

Information

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for County Councillors

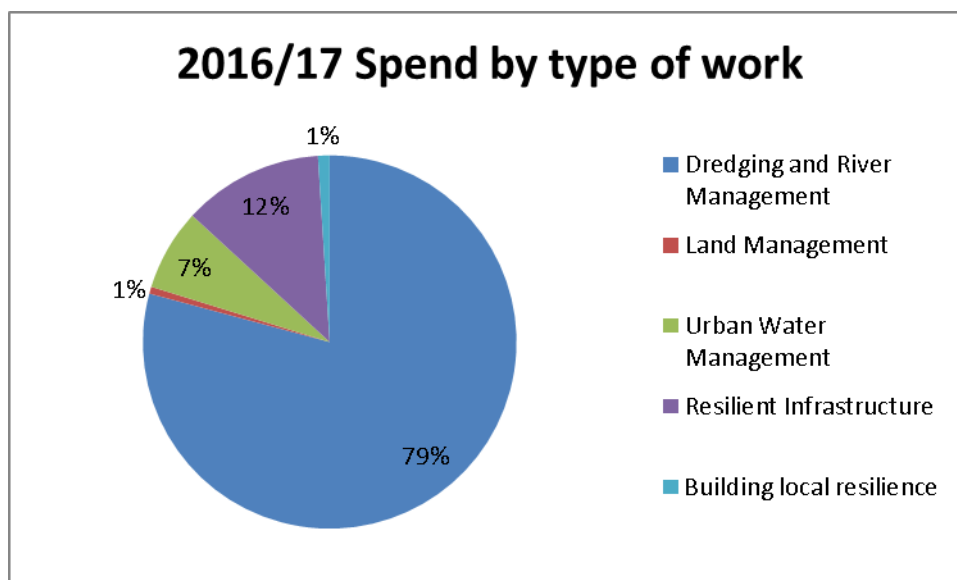
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Date:	6 April, 2016
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To:	All County Councillors
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What is Somerset Rivers Authority proposing to do in 2016/17, with its £2.7m from Council Tax increases?

Somerset Rivers Authority's purpose is to provide a higher standard of flood risk management than is affordable from the existing budgets of Somerset's flood risk management authorities. The 2016/17 programme focuses primarily on providing extra maintenance as existing funding streams for this important activity are insufficient to cover the need. The proposed programme amounts to approximately £2.45m for activities (split £1.69m on maintenance and £760k on capital schemes), plus £235k on SRA/Internal Drainage Board (IDB) staff (4.7 FTE) and overhead costs which supports both this programme, and the delivery of the SRA's projects funded by £13.1m of Growth Deal funding.



What extra maintenance work will be done?

28 different maintenance activities are proposed, across the whole of the county. The SRA will provide maintenance dredging of the rivers Parrett and Tone, monitoring of silt build up, extra desilting of smaller river channels, rhynes and under bridges, and the repair and removal of blockages from an extra 700 culverts across the county.

We will enable reinstatement of annual maintenance to West Somerset streams and West Sedgemoor and Aller Moor viewed rhynes, as well as spending more on enforcing owner responsibilities for maintenance. We will fund normally unfundable preventative maintenance and repairs to a wide range of flood risk management assets across Sedgemoor and in Glastonbury, Frome, Muchelney and Isle Brewers, and funding will also be spent on improving access to reduce future maintenance costs.

To reduce local flooding of highways, particularly in rural areas, the SRA will provide more frequent gully emptying, preventative jetting and road sweeping than was previously affordable, in areas most susceptible to flooding, and install flood alert systems in low spots on roads to increase safety. Recognising the importance of slowing the flow in the upper catchment and reducing run-off in urban areas, the SRA will provide advice and support to communities and landowners for natural flood management and will deliver a programme of measures to ensure existing sustainable urban drainage schemes are effective, encourage individuals to harvest rainwater and replace concrete drives with permeable paving and fund a demonstration project to retrofit a sustainable drainage system to an existing large retail park in Taunton. The SRA will also provide development funding for a major scheme to store water above Taunton. In addition, the SRA will continue its investment in supporting communities becoming more resilient to flooding and its impacts.

What capital schemes will Somerset Rivers Authority support?

- Cannington Flood Alleviation Scheme – the SRA's contribution will enable this £4m scheme protecting at least 100 houses to go ahead.
- Brue Banks Set Back Project - the SRA will fund the first year trial of a £1m scheme to make the banks of the Brue safe, allowing important maintenance to take place.
- Pumping station repairs and improvements across the Levels at North Drain, Westover, Midelnay, Long Load, West Sedgemoor, Saltmoor and Gold Corner. This will enable the deployment of temporary pumps. whereas existing budgets only allow for the current permanent operation
- A temporary pump platform at Andersea which will allow for a constant discharge point evacuating water from the Andersea/Chedzoy moors, for the duration of a flood event, whereas the current means of evacuation, is dependent on the water levels in the Kings Sedgemoor Drain being low enough.
- Improvements to approximately 240 failing water level control structures which will build and maintain the resilience of wet grassland upstream of Langport, improving the condition of 2 sites of special scientific interest and ensuring that long term financial support is available to those that farm there.
- Wirral Park, Glastonbury, pumping station refurbishment – phase 2. In 2015/16 the SRA funded urgent repairs to this pumping station. This year funding will upgrade the station, ensuring it can work well for a further 25 years providing protection from flooding for local homes and businesses.

What other work will Somerset Rivers Authority fund?

In addition to the funding provided by Somerset's local authorities, the SRA receives funding from Somerset's IDBs and the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Deal. In 2016/17, these funds will be used to deliver additional channel maintenance, a major scheme to enhance the capacity of the River Sowey / King's Sedgemoor Drain river system, to dredge further stretches of the rivers Parrett and the Brue, develop the Bridgwater Barrier project, and join forces with the Royal Bath and West led 'Hills to Levels' project in funding a capital grant scheme for natural flood management in Somerset.

Councillors can download a longer, much more detailed briefing by clicking here:

<http://www.somersetiversauthority.org.uk/EasysiteWeb/getresource.axd?AssetID=111917&servicetype=Attachment>

If you have any questions about Somerset Rivers Authority and schemes being funded, please contact Somerset Rivers Authority by emailing sra@somerset.gov.uk or calling 01823 357824.