

ITEM 8a

Somerset Rivers Authority Board Paper

Title: Extension to Highway/LLFA and West Somerset Referrals

RECOMMENDATION

The SRA Board is asked to: approve a bid to the 2016/17 **contingency fund** of £12.5k to extend the land management follow up work on referrals from Highway/LLFA (£5k) and West Somerset (£7.5k) local flooding hotspots

Purpose of the item:

To continue and complete all land management follow-up work from 107 local flooding hotspots (to date) associated with referrals made by SCC Highways, LLFA and West Somerset Flood Group in 2016/17. **This proposal for further work on Highway/LLFA hotspots has support from SCC Highways.**

This funding was all spent by December 2016 - further funding is needed to complete 2016/17 Project.

Background and context

Under FAP W2, an allocation of £18k was made in 2016/17 to FWAG SW to investigate and follow up on highway flooding hotspots throughout the county, as requested by SCC Highways Commissioning and Operations in March 2016, to see if a land management solution can be found.

An allocation of £15k was made to FWAG SW to follow up on local flooding hotspots mainly in West Somerset (and a few in the Somerset Frome catchment), as requested by the West Somerset Flood Group, to see if a land management solution can be found.

Highways and LLFA referrals

- 39 flooding hotspots initially referred by Area Highway teams – an additional 18 sites have been added by Highways or LLFA since April 2016
- All of the original 39 sites, apart from 5, have been followed up on/investigated and land management solutions proposed where appropriate
- Of the 57 total sites – the following action has been taken:
 - ✓ 12 No action required or not visited
 - ✓ 14 requiring further follow up
 - ✓ 13 schemes of land management interventions complete
 - ✓ 13 schemes proposed or underway
 - ✓ 5 Highways or LA only solutions
- Good established working patterns with Area Highways Team, Highways Commissioning, LLFA Team

West Somerset Referrals

- 13 hotspots are almost at the stage of submitting grant funding applications to the SRA
- 9 hotspots have been passed on to other organisations for action (e.g. highway drains)
- 9 hotspots have been/will be addressed by other organisations (e.g. National Trust and Exmoor National Park already had plans to address issues)
- At least 10 sites will be re-visited in winter to investigate flow pathways further before giving advice
- Some sites have no connection with land management
- Soil husbandry visits will be conducted during winter 2016/17

Latest status

- Additional sites have been added by local area highways managers/officers and LLFA – original list was 39 – this has been extended to 57 – and further hotspots in West Somerset were added in autumn 2016
- Further follow-up work is needed on 14 highway sites
- Initial time allocation of 1 day/site not sufficient to cover some more complicated hotspots
- Progress slower on some sites due to unknown land ownership, inaccurate reporting of hotspots, reluctant landowners and complex solutions – eg. Luxborough, Pyncombe Lane, Wiveliscombe
- Some sites (up to 10) need soil husbandry follow-up visits to investigate soil compaction levels and provide soil management advice – this can take up to 2.5 days per site
- Response needed to new referrals not budgeted for
- FWAG's match funding source for land management advice (People's Postcode Lottery funded Hills to Levels Project) finished November 2016
- Some sites need further in-field investigation to look at soil conditions – this was not possible when soils were dry in the summer – it needs to be done now
- Some sites need a multi-agency approach – Carhampton, Monksilver – requiring more time input and liaison time

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