

## **Explanatory Memorandum to Tynwald Members**

Issued by the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture

**To the Hon Clare Christian MLC, President of Tynwald and the Hon. Council and Keys in Tynwald assembled**

### **1. Title of measure**

National Strategy on Sea Defences, Flooding and Coastal Erosion.

### **2. Changes in policy**

None.

### **3. Effects of the measure**

The proposed National Strategy is intended to ensure that locations that have been identified as being most at risk of damage through flooding or storms, are considered as part of a single, consistent process.

It is based on an Evidence Report which contains a standardised methodology for assessing risk and prioritising locations for further attention, a consistent method of evaluating the economic, cultural and environmental value of the property and infrastructure at risk within prioritised locations and an internationally acknowledged formula for deciding when Government should contribute to protection and mitigation schemes.

All information, data and predictions on weather and climate developments and prioritised 'at-risk' locations will be available from a single source, which will allow a Working Group drawn from the relevant Government Departments to adopt a consistent approach to offering advice to the Council of Ministers Environment and Infrastructure Committee on cost effective control and mitigation solutions for all types of flood and storm damage risks for all inland and coastal locations.

Through the development of an Action Plan the Working Group will co-ordinate the work necessary to deliver the Strategy and in particular, raise public awareness and ensure that appropriate, community, Local Authority and private sector stakeholders are proactively engaged. The Group will also compare the data from future weather related events with the information held in the Evidence Report to ensure that the list of prioritised locations is accurate or updated as required.

Emphasis will be placed on the consideration of holistic solutions for providing cost effective protection or mitigation along extensive lengths of river catchments, in favour of small scale, discrete protection projects for individual, or a limited number of properties.

It is anticipated that - in those cases where Government intervention is considered appropriate - the responsibility for constructing or implementing

the protection, mitigation, or adaptation measures identified through the application of the National Strategy will remain with the Departments which currently hold the relevant responsibility.

#### **4. Background**

Following a number of damaging weather related events in recent years the Council of Ministers Environment and Infrastructure Committee agreed the Terms of Reference for a National Strategy on Sea Defences, Flooding and Coastal Erosion in July 2015.

In October 2015 Tynwald supported a motion in favour of the introduction of a national coastline policy and requested the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture to report on proposals for potential defence and repair at the July 2016 sitting of Tynwald.

A motion to ensure that the possibility of environmentally damaging erosion at Wrights Pit East should be considered as part of the work to develop the National Strategy was supported by Tynwald in November 2015.

JBA Consulting, an internationally acknowledged environmental engineering consultancy was appointed to provide a report to identify the essential elements of an effective national strategy (the Evidence Report).

The attached National Strategy on Sea Defences, Flooding and Coastal Erosion has been designed to ensure the ongoing resilience of our communities and economy to weather and climate related damage.

The vast majority of information required to deliver the objectives of the Strategy is now contained in one single location – a factor which will enhance a co-ordinated, consistent approach across all relevant stakeholders to achieving effective and appropriate adaptation measures.

#### **5. Current arrangements for managing flood and storm damage risks**

Responsibility for the management of the full range of weather and climate related flood and storm damage risks currently lies with three Government Departments, Local Authorities and the owners of land and property not in public ownership.

A number of schemes to protect against flooding and storm damage are already being planned or implemented by the relevant Government Departments and it is envisaged that these will continue in accordance with already agreed time tables.

#### **6. Objectives and description of the National Strategy**

The Strategy contains the following objectives:

1. Raise community awareness to flood and coastal erosion risks and engage relevant stakeholders in effective and appropriate adaptation to these events and risks.
2. Manage and reduce the impacts of flooding and coastal erosion on communities, infrastructure and the environment.
3. Prioritise investment to balance the urgency and impact of the risks identified.

**7. Legal Powers or Legal Advice obtained**

None

**8. Resource implications**

None