

EMERGENCY FLOOD PREVENTION WORK

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Cllr Allan Holliday
LEAD OFFICER: Keith Parker – Head of Leisure & Environmental Services
REPORT AUTHOR: Vic Emmerson – Environmental Health Manager

Summary: This report advises of emergency flood prevention work carried out in October 2005 and the resultant budgetary overspend and seeks approval of the action taken and proposed in respect of the budgetary shortfall and the cost of responding to any future events this financial year.

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| Recommendation: | That the Executive: a) approves the action taken and proposed in respect of the budgetary shortfall and the cost of responding to any future events this financial year as detailed in this report; b) that in respect of 2006/2007 the budget be reviewed in October 2006, and c) that in future years any underspend be set aside in to a flooding response fund. |
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Impact on delivering the Corporate Plan: The Council has adopted a policy of providing occupiers of properties in the Borough with sandbags to reduce the risk of flooding of their properties. The service includes the provision of sandbags “out of hours” when considered appropriate.

Impact on other statutory objectives (e.g. crime & disorder, LA21): The provision of a responsive flood prevention service, whilst not a statutory service, does contribute to the Council’s Quality of Life objectives.

Financial and human resource implications: Financial - £12873; to be met from other Environmental Health line budgets.
Human – None

Project & Risk Management: None

Key Decision Status

- **Financial:** N/A
- **Ward:** N/A

Other Ward Implications: None

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Arising from an extreme flooding event in 1999 Members have, each year, approved a budget for responding to actual and threatened flooding of properties in the Borough. Obviously the number and severity of flooding events in any year are unpredictable and, therefore, cannot be budgeted for accurately.

1.2 For the current year a budget of £7500 was approved.

2. ARGUMENT

- 2.1 In October 2005 there were 2 events of actual and threatened flooding of properties in the Borough, mainly in Parton, Egremont, Whitehaven and Frizington, which resulted in the distribution of sandbags by employees of the Parks and Open Spaces Section of the Leisure and Environmental Services Department and Mayson Brothers and the carrying out of certain other flood prevention work by Mayson Brothers.
- 2.2 The total cost of responding to the actual and threatened flooding events was approximately £16751.
- 2.3 The costs incurred so far this year in responding to flooding is £20373 which means the budget is overspent by £12873.
- 2.4 It is considered that officers had no option other than to respond to the actual and threatened flooding by distributing sandbags to the occupiers of affected properties.

3. OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

- 3.1 One option in respect of the current overspend is to seek funding from the Council's contingencies but these are now down to a low level.
- 3.2 Another option is to absorb the current overspend by controlling expenditure against other Environmental Health line budgets which are currently showing an underspend of approximately £23K.
- 3.3 As regards any costs incurred in responding to any future flooding events during this financial year it is considered that there might be no alternative other than to seek funding from contingencies.
- 3.4 As regards future years it is recommended that any underspend of the Flood Prevention budget be set aside into a flooding response fund.
- 3.5 In respect of the forthcoming financial year it is recommended that the Flood Prevention budget be reviewed in October.

4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 It is recommended that the options set out in 3.2, 3.4 and 3.5 above be agreed to.

List of Appendices

None

List of Background Documents: None

List of Consultees: Councillor Allan Holliday – Environment & Cultural

Services Portfolio Holder
Keith Parker – Head of Leisure & Environmental Services
Paul Robson – Accountant
Corporate Team