

## Housing and Infrastructure Board

26 October 2021

### South Yorkshire Flood Catchment Plan Update

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<b>Is the paper exempt from the press and public?</b>	No
<b><i>Reason why exempt:</i></b>	Not applicable
<b>Purpose of this report:</b>	Discussion
<b>Is this a Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>Has it been included on the Forward Plan?</b>	Not a Key Decision

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#### **Director Approving Submission of the Report:**

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#### **Executive Summary**

The report updates the Board on progress in preparing the South Yorkshire Flood Catchment Plan and seeks views on the Draft Plan.

#### **What does this mean for businesses, people and places in South Yorkshire?**

The Catchment Plan aims to help identify and secure additional funding and investment to reduce flood risk to homes and businesses, as well as improving the resilience of places to future flooding.

#### **Recommendations**

The Board is asked to:

- Comment on the Draft South Yorkshire Flood Catchment Plan

## Consideration by any other Board, Committee, Assurance or Advisory Panel

N/A

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### 1. Background

- 1.1 Following the 2019 flood event in South Yorkshire, Mayor Dan Jarvis and Local Authority Leaders submitted a South Yorkshire Business and Infrastructure Resilience Priority Flood Programme to Government, which included the proposal to prepare a catchment wide flood plan covering the whole of South Yorkshire.
- 1.2 The aim of this proposal was to develop a new more effective and integrated approach to future flood policy and investment, taking a holistic 'South Yorkshire' approach to cover all rivers and watercourses, rather than continuing to consider flood policy and investments in a less strategic way.
- 1.3 It would also enable the potential future impacts of climate change to be taken into account and better understand the contribution that Natural Flood Management can play in building resilience and reducing future flooding.
- 1.4 Presentations have been given at previous Board meetings on the Catchment Plan preparation, which has culminated in the attached Draft Catchment Plan for the Board's consideration.

### 2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The aim is for the Catchment Plan to be a 'living document' to facilitate the development of a long-term strategy for flood risk management and climate resilience.
- 2.2 The Draft Catchment Plan (attached at Appendix A) outlines the actions to be undertaken to reduce flood risk, mitigate climate change and support climate resilient communities across South Yorkshire. It will support better joint working; provide a compelling programme to attract potential investors; and help give confidence locally that measures are being put in place to protect communities. Importantly, it will provide a clear programme of well-developed projects to help secure the remaining investment required across South Yorkshire to alleviate and mitigate future flooding.
- 2.3 The Catchment Plan is arranged around the following four Key Workstreams which have been developed in partnership between the MCA Executive, Environment Agency, the four South Yorkshire Authorities and Yorkshire Water. There has also been engagement with a wide range of stakeholders.
  1. Responding to the climate emergency
  2. Ensuring investment is prioritised, smart and based on evidence using the best available data and intelligence
  3. Strengthening the use of technology and operational management to build the capacity of Local Authorities and other Risk Management Authorities to work together more effectively on an operational basis
  4. Community engagement and resilience

2.4 The intention is to finalise the Draft Plan during November taking into account the comments of this Board, members of the South Yorkshire Flood Risk Partnership and wider stakeholders. The final Draft Plan is proposed to be presented to the next meeting of this Board for endorsement with a view to launch the Plan early in the New Year.

2.5 The Board's comments are invited on the Draft Catchment Plan.

### **3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal**

#### **3.1 Option 1**

To continue to support preparation of the South Yorkshire Flood Catchment Plan, subject to any comments and suggested improvements.

#### **3.2 Option 1 Risks and Mitigations**

The key risks relate to the implementation of the Strategy as follows:

- That delivery partners are unable to commit to implementing the Catchment Plan once completed. To minimise this risk, the four workstreams are each being led by one of the South Yorkshire Authorities with other partners also involved to ensure policy and proposals are aligned with partners' policies and are realistically able to be delivered.
- That the causes of flood events are complex and difficult to understand at a strategic whole catchment wide scale. To minimise this risk, flood risk management specialists from a range of organisations have been engaged, as well as other key community stakeholders.
- That there is insufficient public and private funding and investment available to implement the Catchment Plan in a timely manner. To minimise this risk, work is underway to consider potential resourcing issues to deliver the Plan, and Mayor Jarvis, Local Authority Leaders and MPs will continue to lobby Government for further flood investment in South Yorkshire.

#### **3.3 Option 2**

To not support the emerging Draft South Yorkshire Flood Catchment Plan.

#### **3.4 Option 2 Risks and Mitigations**

The key risk with this option is that there would continue to be no consistent approach adopted across South Yorkshire to address flood risk, and different partners and resources would approach flood policy and investment in an unco-ordinated way.

#### **3.5 Recommended Option**

Option 1 is recommended to seek to put in place a shared, joined-up strategic approach to flood mitigation and to maximise resource targeting and effectiveness.

### **4. Consultation on Proposal**

4.1 Both the Housing and Infrastructure Board and the South Yorkshire Flood Risk Partnership (SYFRP) are jointly overseeing and are contributing to the development of the Catchment Plan. It is intended to present the draft Catchment Plan to the MCA in early 2022 for consideration.

## **5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

- 5.1 The views of the Board are requested at this stage. The decision to approve the final document will be taken by both the MCA and the SYFRP (on behalf of the Department of Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)) following consideration and recommendation by the Housing and Infrastructure Board. A Draft final Catchment Plan is anticipated to be presented to the next Board meeting in December 2021.

## **6. Financial and Procurement Implications and Advice**

- 6.1 The Environment Agency is providing lead resources for preparing the Catchment Plan, with the MCA Executive and other partners providing in-kind support to the process. Additional resource is expected to further develop the Catchment Plan and support implementation in 2022/23. Any future proposals and implications for MCA resources would be considered through the usual MCA processes.

## **7. Legal Implications and Advice**

- 7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

## **8. Human Resources Implications and Advice**

- 8.1 Consideration will need to be given to the resources for implementing the Strategy, including the roles and resource requirements of the MCA.

## **9. Equality and Diversity Implications and Advice**

- 9.1 Ensuring equality and diversity will be part of the Catchment Plan, aligning with the intentions of the Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty and the inclusivity policy approach of the Strategic Economic Plan.

## **10. Climate Change Implications and Advice**

- 10.1 The climate and nature emergency requires a strong collective response to carbon reduction and be more resilient to the impacts of climate change. The Catchment Plan will contribute by capturing actions of partners to reduce flood risk and build climate resilience across South Yorkshire, improving information and evidence to support decision making, and support investment decisions and delivery. It may also support the delivery of net zero targets by the provision of carbon sequestration.

## **11. Information and Communication Technology Implications and Advice**

- 11.1 None as a direct result of this report.

## **12. Communications and Marketing Implications and Advice**

- 12.1 Communication on DEFRA Grant in Aid funding is managed by the Environment Agency, with work by Local Authorities to communicate directly with impacted communities on individual schemes. It is intended to launch the Plan early in the New Year which will involve the MCA Executive Communications Team.

## **List of Appendices Included**

- A Draft South Yorkshire Catchment Plan

## **Background Documents**

None