

Report of Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods

Our City Our River Project Update and Community Engagement Strategy

SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides a summary update of the OCOR project. The Our City Our River (OCOR) Masterplan was approved by Cabinet in July 2012 to guide the provision of flood defences and associated regeneration along a new alignment set back from the River Derwent to allow more space for flood water and promote regeneration.
- 1.2 The OCOR Business Case, which was developed jointly by the Environment Agency (EA) Projects team and the Council, was approved by Cabinet on 6 November 2013, and submitted to the EA's Large Projects Review Group, LPRG.
- 1.3 The OCOR Business Case (v6) was approved by the EA's LPRG in September 2014, which triggered the approval and release of funding, Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) and Growth Funding to Derby City Council to enable the commencement of the delivery of the OCOR project.
- 1.4 Derby City Council agreed to take on the lead role and associated responsibilities for the delivery of the OCOR project and the on-going maintenance of the flood defence assets at their Cabinet meeting 22 October 2014.
- 1.5 The project is separated into three Packages, which provide flood risk and growth benefits to distinct areas within the city. Each Package is a combination of stand alone flood defences and flood defences which are incorporated into development sites which are delivered as those sites are developed.
- 1.6 The approval of the Business Case by the EA has released up to £17m of FDGiA funding, and £18m of Growth funding as a contribution to the delivery of the whole of the scheme. In addition, a further £12m of funding has been secured from the LEP as a contribution towards the delivery of Package 2 works. There is currently a funding shortfall in the order of £40m to complete the whole of the scheme.
- 1.7 Following a competitive tender process utilising one of the EA's frameworks; a formal design & build contract was awarded in December 2014 for the stand-alone package 1 works to Gallifords Black & Veatch (GBV) to commence detailed design for the delivery of the scheme in earnest, subject to planning approval being secured. The funding secured to date is sufficient to enable the completion of the whole of Package 1 works, and contribute to the commencement of the delivery of the

Package 2 defences. A dedicated community consultation officer appointment is included within this contract. At this stage, it is envisaged that small elements of work will commence before 31 March 2015, with the main works starting in October 2015.

- 1.8 The OCOR project has developed a Project Initiation Document(PID) which incorporates the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the OCOR Board, the Scheme of Delegation (SOD) for the project, the governance structure and initial staffing structure for OCOR, viewed as an essential step in moving the project forward.
- 1.9 The project is to submit a formal hybrid planning application for the entire OCOR scheme at the beginning of February 2015. This includes for detailed consideration for the first Package and outline for Packages 2 and 3. Consultation linked to the planning application submission includes:
 - The statutory 21 day consultation period – March 2015.
 - All identified land owners within the OCOR 'red –line ' area will receive a formal notice and letter
 - Following validation - all properties within 15m of the red –line area will also receive notice of the submission of the application
 - Site notices will be located along the entire length of the scheme
 - A series of 5 planning application information sessions to be held primarily in the package 1 detailed planning application areas, Darley Abbey, Little Chester, Duke St, Council House and Elvaston .
 - Press release(s) and information regarding the planning application to be circulated via range of mediums, including neighbourhood boards, forums and the Our City Our River website.
- 1.10 There has been significant stakeholder engagement in advance of the submission of the planning application, and there is more comprehensive engagement planned during the planning application process. An outline communication strategy was developed as part of the submission of the Business Case and this is now to be developed further in to a live document, which will incorporate a more comprehensive plan for Community Engagement during the delivery of the project.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the contents of the report regarding key activities and achievements in the OCOR project and its planned approach to Community Engagement.
- 2.2 To support the Council's ongoing commitment to the delivery of the OCOR project.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The OCOR project is a Corporate priority for the Council. Since the adoption of the OCOR Masterplan in July 2012, much work has been undertaken jointly by the Council and the EA. This has centred on the securing the indicative allocations of Growth and FDGIA funding from DEFRA and the EA, and more recently significant funding from the LEP.
- 3.2 The details of the project have been firmed up and refined to support the preparation of the formal planning application. A Project Initiation Document (PID) has been approved by the OCOR Project Board which details how the project will be delivered including the Governance and FSOD arrangements.
- 3.3 A dedicated resource is planned to be employed on the OCOR project to lead on the development and operation of the Communications and Engagement strategy.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

