

Mayoral Combined Authority Board

24 January 2022

Approval of the 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:	Policy Decision
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Has it been included on the Forward Plan?	Yes

Director Approving Submission of the Report:

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Executive Summary

To consider and approve the Final Draft South Yorkshire Flood Catchment Plan entitled 'Connected by Water'.

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 approve the final draft South Yorkshire 'Connected by Water' Flood Catchment Plan; and

- Note that a proposal will be considered by the Housing and Infrastructure Board on the 18th January for the use of some previously committed but unallocated MCA Gainshare funding (for flood resilience and mitigation) to support implementation of the Flood Catchment Plan.

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

South Yorkshire Flood Risk Partnership	17 November 2021
South Yorkshire Chief Executives' Group	25 November 2021
Housing and Infrastructure Board	7 December 2021

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 an uncoordinated 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 Preparation of the Plan has been jointly overseen by the MCA Housing and Infrastructure Board and the South Yorkshire Flood Risk Partnership (SYFRP), and the final draft Catchment Plan (attached at Appendix A) has taken on board feedback from these bodies and those of wider stakeholders. The MCA Board is asked to consider the plan and whether this meets the objectives set by the MCA Board after the 2019 flood events. If this final draft is approved, it will be used to guide investment into flood mitigation measures and inform long-term strategy for flood risk management.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 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; provides a compelling programme to attract potential investors; and demonstrates the measures 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.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 Subject to approval by the MCA Board, it is intended that Mayor Jarvis will formally launch the Catchment Plan on 28 January 2022. Due to Covid restrictions this will now be a virtual webinar launch led by Mayor Dan Jarvis with other speakers including the Chair of the Environment Agency and the Chief Executive of Yorkshire Water. The launch event will bring together partners involved in preparing and delivering the Catchment Plan, along with wider stakeholders. Alongside this, wider public engagement will be launched through the Environment Agency's online consultation website.
- 2.5 The MCA Housing and Infrastructure Board will oversee the delivery of the Plan and future reviews, with the South Yorkshire Flood Risk Partnership coordinating implementation. Periodic updates will be provided to the MCA Board.

3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

3.1 Option 1

To approve the final draft South Yorkshire Flood Catchment Plan.

3.2 Option 1 Risks and Mitigations

Risk: That delivery partners are unable to commit to implementing the Flood Catchment Plan once completed.

Mitigation: The 4 South Yorkshire Local Authorities, alongside other partners, have been involved with the development of and have ownership over the Plan. The Plan ensures each of the actions specify which bodies are responsible for and will contribute to their delivery.

- Risk: That sufficient funding is not available to deliver the actions in the Catchment Plan

Mitigation: At present we are unable to mitigate to any great extent the issue of lack of funding. All key partners are however currently considering how they could contribute resources to fund the immediate and longer-term actions.

3.3 Option 2

To not approve 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 uncoordinated 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 MCA Housing and Infrastructure Board and the South Yorkshire Flood Risk Partnership (SYFRP) have jointly overseen the development of the Flood Catchment Plan. Preparation has also been informed by engagement with a range of stakeholders.

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 MCA Housing and Infrastructure Board received the draft Catchment Plan at its meeting on 7 December 2021 and endorses the plan to the MCA Board and recommends its approval.

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. 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. A proposal will be considered by the Housing and Infrastructure Board at its meeting on the 18th January 2022, to utilise some of the previously committed but unallocated £0.5m MCA Gainshare funding (to support flood resilience and mitigation) 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. Other partners are similarly considering how they may be able to support delivery.

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 There are no human resources implications directly arising from this report.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications and Advice

9.1 There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report.

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 Communications 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 Flood Catchment 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