
Report To:	Environment & Regeneration Committee	Date:	01 May 2014
Report By:	Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources	Report No:	ERC/ENV/IM/14.1 96
Contact Officer:	Robert Graham	Contact No:	4827
Subject:	Flooding Update		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee regarding the funding bid to the Scottish Government and to provide an update on the proposed way forward for flooding schemes.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 On 16 January 2014, Inverclyde Council (Min. Ref. 2014 para 23) confirmed the Inverclyde Flood Protection Scheme to enable a funding bid to be submitted to the Scottish Government. A bid for funding was submitted to the Scottish Government on 17 January 2014 which complied with all the published criteria provided in the guidance notes.
- 2.2 A letter was received by the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services from the Scottish Government on 28 March 2014 stating that the funding bid has been unsuccessful. The reason for this decision is that it was considered that the scheme related to maintenance and drainage improvement works throughout Inverclyde. Further clarification is being sought from the Scottish Government as to why Inverclyde's submission was not viewed as a Major Flood Protection scheme.
- 2.3 Officers have been having extensive dialogue with officers in COLSA and have met with officers from COSLA and the Scottish Government to discuss how the Inverclyde bid can be progressed. The latest position is that COSLA and the Scottish Government are considering whether a mechanism exists by which those unsuccessful bids from this round of applications could be reviewed.
- 2.4 In the event that the bid is ultimately unsuccessful, the alternative strategy of proceeding with the highest priority schemes with the £1m Council funding alone, as agreed by this Committee on 31 October 2013 (Min Ref 2013 para 671(2)) could be progressed.
- 2.5 There has been a significant amount of more detailed information which has been developed through the funding bid process and a revised priority for investment into the flood protection across the area will be prepared and presented to Committee. Discussions will be further progressed with Transport Scotland to determine what contribution can be made to support the revised priority list where there is an impact on the trunk road.
- 2.6 Further to the ongoing discussion with COSLA and Scottish government it may be necessary to reprioritise several schemes subject to the level of support funding being granted. It is considered that schemes which can resolve the maximum number of business and property flooding issues should take precedence.
- 2.7 A contract for £129,000 has been awarded for the design, construction and maintenance of an automated trash screen at the entrance to the Carts Burn culvert at Crescent Street. The

fundamental purpose of the automated trash screen is to maintain flow during extreme events. It is estimated that the installation of the trash screen could reduce maintenance costs by approximately £3,000 per annum.

- 2.8 The Scottish Road Research Board has awarded a grant totalling £34,000 to fund research into the effectiveness of automatic trash screens following a joint bid between Inverclyde Council and Heriot Watt University. £1,200 of this grant has been allocated to Inverclyde and this will be used for staff costs associated with the project.
- 2.9 A CCTV survey of a number of culverted watercourses in Greenock and Gourock has been completed and this has revealed some maintenance issues which will require to be addressed. Full details of the culvert maintenance requirements have still to be evaluated following the CCTV survey. Potential costs and timescale will be assessed and recommendations will be brought to the Committee as soon as these are available.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 3.1 Note current status of the Council's flooding bid and on-going discussions with COSLA and Scottish Government.
- 3.2 Note that a revised priority list for flood schemes which can be achieved within the available £1m budget is being prepared and will be reported to Committee for consideration at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.3 Note the progress being made in other schemes to reduce flood risk.

Ian Moffat
Head of Commercial and Environmental Services

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Following Committee approval in January 2014 a bid for flood protection funding was submitted to the Scottish Government on 17 January 2014.
- 4.2 A letter was received by the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services from the Scottish Government on 28 March 2014 stating that the funding bid has been unsuccessful.

5.0 SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS

- 5.1 The Chief Executive wrote to the senior civil servant involved in this process on 2 April 2014 seeking clarification as to why the bid was unsuccessful and requesting a meeting. A reply was received dated 9 April 2014 which resulted in a further letter from the Chief Executive stressing the validity of the Inverclyde bid.
- 5.2 At the same time, the Chief Executive has had discussions with COSLA officers who have been of significant assistance in both liaising with the Government and providing support and advice.
- 5.3 A meeting took place on 24 April 2014 between the Chief Executive, the Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources, Roads Service Manager and Flooding Officer from the Council plus officers from COSLA and the Scottish Government. The outcome of the meeting was that officers from the Government and COSLA agreed to have further discussions to see whether initially unsuccessful bids from this round of grant funding could be reviewed in light of any clarification provided.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE COURSES OF ACTION

