



Cabinet

Title	Approval and adoption of Barnet's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) and its Action Plan (2023-29)
Date of meeting	5 th September 2023
Report of	Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change
Wards	All
Status	Public
Key	Yes – The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and its action plan (2023-29) is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working across the Borough.
Urgent	No
Appendices	Appendix A – Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Action Plan 2023-29 Appendix B – Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2023-29
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Summary

The report seeks approval and adoption of the proposed Barnet Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) 2023-29. It is a key statutory, strategic document, which replaces the first LFRMS published by the Council in 2017. It explains how local flood risk will be managed within the borough for the next six years.

The LFRMS sets out Barnet's key strategic flood risk management objectives and presents an updated Action Plan 2023-2029 which the Council proposes to adopt to make its communities more resilient to flooding and the impacts of climate change.

The Strategy also summarises the past, current, and predicted future flood risks in Barnet, the responsible Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) for managing flood risk, advice for residents and

developers, and a summary of Barnet's completed and pipeline flood risk schemes over the period of next six years.

The LFRMS Action Plan (2023-29) sets out comprehensive actions to achieve the above Strategic Objectives. The key measures include the Council's commitment to fund dedicated resources to deliver the Strategy, providing efficient responses to flood incidents and emergency recovery, maintaining a robust flood incident log and flood risk asset register, and increasing internal and external stakeholder engagement for collaborative flood risk management and achieving long-term resilience.

The draft strategy was rolled out for public and stakeholder consultation from 24th April 2023-23rd June 2023. The feedback was incorporated into the strategy where appropriate, and the updated strategy is now being put forward for Cabinet approval and adoption.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet approves the proposed Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2023-29.
2. That Cabinet adopts the associated Action Plan 2023-29 to achieve the four key strategic objectives as set out by the LFRMS 2023-29 and under section 1.2.

1. Reasons for the Recommendations

1.1 Background

1.1.1 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 designates London Borough of Barnet as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and as such has a statutory responsibility of local flood risk management within the borough. This includes ensuring that flood risks from local sources, including surface water runoff, groundwater and ordinary watercourses and their interactions, are identified and managed.

1.1.2 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 further places a duty for all Lead Local Flood Authorities to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) to manage all sources of local flood risks, consistent with the Environment Agency (EA)'s 2020 [National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy \(NFCERMS\)](#) for England.

1.1.3 As part of Barnet's previous LFRMS (2017), the LFRMS should be updated approximately every six years as a minimum or following major changes among other strategic documents or legislation.

1.1.4 In July 2021, Barnet saw a record-breaking rainfall event that had a 2% annual probability of occurring. The impacts of climate change were evident and borough wide flooding on highways, pavements, properties, and shops was experienced. This is expected to exacerbate with rapid urbanisation, unprecedented population growth, and evident impacts of climate change. Barnet's need for a robust strategy to manage flood risk and increase the community's flood resilience has never been greater.

1.2 Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2023-29)-An overview

- 1.2.1 The LFRMS 2023-29 sets out the four key strategic objectives (within Section 1) of the Strategy:
- **FLOOD RESILIENCE:** Take action to reduce flood risk and avoid economic damages, while delivering wider environmental and social benefits.
 - **ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION:** Engage and educate local residents and businesses to empower them to understand and reduce their own risk of flooding.

- **PARTNERSHIP WORKING:** Establish and maintain collaborative partnerships with internal and external stakeholders to facilitate effective information-sharing and maximise joint working opportunities.
- **DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING:** Steer development away from flood risk areas to protect these areas and ensure future development is sustainable in the context of climate change.

1.2.2 The strategy also publishes its first [Online Mapping Tool](#) which maps the risk of different sources of flooding within the borough supplemented with historic flood maps and hotspots.

1.2.3 The LFRMS also signposts guidance for residents on how they can reduce their flood risk, advising residents to invest in resistance and resilience measures and providing clear instructions on how to report flooding in Section 4 of the Strategy.

1.2.4 The Section 6 of the Strategy provides details about the Council committed investment of £6m capital budget for flooding and drainage over the period of next 5 years. It provides further details of works delivered as part of this capital budget program for example installation of innovative smart sensors in highway gullies and watercourses, launching an enhanced gully and trash screen clearance programme, surveying high-risk culverted and open watercourses and trash screen improvements at multiple locations in the borough. Larger flood alleviation schemes being funded by Environment Agency and Defra for example £6m Action for Silk Stream project and Halliwick recreation ground SuDS scheme are also referred in this section.

1.2.5 Section 7 lists planned future work and sets out how the proposed objectives and measures in the Action Plan (Appendix A) will be delivered over the period of next 6 years.

2. Alternative Options Considered and Not Recommended

2.1 No alternative options were considered, as the Council, as a Lead Local Flood Authority, has a statutory requirement to develop, implement and maintain a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy under Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

3. Post Decision Implementation

3.1 Upon Cabinet approval of the recommendation to adopt the LRFMS (2023-29) and its action plan, officers will publish the LFRMS on the Council’s website. This will then be a live strategy, which will be continuously applied and monitored to review the delivery of its action plan.

4. Corporate Priorities, Performance and Other Considerations

4.1 Corporate Plan

The Council’s Corporate Plan- “Our plan for Barnet 2023-26”, within its strategic objective Caring for the planet sets the vision to improve our local environment, so that residents enjoy clean air and waterways and reduced flooding from extreme weather.

The proposed LFRMS sets out key objectives and measures for its communities to become flood resilient and adopts a sustainable adaptive approach for flood risk management to protect properties and infrastructure providing wider environmental, biodiversity, health and social benefits. Hence, the approval and adoption of the LFRMS will be in lines with the vision of the Corporate Plan.

