

Broads Authority

20 January 2023

Agenda item number 9

Capital funding progress report

Report by Chief Executive

Purpose

To provide the Broads Authority members and Defra officials with a regular update on the progress implementing the capital funding programme.

Broads Plan context

B3 - seek biodiversity net gain and enhance areas of fen, reed bed, grazing marsh and wet woodland, to protect peatlands as carbon sinks.

C1 – maintain navigation depths to defined specifications, reduce sediment input and dispose of dredged material in sustainable and beneficial ways.

C2 – maintain existing navigation water space and develop appropriate opportunities to extend access for various types of craft.

C3 – manage water plants and riverside trees and scrub, and seek resources to increase operational targets.

E1 - improve the integrated network of access routes and points (with easier access for people with mobility and sensory needs), linked to visitor facilities.

Recommended decision

Note the progress in the delivery of the programme and that with some of the final quotations being lower than anticipated, there is the potential to purchase an additional 14 tonne fen excavator within the Defra provision.

1. Introduction

1.1. At the last Authority meeting Members resolved unanimously to:

- i) Welcome the capital funding from Defra and in view of the compressed timescale for the purchase of the capital items and the specialist nature of the equipment:
 - a) Approve the waiver of Standing Orders relating to contracts for the purchase of the following three items: Truxor T50, long reach 360 excavator, plant harvester.

- b) Authorise the Chief Executive to make appropriate variations to the listed items to ensure that the additional funding is used to best effect.
 - ii) Authorise the Chief Executive to proceed with ordering and making deposits for the most urgent pieces of equipment immediately, and to pursue the remaining items in January.
 - iii) Ask the Chief Executive to provide a regular progress report to the Audit and Risk Committee, Broads Authority and DEFRA.
- 1.2. The table in the appendix updates the Authority on the progress in the last few weeks and has also been sent to Defra officials so that they are aware of the current position.

2. Financial implications

- 2.1. The Change Control Notice (CCN) has been received and the offer accepted and officers are proceeding appropriately and with speed to implement the programme. Currently there are no significant risks other than the delay in the delivery of the work barge because of the lateness of the Defra final approval and the complexity around the restoration of the drainage structure at Strumpshaw SSSI.

3. Risk implications

- 3.1. Officers are working hard to deliver the programme on time and within budget and the risks, with Defra support, are minor.

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Date of report: 06 January 2023

[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: B3; C1-3 and E1

Appendix 1 – Capital Funding Monitoring Report (January 2023)

Capital Funding Monitoring Report – January 2023

Defra has provided the Authority with additional funding of £1,338,880. The formal Change Control Notice was received on 14 December 2022. It includes:

- Capital funding for equipment and land purchase to commit by the end of March 2023, 8 projects totalling £1.115 million
- Capital and Revenue funding for Water Mills and Marshes of £223,880 over two years (2022/23 and 2023/24)

8 projects are designed to enhance the Broads Authority's current management of 390 of the 2,000 hectares fen and grazing marsh and 125 miles of waterways and Broads. 25% of the Broads is designated SSSI and 25% of the UK's conservation priority species are supported in these managed habitats. Also support the final delivery phase of the innovative Lottery funded Water, Mills and Marshes Programme.

This table updates progress on the capital expenditure, regularly reporting to Defra and the Authority's Board.

Project	Purpose	Funding	Cost	Current Position
Water Mills & Marshes (Andrew Farrell)	Complete our works on the Mills, Trails, Access improvements, Changing Places Toilets, and capital works at Upton Marshes.	£ 142,112	£ 142,112	Our investment manager at the National Lottery Heritage Fund was pleased to hear that we now have our full match funding to enable the full delivery of the WMM scheme (total cash investment for the scheme £2.93m). Work is ongoing in the delivery of mill restoration, trails, access improvements, changing places toilet and work at Upton Marshes. We will be completing individual projects over the course of 2023.
Truxor plus accessories (Matt Dane and Sue Stephenson)	Truxor is a low ground pressure and tread amphibious machine that allows it to travel over land into the water with no environmental damage. A multi-purpose machine for tackling a number of sites where access for large	£ 285,000	£288,400	Final quote for T50 Truxor and a wide range of attachments is awaited, prior to issuing contract and order. The machine has been verbally secured and it deliverable by 31 March. (£182,000)

