

Broads Authority

29 January 2021

Agenda item number 10

Broadland Futures Initiative- Elected Members Forum

Report by Director of Strategic Services

Purpose

This report gives an update on the progress of the Broadland Futures Initiative (BFI), and the set-up of its Elected Members Forum (EMF).

Broads Plan context

Strategic actions to prepare for future flood risk management that better copes with our changing climate and rising sea level in the BFI area, which comprises the Broads Authority Executive Area. BFI engages with local communities and other stakeholders.

Recommended decision

- i. To note the report on progress, in particular the engagement campaign from January to April 2021.
 - ii. To nominate the Broads Authority representatives to the Elected Members Forum.
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Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Progress report	3
3. The Elected Members Forum	3
4. Financial implications	4
5. Risk implications	4
6. Conclusion	4
Appendix 1 – BFI area	6
Appendix 2 – Elected Members Forum Draft Terms of Reference	7

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Broads landscape is of international importance, comprising a rich mosaic of wetland habitats, farmland, winding waterways, towns, villages and historic features, coastal beaches, dunes and low sandy cliffs. The landscape has been influenced and shaped over thousands of years by natural processes and by the way people have lived and worked. Rising sea levels and a changing climate make the area increasingly vulnerable to the risks of flooding and erosion, with the local environment and economy increasingly reliant on flood risk management structures.
- 1.2. The BFI is a partnership for future flood risk management in the BFI area. The main goal is to agree a framework for future flood risk management that better copes with our changing climate and rising sea level. The focus will be on what happens from the mid-2020s onwards, however we need to start planning now to secure support and make well-informed decisions. The recent flooding events in South Norfolk and North Norfolk have reminded us of the challenges we all face and the increased risks of flooding due to climate change. We strongly believe that having a strategic approach to better manage and improve our collective resilience to these types of events can need collaborative working, and that is why initiatives such as the BFI are so important for our local communities.
- 1.3. Flooding can affect many aspects of community life in our area: tourism, recreation, the natural environment, agriculture and where we live and work can all suffer adverse impacts as a result of flooding. BFI will make sure that these interlinked interests are all considered, with the full involvement of local communities and other stakeholders.
- 1.4. The BFI Project Team has been set up by organisations responsible for managing coastal and inland flood risk. The Environment Agency has the lead responsibility and is working with Natural England, County and District Councils, Internal Drainage Boards, Broads Authority, National Farmers Union, and RSPB. The Broads Authority supports the Project Team and governance arrangements. The Director of Strategic Services chairs the meetings of the Initiative Project Team every 2 months.
- 1.5. The [Broadland Futures Initiative \(broads-authority.gov.uk\)](https://broads-authority.gov.uk) website contains a description of the project, its partnership, the BFI newsletters, the minutes of the meetings, and contact details. It also contains study reports available to download and read on the origins of the plan area, the sources and nature of flood risk, coastal processes, current approaches to flood risk management, and the future impacts of climate change.
- 1.6. Following a high-level review in 2016, the Environment Agency agreed to review the Flood Risk management areas. As a result, the BFI area comprises the whole Broads Authority Executive Area, as well as the Broadland Flood Alleviation Strategy flood compartments, the Eccles-Winterton and Great Yarmouth strategies, and the flood zone associated with the Walcott coastal frontage – see appendix 2.

2. Progress report

- 2.1. The 2016 high-level review used existing information and projections for changes in the environment, technology and funding. It also identified areas where more evidence is needed.
- 2.2. Since 2016, the Environment Agency has secured some funding and procured services to gather further information to fill the identified evidence gaps. The delivery of additional evidence started in 2019, when we undertook public surveys and awareness raising at existing community group meetings. In 2020, as a result of the Covid-19 related constraints, we designed an alternative engagement campaign to avoid face-to-face meetings, and prepared the Elected Members Forum set-up (see section 3).
- 2.3. An important engagement campaign is scheduled in early 2021, targeted at all people who live in, work in or visit the area. It includes an online virtual exhibition, an online survey, and additional engagement activities such as virtual village hall evenings. The online survey is open to all from 18 January to 11 April 2021. The links and information to the virtual exhibition and online survey will be available on the website.
- 2.4. In the virtual exhibition, there is an overview of BFI and why we are consulting, and a range of posters related to the study reports mentioned at section 1.5. There will also be some videos on dredging and flood modelling.
- 2.5. The online survey will accompany the virtual exhibition. Responses to this survey will help us set the objectives for the BFI strategy plan, and design the framework for future flood risk management. It will inform the EMF in their decision-making process, as a 'temperature check' as to how the public feel. The engagement package is designed to raise their awareness on how the future decisions will be made and to help the public complete the survey.
- 2.6. An update on the 2021 engagement campaign will be given verbally at the meeting. All members are welcome to take part in the activities and to respond to the survey.

