

Housing and Infrastructure Board

18 January 2022

Resourcing the Connected by Water Plan

Is the paper exempt from the press and public?	No
<i>Reason why exempt:</i>	Not applicable
Purpose of this report:	Funding Decision
Is this a Key Decision?	No
Has it been included on the Forward Plan?	Not a Key Decision

Director Approving Submission of the Report:

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Executive Summary

The Board is asked to consider a proposal for the use of an amount of previously committed but unallocated MCA Gainshare funding (for flood resilience and mitigation) to support implementation of the Connected by Water Plan.

What does this mean for businesses, people and places in South Yorkshire?

The Connected by Water Plan aims to help identify and secure additional funding and investment to reduce flood risk to homes and businesses, as well as improving the resilience of places to climate change and potential future flooding.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to:

- Consider and endorse the proposal to utilise £0.15m of previously committed, but unallocated MCA Gainshare funding (for flood resilience and mitigation) to support implementation of the 'Connected by Water' Plan.
- Request that a Strategic Business Case is prepared setting out the proposals for the full £0.5m previously committed but unallocated MCA Gainshare funding.

Consideration by any other Board, Committee, Assurance or Advisory Panel

N/A

1. Background

- 1.1 At its meeting of 7 December 2021, the Board endorsed, and recommended that the MCA approve, the final draft of the South Yorkshire 'Connected by Water' Flood Catchment Plan. Subject to this approval by the MCA Board on 24th January, the Plan will be launched on 28th January.
- 1.2 At this meeting the Board also requested a proposal for the use of the previously committed but unallocated MCA Gainshare funding (for flood resilience and mitigation) to support implementation of the Connected by Water Plan. The approach to developing the funding options is proposed below for the Board's consideration.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 To support implementation of the Connected by Water plan, partners are now exploring funding options. Two bids are being prepared which seek to secure Environment Agency Local Levy funding (one for £0.15m to develop a delivery plan and begin to implement the Plan, and one led by Doncaster MBC to deliver a specific action within the Catchment Plan). Other potential funding contributions could be secured through the Environment Agency (through Adaptation Pathway funding and Flood Defence Grant In Aid), and from Yorkshire Water.
- 2.2 As part of the South Yorkshire Renewal Fund, £5.5m of Gainshare funding was committed for flood resilience and mitigation. £5m was allocated to accelerate the delivery of a number of flood defence schemes in the South Yorkshire Priority Programme (currently progressing through the business case process). A further £0.5m was identified as contingency, and remains unallocated.
- 2.3 It is proposed that £0.15m of the £0.5m contingency funding is used to directly support implementation of the Connected by Water plan, to match the proposed contribution from the Environment Agency. The combined funding 'pot' would enable partners to undertake actions such as:
 - Developing an implementation plan for delivering the Connected by Water Plan;
 - Funding actions identified to be delivered over the next 12 months;
 - Undertaking flood modelling to assess how climate change scenarios will affect South Yorkshire, which will in turn inform how we respond and manage the effects;

- Developing proposals to address our collective funding pressures, including consideration of shared resources to, for example, develop flood risk funding bids and deliver flood risk management schemes;
- Contributing to capital flood schemes identified in the Plan; and
- Creating action plans for priority areas, including engaging with Parish Councils, community groups and businesses on flood risk, resilience, and future plans.

- 2.4 All proposals for use of the £0.5m MCA funding will need to meet the conditions of funding, namely matching capital activity to capital funding.
- 2.5 Discussions are also taking place with Local Authority flood leads regarding proposals for the remaining £0.35m of contingency funding to not only support any overspend with the 'shovel ready' flood schemes, but also related scheme activities set out in the Plan to support flood resilience and mitigation.
- 2.6 Should this approach be supported by the Board, a Strategic Business Case for the full £0.5m contingency fund will be developed with Local Authority partners and presented to a future meeting of the Board for consideration.

3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

3.1 Option 1

To endorse the use of £0.15m previously committed but unallocated MCA Gainshare funding (for flood resilience and mitigation) to support implementation of the Connected by Water Plan, with a view to preparing a Strategic Business Case for the full £0.5m Gainshare funding for approval at a future Board meeting.

3.2 Option 1 Risks and Mitigations

Risk: That the identified activities in the Connected by Water Plan do not meet the conditions of funding, namely matching capital activity to capital funding, and therefore cannot be funded from Gainshare.

Mitigation: Consideration is being given to the specific activities that can be funded from MCA capital resources, with discussions taking place with key partners to identify resources to enable funding of all the immediate and longer-term actions.

3.3 Option 2

Not to endorse the use of previously committed but unallocated MCA Gainshare funding (for flood resilience and mitigation) to support implementation of the Connected by Water Plan.

3.4 Option 2 Risks and Mitigations

Risk: That the implementation of the Plan, and consequently the ability to deliver actions which will help improve flood resilience and adaptation and reduce the risk of flooding for communities in South Yorkshire, will be delayed. The leadership role of the MCA in delivering the Connected by Water Plan would also be negatively impacted and may lead to other partners reducing their commitment to supporting the Plan's implementation.

3.5 Recommended Option

Option 1 is the preferred option to pursue.

4. Consultation on Proposal

- 4.1 Both the Housing and Infrastructure Board and the South Yorkshire Flood Risk Partnership (SYFRP) have jointly overseen and have contributed to the development of the Catchment Plan. Discussions continue to take place with Local Authority Flood Leads on the report's proposals.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The Board is asked at this point to support utilising £0.15m of the £0.5m Gainshare contingency allocation to support implementation of the Connected by Water.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications and Advice

- 6.1 The proposed use of £0.15m of the committed but unallocated £0.5m Gainshare funding as the MCA's contribution to support the implementation of the Catchment Plan, would leave £0.35m contingency funding available. Subject to the Board's agreement, a Strategic Business Case would be prepared for consideration for the whole £0.5m. The proposals will need to meet the conditions of funding, namely matching capital activity to capital funding.

7. Legal Implications and Advice

- 7.1 There are no direct legal issues arising from this report.

8. Human Resources Implications and Advice

- 8.1 There are no human resources implications directly arising from this report.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications and Advice

- 9.1 There are no human resources implications directly arising from this report.

10. Climate Change Implications and Advice

- 10.1 The climate and nature emergency requires a strong collective response to carbon reduction and to be more resilient to the impacts of climate change. The Catchment Plan will contribute by capturing actions of partners to reduce flood risk and build climate resilience across South Yorkshire, improving information and evidence to support decision making, and support investment decisions and delivery. It may also support the delivery of net zero targets by the provision of carbon sequestration.

11. Information and Communication Technology Implications and Advice

- 11.1 There are no IT issues as a direct result of this report.

12. Communications and Marketing Implications and Advice.

- 12.1 Communication on DEFRA Grant in Aid funding is managed by the Environment Agency, with work by Local Authorities to communicate directly with impacted communities on individual schemes. There may be media opportunities when the proposed interventions are being delivered.

List of Appendices Included

None

Background Papers

None