Project	Purpose	Funding	Cost	Current Position
	equipment is difficult. Particularly important for sensitive wetland sites found in the Broads. For example, it would allow fen habitat to be enhanced for bittern and other priority species and provide sensitive management for species of conservation concern such as water vole.			Tractor with front loader (£92,000) and low loader trailer (£14,400) for transportation are also available for delivery before 31 March. Orders for both have been placed.
Barge plus welfare unit (Rob Clarke and Wayne Collins)	This vessel would facilitate all manner of conservation and habitat creation projects on water.	£ 118,000	£70,780	Small workboat/support barge ordered for building May 2023 for delivery in early June 2023. Order placed and awaiting confirmation of contract details. (£70,780)
3 Whaly workboats (Andy Elson and Rob Clarke)	The maintenance of the designated sites in the Broads requires access to areas where conventional craft cannot reach. The Whaly 435R is an incredibly robust, double-walled boat manufactured from high-grade plastic (Polyethylene). This version is even stronger and has a foam layer on the interior, making it the preferred choice for professional use as a work boat.	£ 40,000	£24,580	Price of workboats and outboard engines was lower than the original estimate, giving the potential to purchase two additional outboard engines to replace other existing ones. (£24,580)
360 Excavator (Wayne Collins)	A bespoke 360 excavator built to exacting requirements to manage Marsh and fen. This machine requires low ground bearing tracks, a wide base and slim profile to allow access and enable working within a wetland environment.	£ 187,000	£242,800	Long reach JCB excavator meeting Broads Authority specifications available (£152,800) Potential to purchase additional 14 tonne fen excavator (£90,000) within the overall budget, if some of the smaller items (welfare unit, bog mats, dipper arm extension and weed bucket) are deferred until 2023/24.

Project	Purpose	Funding	Cost	Current Position
Water plant management machine (Rob Clarke)	Higher temperatures and more sunshine have contributed to an increase in water plant growth throughout the Broads. Waterways and broads need sensitive managed to create under-keel clearance and reduce suspended sediment, both increasing dissolved oxygen and improving the flow for fish and sensitive aquatic life within SSSI waterways. The Broads Authority has two such machines but in recent years these have been proven to be inadequate for the task and it is proposed to purchase a third machine.	£ 265,500	£264,500	Berkey weed harvester 6520 (£249,750) with towable fuel bowsers and fuel cube storage bowsers (£14,750) can be delivered and invoiced before 31 st March.
Reciprocating mower /brushcutters (Matt Dane)	Adapting to higher water levels and retain essential management of the fens and marshes requires various small, powered tools for use by staff and volunteers	£ 9,500	£13,940	Orders placed for brushcutters, chainsaws and a reciprocating mower.
Hulver Ground purchase (Sue Stephenson and Angie O'Connor)	How Hill National Nature Reserve forms a large area of established and designated fen within the River Ant valley, north of Ludham Bridge. An area of fen habitat adjacent to How Hill NNR that is currently managed by the Broads Authority under a land management agreement is due to be put up for auction. Purchase of this area of fen would safeguard the future	£ 150,000	£150,000	13 th December 2022: Norfolk Community Foundation confirm acceptance of offer of the Authority's offer of £150,000. Solicitors instructed.

Project	Purpose	Funding	Cost	Current Position
	management of this important habitat, containing rare plant species and communities, such as Crested Buckler-fern.			
Drainage structure repair at Strumpshaw Fen (Kate Knights)	Collapsed heritage drainage structure at Strumpshaw Fen is leading to significant flooding from the River Yare into the SSSI. Replacement of this sluice would allow for proper management of water levels on the site.	£ 60,000	£60,000	Structural Engineer appointed to produce schedule of work / specification for the drainage channel repair. This will enable production of tender documents for the contractor for this first element of the works. Awaiting two quotes and schedules of work for the extension of the pump outflow pipe and backfilling of the repaired drainage channel. On receipt of the above information, Planning permission, IDB consent under S23 of the Land Drainage Act, an EA bespoke FRAP, NE HRA scoping opinion applications will be made. Initial contact has been made with all of the relevant bodies. There is some risk associated with the timescales for the permissions; completing the tender process by the end of March; the availability of contractors and a potential constraint on working on site between May-September due to bats.
		£1,257,112	£1,257,112	

Capital items now not included to allow for purchase of 14 tonne fen excavator

Items	Estimated cost	Biodiversity benefits from intended usage
Steel Welfare Unit (liftable for use on workboats)	£8,000	Support staff welfare when working in remote waterways locations
Groundhog Road Towable Welfare Unit	£14,000	Support staff welfare when working in remote fen locations
Hardwood Bog Mats	£7,000	Enables access for excavators in soft peat soils and fens
Dipper Arm Extension for Fen Excavator	£10,500	Enables ditch management in soft peat areas where heavier machines cannot access
Weed Bucket for Fen Excavator	£4,500	Enables sensitive vegetation management in freshwater dykes, without disturbing sediments
Grazing livestock trailer	£12,000	For movement of the Authority's herd of grazing ponies between different fen sites
Grazing livestock field shelter	£6,000	For winter housing of the Authority's herd of grazing ponies at Buttle Marsh
30no. Mud Pumping Steel Pipes & accessories	£3,600	Enables sensitive transport of pumped sediment across existing habitats during habitat restoration/recreation schemes
Three Pontoon Scow Ends	£22,400	As above. Scow ends enable closer access to the shore for plant and equipment without impacting existing reed habitat
Two 10 metre pontoon spud legs	£22,000	Enables floating plant to remain stationary when working in sensitive aquatic habitats.
Roll out track matting roadway	£20,000	Temporary roadway to allow sensitive access for wheeled equipment when managing/harvesting vegetation in soft peat and wetland habitats
Total	£130,000	