

**Council
24 September 2015**

Snitterfield Emergency Flood Scheme

Recommendation

That Council approves an increase in the capital programme of £2.2 million to facilitate an emergency flood scheme at Snitterfield, with £200,000 funded from the Flood Risk Management Reserve and the balance of £2 million from third party contributions.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Snitterfield village has a flooding problem that has a direct effect on approximately thirty five properties; the indirect effect, limited access etc, affects dozens more. Under storm or heavy rainfall conditions, many of the properties in this village suffer flooding from a number of sources; these include the Main River, field runoff and surface water on the highway. In heavy rainfall conditions the road acts as a channel which transports water to areas of the village causing flooding to residents' homes.
- 1.2 The Bell Brook (the Main River which runs through the middle of the village) is in culvert for the majority of its length through the village; this culvert is under capacity. These flooding issues and the damaging effect of the water on the culvert are a health and safety risk to lives and property. The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for this village is Warwickshire County Council (WCC). The Environment Agency (EA) are responsible for managing Main Rivers. The LLFA are responsible for all ordinary water courses (including the Bearley Brook which runs in culvert parallel to the Bell Brook for part of its length), surface water management and groundwater within its boundaries.
- 1.3 The EA has attempted to assist the villagers in the past by bidding for funds from DEFRA to address these issues. Unfortunately, no funding has been secured through this route, as the proposed solutions to the flooding issues in Snitterfield have never scored highly enough in DEFRA's Partnership Funding Calculator to receive funds from DEFRA.
- 1.4 The Bell Brook flows in an open channel until it reaches the village, as it passes through the village it is carried through an old brick culvert. This culvert is approximately 150 years old and has been constructed in a piecemeal manner. The structure of the culvert is now deteriorating for a number of reasons.
- 1.5 In January 2015 a section of the old brick culvert collapsed. This removed part of one property's driveway and a neighbouring property's garden, adjacent to their front door. The collapse partially blocked the Bell Brook at a time of heavy rainfall. The EA acted to remove all spoil and debris to clear the watercourse, and have temporarily shored up its sides. The culvert is at risk of 'unzipping' in this area, which would compromise its integrity beneath residents' houses.

2.0 Issues

- 2.1 The EA asked their emergency works contractor to design and price a scheme that would remove the health and safety risk to life from further structural movement of the old brick culvert. This proposed solution includes the diversion of a section of the Bell Brook to reduce the present flood risk and remove the risk to life. The contractor's quotation for such a scheme was in excess of £3 million pounds.
- 2.2 The EA has access to emergency funds to address issues that arise outside of the Partnership Funding Scheme which require timely action. They have secured an amount of £2 million pounds from this fund for emergency works at Snitterfield, but this amount does not meet the expected costs of using their own emergency contractor. The EA decided to take a collaborative approach to the problem and approached the LLFA (WCC) to look into the possibility of a partnering arrangement. The County Council has made £200,000 available as a contribution to the costs to enable flood alleviation betterment from the emergency works and enable the works to go ahead. The LLFA contacted other major stakeholders: Stratford District Council (SDC) and Snitterfield Parish Council have offered unconfirmed contributions of £25,000 and £12,000 respectively; Severn Trent Water Ltd (STWL) are currently considering their position.
- 2.3 Therefore, for this financial year only (the EA emergency funding allocation expires on 31st March 2016), funds of circa £2.2 million pounds are available to carry out works in Snitterfield to reduce the risk of flooding and remove the risk to life. It must be noted though that if the proposed works do not commence in this financial year, the £2 million funding from the EA would no longer be available. It is unlikely that, if these funds are lost, they could be replaced with funding from a different source (the EA have been trying to raise funds for over three years). This would mean that a scheme could probably not be carried out in Snitterfield for the foreseeable future; leaving the riparian landowners (including WCC) facing unrealistic costs themselves which may rival the values of the properties.
- 2.4 In summary, none of the riparian owners within Snitterfield (WCC included) have the means to deal with this risk to life in isolation. If further structural failure occurs this could cause serious risk to life (dependent upon the location of any future collapse) and is highly likely to cause damage to property.

3.0 Proposal

- 3.1 Through consultation it has been suggested that WCC, by utilising its own contractors, may be able to deliver this scheme for less than the EA's emergency contractor quote. In collaboration with the EA, WCC have approached three contractors, from the WCC's Design Services Framework Contract (for Engineering and Construction Works 2014), for budget estimates for the proposed work.

- 3.2 It is proposed that, subject to this approval, and a collaboration agreement between the EA and WCC, that a Professional Services contract (for the detailed design) and a works contract (for the construction) will be awarded to a contractor on WCC's Design Services Framework via a Contract Standing Order exemption to allow works to start on the ground as soon as possible, and certainly before the end of the financial year, to be completed by the end of September 2016.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 Based on the estimates received from WCC's contractors the total expected cost is in the region of £2.2 million including an adequate allowance for risk. The EA are contributing £2 million to the scheme this financial year. WCC have pledged £200,000 to the scheme from the Flood Risk Management reserves to enable flood alleviation betterment and enable it to go ahead, which could be contributed either this financial year or next.
- 4.2 This cost may increase if the culvert underneath Smiths Lane is reinforced at the same time – this would bring economies of scale to the County Council (due to undertaking these works as part of a bigger scheme), potentially improve the overall scheme and enable a greater overall contribution from WCC.
- 4.3 If the other funding sources are confirmed then a Deputy Leader decision will be sought to approve the increase in the capital programme.

Background Papers

None.

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Michael Green	michaelgreen@warwickshire.gov.uk 01926 412781 07795 236847
Head of Service	Mark Ryder	markryder@warwickshire.gov.uk 01926 412811
Strategic Director	Monica Fogarty	monicafogarty@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Cllr John Horner	cllrhorner@warwickshire.gov.uk