

Report subject	Poole Bay, Poole Harbour & Wareham FCERM Strategy Review
Meeting date	29 October 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>The existing Poole Bay, Poole Harbour and Wareham Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy was completed in 2014 and set out a sustainable approach to managing the risk of coastal flooding and erosion to over 10,000 properties up to 2115. Since then, the programme of projects it identified for the next 15-20 years has been progressed, with many either delivered or in the process of being delivered.</p> <p>There have also been many changes in climate change, environmental guidance, and funding rules, as well as new risk mapping and more monitoring data, so it is timely to review and update the FCERM Strategy to account for these factors and look further into the future to assess if the envisioned 2115 coast suggested in the 2014 Strategy is still correct, or if adjustments are needed on the pathway to long term sustainable coastal flooding and erosion risk management.</p> <p>This Cabinet report is seeking approval to progress procurement of specialist consultancy services to develop the strategy using FCERM Grant in Aid (GiA) funding which has been secured from the Environment Agency. This work will ultimately lead to an updated FCERM Strategy approved by the Environment Agency against which subsequent studies, schemes and beach management plans can be developed, without the need to assess the strategic options on a site-by-site basis for each scheme. This will provide the basis for future FCERM-GiA bids for schemes to mitigate the risk of flooding or erosion to the residents and businesses in the Poole Bay and harbour area. There will be zero net cost to BCP council in producing the Strategy.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>Cabinet gives approval to:</p> <p>(a) proceed with the recommended option of undertaking a review and update of the 2014 Poole Bay, Poole Harbour & Wareham Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management</p>

	<p>(FCERM) Strategy in partnership with Dorset Council and the Environment Agency, using funding from FCERM-GiA (£650,000 has been secured);</p> <p>(b) proceed with procuring a Consultant to produce the FCERM Strategy update via the South Coast FCERM Framework administered by Havant Borough Council on behalf of the Southern Coastal Group area, which includes BCP Council;</p> <p>(c) delegate authority to the Director for Commercial Operations, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to agree the terms of any funding, progression of the technical case and associated future submission.</p>
<p>Reason for recommendations</p>	<p>To review and update the existing strategy for mitigating flood and erosion risk over the next 100 years taking into account the effects of climate change (such as sea level rise and increased storminess) and changes to national funding rules and other guidance that have changed since the existing Strategy was completed in 2014.</p> <p>This supports achievement of the BCP vision for where people, nature, coast and towns come together in sustainable, safe and healthy communities, by contributing the delivery of the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change is tackled through sustainable policies and practice <p>Our green spaces flourish and support the wellbeing of both people and nature.</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Andy Hadley, Cabinet Member for Climate Response, Environment and Energy
Corporate Director	Glynn Barton – Chief Operations Officer
Report Authors	Alan Frampton – Strategy, Policy & Environment Manager, South West Flood & Coastal
Wards	Boscombe East & Pokesdown; Boscombe West; Bournemouth Central; Canford Cliffs; Creekmoor; East Cliff & Springbourne; East Southbourne & Tuckton; Hamworthy; Oakdale; Parkstone; Penn Hill; Poole Town; West Southbourne; Westbourne & West Cliff;
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. The Poole Bay, Poole Harbour and Wareham Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy Review will be led by BCP Council on behalf of Dorset Council and the Environment Agency (both of whom will have officers on the project delivery team and project board).
2. The rationale for undertaking the review and update of the existing Flood & Coastal FCERM strategy for Poole Bay, Poole Harbour and Wareham is to provide an approved, strategic under-pinning to future FCERM activities across the area, reflecting the coastal process interactions that extend from Durlston Head to Hengistbury Head Long Groyne. This will support the work of BCP Council and Dorset Council as the Coast Protection Authorities responsible for this section of coast who are work in partnership to develop this new FCERM Strategy alongside the Environment Agency.
3. The current FCERM approach is guided by the following key strategic documents:
 - 3.1 The [Poole & Christchurch Bays SMP2](#). Adopted in 2011, this Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) is a non-statutory planning document but is a key evidence source for Local Plans to consider and any future coast works need to be aligned to the SMP to access funding. The review and update of the existing FCERM Strategy will include assessing if more recent evidence suggest that the adopted SMP policies need any adjustment, and make recommendations for SMP policy change where appropriate to do so.
 - 3.2 The [Poole Bay, Poole Harbour & Wareham FCERM Strategy](#). Produced in 2014, this document identifies a way forward to implement SMP2 policy to 2115, including a programme of projects for the next 15-20 years. Most of the projects have since been either delivered or are in the process of being delivered; including in BCP the [Poole Bay Beach Management Scheme](#) (including [beach nourishment](#) in 2021, [timber groyne renewals](#), and the [Hengistbury Head Long Groyne Upgrade](#)) and [Poole Bridge to Hunger Hill Flood Defence Scheme](#).