3. The Elected Members Forum

- 3.1. BFI is working in partnership with local communities to identify the way forward. The soon to be created Elected Members Forum will make the core decisions to agree the framework for future flood risk management. The governance model emulates the approach taken by the Shoreline Management Plan process, building on experience and best practise from flood and coastal erosion risk managers.
- 3.2. The role of the EMF will be to receive advice and recommendations, review progress and propose decisions based on financial, environmental and technical evidence presented by the Project Team. The EMF will take back their conclusions for formal adoption by our Local Authorities and endorsement by our Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC). More details are in the Draft Terms of Reference at Appendix 2.

- 3.3. The EMF will include one representative from each Local Authority within the BFI area, preferably with an interest in flood risk management. Elected members from the following Authorities have been invited: North Norfolk District Council, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council, East Suffolk Council, South Norfolk Council, Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council. The Broads Authority will also be represented by one of their members, who does not need to be an elected member.
- 3.4. It is expected that the EMF will meet at least once a year and up to three times a year, dependent on progress and decisions required.
- 3.5. The EMF will receive support from the BFI Project Team. The first step will be to share the knowledge and baseline understanding regarding flood and coastal risk management, with presentations from technical experts, and feedback on the views expressed by the local community. The next step will be to start discussing the decisions needed as regards to future approaches to flood risk management.
- 3.6. The aim is to guide the decision-making process to form an adaptive pathway for future flood risk management projects, agile and able to adapt to change. We want to be aspirational as well as realistic, keeping democracy at the heart of decision making.
- 3.7. We aim to held the first meeting of the EMF before the end of the 2021 engagement campaign. This is dependent on the timings of the response from the local authorities concerned. An update will be given verbally at the meeting.

4. Financial implications

- 4.1. The Broads Authority provides officer time to support the BFI work. This includes in particular the Director of Strategic Services, communications officers and administrative officers. A wide range of expertise throughout the organisation has also provided feedback to the content being developed.

5. Risk implications

- 5.1. For the future flood risk management framework to be accepted by the majority of people, it is crucial that the decision-making for future flood risk management is well understood by the local community and supported by sound governance.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. Members are invited to decide on the nomination of the representative for the Broads Authority, as well as a substitute, in the event that they are unable to attend.

