

## **Allowenshay Mains Water Project**

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*Ward Member(s)* Cllr Sue Osborne  
*Director:* Netta Meadows, Service Delivery  
*Service Managers:* Tim Cook, Locality Team Manager  
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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. This report has been produced at the request of the Area West Committee. The report provides an update on the Allowenshay Mains Water scheme and a request from members of Area West Committee that an additional financial contribution, from corporate reserves, towards provision of mains water to the parish of Kingstone and the hamlet of Allowenshay is considered.

### **Public Interest**

2. One of the statutory functions of the Council is to regulate private water supplies within the district. This falls under the Council's public health responsibilities in ensuring that private water supplies are healthy for users and do not pose any health risks, which includes actual risks and potential risks that may arise. A private water supply may come from a spring, well or borehole and will be under the control of private individuals or companies. Where such a supply provides water to more than one dwelling, or commercial premises, the Council has duties and powers to ensure it is wholesome, sufficient and safe for use.
3. To achieve this Environmental Health staff routinely sample water from such supplies and carry out risk assessments of such supplies. Where problems are identified, notices can be served on the persons responsible for the provision of the water requiring them to carry out work needed to improve the supply.
4. This report relates to the private water supplies in Allowenshay where there have been ongoing concerns with the supply over a number of years. Most recently a Notice was served requiring works to improve the supply. Due to the extensive works required this is causing financial difficulties and concerns for residents who will need to meet the costs of improving the supply. The proposed work will provide a direct solution for some residents. Mains water is not a viable option for all and other local residents are considering other options. The Council has been asked to consider if there is any further assistance that can be provided to the residents given the critical public health need for them to have a safe water supply.

### **Recommendation**

That District Executive:-

- a. note the update on the work to provide mains water to the parish of Kingstone and the residents of the hamlet of Allowenshay.
- b. agree to approve the provision of a capital grant of £12,500 from corporate reserves to match the contribution agreed by the Area West Committee, towards the

infrastructure cost of providing mains water to Allowenshay village to support a group of residents who have been the subject of the Notice requiring improvements to be made.

## **Background**

5. The Allowenshay Private Water Supply is fed by a number of spring features that originate some distance south of the village of Allowenshay in Somerset. The water from the spring features flows via various storage and distribution arrangements to feed some properties in Dinnington and Allowenshay. Over time, several properties within Allowenshay have chosen to seek alternative private supplies of water and as a result, only some of the properties are still on the Allowenshay PWS.
6. The Council are the regulatory authority responsible for ensuring that private water supplies do not pose a risk to health in accordance with the Private Water Supply (England) Regulations 2016. The Council also has powers under the Water Industry Act 1991, to deal with a private water supply which is failing or unwholesome. Following issues of insufficiency and unwholesomeness the Council served a Notice requiring improvements in 2015.
7. Following ongoing issues with the supply the matter was considered again and a further Notice served in 2018. For legal reasons this Notice was served on consumers of the supply as well as the company considered to exercise management and maintenance of the supply.
8. At the September meeting of the District Executive, members received an update on the situation and were asked to consider a one off capital grant towards the installation costs of providing mains water. Concerns were raised about potential precedent and scale of the contribution requested given the number of beneficiaries (12 households will directly benefit). Members did not agree to a capital contribution and resolved 'that the Exceptions and Appeals Panel be asked to vary the policy for this case only for the approval of a Home Loan through Wessex Resolutions CIC to make it available to all residents served with the Notices regardless of the vulnerability or financial status.'
9. The residents have decided not to pursue the option of a loan and aim to fund the work mainly through individual contributions and the sale of the infrastructure when work is completed.
10. At the February meeting of the Area West Committee, members received an update on the proposal and a request for a financial contribution. The Committee agreed unanimously to award a grant of £12,500. At the meeting, it was proposed and agreed that a further request be made to the District Executive for a financial contribution.

