


REPORT TO CABINET

13 January 2021

Subject:	Flood Risk Management Plan Measures 2021 to 2027
Presenting Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport Cllr Jackie Taylor
Director:	Interim Director Regeneration and Growth, Tammy Stokes
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	
Key Decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member Approval and Date:	Yes
Director Approval:	Yes
Reason for Urgency:	Urgency provisions do not apply
Exempt Information Ref:	Exemption provisions do not apply
Ward Councillor (s) Consulted (if applicable):	Boroughwide
Scrutiny Consultation Considered?	Scrutiny consultation has not been undertaken.
Contact Officer(s):	Barry Ridgway – Group Manager Assets and Maintenance, Highway Services barry_ridgway@sandwell.gov.uk Jo Saunders – Engineer joanne_saunders@sandwell.gov.uk

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Approve and adopt the Flood Risk Management Plan 2 (FRMP2) measures for the period 2021 to 2027 as set out in Appendix 1.
2. Authorise the Director - Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport to make minor amendments to the Flood Risk Management Plan 2, as necessary, following consultation.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of SMBC's proposed FRMP2 measures for the period 2021 to 2027.
- 1.2 Cabinet approval is sought in advance of the proposed measure development freeze date in mid-January 2021.

2 IMPLICATION FOR VISION 2030

- 2.1 Flooding is one of the most common of the environmental risks and has significant health impacts. Flooding results in both short-term health impacts due to injuries, infections, exposure to chemical hazards and longer-term effects, which although less well understood, include depression, anxiety, PTSD and other mental health issues. Studies have shown that mental health issues are reported to be up to six times higher amongst people whose homes have been flooded than whose homes have not. Maintaining homes free from flooding contributes to Ambition 2 (Sandwell is a place where we live healthy lives).
- 2.2 Local highways (carriageways and pavements) are the arteries for communities. The highway network connects residents to employment, education, local services and national transport networks. This enables economic growth, social mobility and are vital in ensuring good health outcomes. Maintaining roads free from flooding also contributes to Ambition 2 (Sandwell is a place where we live healthy lives) and Ambition 6 (public transport that connects us to all local centres and to jobs in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, the airport and the wider West Midlands).

- 2.3 Flooding is a complex issue with lots of agencies and authorities each having a different role to play, which can be confusing and frustrating for the public and businesses. Some people feel totally out of control with what is happening when they suffer flooding. They can feel as though no one is interested or able to help them. There is a role for the Council as Lead Local Flood Authority in supporting residents who are at risk from, or who have experienced flooding. This directly contributes to Ambition 5 (our communities are built on mutual respect and taking care of each other, supported by all the agencies that ensure we feel safe and protected in our homes and local neighbourhoods).
- 2.4 Managing flood risk also enables the Council to provide a supply of quality housing, in places where people want to live and bring up their families in attractive neighbourhoods. (Ambition 7).
- 2.5 The risk of flooding negatively impacts the value of commercial property and most businesses. In considering suitable operational locations businesses would naturally favour commercial property which is not at risk from flooding to ensure business continuity is not at risk. Management of flood risk therefore also contributes to Sandwell's ambition of becoming a location of choice for industries of the future where the local economy and high performing companies continue to grow. (Ambition 9).
- 2.6 Tackling flood risk is consistent with our ambition to build a more resilient and successful Sandwell, building on our reputation for getting things done and focussing on what really matters in people's lives and communities. (Ambition 10).

3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Flood Risk Regulations 2009 (FRR) places duties on the Environmental Agency (EA) and local authorities to prepare flood risk assessments, flood risk maps and Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) and sets out the process for preparing, reviewing and updating FRMPs.
- 3.2 FRMP's run over a six-year cycle. The first FRMPs were published in 2016. These contained measures for the period 2015-2021.
- 3.3 It is now necessary to develop a new set of measures (FRMP2) for the period 2021-2027.
- 3.4 In 2019, The Environment Agency (EA) asked all Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFA's) such as Sandwell, if they would like to work together on the development of joint FRMPs. All LLFA's agreed.

3.5 These measures provide the opportunity to articulate and highlight Sandwell's high priority areas within a national programme.

4 THE CURRENT POSITION

4.1 The EA will coordinate the production of these FRMP2 measures.

4.2 The EA have developed a measure development tool, accompanying measure development guidance and a training video.

4.3 As a minimum, it is necessary for Sandwell to populate the measure development tool with our FRMP2 measures and return it to the local EA Partnership and Strategic Overview Team lead.

