

REPORT FROM: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES MANAGER

TO: EXECUTIVE

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EARBY FLOOD DEFENCE AND RESILIENCE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To update members on progress made with the ESIF funding bid, flood modelling, upland moorland management and Victoria Clough culvert repairs being undertaken by the Environment Agency and works undertaken by Pendle.
2. To seek approval to proceed with flood resilience schemes with funding from the Department of Communities and Local Government.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To note progress made.
- (2) To approve to proceed with the flood resilience schemes with funding from the Department of Communities and Local Government.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To enable flooding issues in Earby to be effectively managed and reduced.

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 £600,000 ESIF to be matched with £400,000 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;
 - Upland moorland management to delay the speed at which surface water runoff progresses down the catchment; and
 - The creation of mini floodwater storage basins in pocket parks allowing both flood water storage and the disruption of flow.
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. It will contribute to Investment Priority 5b of the ESIF fund which seeks to promote investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and deliver flood mitigation activity.
8. The project would be implemented in partnership with the EA (North East).
9. The bid requests £600,000 from ESIF with £400,000 from other public funding.
10. The match funding of £400,000 required would come via the EA as Grant in Aid (GIA). Work is already programmed with the EA but they will bring the timescales forward to suit the ESIF timetable (ESIF 2018/19 and GIA 2019/20).
11. If the full bid to ESIF is successful it is expected that procurement, consultations and negotiations with landowners could start as early as January 2018. The project would have to be completed by March 2020.
12. 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.
13. Following a workshop with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the EA on 31 October 2017 we have answered all queries raised by DCLG and await their decision.
14. We are negotiating with the EA about their flood modelling timetable, see below. A meeting with EA took place on 4 December 2017.

Flood Modelling and Upland Moorland Management by EA

15. 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.
16. The flood modelling is expected to be completed by December 2017.
17. On completion of the modelling work the EA will progress to outline business case and then full business case in 2018.

18. The EA requested a meeting with Cllr Whipp (as lead member on flooding issues) and the Engineering Manager in September to discuss ongoing work of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme Phase 2 and potential Natural Flood Management (NFM) opportunities contributing to reducing flood risk as part of the emerging NFM programme.
19. 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.
20. The meeting established that some quick wins could be achieved such as tree planting and other NFM schemes which are compatible with the bid to ESIF.
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 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) funding of £550,000 for repairs to the culvert.
24. They have appointed a contractor: Bentley/JBA joint venture.
25. The contractor is currently on site undertaking a full sub-surface scan of areas adjacent to the culvert and they are about to commence detailed site investigation works to inform the final design and method of working.
26. Regular meetings are ongoing between the EA, Pendle Council and Lancashire County Council and the various statutory undertakers to obtain the necessary approvals.
27. The EA will inform all affected parties as soon as possible with regards to the scheme start date.

Property-Level Resilience Grants

28. 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.
29. Those properties that were flooded were entitled to receive an initial grant of £500. Most claimed this.
30. There were 78 properties in total that flooded: 49 residential and 29 businesses.
31. The properties that flooded were also entitled to apply for grants up to £5,000 for resilience measures to their property.
32. Forty-one claimed this £5,000 grant but 37 properties did not take up the offer. This includes both residential and business properties.

33. We have written (twice in some cases) 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.
34. We are still in discussion with the residents and businesses in the 37 properties but at the time of writing this report, 26 have agreed to “their” £5,000 being utilised to fund community flood schemes and we will be chasing up the remaining 11 by knocking on doors. An update will be given verbally at the meeting.

DCLG Funding for Community Resilience Schemes

35. 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).
36. 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.
37. It was also made clear that the details of any proposed schemes must be approved by DCLG officials.
38. Three key principles had to be adhered to and addressed:
 - Demonstration of effective engagement with the properties who have not taken up the grant;
 - 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
 - Demonstration that funding was being targeted in a way that provides the best value for money.
39. A report was submitted to DCLG in September 2017 on how Pendle is addressing the three principles.
40. Following the above-mentioned meeting with the EA on 4 December 2017, we received their official confirmation of support on 6 December 2017 for Pendle’s proposals outlined in drawing E0513 D1, attached at Appendix 1, subject to some key issues being addressed as outlined below:
 - (a) It is fundamental that the Earby Community Flood Plan is started, developed and completed.
 - (b) Analysis of the impact of the barriers elsewhere must be carried out to ensure there is no increase in flood risk as a result of the barriers being deployed.
 - (c) An environmental permit is applied for and determined for the spraycrete element of the project as this is deemed a flood risk activity.
41. The EA expressed that they are happy to continue to support the flood group in the development of their Community Flood Plan via their Area Flood Resilience Team.

Proposed Flood Resilience Schemes

42. The detail has been worked up in consultation with the other Flood Risk Management Authorities (as set out in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010) and in particular with the EA.
43. The schemes will be a combination of:
- Flood doors and flood gates to residential and business properties;
 - Internal waterproofing works to Victoria Mill;
 - Deployable flood barriers;
 - Upgrading existing fixed pumps; and
 - Buying and deploying portable pumps.

The extent of the works will be dependent on the number of £5,000 grants which can be utilised.

Stakeholder Meetings

44. A meeting was held with West Craven Councillors and Town Councillors on Friday, 13 October 2017 to discuss proposals in respect of the unclaimed flood resilience grants.
45. The above schemes were discussed which led to the proposed schemes in the attached drawing at Appendix 1.
46. These are the schemes for which we have obtained support from EA and are seeking approval from DCLG.
47. A meeting took place on Friday, 8 December 2017 with Earby Town Council, Earby Flood Group and other interested parties to discuss the community designed flood resilience proposals as per the plan at Appendix 1 which resulted in Earby Town Council and Earby Flood Group being generally supportive of the proposals.
48. We have just advised DCLG of the EA approval (received on 6 December 2017) and outcome of the meeting on 8 December 2017 and now await their formal approval to proceed with procuring the proposed community property resilience works.

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: £400,000 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 the creation of pocket parks.

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

Appendix 1: Proposed schemes drawing.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.