

FLOOD LIAISON GROUP

TUESDAY, 27 JULY 2021

PRESENT: Councillor David Cannon (Chairman), Councillor Gerry Clark, Councillor Ewan Larcombe, Parish Councillor Martin Coker (Cookham), Parish Councillor Jim Cooke (Bisham), Parish Councillor Mike Williams (Wraysbury), Parish Councillor Malcolm Beer (Old Windsor), Parish Councillor Helen Philip (Cookham), Dick Scarff, Bruce McArthur, Zia Cooke, Claire Taylor, Laura Regazzacci, Bob Austen and Colin Lemmings

Also in attendance: Councillor John Baldwin, Councillor Gurpreet Bhangra, Councillor Mandy Brar, Councillor David Coppinger and Councillor Samantha Rayner

Officers: Denise Kinsella, Simon Dale, Sue Fox, Brianne Vally and Mark Beeley

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from David Burfitt, Councillor Stimson and Ian Thompson.

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 11th May 2021 be approved as an accurate record.

Martin Coker asked for further information on flood boards being replaced, which had been discussed a few meetings ago. Sue Fox suggested to email her so this could be investigated.

ACTION – Martin Coker to email Sue Fox about the replacement of flood boards.

ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Brianne Vally said that she would seek further information from colleagues in Hertfordshire and North London on the maintenance programme.	Completed. Brianne Vally said that the maintenance programme could be accessed online, with schemes subject to funding. There would be a stretch between high sand and the Thames that was expected to receive aquatic vegetation maintenance, this work would be carried out by contractors. ACTION – Councillor Cannon, Councillor Larcombe and Mike Williams to inform Brianne Vally of pinch points that they were aware of.
Denise Kinsella to liaise with Ian Thompson about a site visit for Datchet Common Brook blockage.	This was still being arranged. A number of the contractor team had been self-isolating but this had not affected any work.
Brianne Vally to provide an update on the Black Potts Weir work.	The latest newsletter had been distributed in May 2021 and Brianne Vally would provide further information later in the meeting.
Brianne Vally advised members that the measurements were available to view online for the level boards upstream of	Completed. This information had been distributed and circulated to the group.

Black Potts weir and commonality of river level measurements.	
Gully Maintenance Regime presentation slides to be distributed to the group.	Completed.

UPDATE FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Brianne Vally, Environment Agency, provided members with an update. For rain catchment, the Thames catchment received 79% of the average rainfall in July with most river flows decreasing. There had been some isolated showers which had impacted the London area. The latest update on Black Potts Weir had been circulated in May 2021, with the main headline being that work on the weir would be paused to allow the Royal Windsor Horse Show to take place. During the gap, some repair work had been completed at Manor Farm Weir and the team was now back on site at Black Potts with completion scheduled for the autumn.

Brianne Vally mentioned the Thames Valley Flood Scheme consultation, which would be running from 26th May through to 20th August. A team had been set up to look at flooding across the Thames Valley catchment to reduce the risk in the area. It would look to manage the increased impact of climate change and support communities where local schemes did not currently exist, although it was not a substitute for schemes which were not yet happening in the Datchet and Wrybury area. The flood risk management plan consultation would be taking place in the autumn.

Councillor Bhangra joined the meeting.

Dick Scarff asked when work on the Cookham bund would be likely to take place.

Brianne Vally said that the scope of work had been passed on to contractors but she would take it away to confirm.

ACTION – Brianne Vally to confirm with contractors when work would take place.

Dick Scarff had noted that the issue was animal damage and asked what animals had caused the damage.

Brianne Vally said that small animal burrows in the bund were the reason for the damage. Adding piling to the bund had been investigated to see if it could add greater protection.

Dick Scarff asked how much of the bund was being piled and whether other alternatives would be looked at. He asked if there was any new information on the Odney Weir being reopened.

Brianne Vally had noted Dick Scarff's email regarding this issue but had not yet been able to speak with the relevant officer. It was agreed that this would be picked up outside the meeting as it was not directly flood related.

