

## ITEM 7

### Somerset Rivers Authority Board Paper

### Somerset Rivers Authority Annual Report 2020-21

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) Board is asked to:

1. Review and comment on the draft SRA Annual Report 2020-21.
2. Approve the publication of the SRA Annual Report 2020-21.

#### Purpose

The Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) Annual Report 2020-21 provides a detailed account of SRA activities during 2020-21. The Report's wider publication and distribution would demonstrate the SRA's accountability and show partners, MPs, councillors, stakeholders and residents the full range of SRA-funded works across Somerset.

#### Background and context

SRA annual reports have been compiled since 2015-16. The first was produced primarily for Government ministers, Somerset MPs and the SRA Board to show how the SRA had spent its 2015-16 Interim Funding, which included £1.9million from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra).

Since 2015 the number of SRA schemes has accumulated year on year, and there is now a lot to write about and illustrate. As people across Somerset pay for the SRA through a 'shadow precept', it is good to show the full range of what is being achieved by the SRA as a unique partnership devoted to giving Somerset extra flood protection and greater resilience.

#### Latest status

The Somerset Rivers Authority Annual Report 2020-21 gives readers very localised details of what the SRA does as well as some sense of the bigger historical picture. It distils well over 1,000 pages of information and covers hundreds of individual jobs. No other authority in the UK is known to give such a full account of its activities. One new feature this year is an account of the SRA's spending of the £13.049 million of Growth Deal funding awarded in 2014 through the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership. Otherwise the report largely follows the pattern of last year's publication.

A draft copy of the report was enthusiastically reviewed by SRA Joint Scrutiny Panel members at their recent meeting on 2 July, and then a further draft was approved by SRA Management Group members on 9 July.

A much shorter version of the report is also to be produced, condensing facts from the full report into something much more concentratedly visual and graphic.

If the Board's approval is given to the formal publication of the SRA Annual Report 2020-21, both long and short versions will be circulated widely as PDFs, primarily by email, and their contents will be made available on the SRA's website. Printing will be kept to a minimum, to avoid unnecessary costs to the SRA.

### **Recommendations**

The SRA Board is asked to:

1. Review and comment on the draft Annual Report
2. Approve the publication of the SRA Annual Report 2019-20.

**Date: 14 July 2021**

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