



Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director - Place

Report to:	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Date:	18 January 2022
Subject:	Lincolnshire Homeowner Property Flood Resilience Assistance Scheme Update

Summary:

This report updates members of the Committee on the development and promotion of the Council's pilot approach to enhancing the resilience of properties to flooding throughout Lincolnshire in locations where traditional community-based initiatives would not be economically feasible through grant source measures. Members' comments and guidance in continuing to develop the trial and the overall project are sought.

Actions Required:

Members of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee are asked to review and comment on the scope and status of the project and guide officers in developing the project further.

1. Background

Following flooding events in Lincolnshire caused by severe weather and high rainfall that took place in the latter part of 2019 and early 2020, options were explored to start a pilot Property Flood Resilience (PFR) funding assistance scheme in Lincolnshire based on the existing PFR model being delivered by Essex County Council. Following meetings with Essex County Council and their contractors / suppliers, it was then decided to build upon this model, adding in improvements that tailor specific needs for Lincolnshire, improving alignment with national codes of practice and ensuring products meet British Standards including 'wet testing'.

Broader Context

At a national scale the approach being taken within Lincolnshire is unique, with the administrative systems that have been developed and the bespoke measures identified for each property. Some key aspects of this approach include:

- 1) The use of the Jadu Case Management system to minimise administrative burdens on the Flood Risk Team.
- 2) The use of standard templates to align the process with the National Property Flood Resilience (PFR) Code of Practice.
- 3) The trial scheme shall look at resistance, recoverability, and preparedness measures, i.e., the whole suite of PFR measures.

The approach that Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) has taken has received interest and support from a range of both regional and national stakeholders including the Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM), Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA), FloodRe and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The scheme has also recently had exposure by Olivia Blake MP (Sheffield, Hallam) from the House of Commons asking questions to DEFRA regarding the effectiveness of the Lincolnshire Scheme. In a response provided by Rebecca Pow MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at DEFRA) on 28 October 2021, she highlighted how property level resilience measures can play a key role in reducing flood risk and helping people get back into their homes quicker following a flood. She welcomed the initiative shown by Lincolnshire County Council in developing a local Property Flood Resilience (PFR) scheme and expressed she will be keen to hear about the lessons identified.

Progress To Date

Nationally, the government invested £2.9 million from the 2018 budget to support regional PFR pathfinder projects in three areas of the UK to develop interventions to promote use and understanding of PFR. This scheme has just concluded and is being evaluated and will help in providing valuable learning more widely. In line with the government's current direction on PFR, the County Council initiated a 12 month pilot scheme which provided up to £5,000 of financial assistance for the installation of bespoke PFR measures approved by the Flood Risk Team. This followed detailed reviews of the suggested measures thereby ensuring that any measures implemented are proportionate and cost effective. Funding for the scheme came from Lincolnshire County Council.

The pilot scheme is being delivered in partnership between the County Council and Essex County Council, utilising existing contractors, suppliers and associated frameworks for the delivery of PFR to ten properties in Lincolnshire. The pilot focused on those properties for which a number of Section 19 flood investigation reports have been completed. Residents were contacted directly and asked if they would like to participate within the pilot scheme.

In light of lessons identified by the pilot scheme, the County Council has developed its own mechanism for the delivery of bespoke PFR measures, ensuring the scheme is tailored to the specific needs of residents within Lincolnshire, delivers value for money, and minimises the County Council's resource expenditure in terms of administration. These mechanisms went live in July 2021.

The scheme aims to protect up to 35 eligible properties from all sources of flooding via the installation of proportionate and bespoke resistance, recoverability and preparedness measures. In short these measures can be summarised as follows:

Resistance – Those measures which minimise water ingress, for instance, flood doors, flood barriers, self-closing airbricks / airbrick covers, non-return valves, sealing service pipework, repointing of mortar and waterproof sealant etc.

Recoverability – Those measures which minimise damages following water ingress, for instance, the raising of electrical sockets, the use of resilient plaster or plasterboard laid horizontally, the installation of kitchen units made from metal / marine ply / plastic on legs concealed by removable kickboards and the wall-mounting of boilers or placement on upper floors etc.

Preparedness – Those measures which facilitate effective response to flooding, for instance the creation of household flood plans and the use of existing early warning systems from the Flood Forecasting Centre etc.

Such measures are identified through a collaborative process with the homeowners concerned including a flood hazard and property assessment survey. The number of eligible properties identified is a target outlined within the Outline Business Case in the application for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant in Aid (GiA) and Local Levy funds. Through the three sources of funding outlined below it has been requested to move 35 properties per year (aim is to protect approximately 115 - 120 properties over a three year period) from the very significant to significant risk bandings.

Funding to the value of £193,000 has so far been made available for the scheme, with financial breakdowns of this funding outlined in the table below.

Year	Source	Amount (£)
2021 - 2022	GIA	75,000
	Local Levy	50,000
	Lincolnshire County Council	68,000
Total		193,000
2022 - 2023	GIA	50,000
	Lincolnshire County Council	32,000
Total		82,000

It is worth noting that due to uncertainties surrounding the type and status of future eligible properties, alongside the risk of abortive costs, there is some potential for variance in the above figures and number of properties protected per year. However as part of managing this process, the Flood Risk Team will make all reasonable efforts to minimise any such risks thereby maximising the benefits that can be delivered to homeowners within Lincolnshire.

At the time of writing, seven eligible properties have been admitted onto the scheme and LCC's appointed contractor is currently in liaison with the homeowners concerned.

In addition to the above, the potential to further promote the scheme is currently being explored by the flood risk partnership, with the aim of enhancing awareness via a variety of measures within the 2022-2023 financial year. Measures considered include:

- The use of the 'floodmobile' at the Lincolnshire Show and other strategic locations across Lincolnshire with a history of flooding. Further details of which can be found [here](#).
- Advertising via Social Media
- Parish and town council newsletters
- County News
- Local community resilience groups

Consideration will be given to the relative priority of the proposed measures and any potential issues that might arise with pursuing them.

Next Steps

The Flood Risk Team will continue to work with partners and residents to promote and develop PFR approaches in Lincolnshire and in doing so evaluate lessons identified which will help shape and support any potential longer term initiatives in the county. Further updates on progress will be provided to future meetings of this Committee.

2. Conclusion

Members are asked to consider the approach outlined above and continue to support officers with guidance and advice throughout the development of the Lincolnshire Homeowner Property Flood Resilience Assistance Scheme.

3. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

Not Applicable.

4. Background Papers

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

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