

Background note on Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (RFCCs) May 2014

Background:

- established by the Environment Agency (EA) under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (F&WMA).
- chairs are appointed by the Secretary of State (Defra)
- committees are made up of independent members appointed by the EA and elected members appointed by Lead Local Flood Authorities.

The committees have three key purposes:

- To ensure there are plans in place to identify, communicate and manage flood and coastal erosion risk management (FCERM);
- To prioritise and monitor FCERM investment programmes and ensure value for money; and
- To provide a link between all the organisations involved in flood and coastal risk management.

To achieve the above the committees play an important role in guiding flood and coastal management activities within their areas and this includes:

- Advising on and approving flood defence and coastal erosion programmes of works;
- Raising local levies to fund local priority projects and works;
- Providing local democratic input through the majority membership of appointees from LLFAs;
- Balancing local priorities and ensuring investment is coordinated; and
- Working with partners to raise awareness of flood and coastal erosion risk management.

Three Regional Flood Defence Committees cover Hampshire:

- **Thames – shared seat – Councillor Keith Chapman is our link member** with the committee (Hampshire is in grouping comprising 6 other LLFAs – Member from Windsor and Maidenhead currently occupies the seat on committee). Consequently, at the moment Hampshire does not have a vote on the Thames Committee.
- **Southern:** Hampshire has **two seats – Councillors Keith Chapman and Ray Bolton (deputy Alan Rice)**.
- **Wessex:** Hampshire has **one seat – Councillor Keith Chapman (deputy Alan Rice)**.

Funding

Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA)

Funding for Flood and Coastal Risk management comes primarily from the Exchequer funded by general taxation via Defra and administered by the Environment Agency.

Local Levy

The local levy is an additional, locally raised, source of income for committees.

- The income is raised by way of a levy on the Lead Local Flood Authorities within the RFCC boundary.
- **Importantly, only the Lead Local Flood Authorities on the committee can vote on setting the levy.**
- It can be used to fund either capital or revenue expenditure and the programme is determined by the committee.
- It may include schemes of local importance which, although not considered to be a national priority and does not attract FDGiA funding, are still technically, economically and environmentally sustainable.
- Committees can also use the levy to underwrite or develop potential FDGiA schemes.

Hampshire pays a local levy to the three RFCC within the county. For 2013/14 the County Council's Local levy contributions was as follows:

- Thames - £340,941.
- Southern - £223,583.
- Wessex - £39,123

Total **£603,647**