

Report of:	Head of Economic Development
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Portfolio Leader:	Corporate Improvement
Key Decision:	No
Report Track:	Council: 06/07/16

COUNCIL**6 JULY 2016****HERITAGE TRAIL BRIDGE REBUILD, RISING BROOK, RUGELEY –
REQUEST TO ALLOCATE CAPITAL FUNDING****1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek approval for a capital allocation of up to £61,000 towards reinstatement of the Cannock Heritage Trail bridge over the Rising Brook, Rugeley.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Council allocate capital expenditure of up to £61,000 towards the reinstatement of the Cannock Heritage Trail Bridge over the Rising Brook, Rugeley.

3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 In 2012 the bridge which spans the Rising Brook collapsed. The bridge forms part of the Chase Heritage Trail forcing this section of the trail to be closed and temporarily diverted over County Land.
- 3.2 The bridge was made safe in 2012 by propping up the structure and using rock armour boulders as a temporary measure. At this time the Rugeley Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS) had not been approved or fully designed. The decision was taken to not carry out any permanent repairs as the design of the FAS may have had major implications on the bridge in its current location.
- 3.3 Now that the Flood Alleviation Scheme has been fully designed and approved by the Environment Agency and is now progressing through the submission of a planning application there is a need to undertake the reinstatement of the bridge. It is critical that the reinstatement of the bridge is completed as access for any works of this nature will be impossible once the Flood Alleviation Scheme is in place.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This report supports the Council's Corporate Priority of creating an improved living environment.

5 Report Detail**Background**

- 5.1 In 2012 the footbridge which runs in conjunction with the Chase Heritage Trail (Western Springs Road) collapsed bringing the bridge into disrepair. The bridge in its current condition is a liability to the Council (although it has been fenced off) members of the public are still accessing the footbridge via overgrown vegetation which makes it impossible to completely secure the site which could result in a fatal accident.
- 5.2 Working with the Environment Agency it was proposed that solutions for the bridge would fall into the Rugeley Flood Alleviation scheme as at the time there were various flood alleviation solutions which could have impacted on the Rising Brook water course. As a matter of precaution the path was sealed off to stop pedestrian crossing the bridge and rock armour 'boulders' were used to prop up the existing structure. The boulders were installed under licence from the Environment Agency.
- 5.3 In 2015/16 The Environment Agency proposed a scheme around this area including a dam structure to alleviate the risk of flooding within the town centre. The Environment Agency has on our behalf incorporated reinstatement of the bridge into their overall flood scheme designs. The overall flood alleviation scheme will cost in the region of £3m, with a local contribution of £750,000 from the Local Growth Fund, and safeguard the town centre from a one in a hundred years flood event.
- 5.4 A programme of work is being prepared by the Environment Agency which will necessitate the bridge being reinstated at the beginning of the project as it would be unfeasible to do so thereafter as with prohibited access for plant and machinery after the flood scheme is completed.

Funding

- 5.5 The works are estimated to cost approximately £61,000 for reinstatement of the Rising Brook Footbridge, which is to be procured by the Environment Agency along with the works to the Flood Alleviation Scheme.
- 5.6 An immediate order value of £5,000 for the bridge design and specification has been placed with the Environment Agency. This is important given the integral nature of the works with the Flood Alleviation Scheme. This £5,000 has been taken from the Heritage Bridge Repairs account.

Procurement

- 5.7 The Environment Agency using their procurement framework and expertise are to procure the bridge reinstatement as this is forming part of the overall Flood Alleviation Scheme. The Agency will provide the Council with a full package of returned tender document to enable scrutiny of costs.
- 5.8 There are economies of scale with completing the works for the footbridge at the same time as the wider flood alleviation works. The full scheme will be subject to planning consent which is awaiting determination.

Life span

- 5.9 The bridge once complete will have an anticipated life space of 50 years plus and will be regarded as a new construction which is a deteriorating liable asset to the Council.

Public Consultation/Timing and Delivery

- 5.10 Issues with the bridge and this section of the Chase Heritage Trail have been raised as part of the public consultation on the Flood Alleviation Scheme.
- 5.11 Timing and Delivery - The Environment Agency will lead delivery of the scheme, which is currently programmed to start in 2015-16 and be substantially complete in 2016-17. It is intended to minimise disruption to the annual Rugeley Charter Fair held on the Hagley Park, commencing the main works after the 2016 event.

