

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE**

**29 September 2015**

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**CAPITAL CONTINGENCY FUNDING FOR REPLACEMENT OF THE TOP  
LOCK GATE AT TAPTON LOCK, ON THE CHESTERFIELD CANAL**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To seek capital contingency funding for the replacement of the life-expired top lock gate at Tapton Lock, on the Chesterfield Canal.

(2) **Information and Analysis** The Chesterfield Canal provides 5 miles of water and recreational towpath stretching from Chesterfield to Staveley. The canal was restored to navigation by Derbyshire County Council and the Chesterfield Canal Trust in the 1990s and early 2000s. Derbyshire County Council's Countryside Service manage the Canal and boat licencing, and are members of the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities.

Over the last decade, a systematic and prioritised programme has been undertaken to replace most of the original lock gates, which had reached the end of useful service, typically a 20 year lifespan. There now remains only two of the original gates, both of which are deteriorating, but one of which is reaching a point of failure.

The status of the two remaining original gates are:

- **The floodgate at Tapton Mill Bridge**, which allows regulation of water entering the entire canal system from the River Rother. This gate is in a slightly declining condition and is currently being monitored by the Countryside Service. It is currently considered to be in useable condition, but is likely to need replacement in 2016 or 2017.
- **The top lock gate at Tapton Lock** is in a declining and very poor condition, and is no longer watertight. It now requires urgent replacement in 2015.

Tapton Lock is the most frequently used lock on the Derbyshire section of the Chesterfield Canal, mainly due to the regularity of trip boats movements through the lock. The Chesterfield Canal Trust trip boat operates from Tapton Lock, and therefore the lock is used a minimum of four times per week, and often much more.

The current condition of Tapton top lock gate means that the gate does not effectively hold back water from entering the lock chamber, when the chamber is being emptied. Emptying the chamber is a more difficult and time-consuming process than it should be. The extended time required to empty the lock causes delays to the schedule of the trip boats.

Once the leaks become greater than the ability to empty the chamber, the Canal becomes unnavigable to boats beyond this point. The Canal needs the lock gates to function effectively to hold water in the stretch ('pound') above it. The inoperability of Tapton Lock would also impact upon income generation for the navigable waterway from boating, should this not be able to be repaired. The Chesterfield Canal Trust would lose income from operating its trip boat. In turn, Derbyshire County Council's Tapton Lock Visitor Centre would also lose income from a principal source of visitors.

The Countryside Service does not have sufficient revenue funds to support the necessary replacement of this lock gate, which has an estimated cost of £21,000. It therefore intends to make a request for this amount from the Capital Contingency Fund, to meet the cost of completing this project.

(3) **Financial Considerations** An estimate for the scheme has been submitted from one reputable lock gate manufacturer of £21,000. Further quotes from other manufacturers will be sought before placing an Order, to comply with Derbyshire County Council's Financial Regulations. The Countryside Service therefore seeks a maximum of this sum from the Capital Contingency Fund.

### **Other Considerations**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

(4) **Key Decision** No.

(5) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(6) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Gemma Gregory, extension 37612.

(7) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION** That a request be made to the capital board for an allocation of funding of a maximum of £21,000, from the Capital Contingency Fund.

**Mike Ashworth**  
**Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment**