



Report To:	Council
Date:	11 th December 2024
Subject:	Coastal Strategy
Purpose:	To receive funding to prepare the Coastal Strategy by working with partners
Key Decision:	Yes
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council
Report Of:	Pranali Parikh, Director of Economic Development
Report Author:	Pranali Parikh, Director of Economic Development
Ward(s) Affected:	All Wards
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

This report provides the update on the Lincs 2100+ proposals and highlights the implications and opportunities afforded by this strategic collaborative work on the current and future works to be undertaken for the East Lindsey Local Plan.

Recommendations

1. To note the work being undertaken by the Council and its partners in preparing the Coastal Strategy, delivery plan and associated workstreams for coastal development in collaboration with the Environment Agency (EA) and Lincolnshire County Council (LCC).
2. To approve the receipt of up to £3m from Environment Agency (EA) to undertake the works and amend the Council's revenue budget for this purpose.

Reasons for Recommendations

The proposed works for Coastal Strategy offer major outcomes and opportunities for not only East Lindsey and the coast but also wider Lincolnshire. The benefits of this programme of works could include the following:

- The document and evidence base produced by this work will form the basis for business cases and discussions by the partner organisations with the Government for funding to deliver the proposed vision, strategy and delivery plan.
- This work will enable the Council's wider ambition of maintaining coastal defence and providing future security for our businesses and communities.
- It will support and accelerate the continuing collaboration with partners in enabling development, bring forward economic change and enhance community resilience.
- The work proposed here will have long term implications on ensuring food security/productivity, energy resilience (current and future) and the visitor economy at local, regional and national level.
- This work will help to bring forward a Local Plan predicated on managed growth and help unlock development potential for coastal communities.

Other Options Considered

Option 1 – Do nothing.

This option is not recommended. The threat of flood risk for the coastal settlements and communities is a real one as evidenced by the works undertaken by EA as well as ELDC in form of SFRA so far. If the Coastal Strategy is not pursued and, therefore, mitigation/adaptation schemes are not delivered, this will not only constrain East Lindsey and reduce the spatial options available for delivering housing and economic growth, it will also mean large scale negative impact on the current communities and businesses.

Option 2 – Undertake the works for coastal strategy using Council funding.

This option is not recommended. The total cost of proposed works being undertaken by partners is over £9m, of which £3m is proposed to be undertaken by the Council over the next two years. The Council's part of work is interlinked with the work being delivered by the partners and therefore requires a collaborative approach that avoids silo working within organisations.

Option 3 – Undertake the works for coastal strategy by accepting money from NWS via EA.

This option is recommended because of the above mentioned reasons.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Lincolnshire Coastal plain relies on the coastal defences to keep out the high tides around 14 days each month. The Environment Agency (EA) currently nourish the beaches annually in order to protect the ageing assets. This costs around £7m annually. Presently, funding is only in place until 2027. The EA are currently in the

process of seeking approval to continue nourishment until most of the engineered coastal assets come to the end of their useful life in 2040.

- 1.2 More recent intelligence obtained by the EA forecasts that increasing sea levels could result in the East coast suffering major, catastrophic flooding on or around 2040, if not before, particularly in the context of the risks associated with over-topping of the sea defences. This is as a result of climate change, residual life of current sea defences and the lack of funding to manage the risk.
- 1.3 It is understood that the coastal authorities (ELDC & LCC) together with the EA and IDB's need to develop a strategy for what comes next. Noting that the coast is home to some of Lincolnshire's most vulnerable communities, there is an additional and ongoing need to promote safety and resilience.

2. Report

- 2.1 There is an identified and accepted need to develop a long-term strategy for the Lincolnshire Coast. The EA, ELDC, LCC and Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board are working together to develop the case for transformational change on the Lincolnshire Coast, this underpinned through the development of a collaborative Vision and Infrastructure Delivery Plan. This work, in combination with the EA's Coastal Investment Plan (CIP), would result in the production of a series of synergistic documents that would present both the case for change and a rationale for long-term investment.
- 2.2 The current local plan was adopted in March 2018 covering the period 2016-2031. It makes no new market housing allocations in the coastal areas of the district. All of the 7,480 market housing allocations required over the plan period are provided inland within close proximity to existing towns and villages located outside the Coastal Zone. The Environment Agency maintains an on-going objection to market housing in the coastal zone. Until such time as the spatial strategy is amended this will remain the case.
- 2.3 In compliance with the Planning Inspectors recommendation, the Council embarked on a full review of the local plan in 2020. The emergent revised Local Plan is at an early stage of preparation following the Reg 18, Issues and Options Consultation in Spring 2021, which included a call for sites. There has been a considerable delay in the preparation of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), given the need to model new flood risk data. There is a clear likelihood that the situation regarding coastal and fluvial flooding in the District has worsened, making future new market housing development in the coastal areas even less sustainable unless clearly evidenced in terms of need and geographical location.
- 2.4 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has recently been published for consultation and proposed considerable changes to the assessment of housing need. If this is reflected in the revised NPPF due to be published soon, there will be more pressure for developments, given the constraints of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and the Coastal Zone.
- 2.5 A well considered vision, strategy and delivery plan, prepared collaboratively with partners, backed by evidence base is anticipated to provide the solid basis for any

future Local Plan iterations. This will guide the principles for protection, enhancement and redevelopment of the coastal settlements for future generations.

