

Humber 2100+ Update

Report to: Humber Leadership Board

Date: Friday, 18 February 2022

Report by: Alan Menzies, East Riding of Yorkshire Council

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Humber 2100+ project aims to redefine the strategic approach to managing tidal flood risk on the Humber estuary for the next 100 years. The new Humber Strategy will focus on outlining the strategic direction for the first 25 years, including a programme of investment. A narrative for the remaining 75 years will then sketch out the likely pathway that will follow.
- 1.2 The way that tidal flood risk is currently managed cannot continue indefinitely and the scale of risk indicates that we will need to do things differently in the future. The Humber 2100+ partnership will need to continue working together to build a consensus on this, leading to agreement on the way tidal flooding will need to be managed strategically to meet future flood risk challenges.
- 1.3 The partnership looked at a range of possible future scenarios and indicative flood risk solutions for the Humber area during 2021. The valuable feedback received through this process highlighted the significant challenges in securing collective agreement with partners on how flood risk should be managed in the future. As such the Environment Agency project team worked to review the project and provide a revised approach in moving forward. To navigate the way forward, the next steps for the project have been refreshed and agreed with the partnership.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that members note this report and continue to work in partnership on the agreed revised approach to support development of the new Humber Strategy.

3. Background

- 3.1 During the early parts of 2021, partners were asked to review the outputs of the initial scenario assessment with plans to consult the public and stakeholders. Feedback was of a challenging nature and included views around the evidence base, and lack of partner confidence in holding a consultation on any of the proposals shared. This highlighted the challenges that stakeholders will face as a partnership in collectively reaching agreement on the future direction for tidal flood risk management.

- 3.2 The project leadership team has re-evaluated the next steps for the project, considering how to address partner concerns and work towards a new Humber Strategy which all partners can be committed to. All partners will need to take an active role in shaping the future stages of the project and reaching a consensus on the nature of the strategy that we will be ultimately seeking to collectively produce and agree.
- 3.3 The first step towards this revised approach will be ensuring there is a common understanding and acceptance of the scale and consequences of flood risk, both now and in the future, and the implications of how that risk is managed. This will involve strengthening the existing evidence base and working with partners to reframe evidence in a way that is meaningful to them.
- 3.4 Due to the project review, public consultation that was scheduled to happen last year did not go ahead as planned. At the appropriate point, the partnership will be seeking to work with those that live, work and have an interest in the Humber, to shape the future approach. The Partnership will be working to decide how and when to involve stakeholders and will continue to keep in touch via normal channels.
- 3.5 A Programme Board meeting was held on the 2nd December 2021 and all those that attended have confirmed that the current governance structure is fit for purpose and fully endorse the next steps for progressing the strategy. This was based on the stepped approach as follows:
- Step 1: Evidence – understanding tidal flood risk now and into the future
- Step 2: Strategic Approaches – agreeing a range of approaches we will use to manage risk across the Humber
- Step 3: Implementation – defining what actions are needed, where and when.
- 3.6 Work is now underway on Step 1 and we have seen positive signs of improvements to partnership collaboration already. The Environment Agency project team have now set up working groups and file share systems to support effective co-creation with partners. Partners will now need to take an active role in shaping the future stages of the project, with the goal of ultimately delivering a successful strategy for tidal flood risk on the Humber.

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