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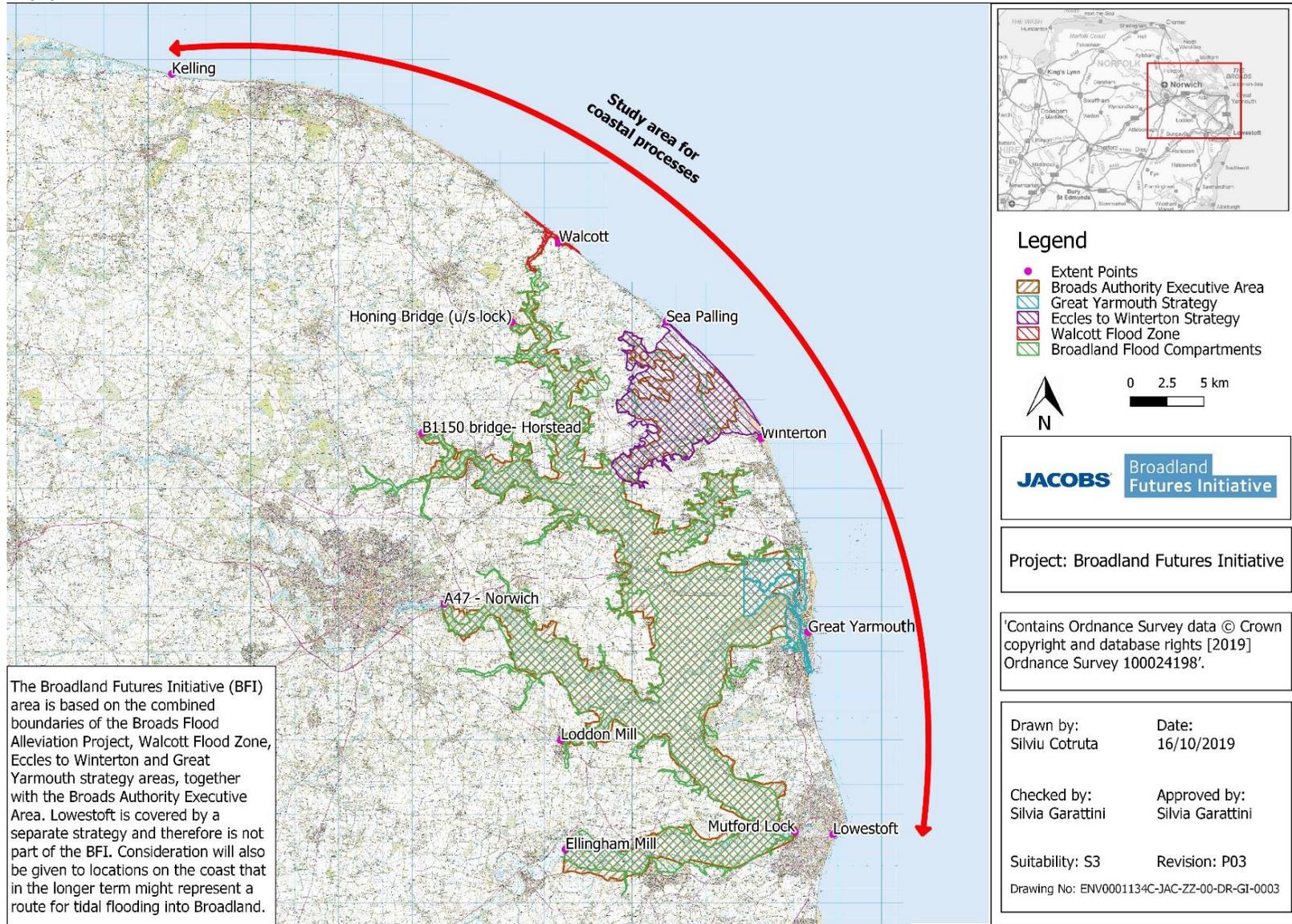
Date of report: 01 January 2021

