

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Town Centres, Economic Growth & Prosperity
2.	Date:	6th February 2012
3.	Title:	Pithouse West Culvert Collapse
4.	Programme Area:	Environment and Development Services

5. Summary

- 5.1 Following recent reports of localised flooding in the area around Rother Valley Country Park, site inspections have revealed the ground collapsed over a culvert on the former Pithouse West colliery site. See attached plan at Appendix 1.
- 5.2 To minimise future risk of flooding to properties in Wetherby Drive and to ensure the 'sale' negotiations of this land to MCD VOC LLP for the Visions of China project are successfully concluded and the site developed, it is considered essential to replace the culvert as a matter of urgency.
- 5.3 Initial cost estimates have been sought from experienced contractors, resulting in a 'rough cut' estimate for the replacement of the culvert of £300,000. Due to the depth of the culvert it is likely that the works will involve tunnelling works rather than open cut excavation works.
- 5.4 It is anticipated that work to replace the culvert will be completed by the end of April 2012, following procurement of a specialist Contractor and the necessary ground investigations.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet Member for Town Centres, Economic Growth & Prosperity approve £300,000 expenditure from DLG monies to replace the collapsed culvert at land at the former Pithouse West colliery site.

That Cabinet Member for Town Centres, Economic Growth & Prosperity grant an exemption in relation to Standing Order 48 (1) (contracts valued at £50,000 or more) which requires invitations to be issued to three –six contractors and approve the use of a limited procurement exercise to appoint a contractor (cost estimates to be received from at least 2 contractors). This is due to the specialist nature of the work and therefore limited number of contractors available.

7. Proposals and Details

- 7.1 A watercourse runs in a deep cut to the east of Wetherby Drive. It flows into a culvert under the A57 Aston Relief Road, then in open channel to the south until it enters another culvert beneath the railway line. See attached plan at appendix 1 for details.
- 7.2 This culvert is in two ownerships; Network Rail and the Council. Work has previously been undertaken (March 2009) by Network Rail in an attempt to alleviate flooding on the upstream side of the railway.
- 7.3 Subsequent to the work undertaken by Network Rail and flooding to properties in Wetherby Drive in June 2009, there was a collapse of the culvert in our ownership and up to 50m was replaced in February 2011. The remaining length of the culvert was known to be in poor condition at this time but funding constraints did not allow for its complete replacement.
- 7.4 Following recent reports (November 2011) of localised flooding in the area, site inspections by the drainage team have revealed a ground collapse over the culvert approximately 7m upstream of the remedial work previously undertaken. The land is presently in the ownership of the Council, and the Council, as riparian owner, is legally responsible for maintaining flows within this watercourse.
- 7.5 To minimise future risk of flooding to properties in Wetherby Drive and to ensure the 'sale' negotiations of this land to MCD VOC LLP for the Visions of China project are successfully concluded and the site developed, it is considered essential to replace the culvert as a matter of urgency.
- 7.6 Following initial discussions with Contractors, it is apparent that the scale of the work required is significant and of a specialist nature. A number of Contractors have therefore ruled themselves out of undertaking the work. As such, it is likely that cost estimates will only be received from 2 Contractors with the suitable skill and competency to undertake this work.
- 7.7 An outline programme for completion of the works is detailed below:
- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Contractor procurement | December/January |
| Ground Investigations | January/February 2012 |
| Start on site | End of Feb/March 2012 |
| Completion | End of April 2012 |

8. Finance

- 8.1 Following initial discussions with Contractors, estimates in the order of £300,000 have been received for the replacement of the collapsed culvert. This estimate includes for site investigations prior to the start of construction, fees, construction costs and a contingency due to the sloping nature of the site and the current unknowns associated with the culvert replacement.

Information has been provided to the Contractors to obtain an accurate cost estimate for the works.

- 8.2 It is anticipated that approximately £100,000 will be spent in 2011/12 with the remainder (£200,000) spent in early 2012/13 (April/May).

9. Risks and Uncertainties

- 9.1 The cost estimate for the culvert replacement is based on initial discussions with experienced Contractors. However, due to the sloping nature of the site and the current unknowns regarding the culvert replacement, it is possible that cost estimates could further increase following the completion of site investigations and the start of construction when the precise requirements of the replacement will become clearer.
- 9.2 The risk of cost increases will be mitigated through the inclusion of a £ 50,000 Contingency within the estimate.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

10.1 The works will contribute indirectly to the Rotherham Achieving and Rotherham Proud themes of the Community Strategy by:

- (a) Developing the Borough's identity, building on its existing economic, cultural, social and environmental assets to strengthen local pride in and connection with Rotherham
- (b) Creating the right conditions for inward investment and the development of world class businesses that will drive the economy by developing the skills of local people and providing high quality facilities and services and a quality environment for growth.
- (c) Maximising economic and other opportunities to reduce disadvantage and raise quality of life and living standards, particularly in the most deprived neighbourhoods.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- 11.1 Internal officer discussions have taken place with relevant colleagues from Leisure and Green Spaces, Network Management (Drainage) and Finance.
- 11.2 Discussions with the Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services and the Director of Planning and Regeneration have also taken place. Both are fully aware of the requirement to replace the culvert and are supportive of the approach outlined in this report.

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