

## Somerset Rivers Authority Board Paper

### Title: Update on Bridgwater Tidal Barrier

#### RECOMMENDATION

The SRA Board is asked to review and comment on progress to date:

- Sedgemoor District Council has completed the acquisition of Heron Court on Express Park.
- Chilton Trinity Parish Council is objecting to the proposed footway/cycleway bridge at the Barrier. A further public drop-in at Chilton Trinity is planned to seek community views and feedback.
- The Environment Agency's Large Project Review Group has noted there will be ongoing scrutiny on affordability given marketplace uncertainty such as Brexit.
- Project partners are continuing to work to secure approval from the Environment Agency's Flood and Coastal Risk Committee, Defra and HM Treasury for submission of the Transport Works Act Order.
- Somerset County Council and Sedgemoor District Council will submit an application for Housing Infrastructure Funding in March.
- The SRA Board is asked to consider additional funding opportunities for scheme enhancements.

#### Purpose of the item:

To update the Board on progress with the development of the Bridgwater Tidal Barrier scheme, and consultation.

#### Background and context

The Environment Agency (EA) and Sedgemoor District Council (SDC) are working in Partnership to deliver the Bridgwater Tidal Barrier Scheme in 2024, subject to funding and statutory approvals. The project will reduce tidal flood risk to 11,300 homes and 1,500 businesses. The present value of benefits are £1,331 million. The present value of capital and maintenance costs of the Barrier and downstream banks work is £100 million. The benefit cost ratio is 13. The Barrier will be located between Express Park and Chilton Trinity village. It will have two vertical lift gates. The scheme includes improvements to the existing downstream primary flood defences along the river Parrett together with new secondary defences in the flood plain. The scheme is classified a Major Project requiring assurance from the Environment Agency's Large Project Review Group (LPRG), Defra and HM Treasury. Forecasts of Flood Defence Grant in

Aid (FDGIA) and external funding show the scheme is affordable. All funding opportunities are being investigated including the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF).

### **Latest status**

- SDC has completed the acquisition of land at Express Park business park which will deliver both delivery and operational efficiencies for the scheme.
- The outline design for the Barrier operational site and downstream defences was presented to key stakeholders and the public in December, and businesses in February.
- Chilton Trinity Parish Council have raised objection to the proposed footway / cycleway bridge at the Barrier.
- Ground investigations completed to establish the suitability of borrow pit locations to provide material for the downstream defences.
- Key landowners consulted over principles for permanent and temporary land, access and borrow pit material to build the downstream defences.
- The Environment Agency's Large Project Review Group has noted there will be ongoing scrutiny on affordability given marketplace uncertainty such as Brexit.
- Work continues with partners and stakeholders to identify wider opportunities and enhancements that could be delivered alongside the scheme. Bringing in appropriate facilitation and funding expertise is being considered.
- Somerset County Council and Sedgemoor District Council are developing the business case and submission for the Housing Infrastructure Funding (HIF)

### **Next steps**

- Public drop-in at Chilton Trinity to present the scheme proposals and to seek further community views and feedback.
- Secure approval from Environment Agency's Flood and Coastal Risk (FCRM) Committee to submit the Outline Business Case for Defra and HM Treasury review. Approval is also being sought to submit the Transport Works Act Order (TWAO).
- Continue consultation with key landowners to secure agreements to build the scheme.
- Continue work to progress the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Environmental Statement (ES) and TWAO documents
- Continue work on opportunities and enhancements to be delivered alongside the scheme and identify funding
- Somerset County Council / Sedgemoor District Council to submit the application for Housing Infrastructure Funding in March

## **Recommendation**

The SRA Board is asked to note:

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- Somerset County Council and Sedgemoor District Council will submit an application for Housing Infrastructure Funding in March.
- The SRA Board is asked to consider additional funding opportunities for scheme enhancements.

**Date: 13 February, 2019**

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