

## Rother District Council

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date:** 23 May 2022

**Title:** Bexhill splash-deck outfall pipe, South Cliff

**Report of:** Deborah Kenneally, Head of Neighbourhood Services

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Timpe

**Ward(s):** Collington, Bexhill

**Purpose of Report:** To inform Members of an increase in capital funding to complete this project.

**Decision Type:** Key

**Officer**

**Recommendation(s):** It be **RESOLVED:** That

- 1) additional funding of £100,000 be set aside in the Capital Programme to complete this work;
- 2) a suitable contractor be procured in partnership with East Kent Engineering Partnership to complete the work up to the value of £200,000; and
- 3) the tender award be made as soon as possible for work to commence in September 2022 and the Head of Neighbourhood Services be authorised to take any further necessary action to conclude the works.

**Reasons for Recommendations:** To enable work to commence to Bexhill outfall pipe in September 2022 before the winter season.

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### Introduction

1. There are several outfall pipes along Bexhill seafront that channel rain-water runoff out to sea from local streets, via underground pipes which often run under seafront assets such as the promenade, splash-deck, and residential properties. Most of these outfall pipes are owned and maintained either by the Environment Agency or Southern Water, but two are the responsibility of Rother District Council due to them being associated with underground water culverts.
2. One of the Council owned outfall pipes on Bexhill beach adjacent to the splash-deck requires extending and replacement of corroded sections. It consists of a metal pipe supported by timber piles and frame. Much of the outfall pipe is buried under shingle and what is left of the pipes' seaward end section is extensively corroded and leaking.
3. Because a section is missing from the seaward end of the pipe, the pipe itself has become blocked with shingle which, although still releasing a low volume of water run-off into the sea, places pressure within the pipe during storms

and high tides. In the past this has resulted in a fountain of water emanating from a manhole cover on the splash-deck and has lifted a section of the splash-deck concrete itself. More recently a large hole in the top of the corroded pipe emits a fountain of water some 20 feet or so into the air during storms and high tides.

4. The back pressure that is created by the pipe being blocked with shingle impacts on the underground pipe that runs underneath a nearby resident's garden resulting in a water fountain in her garden that has caused damage to the underground chamber, water pipe and her garden.
5. If no remedial action is taken to remove the shingle and address the condition of the outfall pipe, there will be an ongoing risk to the safety of people using the beach and splash deck, and to the Bexhill residents along the inland pipe run.
6. East Kent Engineering Partnership (EKEP) coastal engineers, who work in partnership with Rother District Council on projects of this nature, reviewed the outfall pipe in early 2021. They identified that the outfall pipe in this location has reached the end of its design life. It is both too short and too low in the beach, and so unless it is raised higher off the beach, will continue to become blocked with shingle.

### **Financial implications**

7. The estimated project costs were originally outlined by EKEP in early 2021 and capital funds of £100,000 were set aside to have the metal pipe and timber structure replaced. Since this time, labour and material costs for construction projects have risen significantly.
8. Furthermore, following trial hole investigations on site in November 2021, the strata beneath the existing outfall pipe was discovered to be sandstone, a highly durable bed material in comparison to the more common clay or chalk beds as seen around much of the south east. Constructing piled foundations in this bed material is technically more challenging and requires additional provisions for driving.
9. Paragraph G.40 of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules require that any capital scheme likely to exceed its approved estimate by more than £25,000 be reported Cabinet. EKEP are in the process of procuring a suitable contractor to complete the work and the tender response has indicated that the cost of the work will be in the region of £180,000 to £200,000 due to the issues outlined in the paragraphs above. To avoid further increase in costs it is recommended that tender award is made as soon as possible for work to commence in September 2022, once the summer season is over.
10. Members are therefore requested to approve that the capital budget for this project be increased by £100,000 to £200,000.
11. The additional costs can be funded from borrowing, which would increase the Council's revenue costs by approximately £3,800 although it is likely that borrowing can be managed 'internally'.

## Conclusion

12. The works are of vital importance, both for the safety and security of Bexhill residents' property along the inland pipe run and for members of the public using the beach around the outfall pipe and on the splash-deck. Undertaking the works now will protect against further damage to neighbouring properties and avoid incurring more significant costs in the future.

## Financial Implications

13. As in paragraphs 7 to 11.

## Legal Implications

14. There is potential for legal action if further damage occurs to private property due to the blocked outfall pipe.

## Risk management

15. If no remedial action is taken to remove the shingle and address the condition of the outfall pipe, there will be an ongoing risk to the safety of people using the beach and splash deck, and to Bexhill residents' property along the inland pipe run.

## Environmental

16. When unblocked, the outfall pipe will allow improved flow of run-off water direct into the sea to avoid the potential of water arising in undesirable locations.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	Consultation	No
Environmental	Yes	Access to Information	No
Sustainability	No	Exempt from publication	No
Risk Management	Yes		

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Appendices:	None.
Relevant Previous Minutes:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Reference Documents:	None.