

## FLOOD LIAISON GROUP

TUESDAY, 12 JULY 2016

PRESENT: Councillors Jesse Grey (Chairman), John Lenton and Malcom Beer.  
Parish Councillors Harry Clasper

Also in attendance: Martin Coker (Cookham Parish) Ewan Larcombe (Wraysbury Parish), Alan Keene (Bisham Parish) Dick Scarf (Cookham Society) and James McFarlane

Environment Agency officers: Scott Salmon and Nick Reed

Thames Water officers: Cecilia Larkin and Alex Saunders

Officers: Wendy Binmore and Simon Lavin

### APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Kellaway, Parish Councillor Fiona Hower, Parish Councillor David Burfitt and Sarah Hale from the Environment Agency.

### MINUTES

Parish Councils requested more clarity on the Terms of Reference for the Flood Liaison Group as they felt that requiring representation by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman was too restrictive and also, the Chairman or Vice-Chairman might not have the expertise that other members of the parish councils might have. The Chairman of the Flood Liaison Group stated he would feed that back to the Lead Member as it was a valid point.

- ❖ **Action: The Chairman to feedback comments regarding the membership of the Flood Liaison Group in order to get clarity on the membership of the group in the Terms of Reference.**

**RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2016 be approved.**

### UPDATE FROM ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

#### Update on River Thames Scheme

The Environment Agency (EA) had a generic email address for River Thames Scheme queries which was regularly monitored. Any emails sent to that inbox would receive an informed response.

The River Thames Scheme was not just an EA scheme and treasury approval for the scheme was expected in 2017. There is a risk relating to securing sufficient funding. Currently, the cost of the scheme was estimated at £476m but there was a shortfall of £227.6m. However, the scheme would help save local communities benefitting from the scheme an expected £5bn from damages caused by flooding.

There was a £108m projected landfill tax and it was hoped that materials would be reused instead of heading to landfill which would help keep costs down. It was a complex arrangement so there would be a minerals plan and a reuse plan.

There was a funding strategy group Chaired by Cllr David Hodge of Surrey County Council, and Councillor Simon Dudley was a member of that group. Brochures were being released call 'a case for investment' which could be circulated to the Group. Full funding must be in place before the scheme is started. Planning permission for the flood channel had still to be secured. Site investigation work had flagged up issues such as land contamination so there may be some more costs or savings to be found.

1D and 2D models were being developed. The 1D model extends for Henley to Southend and the 2D model extends from Hurley to Teddington. The River Thames Scheme model is the largest model prepared in Europe and is the largest and most complex model prepared by the EA. There is still some scope to adjust the channel route and the modelling will be used to assess this. The modelling will also be used to assess potential benefits and impacts of temporary defences.

There will be ecology and environment surveys being carried out and a community engagement exercise would take place. Scott Salmon will lead on community engagement in RBWM area.

There were 21 separate parcels of land to negotiate for the channel in the RBWM area and seven habitat risk assessments.

The overall business case was due to be submitted by January 2018, and the EA would be circulating a regular newsletter.

PCllr Clasper commented that there was a lot of information to absorb and suggested that a special meeting took place to help understand all the information. Scott Salmon from the EA said he would make the request for a special meeting but could not guarantee that it would take place. The Chairman stated he would also approach the River Thames Scheme Project Manager requesting that such a meeting be arranged.

PCllr Clasper also sought clarity regarding the funding requirements for the scheme and the EA confirmed that the project needed to have all funding in place by January 2018, and whether a commitment to complete the full scheme existed and the Chairman confirmed that it did.

#### Update on Middle Thames Flood Alleviation Plan

The Environment Agency was still collecting a lot of information and was working with Thames Water (TW). The next step was to discuss concerns with the Borough and County Councils along this length of the Thames. The EA would then engage with all of the Thames side parish councils. It was a national project looking at the Thames from the downstream end of the Oxford scheme, in the Cotswolds, through to the upstream end of the Maidenhead Windsor and Eton Flood Alleviation Scheme. The EA confirmed that the Middle Thames plan and the Lower Thames scheme overlapped. A feasibility study was taking place and the EA was looking into flood storage areas more closely and were keeping all options open.

