

REPORT FROM: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES MANAGER

TO: WEST CRAVEN COMMITTEE

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WEST CRAVEN FLOOD DEFENCE AND RESILIENCE – UPDATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To note progress made with the ESIF funding bid, EA flood modelling and Natural Flood Management (NFM) and Victoria Clough culvert repairs being undertaken by the Environment Agency and works being undertaken by Pendle.
2. To note progress made on the flood resilience schemes with funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

RECOMMENDATION

- (1) To note progress made

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To enable flooding issues in West Craven to be effectively managed and reduced.

EARBY ISSUES

ESIF Bid update

1. An outline bid was submitted to the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) for a series of flood prevention measures to enable Earby and its commercial and residential communities to become more flood resilient.
2. We were subsequently invited to submit a full bid for European Funding under the ESIF Programme Priority 5 which relates to promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management.
3. The bid is for £635,260 ESIF to be matched with £425,000 public sector funding (Environment Agency (EA) Medium Term Plan).

4. Specific activities outlined in the bid include:
 - flow control and flood water storage at key locations to limit the amount of floodwater entering the flood-susceptible areas of the town; and
 - complementing EA's Natural Flood Management (NFM) scheme with some upland moorland management to delay the speed at which surface water runoff progresses down the catchment.
5. The above projects would achieve greater flood resilience for businesses and residents of Earby and would complement capital works highlighted by the EA.
6. It is envisaged that the schemes will add to Earby's flood resilience and help to promote economic growth and is therefore in line with the Lancashire Strategic Economic Plan and Lancashire's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy's local strategic objectives.
7. The project would be implemented in partnership with the Environment Agency (North East).
8. The match funding of £425,000 required would come via the EA as Grant in Aid (GIA). Work is already programmed with the EA but they agreed to bring the timescales forward to suit the ESIF timetable. However, their flood modelling was expected to be completed by December 2017 but it is not yet completed. The expected new completion date is the end of June 2018 and so match funding cannot yet be secured.
9. Since the last report, the DCLG has become the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).
10. The Department for Communities and Local Government recently sent us a Funding Agreement for £635,260, subject to contract.
11. However, one of the conditions of funding is that the match funding is secured and so we have not yet signed the Funding Agreement.
12. We have arranged a meeting with the EA to find out if we can enter into an agreement with them that should enable us to sign the Funding Agreement to secure the ESIF funding before EA's funding is in place.
13. Any works started before the match funding is in place would be done at risk but if we do not start the capital works we will not lose any money should the EA money not be forthcoming.
14. We have already started negotiations with landowners who seem quite positive about the water storage schemes. We met the landowners with a team from the EA who discussed Natural Flood Management (NFM) measures with the landowners at the same time. Again, landowners seemed quite receptive. These measures will be included in the EA flood modelling exercise which we are waiting for.
15. It is expected that the works would be designed, procured and implemented by the Council's Engineering department in consultation with the EA and local landowners.
16. We are negotiating with the EA about their flood modelling timetable and saw them on Thursday, 14 June 2018 at the West Craven Flooding Drop-in Event (see details below). Discussions with EA and MHCLG are ongoing.

Flood Modelling and Upland Moorland Management by EA

17. The above bid relies on flood modelling information which the EA is currently undertaking (with £100,000 GIA funding) to ensure the schemes identified in the bid will be a success.
18. The flood modelling was expected to be completed by December 2017. However, we are still waiting for this to be completed. The expected completion date is now the end of June 2018.
19. The EA is working on the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme Phase 2 and potential Natural Flood Management (NFM) opportunities contributing to reducing flood risk as part of their NFM programme and they are including Earby within this scheme.
20. This is because Earby Beck ranks third in the top 10 tributaries contributing to the flow of the River Aire. Therefore, the Earby catchment is key to this investigation.
21. A recent meeting with landowners, Pendle Council Engineers and the EA proved very positive with the landowners seeming very receptive to the proposed NFM measures and water storage areas on their land.

Pendle Flood Prevention Works

22. Funding was allocated from the central pot (£10,000) and West Craven Committee's capital programme (£5,000). This has been used mainly to implement the construction of walls and the installation of a flood gate adjacent to Earby Beck to help protect properties that flooded in the 13 September 2016 flash flood. These properties were not flooded during Storm Eva (Boxing Day 2015) and therefore did not qualify for Government property resilience grants (see later).