6 Implications**6.1 Financial**

- An order value of £5,000 has been placed with the Environment Agency for detailed bridge design work.
- The estimated cost of the bridge reinstatement works £61,000.
- No provision exists within the Capital Programme for this amount and Council approval is requested for the scheme to be included.
- The Flood Alleviation Scheme is also included in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulation 123 list.

6.2 Legal

None.

6.3 Human Resources

None.

6.4 Section 17 (Crime Prevention)

None.

6.5 Human Rights Act

None.

6.6 Data Protection

None.

6.7 Risk Management

There is a risk that LGF grant may not be achieved to provide match funding to the EA grant in aid. Discussion have been held between the Council, Environment Agency and Staffordshire County Council to agree how both Councils would then jointly fund the local contribution and agreed memorandum of understanding was the subject of a report to Council on 15 April 2015. This is a minimal risk and was put in place to allow the Environment Agency to continue with confidence that local funding was secured before the final agreement on the Local Growth Fund was arrived at. The contract for Local Growth Fund support will be signed once the tenders for the works have been received.

6.8 Equality & Diversity

None.

6.9 Best Value

Match funding from the Council and SCC will achieve at least that amount in grant from the EA. The EA will manage and deliver the scheme.

7 Appendices to the Report

Appendix 1 – Draft Memorandum of Understanding between the Environment Agency, Cannock Chase District Council and Staffordshire County Council.

Appendix 2 – Rugeley Flood Risk Map.

Previous Consideration

None

Background Papers

Rugeley Improvement Package – Report to the Economic Growth and Governance Board, 11 March 2015

Draft Memorandum of Understanding- Rising Brook, Rugeley FAS

1. Introduction

This Memorandum of Understanding is not a legal agreement. It covers the intentions of the partners to fund the Rising Brook, Rugeley Flood Alleviation Scheme.

2. The Partners

- Environment Agency;
- Cannock Chase District Council;
- Staffordshire County Council.

3. Summary

The Environment Agency and Cannock Chase District Council and Staffordshire County Council are working together in partnership to deliver a flood alleviation scheme for the Rising Brook, Rugeley. The scheme is part of the Environment Agency's flood risk management capital programme and Cannock Chase District Council's Local Plan. There are currently 114 residential properties at risk of flooding in Rugeley and also commercial properties, some of which are in Cannock Chase Local Plan as being earmarked for redevelopment. Currently, these commercial properties cannot be redeveloped as they are in the floodplain. A flood alleviation scheme would reduce risk to residential property and allow for future redevelopment of the town centre. The scheme will involve constructing a flood storage area on Hagley Park adjacent to Western Springs Road. The current estimated cost is £1.8m exclusive of risk. Under government funding rules, Flood Defence Grant in aid (the Environment Agency's source of funding) cannot fund all costs for flood defence schemes and therefore, third party contributions are required for this scheme. In April 2014 Cannock Chase District Council and the Environment Agency agreed to work together to secure Local Enterprise Partnership funding to match fund flood defence grant in aid funding.

4. Objectives

The aim of the scheme is to protect people and property in Rugeley from the 1:100 Annual Exceedance Probability (plus an allowance for climate change) flood event. This would reduce flood risk to residential and commercial property and allow for re-development of sites in the town centre.

5. Project Funding, Timing and Delivery

Timing and Delivery - The Environment Agency will lead delivery of the scheme, which is currently programmed to start in 2015-16 and be substantially complete in 2016-17. Project Funding - The Environment Agency will provide funding to cover the cost of the scheme minus the contribution from Cannock Chase District Council and Staffordshire County Council.

There is additional potential funding from Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership which is expected to be secured in the future. Until this is secured, Staffordshire County Council and Cannock Chase District Council will jointly and equally provide up to £750,000 towards the scheme.

Signed by:

..... Date on behalf of Staffordshire
County Council

Signed by:

..... Date on behalf of Cannock
Chase District Council

Signed by:

..... Date on behalf of Environment
Agency