The EA was also taking a more strategic approach to the deployment of temporary flood defences, trying to defend against more frequent flood events, and ensuring that temporary defences are placed in areas where they will work.

#### Update on Marlow Flood Alleviation Scheme

Detailed design is currently in progress and tenders for construction will go out shortly. Some advance works were due to start in late 2016 with construction of the main scheme due to start in Spring 2017. The EA were also looking at deploying temporary flood defences in the event of flooding occurring in the interim. The EA confirmed that they were keen to talk to

Bisham Parish Council prior to commencement of the construction of the Marlow Flood Alleviation Scheme. James McFarlane asked how interlinked the various Thames schemes were, and the EA confirmed that the River Thames Scheme, Middle Thames Plan and Marlow Schemes were linked. James McFarlane sought confirmation of the extent of the River Thames Scheme and the EA confirmed that the scheme extended from Datchet to Teddington through Runnymede and Spelthorne.

Martin Coker asked that the EA update Cookham Parish Council on progress on the Marlow Flood Alleviation scheme, as they were just downstream of Marlow, and the EA confirmed that they would include Cookham Parish Council in all correspondence.

## UPDATE FROM THAMES WATER

### Flood risk prioritisation and identification of synergies for partnership working

Thames Water (TW) were looking at their next asset management period. As the Flood Liaison Group was locally focused TW were looking to pursue this with the Berkshire Strategic Flood Risk Management Group. TW were however very keen to gather information from forums and groups as this would help them to prioritise investment based on risk.

### Bin it, don't block it campaign

Thames Water has carried out a local campaign and will continue with the campaign in reactive capacity when looking at sewer abuse – fat and oil blocking the drains.

On a wider scale, TW were trying to work with Water UK so they could focus on larger food retail establishments; Water UK could engage with the larger food outlets, letting them know what they can do to help, for example fitting grease recovery units. There was also a proactive media campaign that would be carried out in problem areas.

PCllr Clasper asked whether Thames Water could share details of sewer abuse hotspots? Thames Water indicated that they did not publish information on sewer abuse hotspots, TW were still finalising clusters of hotspots, but added that there was definitely a cluster of hotspots in Slough and the Windsor areas. Once Thames Water know for sure, they would pass that information on to the parish councils so they could help with the campaign.

Thames Water were working on a set of standards indicating what was deemed flushable, to prevent blockages from items such as wipes, nappies and baby wipes. This standard should be ready within two years.

Councillor Beer stated that all licenced food outlets should have oil traps fitted and that this should be made a condition through the building regulations. Thames Water stated that this had been discussed at a meeting the previous week. While TW could enforce outlets not to let unsuitable waste go in to the sewer they could not tell them how to dispose of this waste.

Councillor Beer congratulated Thames water on their consultation and liaison undertaken during the ongoing works on Ham Island bridge. TW reported that the preparation work was taking longer than anticipated and that they had secured a second under bridge works unit, Thames Water were very grateful to the residents for being patient.

Thames Water apologised for the lack of progress on the “lift and look” survey on the sewer system in the Cookham area. All agreed however that this survey needed to be undertaken during wet weather / a period of elevated groundwater levels

Thames Water indicated that it is essential that any reports requiring urgent action be reported to the Thames Water helpline, which is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, so that contacts can be properly logged and tracked through to completion. The Thames Water

helpline number is 0800 316 9800 and their email address is [customer.feedback@thameswater.co.uk](mailto:customer.feedback@thameswater.co.uk)

#### Update on impacts of recent flood event and actions

Thames Water reported that recent rainfall events had had no significant impacts on their systems. The flooding of the Theatre Royal in Windsor had been a result of sewer abuse.

