

PTE/17/19

North Devon County/Locality Committee
31 March 2017

Environment Agency Flood Risk Pilot Initiatives and Other Developments

Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Please note that the following recommendation is subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee notes the contents of this follow-up report, in line with its original request for feedback from the Environment Agency following its consideration of item PTE/16/17 at its meeting of 20 December 2016.

1. Background/Introduction

At its meeting of 20 December 2016, the Committee considered a report (PTE/16/67) entitled 'Flood Risk Management Responsibilities and Incidence Response & Recovery'. This brief, follow-up, report is in direct response to the request for the Environment Agency to provide feedback on its pilot initiatives and other developments in the area, which were referred to by the Environment Agency representative who attended the previous meeting.

2. Environment Agency Pilot Initiatives and Projects in North Devon

Through its attendance at the North Devon County/Locality Committee meeting on 20 December 2016, the Environment Agency representative (Simon Dart) made specific reference to two particular flood risk projects which they are leading in North Devon, one being a pilot project in the Braunton area, the other being a proposed flood defence scheme at Bishops Tawton. A brief update on each is provided below.

Natural Flood Management Pilot Initiative, Braunton - The Environment Agency is currently working in partnership with Devon County Council Flood Risk Management, North Devon Biosphere and Natural England on a Natural Flood Management (NFM) pilot study in the Ackland Stream catchment, Braunton. Historic mapping and the knowledge of local landowners were utilised in order to determine appropriate measures. Based on this, a range of techniques were then selected – including leaky dams, tree/hedge planting and constructed wetlands – which are due to be constructed in the coming months. Flow monitors and rain gauges have been installed to establish a baseline of monitoring data, with this data to be continually assessed as the project progresses, in order to determine the effectiveness of measures implemented. There is also a possibility for the extension of this project into the future, with a second site in the area having been identified as having potential for NFM measures.

Proposed Flood Defence Scheme at Bishops Tawton - The Environment Agency are currently progressing the business case for a project that will give flood benefit to Bishops Tawton. The approach to modelling the site is under review, in order to determine how to represent flooding issues in a way that isn't cost prohibitive to the benefits available for the construction. The EA have identified that there is likely to be a significant funding gap for the scheme, as it has a very low score using the Flood Defence Grant in Aid Partnership Funding standard calculation. However, the EA are currently working with Devon County

Council and South West Water to try and address this issue. If the required amount of funding cannot be found, then the EA would like to review what can be achieved through the planning process and try and have an input on planned development or other local budgets to gradually address some aspects of the project.

3. Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations

This report is based on the specific request made by the Committee for feedback from the Environment Agency. As such, this is presented for information only, with a very simple report format adopted. The Environment Agency will continue to update the relevant communities and stakeholders in the progress of its own works. The DCC Flood and Risk Management Team will provide Member updates, where it is engaged in these initiatives, through its annual reports to Cabinet and to the Place Scrutiny Committee, as well as through its occasional newsletters, Member briefings and web site content.

Dave Black
Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Electoral Divisions: All North Devon Divisions

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for enquiries: Martin Hutchings

Room No: AB3 Lucombe House, County Hall

Tel No: 01392 383000

Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
None		

pc220317ndc
sc/cr/environment agency flood risk pilot initiatives and other and other delvelopments
03 220317