Victoria Clough Culvert

23. The EA has secured GIA and Local Levy funding of approximately £1 million for repairs to the culvert. They have appointed a contractor: Bentley/JBA joint venture to do the works.
24. Site investigations have been carried out and work is due to start in July.
25. Regular meetings are ongoing between the EA, Pendle Council and Lancashire County Council and the various statutory undertakers.

Property-Level Resilience Grants

26. Following the Boxing Day Floods of 2015, grants were offered to businesses and residential properties that could prove they had been flooded. This required inspection by our officers.
27. Those properties that were flooded were entitled to receive an initial grant of £500. Most claimed this.
28. There were 78 properties in total that flooded: 49 residential and 29 businesses.
29. The properties that flooded were also entitled to apply for grants up to £5,000 for resilience measures to their property.
30. Forty-one claimed this £5,000 grant but 37 properties did not take up the offer. This includes both residential and business properties.

31. We have written to the 37 properties that did not take up the offer asking owners if they might be interested in Pendle Council pooling their £5,000 entitlement to work on external community-led flood alleviation measures on their behalf to help prevent water from reaching their properties in the future.
32. At the time of writing this report, 27 of the 37 have agreed to “their” £5,000 being utilised to fund community flood schemes.

MHCLG Funding for Community Resilience Schemes

33. In March 2017 the former Minister for Local Growth and the Northern Powerhouse gave approval in principal to unclaimed grants (in Earby) being used to deliver community flood resilience scheme(s).
34. It was made clear that any such schemes must be separate to any works funded by other Government departments or agencies, eg DEFRA, Environment Agency, Department for Transport.
35. It was also made clear that the details of any proposed schemes must be approved by MHCLG officials.
36. Three key principles had to be adhered to and addressed:
 - (a) demonstration of effective engagement with the properties who have not taken up the grant;
 - (b) evidence that the schemes chosen are the best option, that they had been agreed with the EA and that advice had been taken from technical experts; and
 - (c) demonstration that funding was being targeted in a way that provides the best value for money.
37. A report was submitted to MHCLG on how Pendle is addressing the three principles.
38. The proposals for flood resilience included purchasing deployable flood barriers and containers in which to store them. These measures will give protection from flooding for up to 105 properties.
39. The EA and MHCLG required further flood modelling work to be undertaken to ensure that the deployment of the barriers would not cause flooding to properties.
40. This work has been done and the EA has now signed off on the suitability of the deployable barriers.
41. Everything was sent to the MHCLG at the beginning of May for approval and we are waiting for their decision.
42. One of the conditions was that a Community Flood Plan was to be developed. A draft community flood plan has now been developed in partnership with Earby Flood Group.

BARNOLDSWICK ISSUES

Ghyll Meadows

43. Pendle Council has been successful in bidding and securing funding from the Environment Agency for £300,000.
44. This is for a scheme which includes diverting and upsizing the culvert at Ghyll Meadows. It will significantly reduce the risk of flooding to 55 properties.
45. The scheme has come about following the 2015 Boxing Day floods when, thanks to community efforts, the properties narrowly missed devastating flooding damage.
46. On Skipton Road we were successful in completing the construction of a flood wall to hold back flood water in 2016 following the Boxing Day Floods of 2015. This was used as match funding for the above bid.

West Craven Flooding – Drop-In

46. A drop-in session was held on 14 June 2018 at the New Road Community Centre in Earby to inform residents about the flood resilience measures, schemes and proposals mentioned in this report to enable residents to ask any questions they might have and to inform them about the proposals.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: The ESIF schemes would support the following policies within the Pendle Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy: Policy ENV 1: Protecting and Enhancing Our Natural and Historic Environments; Policy ENV 7: Water Management; Policy SUP 2: Health and Wellbeing.

Financial: £425,000 of capital funding is required as match funding to the ESIF bid. This will come from GIA via the Environment Agency.

Legal: None directly arising from this report.

Risk Management: Discussions need to be had with landowners regarding water storage locations.

Health and Safety: None directly arising from this report.

Sustainability: The ESIF funding would enhance the sustainability of the area by creating and supporting habitats and improving conservation.

Community Safety: The flood resilience schemes will directly protect properties from flooding in the future. The external community-led schemes would also help prevent future flooding of properties and thereby adds to community safety and security.

Equality and Diversity: None directly arising from this report.

APPENDICES

None.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.