



EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

REPORT OF: Executive Member for Growth and Development

LEAD OFFICERS: Strategic Director of Environment & Operations

DATE: Friday, 15 March 2024

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED: Growth and Development

WARD/S AFFECTED: (All Wards);

SUBJECT: Delivery of Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) projects for the financial year 2023/24

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To seek the Executive Members approval for the addition of Flood Defence Grant in Aid projects to the Capital programme for delivery within the financial year 2023/24.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Member: approves the addition of the Flood Defence Grant in Aid projects to the Capital programme for the financial year 2023/24.

3. BACKGROUND

The Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Investment Programme is a Defra capital investment plan to better protect homes and non-residential properties from flood risk and coastal erosion. The conditions of the Investment Programme are that overall schemes must attract at least 15% of partnership funding and deliver 10% efficiency saving on projects.

The funding from Defra for managing flood risk in England is known as ‘Flood Defence Grant in Aid’ (FDGiA). This funding from Defra is administered by the Environment Agency (EA). The amount of FDGiA available for a particular scheme is based on a set formula that considers the number of households protected against flood risk; the estimated value of damages being prevented; and the other benefits a particular project would deliver, such as environmental improvements.

Within Defra’s FCERM 6 year programme (2021 to 2027), the Council has the following projects that have recently been approved for funding for the delivery year 2023/24.

Project	Allocated FDGiA Grant (£)	Properties better protected against flood risk	Estimated project cost in 2023/24 (£)
Fitzgerald Drive, Darwen	40,000	15	40,000
Natural Flood Management (NFM) scoping study	105,000	-	16,000
Quick win fund (Blackpool St)	15,500	2	15,000

The Natural Flood Management (NFM) scoping study will continue in 2024/25 and the outstanding £89,000 will be spent in 2024/25.

Please note that the above only shows the FDGiA allocation to each project and does not include any additional funding from other sources.

In addition to above, the Council also has an underspend of FDGiA grant from the last FCERM programme cycle (2014 - 2023). Under the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) rules, as long as the grant is spent on capital projects the authority has flexibility for spend within the programme. It is proposed therefore that the underspend will be allocated to the urgent drainage/flood improvement works of Desilting ponds within Parks and open space.

Any changes to the allocated projects will be reported via the Council's Executive Member for Growth and Development. Changes to the FCERM programme as detailed within this report will be resourced from within the programme, and as such there will be no additional impact on Council finances. The equality impacts of each project are considered and assessed at the scheme design stage.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

The projects included will mitigate flood risk and better protect our residents from flooding. The projects identified accord with the Lancashire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2021 - 2027 Strategy. The Council's primary purpose for this strategy is to ensure that, as far as is reasonably practicable, the risk of flooding to human health and life, the environment, economic activity, infrastructure and cultural heritage arising from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses is minimised.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

All schemes proposed directly accord with the Lancashire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2021 - 2027 Strategy.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All Flood Risk Management Schemes are funded through the Environment Agency governed FDGiA capital grant with no additional cost to the Council.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA) designates Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) responsible for managing flood risk from 'local' sources; surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. One of our responsibilities is to undertake drainage investigations and identify flood risk mitigation projects then develop business cases and bid for capital funding. These projects have been identified in compliance with those duties.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

10. CONSULTATIONS

All schemes will be the subject of detailed individual consultations with the stakeholders and the wider community. Residents and stakeholders will be informed prior to the start of the proposed works in respect to the nature of the scheme and their anticipated duration. This will be communicated via the Council's website, social media facilities, leaflets, and letters as appropriate. Customer feedback will be actively sought on completion of each scheme, with feedback analysed and used to improve the service in the future.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded and published if applicable.

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CONTACT OFFICER:	Joanne Byrne/Imran Munshi
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DATE:	11 March 2024
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BACKGROUND PAPER:	
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