4.4 The national programme dates are outlined below:

15th January 2021: measure development freeze date. All measures should be developed by this date, with local approval.

End of March 2021: The completion of relevant sections of the FRMP2 templates.

April to June 2021: Environment Agency and LLFA elected member approvals.

Summer 2021: EA Consultation on draft FRMPs goes live for three months.

The proposed FRMP2 measures for Sandwell have been developed along three themes:

1. Building a More Resilient Community

Our objective is to better enable local residents, communities, owners of assets that are important for managing flood risk and Key Service Providers to better understand their own local flood risk and thereby enable better preparedness, enhance understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the many agencies involved in flooding and to provide sign-posting to where additional help and support is available.

We propose to create a Sandwell "Communities at Flood Risk Toolkit" and make that available via the Council website.

2. Support the Delivery of Better Flood Risk Management for New Developments

Our objective here is to develop a joint planning policy to support adoption of shared principles of flood risk management for proposed new developments across The Black Country.

3. Deliver Measures to Protect Residents at Risk from Flooding

The objective is that Sandwell will, subject to securing funding, deliver Flood Risk Mitigation Projects to protect residents at the highest risk from flooding.

A full list of the proposed measures are included as Appendix One.

5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

5.1 Consultation has been undertaken with:

Our neighbouring Black Country Authorities and Staffordshire County Council who provide additional resource and advice on Sandwell LLFA activities under a Service Level Agreement.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

6.1 Do nothing: is not a recommended option since the Authority would fail in its statutory duty.

It is unlikely the Environment Agency will be able to delay the consultation going live if any individual LLFAs have not got the necessary approval by those dates.

Sandwell would miss out on the opportunity to articulate and highlight Sandwell's high priority areas within a national programme, which could have implications for future funding opportunities.

7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 These measures do not constitute commitments and can be funded from existing approved budgets.

7.2 Future proposals will be developed and aligned with these measures which will either be fully funded from Flood Defence Grant in Aid bids, Local Levy bids or from existing budgets.

8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 confers a number of duties on Sandwell as the LLFA for our Borough. These can be broadly described as taking a lead in managing local flood risks (i.e. risks of flooding from surface water, ground water and ordinary watercourses). This includes ensuring co-operation between the various Risk Management Authorities in our area in order to develop, maintain, apply and monitor the implementation of a local food risk management strategy.
- 8.2 The Flood Risk Regulations 2009 (FRR) places duties on the Environmental Agency (EA) and local authorities to prepare flood risk assessments, flood risk maps and Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) and it sets out the process for preparing, reviewing and updating the FRMPs. Sandwell's responsibilities, under these Regulations include:
- The preparation of a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) Report, including the identification of flood risk areas
 - The preparation of Flood Hazard Maps and Flood Risk Maps
 - The preparation of Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs)
 - Cooperating with the Environment Agency and other LLFA's.
- 8.3 The process for preparing, reviewing and updating FRMPs occurs over a six-year cycle. The first FRMPs were published in 2016 and contained measures for the period 2015-2021.
- 8.4 The Council as LLFA must now develop new measures (FRMP2) for the period 2021-2027.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) initial screening has been undertaken. The screening identified that there will be no adverse impact on people or groups with protected characteristics as a result of the proposals contained within the report. A full EIA is not therefore required.

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 A data protection impact assessment is not required for this proposal – all material is maintained in accordance with the council's data protection policy.

11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT

11.1 There are no crime and disorder issues needed to be considered as part of this report.

12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS

12.1 Not applicable.

13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)

13.1 As outlined in Section 2 above, flooding is one of the most common environmental risks. The impacts from flooding are expected to grow in the future due to the effects of climate change and population growth. Floodwater poses both immediate dangers to human health at the time of flooding but more insidiously has long-term impacts on mental health, displacement, lack of investment and reinforces disadvantage.

13.2 FRMP2 measures will inform the plans that the Council as LLFA will develop to achieve benefits to the health, wellbeing and economic prosperity of the residents of Sandwell and improvements in the natural environment across the Borough.

14 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND

14.1 This proposal will help deliver the aims and objectives as set out in the Corporate Asset Management Plan and The Highway Asset Management Plan and help protect other Council managed housing, property and land.

15 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 Approval is sought for the proposed FRMP2 measures set out in Appendix 1.

15.2 Approval is sought to give delegated authority to the Director for Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport to make minor amendments to the FRMP following consultation.

16 BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 None

17 **APPENDICES:**

Appendix 1: Flood Risk Management Plan Measures 2021 to 2027

Tammy Stokes
Interim Director - Regeneration and Growth