

Decision Pathway – Report



PURPOSE: Key decision

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 07 June 2022

TITLE	Defra Innovation Resilience Programme Fund		
Ward(s)	Central, Ashley, Lawrence Hill, Easton, Lockleaze, Eastville, Frome Vale, Hillfields.		
Author: Matthew Sugden	Job title: Principal Flood Risk Officer		
Cabinet lead: Cllr Beech, Cabinet Member Strategic Planning, Resilience and Flood Strategy	Executive Director lead: Stephen Peacock, Executive Director Growth and Regeneration		
Proposal origin: BCC Staff			
Decision maker: Cabinet Member			
Decision forum: Cabinet			
Purpose of Report: To seek approval to submit the Frome Catchment Innovation Programme Outline Business Case to the Environment Agency for technical assurance and financial approvals, and subsequently progress to Full Business Case and scheme delivery under delegated authority.			
Evidence Base:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The River Frome has been identified as a priority catchment by the Environment Agency (EA) and Bristol Avon Catchment Partnership (BACP) to address multiple environmental challenges over the coming years. Peak river flows for the region are forecast to increase by 70% for the upper end climate change scenario (UKCP18) by the end of the century. Our hydraulic modelling indicates that the flood risk posed from the Frome in Bristol will go from being relatively manageable today, to a significant risk to people and property as we progress through the century. 2. Following a government announcement of £200m new national flood resilience funding, in April 2021 DEFRA announced that Bristol City Council in partnership with South Gloucestershire Council, Wessex Water and the Environment Agency (“the partnership”) was one of 25 successful expressions of interest to take part in the national Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme (see background document 1). The programme spans a five year time period of 2022-2027 and aims to demonstrate how practical innovative actions can work to improve resilience to flooding. 3. In September 2021 we were successful in our bid for an initial grant which provided us with funding for supporting studies to develop the outline business case (OBC) needed to unlock the funding for delivery of the Frome Catchment Innovation Programme. The OBC builds on the successful expression of interest (background document 2) and justifies the case for investment in Bristol and surrounding areas to deliver the programme of work identified within. 4. The Frome Catchment Innovation programme has six work streams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Flood Management measures in more rural areas of South Gloucestershire • Retrofit sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) in urban areas of South Gloucestershire and Bristol • Frome Gateway River restoration and integration with Frome Gateway development framework • Innovative financing approach to engage businesses in funding and delivery of green infrastructure • Investigating innovative solutions to flooding issues through planning policy • Monitoring of important city centre culverts (underground rivers) 5. The programme will be governed by a Programme Manager reporting into a Director’s Board, made up of representation from each project partner at Director level. It is proposed that this board, with input from the 			

Cabinet member for Strategic Planning, Resilience and Flood Strategy, will have authority to approve full business cases in relation to each workstream. The Cabinet member for Strategic Planning, Resilience and Flood Strategy will advise on the level of consultation required in the appraisal of options to inform full business cases.

6. Delivery of the programme will assist the city meet its ambitions regarding the One City Plan, Climate and Ecological Emergencies action plans as well as the aspirations of the Avon Catchment Partnership, of which Bristol City Council is a contributing member. The objectives of the programme are to:
 - Increase the resilience of communities and infrastructure at risk of flooding in the Frome catchment
 - Demonstrate and quantify the benefits of natural flood management measures and retrofitting SuDS
 - Support sustainable growth and regeneration throughout the Frome catchment area
 - Improve local monitoring systems in central Bristol to increase flood resilience
 - Engage with residents and businesses to understand flood risk and measures they can take to improve their resilience to flooding
 - Engage with businesses to facilitate innovative funding mechanisms to contribute towards nature based solutions
7. Evidence of how the programme will meet the objectives is provided in the Outline Business Case Appendix A

Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:

That cabinet:

1. Approves submission of the OBC to the Environment Agency for technical assurance and financial approval of the Frome Catchment Innovation Programme as outlined in this report and Appendix A.
2. Authorises the Executive Director for Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the S151 officer and Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance and Performance to make an application for up to £7.3m grant funding to develop and deliver the programme of work identified within the Outline Business Case.
3. Authorise the Executive Director for Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the S151 officer and Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance and Performance, on successful grant award, to take all steps required to accept and spend the funding including entering into any agreements or procuring and awarding contracts (which may be over £500k) to deliver the programme of work identified in the Outline Business Case
4. Authorises the Director – Economy of Place, in consultation with the partnership Directors Board and Cabinet member for Strategic Planning, Resilience and Flood Strategy to proceed with the development and approval of FBC's for individual work streams which may be over £500k.
5. Note that officers will undertake public consultation in respect of options and detailed designs for individual work streams where relevant to inform a decision on scheme construction and delivery.

