

STAFFORDSHIRE LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

2024 Update

Context of the Updated Local Flood Management Strategy

1. Introduction

In England, over 5.2 million properties are at risk of flooding¹. Of these, 2.7 million are at risk from rivers or the sea and 3.4 million are at risk from surface water. Some properties are also at risk from multiple sources, with estimates that 660,000 properties are at risk from flooding from rivers, the sea, and surface water². Across Staffordshire, the County has experienced 8 significant flood events since the last strategy in 2015, with 3 of these events in 2020 alone. Flooding is likely to increase, and it has been the experience in Staffordshire and elsewhere that whilst one community is recovering from a flood event, another is responding.

In response to the 2007 summer floods, that resulted in 55,000 properties flooding, 7,000 rescues by emergency services, 13 deaths and an estimated £3 billion of damage across the country, the Government commissioned Sir Michael Pitt to undertake a review³. The outcome of this outlined the need for changes in the way the UK is adapting to the increased risk of flooding and the role different organisations have in delivering this function. The Flood and Water Management Act 2010, enacted by Government in response to the recommendations of The Pitt Review, designated unitary and county councils as Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) with new responsibilities for leading and co-ordinating the management of local flood risk; namely the flood risk arising from surface water runoff, groundwater, and ordinary watercourses. This includes a statutory duty to develop, maintain, apply, and monitor a strategy for the management of local flood risk.

¹ [National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy](#). 2020. Environment Agency.

² [Flood and coastal erosion risk management report: 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023](#). 2023. Environment Agency.

³ [Pitt Review: Lessons learned from the 2007 Floods](#). 2008. Sir Michael Pitt.

This Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) for Staffordshire is an update to the LFRMS published in 2015. Central Government are currently considering the implementation of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act (2010) that will have significant impacts upon the scope and scale of the LLFA function. Once this has been announced, a more thorough review of the LFRMS will be undertaken, expected in 2024/25.

This Strategy outlines the priorities for local flood risk management and provides a delivery plan to manage the risk. Although the remit of the LFRMS is to address flooding from surface water, groundwater, and ordinary watercourses, it also provides an overview of the management of other forms of flooding, such as main rivers and sewers.

As part of this update, other Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) were consulted along with a public consultation on the core document and Action Plan. The feedback has been incorporated within this update or has otherwise been noted for the future LFRMS update and/or review.

2. Context of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) is a key document because it draws together existing flood risk studies and related plans into a single document that outlines how we will manage local flood risk in the future. The LFRMS also complements and supports the National Strategy¹ published by the Environment Agency. This sets out a long-term vision for a nation ready for, and resilient to, flooding and coastal change for today, tomorrow and to the year 2100. The National Strategy has three long-term ambitions:

- Climate resilient places: working with partners to bolster resilience to flooding and coastal change across the nation, both now and in the face of climate change;
- Today's growth and infrastructure resilient in tomorrow's climate: making the right investment and planning decisions to secure sustainable growth and environmental improvements, as well as infrastructure resilient to flooding and coastal change; and,
- A nation ready to respond and adapt to flooding and coastal change: ensuring local people understand their risk to flooding and coastal change and know their responsibilities and how to take action.

3. Update of this Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

This is an update to our local flood risk management strategy provided in 2015. The update includes the following:

- A more user-friendly summary including overview of key objectives;
- A refresh of Objectives to make them more focused and consistent with national strategy;
- The previous strategy was between Shropshire Council and Staffordshire County Council, whereas this update is solely Staffordshire County Council update;
- An update on the action plan to bring this up-to-date, in line with National Flood Risk Strategies, and to increase our scope;
- An update on policies given experience and wider policy changes since the last strategy;
- Includes feedback from a public consultation and relevant partner organisations;
- More focus on community engagement and innovation.

It consists of a strategy summary together with an Action Plan, a list of key guidance notes and policy documents, and several maps.

3.1. Review of Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

In January 2023 Defra published a “Review for implementation of Schedule 3 to the Flood and Water Management Act 2010”. Following this review, Central Government have agreed to the recommendation to implement Schedule 3. Under Schedule 3, Staffordshire County Council will take the role of SuDS Approval Body (SAB), responsible for approval of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and possibly adoption and maintenance of surface water features. It is expected that statutory instruments, guidance, and technical standards will be published in 2024. This is likely to bring about significant changes in the scope and extent of the County as a Lead Local Flood Authority. The revised Local Flood Risk Management Strategy is intended to be initiated in 2024 when the

announcement for Schedule 3 is expected, with publication expected in 2024/2025, and will include:

- A detailed appraisal of preferred options;
- How we will bring in Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act;
- A more thorough review of the document given these; and,
- Additional suggestions from public consultation and partner organisations.