- 6.1 In preparation for the possibility of the Council's bid ultimately being unsuccessful, officers are preparing an alternative strategy of proceeding with the highest priority schemes with the £1m Council funding alone.
- 6.2 Further information has been gathered during the preparation of the funding bid to the Scottish Government which has presented an opportunity to review the priority schemes for the alternative strategy. The further information includes hydraulic analysis and outline design for proposed solutions which were prepared to a sufficient level to develop robust cost estimates and undertake the cost benefit analysis. With only £1m potentially now available, and in view of this more detailed information, it is considered that schemes which can resolve the maximum number of business and property flooding issues should be prioritised. Unfortunately, this will mean that some areas of significant flooding cannot be addressed within the currently available budget.
- 6.3 Discussions will be further progressed with Transport Scotland to determine what contribution can be made to support the revised priority list where there is an impact on the trunk road, particularly at Cartsburn Street, West Station and High Street adjacent to the Oak Mall. Other locations which will be discussed with Transport Scotland are East Hamilton Street and the A8 roundabout in Port Glasgow.
- 6.4 Part of the Inverclyde Flood Protection Scheme included the upsizing of the culverted watercourse in Steel Street to mitigate a flood risk. Officers have been involved in extensive discussions with Scottish Water to determine if a collaborative agreement to upsize the culvert at the same time as proposed sewer works in the same area would reduce the impact on the community. The cost of working with Scottish Water's contractor was benchmarked against independent cost estimates and did not compare favourably. It had been decided not to progress this work under an agreement with Scottish Water but rather for the Council let a contract which would commence immediately after the Scottish Water contract to minimise disruption. The Steel Street improvements are expected to fall outwith the revised priority schemes as it is considered that schemes which can resolve the maximum number of business and property flooding issues should take precedence.

7.0 OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

- 7.1 A contract for £129,000 has been awarded for the design, construction and maintenance of an automated trash screen at the entrance to the Carts Burn culvert at Crescent Street. The installation of this automated screen is considered as a priority to reduce flooding because there is no alternative safe access for operatives to clear blockages above the screen during a flood event. The screen will ensure that more flow can be contained within the culvert and reduce the impact of flooding onto the A8 at Rue End Street, the EE call centre and the Hospitality Inn. Further work will be required to increase the capacity of the culvert and this will be included in the revised priority list.
- 7.2 A grant has been awarded by the Scottish Roads Research Board which will focus on the performance of the automated trash screen and will be mainly done by Heriot Watt University. The aim of this project will be to assess the performance of automated trash screens installed by Inverclyde Council with a view to drafting guidance related to the design, operation and performance of these devices in a Scottish context.
- 7.3 A CCTV survey of a number of culverted watercourses in Greenock and Gourock has been completed and this has revealed some maintenance issues which will require to be addressed. These watercourses were not part of the proposed Flood Protection Scheme. Full details of the culvert maintenance requirements have still to be evaluated following the CCTV survey. There is currently revenue funding available for clearance of debris from culverts.
- 7.4 A contract to remove significant debris at a restricted location on the Ash Burn in Gourock has been completed to allow CCTV work necessary for compliance with the Flood Risk Management Act 2009. This work was funded through the Drainage Maintenance - CCTV Survey budget.
- 7.5 A land slip to the rear of Castle Road in Greenock, which was caused by overland flow from a blocked culvert, has been made safe through a contract which included the installation of geotextile netting. This work was paid for from the Additional Flooding Works budget.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

- 8.1 Financial Implications:
One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
	Scottish Roads Research Board Grant	2014/15	(£1.2)		Income to be retained in the overall budget to improve flooding maintenance work in other areas

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A	Reduced impact of emergency response requirements at Cartsburn Street	2014/15	(£3)		Savings to be retained in the overall budget to improve flooding maintenance work in other areas

Human Resources

8.2 This report has no implications for Human Resources.

Equalities

8.3 This report has no implications for the Council's equality and diversity policies.

Repopulation

8.4 Continued flooding on the main transport routes through Inverclyde will have a negative impact on the area's attractiveness and businesses and as such will have an adverse impact on the Council's efforts to stabilise and grow the area's population.

9.0 CONSULTATIONS

9.1 Financial Services have been consulted on this report

9.2 The Head of Legal and Property Services has been consulted on the contents of this report.