

Housing and Infrastructure Board

07 December 2021

Final Draft South Yorkshire Flood Catchment Plan

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

Director Approving Submission of the Report:

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Executive Summary

To consider and endorse the Final Draft South Yorkshire Flood Catchment Plan entitled 'Connected by Water,' and to recommend approval of the Plan by the MCA Board.

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 climate change and potential future flooding.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- Consider and endorse the final draft South Yorkshire 'Connected by Water' Flood Catchment Plan;
- Recommend that the MCA Board approve the final draft Catchment Plan; and

- Request that proposals be prepared, in time for the next HIB Board meeting, for the use of an amount of the previously committed MCA Gainshare funding (for flood resilience and mitigation) to support implementation of the Catchment Plan.

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

N/A

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 piecemeal way. 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
- 1.3 The Board has commented at various stages in the preparation of the Catchment Plan and these comments have informed a final draft version (attached at Appendix A), along with the comments of the South Yorkshire Flood Risk Partnership (which has jointly overseen its preparation with this Board), and those of wider stakeholders. Members views are invited on this final draft Plan.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The aim is for the 'Connected by Water' 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 Catchment Plan 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 demonstrate that measures are being put in place to protect local communities. Importantly, it provides 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 by the MCA Executive, Environment Agency, the four South Yorkshire Authorities and Yorkshire Water:
 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 Catchment Plan encompasses activities already underway as well as new innovative actions, with lead and supporting organisations identified for each action and an indicative timescale for completion.
- 2.5 The South Yorkshire Flood Risk Partnership have endorsed the draft Catchment Plan, and subject to approval by the MCA in January, it is intended to formally launch the Catchment Plan on the 28 January 2022.
- 2.6 Work is underway to identify and secure resources and funding to deliver the Catchment Plan over the coming years. There are a number of immediate actions over the next year that will require additional funding to progress. There is previously committed but unallocated MCA Gainshare funding to support flood resilience and mitigation, some of which could be allocated to support delivery of some of these immediate actions. Other partners are similarly considering how they may be able to support delivery. It is therefore intended to work up a proposal for the next Board meeting for use of some of the unallocated Gainshare funding to support the implementation of the Catchment Plan. The proposals will need to meet the conditions of funding, namely matching capital activity to capital funding.

3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

3.1 Option 1

To endorse the final draft 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. The four workstreams were each led by one of the South Yorkshire Authorities with other partners also involved and each of the actions specify which bodies are responsible for and will contribute to their delivery.
- That sufficient funding is not available to deliver the immediate actions in the Catchment Plan. In response all key Partners are currently considering how they could contribute resources to fund the immediate and longer term actions.
- That there is insufficient public and private funding and investment available to deliver the whole Catchment Plan over time. Work will continue to identify opportunities to help 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 endorse the final 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 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.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The SYFRP, on behalf of the Department of Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), endorsed the draft Catchment Plan at its recent meeting in November 2021. The endorsement of the Board is requested at this stage with a recommendation to the MCA to approve the Catchment Plan at its meeting on the 24th January 2022.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications and Advice

- 6.1 The Environment Agency provided lead resources for preparing the Catchment Plan, with the MCA Executive and other partners providing in-kind support to the process. Additional resources will be required to deliver the immediate and longer-term actions, and all Partners are considering how they could contribute to supporting delivery. It is proposed to work up a proposition for consideration at the next meeting of the Board to use some of the unallocated £0.50M Gainshare funding for flood resilience and mitigation, as the MCA's contribution to support the implementation of the Catchment Plan.

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 to 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. Subject to approval, it is intended to launch the Plan on 28 January 2022 which is involving the MCA Executive Communications Team.

List of Appendices Included

- A Final Draft 'Connected by Water' South Yorkshire Flood Catchment Plan

Background Documents

None