- 4 The existing Strategy is underpinned by evidence developed over a period of time from 2011 to 2014, and as such is not fully reflecting of the latest guidance on climate change and sea level rise, changes in environmental legislation and funding rules, new risk mapping and monitoring data, etc. In addition, this 2014 document identifies some key areas of uncertainty about the long-term future for a number of sections of the coast, all of which require further investigation. The updated FCERM Strategy will include a focus on these areas of uncertainty to provide greater clarity on the long-term intent for coastal flood and erosion risk management.
- 5 The scope of the Strategy review will include:
 - 5.1 Reflecting the recent projects and schemes in a revised baseline for the update strategy, from which the longer-term questions about which the 2014 document was less certain will seek to be addressed, including how long the current approach to beach management in Poole Bay can be sustained given latest projections for sea level rise.
 - 5.2 New modelling of waves, tides and sediment transport processes in Poole Harbour and along the beaches of Poole Bay.
 - 5.3 Updated assessment of economic benefits accounting for latest climate change guidance and a revised 100 year strategic planning horizon.
 - 5.4 Environmental assessments, including a strategic environmental assessment, habitat regulations assessment, including new assessment of habitat compensation and biodiversity net gain requirements.
 - 5.5 Engagement and consultation during the course of developing the strategy review, working with Dorset Coast Forum to deliver this aspect of the project.

Options Appraisal

Do not undertake review

- 6 If the FCERM Strategy was not reviewed and updated, then future FCERM decisions and funding applications for Grant in Aid / Local Levy would continue to rely on the on the existing 2014 Strategy, but have less certainty about the long-term sustainability of those decisions as the 2014 Strategy is based on now superseded information, and so mean BCP Council, Dorset Council and the Environment Agency would have to undertake additional work to demonstrate a strategic approach is still being taken – taking into account all that has changed since 2014 – on a site-by-site basis as they seek to progress schemes, giving consideration to the wider implications for FCERM activity and coastal risk around the rest of Poole Bay and Harbour. This will increase costs by tens (if not hundreds) of thousands of pounds per project, and delivery time for each project to achieve this individually (and cumulatively cost more than producing an updated FCERM Strategy – which for this review is estimated at £650k and for which FCERM Grant in Aid funding has been secured).

Undertake review (Recommended)

- 7 By undertaking the review and update of the existing strategy for mitigating flood and erosion risk over the next 100 years taking into account the effects of climate change (such as sea level rise and increased storminess) and changes to national funding rules and other guidance that have changed since the existing Strategy was completed in 2014, the strategy will provide the up-to-date basis for Outline Business Cases for future schemes via FCERM-GiA under our permissive powers as a Coast Protection Authority, which in turn provides long term efficiencies in the delivery of future projects for the BCP coastal and harbour frontage west of Hengistbury Head to Lytchett Bay, as well as the frontages of partner organisations.

Summary of financial implications

- 8 No funding from BCP Council is required. £650,000 of FCERM-GiA has been secured from the Environment Agency to fund delivery of this FCERM Strategy review which will be led by BCP Council on behalf of Dorset Council and the Environment Agency. This will fund both BCP Council's FCERM teams' (South West Flood & Coastal) officer time, Dorset Council's officer time, and Consultants that will be procured to undertake the technical work required to deliver the strategy review.

Summary of legal implications

- 9 The approval of an updated FCERM Strategy will support the delivery of coast protection measures, which are a permissive power granted under the Coast Protection Act 1949 that BCP Council uses to undertake coastal defence works.
- 10 In developing the new FCERM Strategy, a strategic environmental assessment, habitat regulations assessment, water framework directive assessment and marine conservation zone assessment will be completed to comply with environmental legislation. As part of this, stakeholder engagement will be conducted including with statutory consultees and local communities to ensure a wide range of views are considered and inform that FCERM Strategy.
- 11 The grant funding agreement is conditional on certain pre-conditions and contains termination and/or clawback rights for the funding body. Further, advice should be sought on the terms of the consultants' appointment and Procurement advice has been taken on the suitability of the proposed framework agreement.

Summary of human resources implications

- 12 There are no human resource implications. Management of the project will be undertaken by members of the BCP Council FCERM team (South West Flood & Coastal), supported by officers from Dorset Council and the Environment Agency on the project delivery team, and guided by a Project Board comprised of senior officer representatives of BCP Council, Dorset Council and the Environment Agency.

Summary of sustainability impact

- 13 The purpose of the FCERM Strategy is to set out the long-term, sustainable, adaptive approach to implementing coastal flood and erosion risk management that is technically, environmentally and economically viable, taking into account future projections of climate change and sea level rise.
- 14 In addition, in developing the updated FCERM Strategy extensive engagement will take place, providing an opportunity to share information and educate local communities about the future risks of flooding and erosion and allowing those

communities to inform and help shape these long-term plans such that additional benefits to communities can be considered to improve public realm as well as provide flood and erosion risk management.

- 15 The resulting updated Strategy will in fact help inform the sustainability of broader BCP projects and initiatives that could be at risk of coastal flooding or erosion.

Summary of public health implications

- 16 The approval of an updated FCERM Strategy will allow future coastal flood and erosion defence schemes to be progressed efficiently to reduce the risk of flooding and erosion to people and property, which emerging research demonstrates can provide considerable public health and well-being benefits.

Summary of equality implications

- 17 There are no equality implications of this recommendation.

Summary of risk assessment

- 18 Without approval of an updated FCERM Strategy, the respective partner authorities will need to spend additional funds and resources to develop future schemes to demonstrate a strategic approach is being taken on a site-by-site basis, taking into account more recent guidance and evidence, etc. The whole purpose of the project is to understand and work towards reducing the risk of flooding and erosion to our residents and businesses.

Background papers

None

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.