

Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director - Place

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| Report to: | Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee |
| Date: | 21 February 2022 |
| Subject: | Development Fund - Drainage Investigations & Flood Repairs - Progress on programme delivery |

Summary:

This report informs the Committee of progress to date with the programme of work for the Development Fund for Drainage Investigations and Flood Repairs. The Governance Document and initial Programme of Works were approved by the Executive on 21 February 2020.

Actions Required:

The Committee is invited to review and comment on the progress with the Development Fund for Drainage Investigations and Flood Repairs.

1. Background

Funding to the value of £2.2million pounds (Capital £2m, Revenue £200k) has been made available to address drainage and flooding issues in Lincolnshire. A programme of work has been developed in collaboration between the Floods Team and Highways. Implementation of this additional investment was identified for delivery in Financial Year 2020/21 and 2021/22 with overall spend by March 2022.

Following presentation to Informal Executive in November 2019 on the planned approach, and endorsement by the Executive in February 2020 of the programme, officers in both service areas have been working towards the delivery of the programme to determine the cause of local flooding and drainage issues, and where appropriate deliver solutions on the ground.

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to members of this Committee on progress that has been made and some of the challenges that have been encountered which provide important learning for the delivery of any future programme of this nature.

Progress to date

In the majority of cases, determining solutions to drainage and flood risk issues can be notoriously difficult to predict until a thorough investigation has occurred, and local circumstances are fully understood. The endorsement of the programme Governance Document and of the programme itself has allowed officers to have the flexibility to manage the programme in the most efficient way guided by the results of necessary investigations and design work. The overall programme is currently on target to have the allocated £2.2million either spent, or committed in programme, by the end of March 2022. As indicated, individual scheme detail and predicted costs can fluctuate somewhat in certain cases as investigations reveal the true extent of what is required to bring a long-term satisfactory resolution, however this variation has been managed within programme and within allocated funds.

The current works programme for Drainage Investigations and Flood Repairs can be found in **Appendix A**. The majority of the programme consists of schemes being delivered via the Highway Asset Teams and this is currently in progress through the term contractor Balfour Beatty. Due to the scope of the work involved there has been an element of over programming from the highways perspective to maximise the delivery outputs and build in flexibility. Anything not completed against the smaller Highways schemes will be picked up under the existing Highways Asset Programmes. In summary 7 schemes were completed in 2020/21 with a combined value of £410,203 whilst in the current financial year a predicted spend of £345,000 includes 11 completed schemes and a further 5 in programme. Whilst this element of the programme focusses on more localised issues, there are a further 5 schemes being progressed by Technical Services Partnership due to being more extensive and complex in nature. Following investigations some of these schemes have increased in size and cost as the causation is better understood, however this will enable wider issues to be addressed working with partners to bring collaborative solutions and thus providing longer term benefits to these communities rather than a short-term fix. This has all been managed within the existing funding allocation. The projects at Freiston and Woodhall Spa have now completed works on site whilst the schemes at Scothern and Kirton have recently been out to tender for which results are awaited.

The scheme at Cherry Willingham will not have works commencing on site before March 2022, however what this funding has allowed is for the detailed investigation, design, and costing work to be undertaken providing 'shovel ready' schemes subject to any future funding agreement. This scheme in particular has proven complex in establishing suitable solutions in a joined-up manner to establish a suitable design, working with partners and other stakeholders, securing suitable agreements with private individuals, land access and network availability.

It should also be noted that 11 schemes which appeared on the original Development Fund programme are not now being taken forward as part of this work as, on investigation, the scale of the work involved was much reduced and will be taken forward separately by Highway asset teams (see Appendix A). The flexibility to manage the

programme in this way has allowed the funding to be re-allocated to support the more significant schemes on programme to deliver wider benefits. It is worth reiterating that this Development Fund Programme is running alongside a full and extensive programme of drainage work being undertaken by the Highways Asset Teams and that of local partnership schemes and the capital programme of work being led by the Floods Team, collectively delivering some significant benefits to communities across the county as well as addressing some long-standing localised drainage issues.

A general point worth noting in managing the overall programme delivery is that sourcing construction materials (supply of raw materials), labour, plant etc is currently very challenging and has the potential to impact on scheme delivery of this and wider programmes moving forward. This is replicated nationally and is unfortunately, factors that are outside the control of the Programme Delivery Board. This situation has been influenced by a variety of factors such as Brexit (affecting cement imports particularly) and Covid, some aspects of which have been reported widely within the national media. The Programme Delivery Board will continue to closely monitor these circumstances and highlight any significant concerns through the established Governance Structure.

Next Steps

With the increase in scale on some of the schemes within this programme, to maximise the long-term benefits, the investigation, feasibility, design and construction in the same year has been very challenging but has been managed with great support through both the floods and highways teams, Technical Services Partnership and the term service contractor, Balfour Beatty. And whilst this programme of work will have achieved some significant benefits both locally and more widely to communities, the collaborative working between the Floods and Highways teams have highlighted further opportunities to understand and address drainage and flooding issues beyond the scope of this particular programme and deliver efficiencies in budget. To that end the Programme Delivery Board have taken the opportunity to start feasibility work on future schemes to ensure a pipeline of activity is retained.

Following a meeting of Informal Executive on 21st December 2021 it was agreed to provide an allocation of £1.444m to extend the Drainage Investigation and Flood Repairs scheme for a further two years. The allocation being £0.750m in FY2022/23 and £0.694m in 2023/24. This will allow the Programme Delivery Board to continue to build on the achievements of this programme and deliver the pipeline projects identified. Taking learning from the current programme the preferred approach would be for detailed investigation and design in FY2022/23 and construction in 2023/24, although this would only be for the larger more complex schemes. Taking this approach would allow;

- More certainty on delivery so budget is spent, but also spent efficiently and effectively.
- Stable resource management – both engineering design staff and contractors being available (investigation and construction).
- Appropriate time to manage unknowns such as investigations and land access

- Ensuring highway network is available at an appropriate time (road space not already booked by others)
- Programming (and achieving) construction at an appropriate time (outside of winter season)

The Programme Delivery Board would welcome views and guidance from members on the Development of any future programme for Drainage Investigation and Flood Repairs.

2. Conclusion

Works originating from the Development Fund – Drainage Investigations and Flood Repairs have already delivered benefits to areas in the County whilst in developing a future pipeline of works further improvements and benefits will be realised where drainage and flooding issues currently exist.

Working within the governance structure, this has allowed officers to continue to carry out the necessary investigations and design works for the schemes identified within the attached programme and have the flexibility to manage the programme to deliver greatest benefit. This approach will now be continued into a future programme of work for FY2022/23 and 2023/24 with further reporting to committee on both the conclusion of the current programme and the forward plan of works once this has been developed.

3. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

The programme for the Development Fund - Drainage Investigations and Flood Repairs will be monitored throughout its duration as per the approved governance document.

4. Appendices

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| These are listed below and attached at the back of the report | |
| Appendix A | Development Fund – Drainage Investigations and Flood Repairs – Programme of Work 2021/22 |

5. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Matthew Harrison, Flood and Water Manager, who can be contacted on 07771 837565 or matthew.harrison@lincolnshire.gov.uk.