## **Project Update**

11. Having considered a number of options, the group has decided that the most secure, long term solution is to provide mains water into the hamlet which will be available to all the community.
12. The most economical way to provide mains water is for the residents currently supplied with spring water to undertake a self-lay project to provide the infrastructure for mains water and for Wessex Water to adopt and manage the system including maintenance and repair of the pipework once the works are complete. The cost of the scheme has increased since the last report due to advice received regarding VAT liability. The total

cost is now in the region of £240,000 inclusive of VAT. After the costs of easements and compensation to the land owners has been paid out and Wessex Water have purchased the infrastructure, there is a shortfall of £102,809 which is the amount required to be paid by the twelve residents.

13. A limited company has been established to deliver the scheme and this will close when the work is complete. The company will directly contract to install the infrastructure which will then be sold to Wessex Water. Wessex Water will be responsible for the ongoing supply of mains water and maintenance of the infrastructure. At present the status of the project is awaiting the setting up of a bank account for the company established for the infrastructure works - Allowenshay Mains Water Limited.
14. There is a lead in time of two months to apply for the necessary permissions and the work is due to take eight weeks.

### Area West Committee – Financial allocation

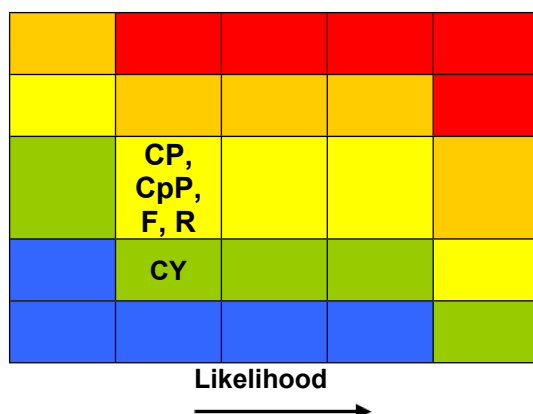
15. Members of the Area West Committee agreed that in this instance, a grant could be awarded on the basis that the need for the work is very clearly demonstrated and in recognition that others in the community would benefit from access to mains water and the provision of five hydrants. Members comments included that they were impressed by the level of commitment demonstrated.

### Financial Implications

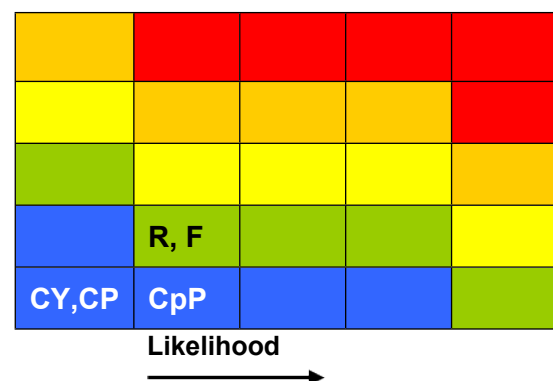
16. Area West Committee has awarded £12,500 towards the scheme. If members agree recommendation b) above, this will increase the SSDC contribution to £25,000 which is 10% of the total scheme costs.
17. Should Members decide to agree recommendations b) in this report, the grant of £12,500 will be allocated from the useable capital receipt reserve and added to the capital programme for monitoring. This, along with the £12,500 awarded by AWC would be paid to the limited company set up by the residents.

### Risk Matrix

**Risk Profile before officer recommendations**



**Risk Profile after officer recommendations**



**Key**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Colours</b> (for further detail please refer to Risk management strategy)
R - Reputation	High impact and high probability
CpP - Corporate Plan Priorities	Major impact and major probability
CP - Community Priorities	Moderate impact and moderate probability
CY - Capacity	Minor impact and minor probability
F - Financial	Insignificant impact and insignificant probability

## **Council Plan Implications**

18. Healthy, Self-Reliant Communities - The community has identified an innovative solution to a local issue and is investing a considerable amount into delivery.

## **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

19. None arising directly from this report

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

20. None arising directly from this report

## **Privacy Impact Assessment**

21. There are no direct privacy impact implications arising out of this report.

## **Background Papers**

- District Executive July 2019 & September 2019
- Area West Committee papers February 2020

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