

Item: 17

Policy and Resources Committee: 26 November 2019.

Kirkwall Surface Water Management Plan.

Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider funding requirement in order to progress a Capital Project Appraisal for a scheme to reduce surface water flood risk to Kirkwall.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That, following publication of the Orkney Local Flood Risk Management Plan in 2016, an action was identified to prepare a Kirkwall Surface Water Management Plan, with its purpose being to provide sufficient information to support development of an agreed strategic approach to management of surface water flood risk within Kirkwall.

2.2.

That development in the Junction Road area of Kirkwall is constrained by the surface water flood risk as a result of surcharging of both the combined sewer and the surface water sewer in Junction Road.

2.3.

That the option recommended in a flood study report, commissioned by the Council and published in 2013, namely a combined surface water and combined sewer pump station, is not supported by Scottish Water.

2.4.

The proposal to procure consultants to model an alternative range of options to reduce flood risk in Kirkwall and allow preparation of a Stage 1 Capital Project Appraisal, at an estimated cost of up to £50,000.

2.5.

That, for detailed design and scheme preparation of an approved option, leading to development of a Stage 2 Capital Project Appraisal, a budget of up to £100,000 should be allowed.

2.6.

That, on 12 November 2019, when reviewing the draft Kirkwall Surface Water Management Plan, the Development and Infrastructure Committee recommended that the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure should submit a report, to the Policy and Resources Committee, seeking a budget of up to £150,000 in respect of detailed modelling work and technical design of a scheme to reduce flood risk in Kirkwall.

It is recommended:

2.7.

That the Council should engage consultants to model a range of options and produce recommendations to reduce flood risk in Kirkwall, at an estimated cost of up to £50,000, to be funded through a contribution from the Renewables, Redevelopment and Regeneration Fund.

2.8.

That, following receipt of the consultant's recommendations, the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure should submit a Stage 1 Capital Project Appraisal in respect of a scheme to reduce surface water flood risk to Kirkwall, to the next available meeting of the Development and Infrastructure Committee.

2.9.

That, subject to positive endorsement of the Stage 1 Capital Project Appraisal by the Development and Infrastructure Committee, the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure should develop a Stage 2 Capital Project Appraisal, including detailed design, at a further cost of up to £100,000, to be funded through a contribution from the Renewables, Redevelopment and Regeneration Fund.

3. Background

3.1.

In 2010 the Council appointed consultants to prepare a drainage network model and study options to reduce surface water flood risk to Kirkwall. Scottish Water commissioned additional work to expand the scope of the study. The final report was issued in 2013 concluding that, while significant improvements had been made to reduce the flood risk, any complete solution would require joint action from the Council and Scottish Water, including upgrading of surface water pipes and the provision of a pumping station and outfall pipe to relieve the existing combined surface water and foul sewer in Junction Road, Kirkwall. Scottish Water advised it was not able to support this solution as it did not meet their criteria for funding.

3.2.

Preparation of a Kirkwall Surface Water Management Plan was identified as an action in the Orkney Local Flood Risk Management Plan, published in 2016, in accordance with the Council's duty (as lead authority) under Section 34 of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009.

3.3.

The purpose of the Kirkwall Surface Water Management Plan is to provide sufficient information to support development of an agreed strategic approach to management of surface water flood risk within Kirkwall by ensuring the most sustainable measures are identified (ie the most economically, socially and environmentally beneficial measures).

3.4.

The draft Kirkwall Surface Water Management Plan contains options to reduce the risk of surface water flooding in Kirkwall. In general, these are the same options identified in the previous study in 2013 including:

- Provision of a pumping station to pump excess flows from the surface water system and Scottish Water combined system direct to the harbour.
- Provision of a pumping station to pump from the Peedie Sea to the harbour.
- Provision of a storm pump at the Scottish Water Ayre Road pumping station to discharge flows when the storm overflow is restricted by the tide.
- Pipe upgrades to both the Scottish Water combined sewer and surface water networks.
- Storage schemes to alleviate localised flood spots.

4. Development Constraints

4.1.

