

| | |
|--|---|
| Report to: Essex Flood Partnership Board | Report Number AGENDA ITEM 5 (EFPB/07/18) |
| Date of report: 05/07/18 | County Divisions affected by the decision: All |
| Title of report: Local Flood Risk Management Strategy | |
| Report by: Lucy Shepherd, Lead Local Flood Authority Manager | |
| Head of Service: John Meehan Head of Planning and Environment | |
| Enquiries to: Lucy Shepherd 03330 136742 | |

1. Background

- 1.1. Essex County Council has been discussing our Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) refresh with the Essex Flood Partnership Board during its development.
- 1.2. In this latest update we wish to share the draft of the LFRMS document for partner consultation. We are seeking the Boards view on the approach being taken, and refreshed content of the draft document.

2. Purpose of report

- 2.1. For action: To begin a partner consultation on the approach to our strategy refresh and ask for comments.

3. Reasons behind the LFRMS refresh

- 3.1. Following the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, Lead Local Flood Authorities were under pressure to respond to their new responsibilities and start delivering their statutory role in partnership with others.
- 3.2. The first iteration of our LFRMS (2012) followed national guidelines and focussed heavily on describing new processes and legislation. This was helpful for the purposes of supporting a new service and establishing clear ways of working.

- 3.3. Following a review by internal teams, including strategy and communications experts. It was agreed that the LFRMS no longer met ECC principles for strategy structure, presentation or language. The LFRMS also includes outdated information and replicates a lot of content found elsewhere within flood and coastal erosion risk management documents.
- 3.4. Since it's publication, only a handful of 'downloads' and requests have been made for our LFRMS. However, we do not currently widely publicise the LFRMS due to it being outdated and unsuitable for the general public as an audience.

4. Why the new public audience?

- 4.1. In our view the LFRMS in its current format no longer serves any audience. We feel that our internal and external processes and relationships are now well established and that there are many other existing strategies and technical documents to serve professionals within the field. However, there lacks a strategic document that focuses entirely on the public audience.
- 4.2. Essex is a trusted, innovative and leading LLFA. We have already established a number of 'resilience' initiatives to assist our residents to help themselves. A refreshed public facing strategy would help us to communicate flood risk and the possible self/community response to that risk even further.
- 4.3. In times where resources and processes are being streamlined within Local Government, we see this as a good time to be clear about what we can do to help communities. In parallel with what communities can do to help themselves.

5. Governance

- 5.1. Following this consultation, and pending any changes, the LRFMS will become live once signed off by Cabinet Member Approval (CMA). The legal view is that this does not require another public consultation, as the fundamental objectives of our LFRMS are not changing.
- 5.2. The content of other associated strategies, such as the Flood Risk Management Plans, will not be affected by the changes within our LFRMS. Our new refresh is intentionally broad enough that it will not become outdated or contradict any of our previously reported activities.
- 5.3. The required Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screenings are being conducted and will be published with the final documents Appendices.

6. Format and content

- 6.1. The refreshed format of the LFRMS is modern and visual. Plain English is used throughout and the section headers logically set out our approach.
- 6.2. Jargon and legislative terms such as 'asset register' and 'capital flood programme' have been rephrased so that they have real-world meaning.
- 6.3. Throughout the document we have used case studies to illustrate the fantastic partnership working that is happening in Essex. A focus on how 'you' can be involved as the homeowner/resident/community is also prevalent.

7. Consultation

- 7.1. A copy of the draft document will be emailed to the Flood Board. This is a large file, so please let us know if you have any problems accessing the file.
- 7.2. We are seeking your view on the approach we have taken as set out here. Attached is a set of 7 questions (Appendix 1) in order for us to gauge support.
- 7.3. We are asking for consultation responses via an online form found at <https://flood.essex.gov.uk/LFRMSpartnerconsultation>. Alternatively you can return the attached form in Appendix 1 to:

lucy.shepherd@essex.gov.uk

or...

Lucy Shepherd
Sustainability and Resilience (Flood)
E3 County Hall
Market Road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM1 1QH

- 7.4. We intend to launch social media campaigns in partnership with our Sustainability and Resilience colleagues following the LFRMS being signed off. These will target different sub-groups of the public such as those in a high risk area of who have already been affected by flooding.

Appendix 1: Essex LFRMS Partner Consultation Questions

| Consultation Question | Answer (please tick) | | |
|---|----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | YES | NO | |
| 1. Do you agree that our target audience (general public) is the correct one for this refreshed LFRMS? | | | |
| 2. Do you agree that other customer needs (technical, developer etc.) are met by existing strategies and documents? | | | |
| 3. Do you feel that the strategy refresh content meets the needs of our target audience? | | | |
| 4. Do you feel that the strategy refresh format meets the needs of our target audience? | | | |
| 5. Do you think that the strategy refresh would enable more, the same or less understanding and commitment to flood management within your authority than the previous version? | MORE | SAME | LESS |
| | | | |
| 6. Do you think that there is any other information that the audience would find valuable? If Yes, please specify. | Comment | | |
| | | | |
| 7. What type of campaigning would best reach this audience? | Comment | | |
| | | | |