

ADVISORY

AGENDA NO.

**REPORT TO PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

DATE: 10 MAY 2006

**CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF
DEVELOPMENT AND
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

TEES VALLEY JOINT STRATEGIC FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT – LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

SUMMARY

1. This report invites Members to note the joint Tees Valley Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will form part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework.

RECOMMENDATION

2. Members are recommended to: -
 - (i) Note the content of this report and endorse the principle of undertaking a Joint Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
 - (ii) Endorse the appointment of consultants to carry out this work

BACKGROUND

3. Consultation draft Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk states that all local planning authorities should prepare a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, in consultation with the Environment Agency, to determine the variations in flood risk across the Borough as the basis for preparing appropriate policies for flood risk management for these areas. This will also enable the Council to determine the acceptability of flood risk in relation to emergency planning capability. Strategic Flood Risk Assessments should either form part of a sustainability appraisal of local development documents, or be used to inform the sequential approach to flood risk for site allocations and in determining planning applications.
4. The submission draft of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East (June 2005) also advocates that in developing Local Development Frameworks and considering planning applications a sequential risk-based approach to development and flooding should be adopted. In addition it will be necessary to undertake a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

THE PROPOSAL

5. Following a meeting with the Environment Agency and the other Tees Valley Authorities in January 2006, the Head of Planning Services is in agreement to pursuing a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment in conjunction with the other Tees Valley Authorities. Joint working is particularly encouraged and there are numerous examples of such joint working.

6. The Council's Procurement Team are satisfied that Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council will go out to tender for the Tees Valley Authorities to ensure that best value for money is achieved. The Environment Agency will be invited to submit a competitive tender by linking work carried out on the River Tees Catchment Flood Management Plan.

COSTS

7. It is estimated that the costs for a local authority to undertake a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment singly is between £20,000 and £25,000. It is also estimated that costs between £40,000 and £45,000 jointly for a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Boroughs of Redcar & Cleveland, Stockton and Middlesbrough (a maximum of £15,000 each). Since these estimates were received, Hartlepool Borough Council and Darlington Borough Council have agreed to undertake a joint Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. These figures are only a guide until tenders are received which is to be coordinated by Redcar & Cleveland.

THE TIMETABLE

8. Dependent on the consultants workload, it is anticipated that the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will take a maximum of six months to complete and will require a "planning input" into the final Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to ensure that the data has been interpreted correctly and that it is a planning document with a technical input and not a technical report with a planning input.

ADVANTAGES

9. The advantages of pursuing a joint Strategic Flood Risk Assessment are as follows:
 - Economies of scale
 - The River Tees catchment area extends beyond the authority boundary
 - A development within one Authority boundary may increase the risk of flooding elsewhere if a holistic approach is not adopted
 - Frees up Council staff to concentrate on the preparation of other development plan documents
 - Avoid any legal challenge as to the soundness of a development plan document

DISADVANTAGES

10. The disadvantages of pursuing a joint Strategic Flood Risk Assessment are as follows:
 - Consultants have to be able to fit it into their workload
 - Each local planning authority are at different stages of production of their local development documents

SUMMARY

11. To summarise:
 - As part of the preparation of the Local Development Framework, each local planning authority is required to undertake a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

THE NEXT STEPS

12. Once the joint approach set out above is agreed by all the five Tees Valley Authorities, a steering group will be set up and attended by various Officers. Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council will act on the behalf of the four remaining Authorities and go out to tender for the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, in order for the best value for money is achieved.

RECOMMENDATION

13. Members are recommended to:
 - (i) Note the content of this report and endorse the principle of undertaking a Joint Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
 - (ii) Endorse the appointment of consultants to carry out this work

Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services.

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Background Papers - Draft Planning Policy Statement 25 Development and Flood Risk, Planning Policy Statement 12 Local Development Frameworks and Submission Draft Regional Spatial Strategy.

Financial Implications – The financial implications are the costs to the Council incurred in the appointment of consultants to undertake the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. It is likely to cost something in the order of £10,000. The project will be financed from the Local Plan budget.

Environmental Implications- N/A

Community Safety Implications - N/A

Human Rights Implications - The provisions of the European Convention of Human Rights 1950 has been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

Ward and Ward Councillors - N/A