Development in Kirkwall is currently constrained due to under capacity in the Scottish Water combined sewer system which contributes to the flood risk in Junction Road. Development in the lower part of Kirkwall, in the Junction Road area, is also constrained by the surface water flood risk as a result of surcharging of both the combined sewer and the surface water sewer in Junction Road.

4.2.

In November 2018, Scottish Water delivered a presentation on Development Impacts on the Kirkwall Sewer Network. This included medium and long term options for solving constraint issues in Kirkwall. For the Junction Road area, the presentation included the options referred to in section 3.4 above but noted that financing them would be difficult.

4.3.

To reduce external flood risk to the 1 in 200 years plus climate change level required by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency to allow development to proceed, the options identified would require significant investment from both Scottish Water and the Council. However, Scottish Water only provide funding for schemes which are required to prevent internal flooding up to a 1 in 30 years return period. Scottish Water have therefore advised that they will not support options to reduce flood risk to the Junction Road area which require significant investment from Scottish Water.

5. Proposed Action

5.1.

It is therefore proposed to revisit options to reduce flood risk in the Junction Road area and investigate if alternative options which could be supported by Scottish Water can be effective. This would include looking at a surface water pumping station from the Peedie Sea to the Harbour and upgrades to the surface water pipe network between Junction Road and the Peedie Sea. This includes specialist modelling work and will require the use of a consultant for which a budget of up to £50,000 should be allowed.

5.2.

Following receipt of the consultant's recommendations, a Stage 1 Capital Project Appraisal would be submitted to the next available meeting of the Development and Infrastructure Committee to gain approval to proceed to detailed design of any identified solution and preparation of a Stage 2 Capital Project Appraisal.

5.3.

For detailed design and scheme preparation of an approved option, a further budget of up to £100,000 should be allowed.

6. Corporate Governance

This report relates to the Council complying with its governance and financial process and procedures and therefore does not directly support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

7. Financial Implications

7.1.

The report identifies a requirement to procure the services of a consultant for modelling and design work to allow preparation of a Stage 1 Capital Project Appraisal, at an estimated cost of up to £50,000, and follow on detailed design and scheme preparation to allow preparation of a Stage 2 Capital Project Appraisal, at a cost of up to £100,000, making a total budget requirement of up to £150,000.

7.2.

In accordance with the Council's policy of presumptions against new commitments, when faced with spending pressures a Service Committee is required in the first instance to identify compensatory savings within relevant budgets under the Committee's control.

7.3.

Given service pressures and commitments for financial year 2019 to 2020, the Development and Infrastructure Committee has determined that there is no capacity to fund the development of the capital project appraisals from the Development and Infrastructure budget. Noting the strategic nature of the work to address wider housing development curtailment and the impact on flooding, the Committee has accordingly made a spending recommendation to the Policy and Resources Committee.

7.4.

At its meeting held on 19 February 2019, when considering funding for demolition of the former Papdale Halls of Residence, the Policy and Resources Committee recommended a contribution of £250,000 be made from the Renewables, Redevelopment and Regeneration Fund towards the funding package for demolition. The Committee further recommended that powers be delegated to the Head of Finance to substitute General Capital Grant for the funding package identified, should it be possible to capitalise some, or all, of the expenditure associated with demolition of the former Halls of Residence and that any unutilised funding from the contribution of £250,000 be returned to the Renewables, Redevelopment and Regeneration Fund.

7.5.

The Council has received confirmation from Audit Scotland that it would be reasonable for the full demolition cost of the former hostel to be treated as a capital expenditure with an impairment loss recognised to bring the value down to the recoverable amount. It will therefore be possible to utilise General Capital Grant on the demolition project, thus freeing up the funding package that had been earmarked, including the contribution of £250,000 from the Renewables, Redevelopment and Regeneration Fund.

7.6.

The budget requirement sought of up to £150,000 to develop capital project appraisals for a scheme to reduce surface water flood risk to Kirkwall could be met through a contribution from the Renewables, Redevelopment and Regeneration Fund.

8. Legal Aspects

8.1.

Section 95 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 requires the Council to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs. As part of that, the Council is expected to have regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

8.2.

In terms of Section 35 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, the Council must determine and keep under review the maximum amount which it can afford to allocate to capital expenditure. In so doing, the Council must comply with regulations made by Scottish Ministers.

9. Contact Officers

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