

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Drainage Town and Parish Grant Funding
Date of decision:	15 th November 2024
Decision maker:	Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
Authority for delegated decision:	<p>On 9th February 2024, Full Council agreed the content of the 2024/25 Budget Setting report. As part of the report, Full Council agreed that £445k of the £945k increase in Rural Services Grant would be provided for improvements to the drainage network. Full details of the decision taken can be seen at the following link:</p> <p>Decision - To approve the 2024/25 budget and associated Medium Term Financial Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy.</p> <p>Delivery of the £445k of funding is proposed to be through Parish Lengthsman contract variation agreements or purchase orders, or in the case of gully cleansing through the Public Realm Contract with Balfour Beatty Living Places, which are permissible under the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.</p>
Ward:	Countywide.
Consultation:	Town and Parish Councils were invited to provide submissions for improvement works on Public Rights of Way in July 2024.
Decision made:	To vary the Parish Lengthsman contract with 67 Town and Parish Councils, to deliver £288,794.00 of improvement works on the Public Rights of Way network, as set out in this report.
Reasons for decision:	<p>Working with parishes on locally important maintenance forms part of the objective to 'Expand and maintain the transport infrastructure network in a sustainable way and improve connectivity across the county' in the Council's Delivery Plan 2024/25.</p> <p>On 9th February 2024, Full Council agreed the content of the 2024/25 Budget Setting report. As part of the report, Full Council agreed that £445k of the £945k increase in Rural Services Grant would be provided for improvements to drainage.</p> <p>In July 2024, Town and Parish Councils were invited to provide submissions for the £445k of grant funding for drainage works. The funding was made available for ditching works, drainage surveys, minor drainage schemes and gully clearing and cleansing.</p> <p>Submissions were invited by 27th September 2024 and provided details of the location (what3words) of each asset including photographs, a short description of the work required and a cost estimate.</p> <p>Submissions from 67 Town and Parish Councils have been identified at this stage as being acceptable and offers best value to the council.</p>

Equality Considerations	None.
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	<p>Financial Implications</p> <p>A total budget of £445k has been allocated to this project, provided through Rural Services Grant funding.</p> <p>The submissions from the 67 Town and Parish Councils total £288,794.00 of works.</p> <p>Project codes will be allocated so that the project manager assigned can monitor and review progress to enable reporting to the relevant programme boards.</p> <p>Risk Management</p> <p>The identified works should reduce the risk to users on the network as a result of improved condition.</p> <p>Legal Implications</p> <p>Direct award of a contract is permissible under the Contract Procedure Rules where the total value is below £25k and can demonstrate best value to the council.</p>
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	That this additional investment is not made and the Council continues to maintain Herefordshire’s drainage in accordance with sound asset management practices but wholly within existing maintenance allocations and grant funding made available.
Details of any declarations of interest made:	None.