Corporate Strategy alignment:

The proposals align with the key themes of the corporate strategy, in particular by:

- Creating more resilient communities (Wellbeing). The proposals will enable communities in the river Frome catchment to engage with the programme, better understand the risk of flooding and influence practical actions to increase resilience
- Pursuing economic growth (Fair and Inclusive). The proposals to integrate with the Frome Gateway development framework and investigate policy challenge areas will assist with delivery of safe, resilient and sustainable development with regard to flood risk

City Benefits:

The programme will help to address the ecological emergency by providing biodiversity improvements such as improved water quality and habitats for fish and other river species. The programme will help to address the climate emergency by increasing resilience to flooding through natural flood management measures, improved drainage solutions, and better data led intelligence to inform operational procedures.

Consultation Details:

The proposals have been developed and discussed with the partnership organisations and in consultation with the Cabinet member for Climate, Ecology, Waste and Energy. G&R Scrutiny were informed of the programme on 28th Feb 2022 and a follow up session was held on 21st March. The proposals have been informed by engagement with land owners (regarding natural flood management), and engagement with citizens and business owners in the Frome Gateway area has been undertaken. Formal public consultation on individual schemes and projects will be undertaken prior to delivery where appropriate.

Background Documents:

1. Government announcement of successful projects and details of the national programme <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-and-coastal-resilience-innovation-programme>
2. Expression of Interest (attached)

Revenue Cost	£ 0	Source of Revenue Funding	n/a
Capital Cost	£7.3m	Source of Capital Funding	Grant
One off cost <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	Income generation proposal <input type="checkbox"/>

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:**1. Finance Advice:**

1. This report seeks Cabinet approval to submit an Outline Business Case (OBC) to the Environment Agency for technical assurance and financial approval for grant funding of up to £7.3m to develop and deliver the programme of work identified within the OBC.
2. Further details of the £7.3m indicated are contained in the OBC document. This is an estimate at this stage and is expected to change on production of the FBC at which stage the detailed design will be completed and procurement strategy fully determined.
3. Revenue Implications – Ongoing revenue implications of this scheme are still being determined. Any funding ongoing needs will be identified and funding issues fully addressed to the satisfaction of the S151 officer under the delegated authority requested above.
4. The OBC allows for Risk, Contingency and optimism bias in line with guidance provided by the funder. These will be firmed up as we progress to FBC stage and ensure that adequate provision is made for any residual risk at that stage.
5. Any potential costs over-run will be funded from the national contingency pot held by central government or mitigated via value engineering, should any bid for additional funding be unsuccessful.
6. Match funding is not required as part of this programme, however some match funding has been identified from South Gloucestershire and details of this are included in the OBC.

Finance Business Partner: Kayode Olagundoye, Interim Finance Business Partner, Growth and Regeneration, 19th April 2022.

2. Legal Advice: The application for funding does not raise any specific legal issues. If successful, the procurement process to spend the funding must be conducted in line with the 2015 Procurement Regulations and the Councils own procurement rules. Legal services will advise and assist officers with regard to the conduct of the procurement process and the resulting contractual arrangements.

Legal Team Leader: Husinara Jones, Team Leader/Solicitor 18 May 2022

3. Implications on IT: I can see no implications on IT in regards to this activity.

IT Team Leader: Gavin Arbuckle – Head of Service Improvement and Performance. 24 February 2022		
4. HR Advice: There are no HR implications evident		
HR Partner: Celia Williams, HR Business Partner, 14 th March 2022		
EDM Sign-off	Peter Anderson, Interim Director Management of Place and Chair of EDM	16 March 2022
Cabinet Member sign-off	Cllr Beech, Cabinet Member Strategic Planning, Resilience and Flood Strategy	04 April 2022
For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off	Mayor's Office	09 May 2022

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal Outline Business Case	YES
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	NO
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	YES
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Exempt Information	No
Appendix J – HR advice	NO
Appendix K – ICT Inc	NO
Appendix L – Procurement	NO