

## ITEM 9

### Somerset Rivers Authority Board Paper

#### Title: Request for additional funds - Flood Alert Systems

It is recommended that the SRA Board:

- Increases, by £17k, the funding to the Flood Alert Systems project, involving installations at 3 highway locations. This would be funded from the remaining 2016-17 contingency budget.
- Top slices £4k plus inflation, from the annual SRA budget to fund the annual charges, prior to other proposals being considered.

#### **Purpose of the item:**

To seek support for the proposal to increase funding to the 2016-17 Board approved Flood Alert Systems project, to enable the project to go ahead.

#### **Background and context**

When the Automated Flood Alert System was first proposed and funding for it was approved by the SRA Board, the system supplier was willing to provide the equipment free of charge as it wished to trial the system, however since then the system has been trialled in Dorset and the offer of the free equipment is no longer on offer. It has also become evident that there is an on-going maintenance cost associated with the system.

The project is for the installation of 3 fully automated detection systems designed to be activated when carriageway flooding reaches a predetermined level, triggering advanced warning road signs advising travelling motorists that the road ahead is flooded. This system would significantly reduce the risk of personal injury or vehicle damage particularly during hours of darkness. The original project was approved for £10k funding by the SRA Board, as part of the 2016/17 programme, in March 2016.

However the opportunity of gaining the equipment at no cost has passed, leading to an increased cost estimate of £17k to £27k (including inflation from last year's cost estimates below)

There are also annual charges (SIM card, software etc) that would need to be met by the SRA, which are currently approximately £4k per year, but will rise with inflation.

These costs are exclusive of VAT which it is understood will not apply under the current finance arrangements

The recommendation is to increase the funding to install the Flood Alert system at the 3 sites identified and to fund the annual charges. However there is an option to scale down the proposal to two sites or even just one if required.

**Latest status:**

**Three Locations** (A359 Yeovil to Sparkford road near Mudford; A378 Langport Road, Wrantage; and Oake Road, Bradford-on-Tone)

Year 1

Site preparation and ground works (estimate) £7,500

Purchase, installation and commissioning of equipment £15,600

SIM card and one year's comms costs £648

Bureau management fee £1,440

Total £25,188

Years 2,3,4 & 5 (at 2016/2017 prices)

SIM card and comms costs £648

Bureau management fee £1,440

Yearly Engineer's visit £1,260

Site maintenance (via Highways TMC) (estimate) £1,500

Total £4,848

**Two Locations** (any two from: A359 Yeovil to Sparkford road near Mudford; A378 Langport Road, Wrantage; and Oake Road, Bradford-on-Tone)

Year 1

Site preparation and ground works (estimate) £5,000

Purchase, installation and commissioning of equipment £10,400

SIM card and one year's comms costs £432

Bureau management fee £1,440

Total £17,272

Years 2,3,4 & 5 (at 2016/2017 prices)

SIM card and comms costs £432

Bureau management fee £1,440

Yearly Engineer's visit £840

Site maintenance (via Highways TMC) (estimate) £1,000

Total £3,712

**One Location** (any one from: A359 Yeovil to Sparkford road near Mudford; A378 Langport Road, Wrantage; and Oake Road, Bradford-on-Tone)

Year 1

Site preparation and ground works (estimate) £2,500

Purchase, installation and commissioning of equipment £5,200

SIM card and one year's comms costs £216

Bureau management fee £1,440

Total £9,356

Years 2,3,4 & 5 (at 2016/2017 prices)

SIM card and comms costs £216

Bureau management fee £1,440

Yearly Engineer's visit £420

Site maintenance (via Highways TMC) (estimate) £500

Total £2,576

### **Current Status:**

This paper was reviewed by both the SRA Technical Group and the Management Group at their meetings in August and September and both gave their support to the proposal.

If the additional £17k one-off funding were approved by the SRA Board, it is suggested that it should be funded from the remaining £23k of 2016-17 contingency. The annual charges could be handled each year by either of the following two options:

- a) Leave the annual charges (without which the equipment will not work and will result in a £2,250 (£750/site) decommissioning fee) to compete against other actions for funding each year.
- b) Embed the commitment to annual charges by top slicing £4k (plus inflation) off the annual total SRA budget before proposals for that year are prioritised.

Option b) above is recommended, as without the annual charge, the equipment will not work and the SRA would incur a decommissioning cost. By limiting the top slice to £4k plus inflation, were the annual charges to substantially increase, the proposed increase would have to come back to the Board.

### **Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the SRA Board:

- Increases, by £17k, the funding to the Flood Alert Systems project, involving installations at 3 highway locations. This would be funded from the remaining 2016-17 contingency budget.
- Top slices £4k plus inflation, from the annual SRA budget to fund the annual charges, prior to other proposals being considered.

**Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017**

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