. A copy of current flood investigations in the county carried out in accordance with Section 19 was attached to the report at Appendix A for the members' consideration.

A question was asked relating to works at Lincoln West. Officers agreed to respond after the meeting.

A further request was made concerning the Westborough Scheme; as some issues had arisen concerning landowners. The Committee was advised that work was on-going with the drainage board.

The Executive Councillor for Economy and Place advised that he would raise the issue of non-attendance at meetings by Anglian Water at the next Strategic meeting.

One member highlighted the need for a more readable version of Appendix A.

RESOLVED

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

66 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 programme, to ensure that scrutiny activity was focussed on areas of greatest benefit.

Page 43 of the report provided the Committee with a copy of the work programme for the Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee up to 28 May 2019.

The Scrutiny Officer reminded the Committee of the items that had been suggested to be taken forward to a future meeting. These included Water Resources East (and that Anglian Water should be invited to attend); Climate Change report; and a visit by the Committee to see construction at the Boston Barrier.

A further item suggested was an update on IBD Special Levies and the impact this had on district councils. The Committee received reassurance that lobbying was continuing. It was agreed that a copy of the Local Government Association document should be circulated to all members of the Committee, rather than having the item included on a future agenda.

RESOLVED

That the Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee Work programme presented, be agreed subject to the addition of the items mentioned above.

The meeting closed at 11.15 am

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