[Broads Plan](#) objectives: 1.3, 1.4, 7.1, 10.1

Appendix 1 – BFI area

Appendix 2 – Elected Members Forum Draft Terms of Reference

Appendix 1 – BFI area

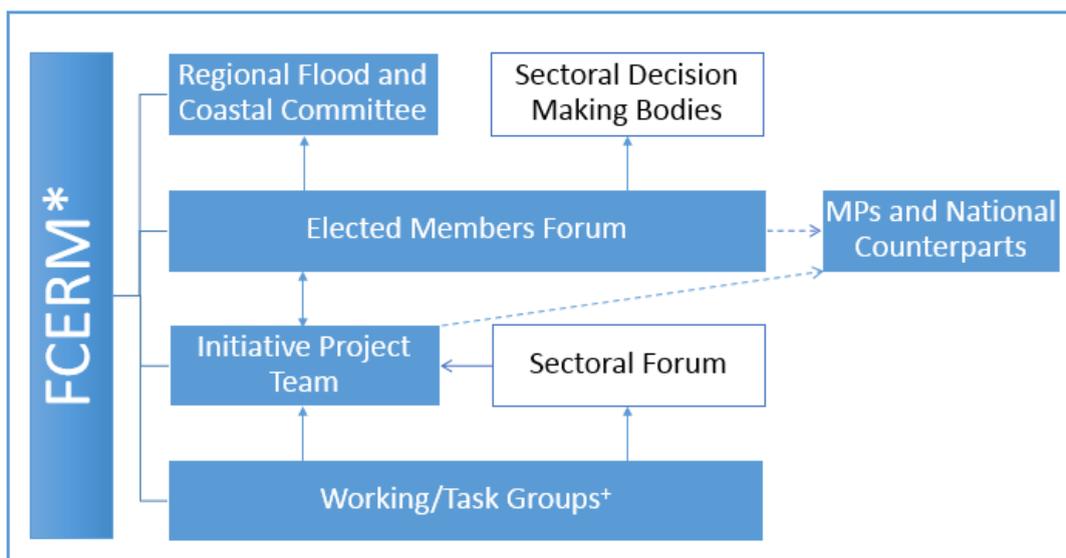


Elected Members Forum - Terms of Reference	
The membership of the Elected Members Forum	<p>Core membership of the Forum is comprised of local authorities within The Broadland Futures Initiative study area, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ North Norfolk District Council ✓ Great Yarmouth Borough Council ✓ Broadland District Council ✓ Norwich City Council ✓ East Suffolk Council ✓ South Norfolk Council ✓ Norfolk County Council ✓ Suffolk County Council ✓ Broads Authority <p>This is a Member-driven Forum and it is expected that Councils will have a member representative at each meeting with an officer in support, if required. Forum members are expected to attend each meeting, supplying a deputy member if not available. The proposed composition of the forum is expected to provide Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) representation. If this is not achieved a supplementary RFCC elected member may be required and will be put forward by the RFCC.</p> <p>Additional contacts, may receive information and be kept updated on progress of the Elected Members Forum. With the prior approval of the Chairperson, these individuals may also attend meetings and speak (as appropriate).</p> <p>The Initiative Project Team will present the Forum with information to help guide discussion and agreement. Therefore, members of the Initiative Project Team may be invited to Forum meetings to provide technical information. As governance and technical lead respectively, the Broads Authority and Environment Agency lead Project Team representatives (or their deputies) will attend all Forum meetings to provide key project information. However, these leads do not vote on key decisions.</p>
The purpose of the Forum	<p>To agree a framework for future flood risk management that better copes with our changing climate and rising sea level.</p>

<p>The context of the Forum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. The Initiative Project Team (IPT) makes recommendations. B. The Elected Members Forum (EMF) reaches agreement. C. The Local Authorities endorse. D. The RFCC adopts and is the umbrella decision making body. E. Environment Agency assurance is a prerequisite to approve Grant in Aid (GiA) spending.
<p>The functions of the Forum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive advice and recommendations from the Initiative Project Team. 2. Review Initiative progress. 3. Provide a strategic steer to the work of the Initiative Project Team. 4. Reach agreements based on financial, environmental and technical evidence presented by the Initiative Project Team for the local authorities to endorse. 5. Provide a conduit for information exchange between appropriate groups and to raise awareness about the Broadland Futures Initiative. 6. Present conclusions for formal adoption by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC). 7. Share information with and involve stakeholders as appropriate. 8. Ensure adequate and appropriate liaison with ultimate decision making bodies in relation to strategic priorities. 9. Support an MP Briefing Forum. 10. Agree a long term adaptive pathway for future flood risk management projects, keeping democracy at the heart of decision making.
<p>Frequency of meetings</p>	<p>The Elected Members Forum will meet at least once a year and up to three times a year, dependent on progress, decisions and guidance required. Additional meetings may be called by the Chairperson if required.</p>
<p>Election of the Chairperson / Vice Chairperson</p>	<p>The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Forum are elected through expressions of interest and subsequent vote. If no expression is made then the Norfolk County Council Cabinet Member will take the position of Chairperson.</p> <p>The Term of Office for the positions of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson will be for a period of two years with an election taking place within that time.</p>

<p>The role of the Chairperson</p>	<p>The Chairperson leads each meeting and ensures that discussions are relevant and follows the agenda in the given timescale. The Chairperson ensures that governance arrangements are adhered to and resolves conflicts within the group. The Chairperson ensures democratic decision making and that all members have an opportunity to be heard.</p> <p>During decision making, if votes are even between options, the Chairperson’s vote will decide the option progressed.</p>
<p>The role of the Members</p>	<p>To share information between its representatives regarding the Broadland Futures Initiative. Actively promote, adhere to and deliver the purpose and functions of the Forum.</p>
<p>The role of the Lead Officer</p>	<p>The Lead Officer prepares the agenda, organises the meetings, advises the Chairperson and is responsible for ensuring minutes are taken and made available within 14 working days of the meeting.</p>

BFI hierarchy reference



BFI Phase 1

BFI Phase 2

*Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management

+Working/Task Groups to include geographical and/or sectoral representation

Latest Broadland Futures Initiative information, including contact details, meeting minutes of the Project Team and newsletters can be found here: <https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/looking-after/climate-change/broadland-futures-initiative>