

Mr Roger Elkins, Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure in consultation with Mr Duncan Crow, Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue and Communities	Ref No: H&I20 (19/20)
February 2020	Key Decision: No
Operation Watershed Active Communities Fund Applications	Part I
Report by Executive Director Place Services and Director for Highways, Transport and Planning	Electoral Division(s): The Witterings Bramber Castle St Leonard's Forest
<p>Summary</p> <p>The purpose of Operation Watershed is to support people in their local communities who want to work with the County Council to become more prepared for, or to reduce the risk of, flooding. Local groups are encouraged to apply for funding to finance schemes and projects of all sizes as a way of achieving this.</p> <p>£1.500m is allocated for Operation Watershed in the Capital Programme agreed by Full Council in December 2017. The allocation for 2019/20 is £0.300m. In this period five full applications have been received and evaluated totalling £52,431.16 and are set out in Appendix A of the report.</p>	
<p>West Sussex Plan: Policy Impact and Context</p> <p>The County Council provides services to more than 850,000 residents every day and the West Sussex Plan sets out how the County Council plans to shape its services for the next five years, focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving our children and young people the best start in life • Ensuring West Sussex is a prosperous place • Our communities will be strong, safe and sustainable • We will support you in later life to remain independent; and, • We will be a council that works for our communities <p>Within 'Our communities will be strong, safe and sustainable' theme, Operation Watershed is one of the measures to deliver the 'A safe place' corporate outcome.</p>	
<p>Financial Impact</p> <p>£1.500m is allocated for Operation Watershed in the Capital Programme agreed by Full Council in December 2017. The allocation for 2019/20 is £0.300m.</p> <p>In this period five full applications have been received and evaluated totalling £52,431.16. If the five grant applications are awarded this will reduce the remaining allocation in 2019/20 to £197,596.44.</p> <p>Details of all applications are set out in Appendix A.</p>	

Recommendations

That the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure approves the applications from the community groups or parish councils set out in Appendix A of the report.

Proposal

1. Background and Context

- 1.1. The purpose of Operation Watershed is to support people in their local communities who want to work with the County Council to become more prepared for floods and help reduce the likelihood of highways or neighbouring land flooding.
- 1.2. Local groups are encouraged to apply for capital funding to finance schemes and projects of all sizes as a way of achieving this. £300,000 has been allocated in the 2019/20 capital programme to the 'Operation Watershed Active Communities Fund'.
- 1.3. The funding is open to communities who are willing to develop, support and sustain partnerships. Bringing together local people, businesses and landowners can help to minimise the risk of local flooding. There are now many examples of those who suffer from the effects of flooding, and those responsible for maintaining a huge network of drainage systems and ditches, working together to agree and implement the best local solution.
- 1.4. The required demonstrable criteria for applications to be successful from April 2018 comprise the following three tests (a-c):
 - Tackle a recognised surface or ground water flood risk
 - Meet at least one of the following elements in its technical scope:
 - Provide new infrastructure installations or build
 - Make material change improvements to existing infrastructure
 - Increase the drainage capacity of existing infrastructure
 - Provision of assets for community groups usage to protect their local area
 - Evidence 'Community Commitment' to deliver the project including all and any future maintenance
- 1.5. Officers will work with local members, parish representatives and other appropriate community leads to understand local pressures and concerns and help ensure that any proposed funding bids demonstrate a long term community benefit.
- 1.6. In this period five full applications have been received and evaluated as meeting the required standard totalling £52,431.16 and are set out in Appendix A.
- 1.7. This is the second tranche of applications presented for approval for the Active Communities Fund 2019/20 as outlined in Table 2 below.

2. Proposal Details

Details of grant funding for flood risk mitigation projects against applications from the community groups and parish councils are set out in Appendix A.

