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The Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP  
Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Copied to:

Simon Moody, Area Director for Solent and South Downs, Environment Agency  
Claire Francis, Area Flood & Coastal Risk Manager, Environment Agency

17 April 2024

Dear Secretary of State,

**Alverstoke Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Scheme (FCERM) –  
Updates following Storm Pierrick and Secretary of State funding**

In November 2023, through the Environment Agency, we responded to a Secretary of State Request to identify projects which currently have a Partnership Funding gap in the current Capital Investment Programme and that will deliver better flood protection to properties by March 2027. Alverstoke was one of the projects we identified as urgently needing additional funding.

This letter reiterates and confirms the urgent need for additional funding for the Alverstoke FCERM scheme to protect the surrounding community from future floods.

Alverstoke has a known significant tidal flooding risk, and the proposed scheme is part of Gosport Borough Council's (GBC) planning for the long-term future of our coastal communities.

Unfortunately, the proposed defence scheme has insufficient budget to be constructed and on Monday 8 April, the **Alverstoke community was flooded as a result of an exceptionally high tide surrounding Storm Pierrick.**

The subsequent images and reports from Alverstoke which have been shared widely on social media and the national press, show firsthand the devastation to the community with flooding to around 65 homes and five commercial properties, including many vehicles written off. Had homes not been evacuated overnight, then the impact may have been graver.

### **Protecting Gosport homes**

With additional funding, the completed flood defence scheme will **reduce the risk of coastal flooding for the Alverstoke community to 121 residential and 9 commercial properties** based on a 1% Annual Exceedance Probability flood event. This will help protect the community for the next 50 years against the increased risk from climate change effects.

### **Policy and strategic importance**

Delivery of this flood risk management scheme will contribute towards the Environment Agency's (EA) objectives for their National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy.

The scheme is an important part of Gosport Borough's adopted plans under two main strategic documents, and from which the scheme is derived – *the Shoreline Management Plan (2010) (SMP)* and the *River Hamble to Portchester Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy (2016)*. Under the SMP, this scheme is a key part of a 'hold the line' policy to maintain or upgrade the level of protection provided by coastal defences in this area.

### **Funding certainty**

GBC and the Environment Agency have invested heavily in the development of the scheme including studies and design. However, the scheme currently has a significant budget shortfall and construction is not possible without additional funds.

To complete the delivery of the works, an **additional £3.59M was requested to the Secretary of State** in November 2023. **This additional funding is crucial to be able to complete the scheme.** The Council is still awaiting confirmation whether this additional funding will be made available.

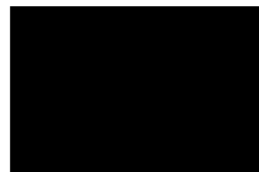
The Alverstoke community and stakeholder expectations have been raised, and for this scheme to not be delivered in this location, where the need has been so clearly demonstrated through recent events will be devastating and may put future lives at risk.

I look forward to your response at the earliest opportunity so that the scheme can be successfully delivered. Any further thinking or information relating to the request for additional funding made in November 2023 would be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Peter Chegwyn  
Leader of Gosport Borough Council



Debbie Gore  
Chief Executive