- 4.1 Our City Our River is a flood risk management and regeneration scheme through the City Centre of Derby. The core objectives of the scheme as set out in the Masterplan that was approved by Cabinet in July 2012 include:
 - Reduce flood risk to protect people, property(1,450 homes and 800 businesses) and jobs.
 - Maximise regeneration and sustainable development opportunities along the river frontage.
 - Release economic potential of brownfield sites currently at significant risk of flooding.
 - Enhance the significant heritage assets of the city, which include the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, to promote tourism to the city.
 - Enhance ecology, wildlife and biodiversity along the river and deliver the objectives of the Water Framework Directive.
- 4.2 In relation to the first point the City's existing flood defences only provide a low level of protection which would be 'overtopped' even in a moderate flood event. The existing defences, some of which are in a poor condition and are coming to the end of their life, are only designed for a 1 in 25/50 event as opposed to a 1 in 100 event that would be attained under the OCOR scheme. Derby is therefore currently at risk from flooding which would have a major impact on local residents, businesses and the City's infrastructure.
- 4.3 **Community Engagement and Consultation to date:**
 - Following the adoption of the Masterplan, a proactive communication strategy has been adopted. This has included use of our scheme website, www.ourcityourriver.co.uk, and newsletters to keep people updated as to how the

scheme is progressing; issuing of press releases for good news opportunities to increase public awareness of the scheme eg site investigation works, archaeological trial trenching and Growth funding announcements; and engaging local schools. During a phase of excavations three primary schools visited the archaeological trial trenching and an afternoon workshop was held with GCSE students who were undertaking assessed coursework of flood risk management on the River Derwent. This strategy has resulted in many positive news stories in the local and regional media.

- During the development of outline designs to support the business case, consultation work has focussed on working with directly affected landowners and key stakeholders for each site. For example, drop-in sessions have been held for residents of Darley Abbey Mills and Etruria Gardens; individual meetings have been held with residents around Duke Street; meetings have been held with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust to explore environmental enhancement opportunities and design options of Watermeadows ditch; and a historic environment steering group has been formed for Darley Abbey Mills and Little Chester. The knowledge gained of site specific issues has materially contributed to the outline design of proposed solutions. Where issues have not been fully resolved, their identification allows a full explanation to be provided in future communications. This approach has been intended to minimise the risk of objections to the planning application for the scheme.
- English Heritage and the World Heritage Site have provided a comfort letter outlining that they are satisfied with the approach to the scheme and proposed design solutions at a number of locations. Meetings have also been held with Network Rail to discuss issues relating to the interaction of flood defences and the rail routes through the city.
- Numerous discussions and meetings have taken place with potential developers of sites where flood defences need to be integrated as part of the developments in line with the guidance attached to the OCOR Masterplan.

4.4 On going Community Engagement and Communications

- As part of planning application consultation, five public information events have been organised so that the details of the planning application can be discussed directly with officers to answer questions and promote comments to be submitted on the application. These meetings are located in the different wards that are affected.
- The OCOR project team are in the process of identifying a full time resource to develop and implement the Communications and Community Engagement Plan. This is a key role for a project of this size and complexity, and will include various strands including the following:
 - Community engagement during the development of the Package 2 and 3 detailed designs, and detailed planning applications;
 - Co-ordinating community engagement during the delivery of construction works (in support of the dedicated role for day to day communications included within the Design and Build contract with GBV for Package 1 stand

alone flood defences);

- Key Stakeholder engagements, including Natural England, English Heritage, Network Rail, Local Business' LEP, landowners
 - Engagement with potential developers of sites which will contribute to the provision of flood defences;
 - Engagement plans for identifying and securing potential funding sources to fulfil the funding gap required to complete the whole scheme;
 - Engagement plans within the Council departments to ensure co-ordination of resources and continued compliance with core Council strategies
- The OCOR Communications and Community Engagement Plan can be presented to a future Board for review and formal acceptance.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Not Applicable

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer	N/A
Financial officer	N/A
Human Resources officer	N/A
Estates/Property officer	N/A
Service Director(s)	N/A
Other(s)	N/A

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List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

1.1 None arising from this report

Legal

2.1 None arising from this report.

Personnel

3.1 None arising from this report.

IT

4.1 None arising from this report.

Equalities Impact

5.1 None arising from this report

Health and Safety

6.1 None arising from this report.

Environmental Sustainability

7.1 None arising from this report.

Property and Asset Management

8.1 None arising from this report.

Risk Management

9.1 None arising from this report.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

10.1 None arising from this report.