Factors taken into account

3. Consultation

- 3.1. The applications listed in Appendix A are promoted by the local communities and supported by the respective local Member.
- 3.2. All applications have been considered by the Operation Watershed Steering Group, comprising the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure, the Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue and Communities and programme leads assigned by the Heads of Service, following the evaluation of the project proposals against an established and agreed matrix including technical evaluation and "value for money" assessment.

4. Financial (revenue and capital) and Resource Implications

- 4.1 There are no revenue implications regarding this proposal.
- 4.2 £1.5m is allocated for Operation Watershed in the Capital Programme agreed by County Council in December 2017. The allocation for 2019/20 is £300,000.

Table 1	Year 1 2018/19 £m	Current Year 2019/20 £m	Year 3 2020/21 £m	Year 4 2021/22 £m	Year 5 2022/23 £m	Total £m
Capital budget	0.345	0.300	0.255	0.300	0.300	1.500
Applications Previously Approved	0.345	0.050	-	-	-	0.395
Remaining budget	0.000	0.250	0.255	0.300	0.300	1.105
Applications for Approval	-	0.052	-	-	-	0.052

- 4.3 The applications recommended for approval in this Decision Report represent allocation of monies from available funds. It is anticipated that the total in year budget allocation will be awarded within this financial year.

Table 2	Number	Value (Capital)
Description		
Applications approved – Aug 2019	03	£49,972.40
Applications for approval – Jan 2020	05	£52,431.16
Total allocations approved and applied for	08	£94,719.56
Grant Fund 2019/20		£300,000.00

- 4.4 Funding community groups and parish councils is considered to be an effective and efficient means of alleviating local flooding problems in their area.
- 4.5 Rigorous evaluation of all applications has been undertaken against the published Evaluation Scorecard by the project team in consultation with officers with key experience in the functions of Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Management, Community Development, Community Resilience and Highways.
- 4.6 There are no Human Resources, IT and Assets Impact implications arising from funding these applications.

5. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from funding these applications.

6. Risk Implications and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
There is a risk that the funding does not cover all the anticipated costs of a project and community groups bear the risk of under-budgeting.	WSCC working closely with officers and the local Member to identify potential problems before any funding is allocated.
Under spending on projects has to be returned to the County Council or utilised to deliver further works.	WSCC works in partnership with community groups to agree approach on project by project basis.

A full risk register has been developed and the risks profile is being managed as part of the project governance.

7. Other Options Considered (and reasons for not proposing)

The County Council could undertake all of the work. However, in many cases local communities are best placed to carry out smaller scale works to either assess the flood risk or reduce the risk of local flooding. In some cases, the County Council has already undertaken larger scale flood alleviation works and Operation Watershed funding can contribute towards maintenance costs.

8. Equality and Human Rights Assessment

- 8.1 The panel considering any application will be alert to the need to consider any equality implications arising from the bid or the way the money is to be used if indicated in the bid information. There are no identifiable impacts

arising from the applications relating to obligations contained in the Equality Act 2010. The applications will support communities to address local flooding issues and do not have a disproportionate impact on individuals with protected characteristics.

8.2 There are no human rights implications arising from these applications.

9. Social Value and Sustainability Assessment

9.1 Supports and development of community groups actively involved in resilience and flood awareness and preparedness.

9.2 Aids agenda for empowerment of local communities.

10. Crime and Disorder Reduction Assessment

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from funding these applications.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Table of grant applications for approval and supporting application forms

Background papers

None

Appendix A

The following applications are recommended for approval:

Ref No.	Community Group or Parish Council	Brief Description of Project	£ Requested
6001	Birdham Parish Council	Reinforcement of west bank of ditch adjacent to the Saltings, Crooked Lane	£14,552.76
6002	Birdham Parish Council	Western Drain, Crooked Lane	£16,972.80
6003	Ashurst Parish Council	Flooding on the B2135 north of Ashurst	£8,376.00
6015	Rusper Parish Council	Wimland Road Drainage Improvements	£7,684.00
6019	Ashurst Village Hall	Car Park Drainage Scheme	£4,845.60
		Total Funding Requests	£52,431.16