

WIRRAL FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Introduction

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010, hereafter 'the Act', aims to improve both flood and coastal erosion risk management and the way in which water resources are managed. It creates clearer roles and responsibilities through defining flood 'risk management authorities' (RMAs) and instils a risk-based approach to flood and water management. There is a lead role for local authorities in managing local flood risks (flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses) and a strategic overview role of all flood and coastal erosion risks for the Environment Agency.

The Act places a 'duty to cooperate' on the flood risk management authorities in the exercise of their functions. The way in which we deliver this is through working in partnership. In Wirral, the RMAs are; the Environment Agency, Highway Authority and Water & Sewerage Undertakers (United Utilities and Welsh Water).

Whilst no longer a requirement of The Act, best practice would require local authorities to ensure that adequate scrutiny arrangements are put in place. This includes arrangements to review and scrutinise the exercise by risk management authorities of flood risk management functions or coastal erosion risk management functions which may affect the local authority's area.

The Act does not stipulate the form that these partnership arrangements should take; it is in this capacity that these Terms of Reference seek to formalise the role and responsibilities of the Wirral Flood & Water Management Partnership Group. They also set out how this Group operates in relation to the wider Merseyside Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Partnership and the North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC).

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1. Purpose of the Wirral Flood and Water Management Partnership

The main purpose of the partnership is to achieve through joint working an effective management of flooding and coastal erosion incidents on Wirral; to take such collective measures in order to minimise the potential impact of such incidents; and to seek the implementation of more permanent and sustainable solutions to the mitigation or alleviation of flooding and coastal erosion. The partnership will also establish a formal link with Wirral Council's Overview & Scrutiny function, to provide appropriate governance and elected member oversight of local flood and coastal erosion risk management activities.

2. Objectives

- 2.1 This partnership has been developed to enable the delivery of Wirral's roles and responsibilities set out in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and the Flood Risk Regulations 2009.
- 2.2 The Partnership will strive to ensure that effective flood and coastal erosion risk management and resilience is built into service delivery in a manner which delivers better protection from flood risk for the businesses, communities and key infrastructure of Wirral.
- 2.3 The Partnership will provide a single voice on flood and coastal erosion risk management activities in Wirral; providing the key point of contact for local authority scrutiny; and providing strategic oversight of all flood and coastal erosion risk and drainage matters in the Borough.
- 2.4 The Partnership will provide the forum for the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee to review and scrutinise flood and water risk management arrangements on Wirral.

3. Wirral Flood and Water Management Partners

The principal partners of the Partnership are:

Wirral Council	Chairperson, Interim Director - Highways & Streetscene
Wirral Council	Cross Party Working Group Representatives from the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee x 3, Appointments to be made by Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee. (Conservative Group) (Labour Group) (Lib Dem Group)
Wirral Council	Cabinet Member for Environment
Wirral Council	Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)
Wirral Council	Highway Authority
Wirral Council	Coast Protection
Wirral Council	Development Control
Wirral Council	Forward Planning

Wirral Council Building Control
Wirral Council Emergency Planning
Wirral Council PR, Marketing & Community Engagement
Wirral Council Climate Change Officer
Wirral Council Legal Services
United Utilities
Welsh Water
Environment Agency
Merseyside Flood Risk Coordinator
Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service
Merseyside Police
Merseytravel
Wirral NHS

The Partnership will allow for representation of other agencies, organisations and community and third sector representatives on an 'as and when' basis.

4. Aims of the Partnership

- 4.1 Funding and skills – to identify new funding opportunities, more cost effective methods of joint working and ensure the core skills, competencies and resources are safeguarded.
- 4.2 Cooperation – to share data, skills and best practice throughout Wirral to ensure that flood and coastal erosion risk management delivery is feasible, proportionate and sustainable.
- 4.3 Lobbying – to provide a unified voice for flood and coastal erosion risk and drainage matters on national and regional policy and funding matters.
- 4.4 Awareness – to ensure that the general public is aware of the flood risk responsibilities and that partner organisations are familiar with their respective roles, responsibilities and duties and that work programmes are aligned accordingly.
- 4.5 Oversight – to receive reports on and provide strategic input and direction to the development of plans, policies and programmes of work developed to manage flood and coastal erosion risk across the Borough.
- 4.6 Conflict Resolution – addressing specific issues affecting delivery or collaborative working as they arise.
- 4.7 Reporting – to report flood and coastal erosion risk management activity and programmes to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Reports should be made publicly available subject to the usual exemption rules, ensuring public accountability and transparency.
- 4.8 Overview & Scrutiny – to be held to account by the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Cross party membership of the partnership provides elected members the opportunity to ask questions about decisions concerning the management of local flood risk.

- 4.9 Delivery – to establish suitable working groups to deliver flood and coastal erosion risk management measures and provide advice to Local Planning Authorities, developers and other bodies as needed.
- 4.10 Communication – to promote activities and engage with the communities of Wirral on flood and coastal erosion risk issues, including the responsibilities of landowners and tenants in flood and coastal erosion risk management.

5. Organisation of Meetings

- 5.1 The meeting will be chaired and administered by Wirral Council as the LLFA.
 - 5.2 Meetings will be held twice a year to best fit with reporting and budget cycles
 - 5.3 The Operational Flood Group will continue to meet to discuss operational issues and to deliver actions or recommendations from previous flooding events. The LLFA chair of the Operational Flood Group will provide a status report to each meeting of the Partnership.
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