- 2.6 The Council is working collaboratively with its partners to develop the Coastal Strategy in order to meet, adapt and plan for the respective duties of each partner organisation whilst continuing to deliver services to the coastal communities. Whilst the full details and scope of the work will be refined and redefined through the procurement process through partnership working, it is likely to include the following key workstreams:
- Vision for the Coast – to provide agreed objectives and outcomes for the area and establish shared ambition for the partnership.
 - Infrastructure Opportunities – integrated picture of the assets and systems required to support the Vision. Will inform the need and case for investment by the public and private sector.
 - Socio-Economic Opportunities – Identifying communities and business needs for sustainable growth. Identify options to mitigate to root causes of economic and social challenges currently faced.
 - Water Management Scenarios – Considering flood risk and land drainage, set out scenarios concluding a preferred scenario with positive and negative impacts. Narrative of direction, steered by the Vision.
 - Spatial Strategy – Identification of a range of scenarios to inform the conversion of the vision in a number of evidence-based spatial plans, mapping future business, industry and community needs and identifying the opportunities for economic growth and the best use of natural capital with the Coastal Zone.
 - Infrastructure Strategy – Identifying the infrastructure necessary to achieve the ambition set out in the vision.
 - Investment and Delivery Plan – A clear plan identifying investment requirements to inform the case to government (and the private sector) for investment, together with a programme for delivery.
 - Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Business Case – a necessary part of the EA's evidence base to make the business case for investment in coastal defence.
- 2.7 These workstreams would also be informed by consultations with stakeholders and communities, including a Sustainability Appraisal consultation with statutory consultees and are likely to be modified and revisited over the coming months. This may result in widening or narrowing the scope of works and a need to commission a further series of workstreams.
- 2.8 These workstreams will provide the EA with the information necessary to identify the scale of the likely funding shortfall for the infrastructure necessary to deliver effective flood risk management. Similarly, it will help Lincolnshire County Council planning for infrastructure development plans.
- 2.9 The EA has been offered up to £9.3m funding by Nuclear Waste Services (NWS) to develop the evidence base, vision, strategy and delivery plan for coastal defences and developments. It is proposed that up to £3m of this funding is received by the Council to undertake necessary works that would contribute towards the overall scope of works.

- 2.10 This does not abide the partner organisations to agree or deliver anything other than the above mentioned scope.
- 2.11 For procurement of proposed work, the Council will have access to the established frameworks of EA and LCC. The actual scope and cost of works will be refined and redefined following procurement by working closely with partners.
- 2.12 A working group of officers from all partner organisations is established to progress the works. Regular updates will be provided to the Planning Policy Committee and Executive Board at relevant stages.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. In summary, the work proposed to be undertaken for the preparation of the Lincs 2100+ works will enable the Council and its partners to collectively make the much wider case for development and investment in the coastal zone necessary to ensure its long term and sustainable future of our communities.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

None

Corporate Priorities

The South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Sub-regional Strategy includes 'Develop an ambitious future Investment Plan for the coast' as one of the key priorities for East Lindsey District Council.

Staffing

None

Workforce Capacity Implications

The funding includes allowance for staff and consultancy costs for Council and its partner organisations to undertake this additional workload.

Constitutional and Legal Implications

The EA will enter into an agreement with NWS to receive the full amount of funding up to £9.3m. EA will enter into a collaboration agreement with ELDC, LCC and the LMDB to prepare the vision, spatial strategy, infrastructure and delivery plan. As part of this, the Council will receive up to £3m from EA to prepare the necessary evidence. The funding conditions from the parent agreement (NWS-EA) will be cascaded through the collaboration agreement to ELDC as the recipient body for the £3m funding.

Legal input will be required in shaping the conditions for the collaboration agreement with EA and LCC.

Data Protection

None

Financial

The cost of works to be led by ELDC is estimated up to £3m. The funding will be drawn down from EA for eligible activities retrospectively, on demonstration of spend.

There remains a clear risk that the funding proposed by NWS ceased for any reason, as a consequence of NWS deciding to discontinue work on the proposed GDF facility as a consequence of either a change in strategic direction or a negative vote of public confidence. In this event, the rest of the money will need to be found from alternate sources.

It is to be noted that the Council will need to continue working on its Local Plan in parallel to the Coastal Strategy. While the coastal strategy will inform the vision for developments in coastal zone, it will not provide the vision and spatial strategy for the whole Local Plan area. The Council will incur the cost of any work to be commissioned for the Local Plan in addition to the work proposed in this document.

Risk Management

The spend of this funding will need to be in accordance with the conditions of the parent agreement with NWS and EA. Any non-compliant spend will be at risk of clawback.

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

It is intended to take the work through the Sustainable Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process which will require public consultation at relevant times.

Any work related to the preparation of Local Plan will be subject to consultation as part of the planning process.

Reputation

There is risk of perception of predetermination for GDF facility due to the source of funding being NWS. This will be mitigated by providing clear information in public domain at all stages of work on full transparency basis.

Contracts

There will be a need to enter into contracts for procurement of consultants to undertake the works in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules (CPR).

Crime and Disorder

None.

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

None.

Health and Wellbeing

The Coastal Strategy will provide a long term vision for the sustainability of coastal communities.

Climate Change and Environmental Implications

The core of the works for coastal strategy is to respond to the threat of climate change. The proposed works will help preparing a coherent plan for dealing with climate change and environmental implications.

Acronyms

LCC – Lincolnshire County Council
ELDC – East Lindsey District Council
EA – Environment Agency
LMDB – Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board
CIP – Coastal Investment Plan
NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework
SFRA – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
AONB – Area of Natural Beauty
NWS – Nuclear Waste Services
GDF – Geological Disposal Facility
SEA - Sustainable Environmental Assessment
SA - Sustainability Appraisal
CPR – Contract Procedure Rules

Appendices

None.

Background Papers

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

Chronological History of this Report

None

Report Approval

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