#### UPDATE FROM RBWM

##### Update on Capital Programme

- Shepherds Lane, Hurley has been substantially completed.
- The 2016/17 Capital Programme had been approved by Cabinet in May including.
- £75k highway drainage programme – including South Meadow Lane Eton culvert works, Brook Lane Waltham St Lawrence passing points and flap valve on outfall to Datchet Common Brook
- £50k for minor highway drainage works.
- £25k for reactive highway drainage works i.e. minor repairs jetting and drain cleaning.
- £25k for works on the Wraysbury Drain in the vicinity of the Dive Centre
- £50k for prioritised works from the Waltham Study
- £50k for prioritised works from the Fifield Study
- £25k contribution towards EA costs in investigating the feasibility / modelling of possible schemes in the Bisham / Cookham areas.
- £285k ongoing commitment towards the development of the River Thames Scheme.
- £50k for the development of a register of structures and features with a significant affect on flood risk
- £20k for the development of second round Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment
- £100k for culvert replacement in Waltham Road Waltham St Lawrence (near Grove Park Business Estate)

A query was raised regarding gully emptying and Simon Lavin responded stating that there was a routine gully emptying programme in place.. The majority of gullies were cleaned once a year. Some roads were however cleaned four times per year and there was also a reactive programme in place.

Scott Salmon asked for a contact point within the Borough regarding emergency planning issues and Simon Lavin stated that Craig Miller, Head of Community Protection & Enforcement, was the correct person to contact regarding emergency planning.

##### Update on impacts of recent flood event and actions

- Flooding had been experienced at 4 locations in Windsor and 2 in Old Windsor. Albany Road and Meadow Lane needed to be investigated
- Simon Lavin stated he was also aware of incidents in Datchet in Link Road and engineers were currently looking at that. Flooding also occurred in Lawn Close and part of London Road in Datchet which were private streets and legal advice had therefore been sought regarding possible actions.

#### PARISH FLOOD GROUP UPDATE

Cllr Beer raised an issue relating to the presence of mink in water courses across the Borough including Ham Island. The presence of mink was a Borough-wide issue and was decimating vole populations.

Simon Lavin said he would seek advice from the Borough's ecologist.

Martin Coker raised an issue relating to the erection of temporary buildings in the flood plan and Simon Lavin responded stating that "minor planning" applications were not routinely referred to the Borough's Flood Risk Management Team. Simon Lavin confirmed he was aware of the site Martin was referring to and was in discussion with the Town Planning Team.

### ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- The EA were to make an appointment with Bisham Parish Council regarding the Marlow Flood Alleviation scheme – when they had progressed the scheme to a suitable point they would arrange to meet Bisham Parish Council and it was envisaged that this meeting was imminent. Bisham Parish council would liaise with the EA outside the Flood Liaison Group meeting.
- Thames Water indicated that the flood defence work at the Lightlands Lane pump station had been completed. It would work with some flooding but, if fully submerged, it would not. If the whole area was submerged during flooding, then there would be nowhere to pump the water too anyway. Martin Coker asked whether the electronic controls within the control kiosk had been raised and Thames Water representatives confirmed that they would talk to pumping station colleagues to see what could be done to ensure that the pump station was as flood resilient as possible.

Mr Ewan Larcombe addressed the flood group stating he was not against the River Thames Scheme but he was not happy that the Jubilee River Scheme did not work properly and that there was no dredging taking place. Members of the flood Liaison Group stated there had been dredging on the Thames from Reading to Teddington which took 49 years and that the points raised by Mr Larcombe were valid.

- ❖ **Action: The EA to formally confirm their current position on dredging and provide an update to the next Flood Liaison Group meeting.**

### FUTURE MEETINGS

- 17 January 2014
- 3 April 2017

The meeting, which began at 6.00 pm, finished at 8.07 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....