4.2 Corporate Performance / Outcome Measures

The proposed action plan will be monitored, and its progress will be measured during the period 2023-29. This would also contribute to achieve the Council’s Flood Risk Management Plan

Measures in lines with the with the Environment Agency (EA)'s 2020 [National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy \(NFCERMS\)](#) for England.

4.3 Sustainability

The LFRMS proposes to use sustainable flood risk management practices such as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), Natural Flood Management (NFM) and Property Flood Resilience (PFR), and to look for opportunities to implement such practices.

4.4 Corporate Parenting

As the LFRMS proposes to adopt sustainable and natural approaches to flood risk management and implement schemes of this nature, it tends to provide not only flood risk benefits but wider environmental, health, social and educational benefits. Such schemes, where possible, could be used to have school trips to educate the pupils on flood risk management, water quality, ecology, and biodiversity.

4.5 Risk Management

The Council has an established approach to risk management, which is set out in the Corporate Risk Management Framework. Any individual capital schemes that are delivered as per the action plan will develop their respective risk registers.

4.6 Insight

Not applicable.

4.7 Social value

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. This report does not relate to the procurement of service contracts.

5. Resource Implications (Finance and Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT and Property)

5.1 The capital budgets for the delivery of the Action Plan are through the Council, Revenue and external Grant funding from Defra and Environment Agency, Thames Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (TRFCC) and other project funding opportunities.

5.2 The LFRMS Action Plan (2023-29) sets out a list of comprehensive actions to achieve the four key strategic objectives. The key ones include:

- Council's commitment to fund dedicated resources to deliver the strategy and continual reviewing of resourcing requirements.
- Providing efficient responses to flood incidents and emergency recovery.
- Maintaining a robust flood incident log and flood risk asset register.
- Increased internal and external stakeholder engagement including setting up an internal flooding steering group.

5.3 Below actions will be covered from the Highways capital and annual reactive budgets:

- Annual drop-in sessions for local communities during London Flood Awareness Week or similar events.

- Increase emergency preparedness by ensuring stock of flood barriers and installing temporary barriers.

5.4 The workload is currently delivered by the Flood and Water Management within Asset Management team in Highways Service. There is one full time dedicated Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) resource along with a part-time graduate support. Support from resources within wider Asset team is sought as and when needed.

5.5 Two permanent full-time positions are open for recruitment to support the LLFA service delivery.

5.6 Any procurement of services or capital delivery will be undertaken in lines with Barnet’s Contract Procedure Rules.

5.7 No impact on IT and property matters envisaged.

6. Legal Implications and Constitution References

6.1 The Council is identified as Lead Local Flood Authority under Flood and Water Management Act (2010) and Flood Risk Regulations (2009).

6.2 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (section 9) places a duty for all Lead Local Flood Authorities to produce and publish a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

6.3 The LFRMS is a supplementary planning document and has been prepared in accordance with the above legislation and recommended consultation and referred to Cabinet for approval and adoption.

6.4 Under the Council’s Constitution, the functions of Cabinet include the following responsibilities: Development of proposals for the budget (including the capital and revenue budgets, the fixing of the Council Tax Base, and the level of Council Tax) and the financial strategy for the Council;

- Recommending major new policies (and amendments to existing policies) to the Council for approval as part of the Council’s Policy Framework and implementing those approved by Council;
- Approving policies that are not part of the policy framework.

7. Consultation

7.1 The LFRMS was rolled out for public consultation from 24th April 2023 – 23rd June 2023. Four drop-in sessions were also organised in Osidge, Golders Green, Hendon and Colindale libraries during this period.

7.2 Two sets of surveys were rolled out, a non-technical questionnaire targeted for local communities and businesses while a technical survey was targeted for the stakeholders and risk management authorities.

7.3 The consultation focussed to capture key feedback on the strategic objectives and proposed actions plan included in the draft strategy.

7.4 The detailed feedback of the consultation will be published on [Local Flood Risk Management Strategy consultation | Engage Barnet](#) in September 2023 once the Strategy is approved, adopted and made live on Council’s website.

8. Equalities and Diversity

8.1 Decision makers should have due regard to the public sector equality duty in making their decisions. The equalities duties are continuing duties they are not duties to secure a particular

outcome. The equalities impact will be revisited on each of the proposals as they are developed. Consideration of the duties should precede the decision. It is important that Cabinet has regard to the statutory grounds in the light of all available material such as consultation responses. The statutory grounds of the public sector equality duty are found at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and are as follows:

- 8.2 A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- a) Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- a) Tackle prejudice, and
- b) Promote understanding.

Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act. The relevant protected characteristics are:

- a) Age
- b) Disability
- c) Gender reassignment

d) Pregnancy and maternity

e) Race

f) Religion or belief

g) Sex

h) Sexual orientation

i) Marriage and civil partnership

8.3 The LFRMS has no foreseeable equality impact.

8.4 The LFRMS is beneficial to local residents, businesses, developers and key stakeholders who are potentially at risk of local flooding from surface water, ground water and flooding from ordinary watercourses (non-main river). The LFRMS would have a positive impact for all Barnet communities including the 'Protected Characteristics' groups.

9. Background Papers

9.1 Consultation page for Draft LFRMS 2023-29 [Local Flood Risk Management Strategy consultation | Engage Barnet](#)

9.2 Committee approval for 2018 Barnet Local Flood Risk Management Strategy [Approval of the Barnet Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.pdf \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

9.3 [Barnet's Environment Committee Paper \(2022\)](#)

9.4 Mapping tool published with the strategy [Online Mapping Tool](#)