Councillor Baldwin had noted that the flood risk management plan would be published in the autumn and commented that this was late in the year to be publishing a plan.

Brianne Vally explained that the consultation would be published in the autumn. The plan was reviewed on a six year rolling basis, with the first cycle taking place from 2015-2021 and the second cycle taking place from 2021-2027.

Councillor Baldwin asked how documents for the consultation would be circulated.

Brianne Vally said that this was something that the team would work on this summer and they would look to have an engagement plan in place. The plan would be available for all to access through the Citizen Space website.

The Chairman said it would be included as part of members and residents newsletters once it was available.

Councillor Baldwin said that the plan should focus on the residents who were affected by the plan.

Councillor Larcombe said that the Windsor park gauge had a large cage around it. He asked what this was for.

Brianne Vally asked Councillor Larcombe to email her after the meeting and she would investigate and report back to the group.

ACTION – Councillor Larcombe to email Brianne Vally, the response would be circulated to the Flood Liaison Group.

UPDATE FROM THAMES WATER

Denise Kinsella provided an update to members of the group. She said that there was 32km of planned cleaning for the year, for which about 8km had so far been completed. The year ran from April to April. For sewage depth monitors, there were 62 in the catchment area of Maidenhead and there were 18 in the Windsor area. 26 blockages were identified by Thames Water using these monitors in the Maidenhead area, while there were 3 blockages identified in Windsor. In Moneyrow Green, a local engineer had been sent out and identified some work was needed on manholes, some would be converted to no leak covers. A clean was also conducted of around 1km of sewer and significant amounts of scale and iron were removed. London had been impacted with some flooding recently and some teams from Thames Water had helped out.

Councillor Coppinger thanked Denise Kinsella and her team on behalf of the residents of Moneyrow Green and noticed that there were a number of new vehicles that the team used.

Denise Kinsella said that the fleet available to Thames Water was always being upgraded.

Councillor Brar asked if there was an update on Lightlands Lane pumping station and if the drains had been cleared on White Ladies Lane.

Denise Kinsella confirmed that White Ladies Lane was on the planned maintenance programme. She was unsure of work taking place at Lightlands Lane.

Martin Coker said that recent flooding in Cookham had been caused by surface water and drainage as Lightlands Lane was the lowest point in Cookham.

Sue Fox said that there was an item on surface water flooding in Cookham on the capital programme. She would check if this was related to the issues on Lightlands Lane.

ACTION – Sue Fox to check if Lightlands Lane was part of the work outlined for Cookham in the capital programme.

UPDATE FROM RBWM

Sue Fox, Principal Flood Risk Management Officer, said that there had been a significant amount of rainfall recently and there was a focus on areas which had experienced surface water flooding, where it had highlighted some areas where capacity was overwhelmed. As had been mentioned in the Environment Agency update, the flood risk management plan

consultation would be launched soon and there were two areas that had been identified in the borough, one in Maidenhead and one in Windsor. The borough would be putting a response together to the Basin Valley Plan. Sue Fox said that the River Thames infrastructure project press release had been distributed last week and asked that if any members had any thoughts to let her know. The Environment Agency had released modelling so that RBWM could assess the wider impact on local measures. RBWM had submitted some bids into the Environment Agency's refresh programme which would allow the council to understand how the catchments worked and what measures were needed. Highway drainage work was being prioritised but it had been noted that some issues when cleaning gullies had not been sorted so it was important that these were reported to Thames Water. The scheme in Meadow Way was now complete and should be running, but if there were any issues spotted residents were encouraged to use the 'Report It' tool. Cleaning would take place on the Safeway's which should alleviate any wet spots which were caused by a lack of capacity.

For the flooding on Moneyrow Green, as properties had been flooded a draft section 19 investigation report had been prepared which would be shared with partners for review. The council was working with Thames Water and the Environment Agency to solve issues with flooding in this area. There was also flooding in Fifield in June, the council had been cleaning the highway drains in this area as a result.

Sue Fox was undertaking a refresh of the RBWM webpage and asked if anyone on the group had any ideas on what should be included to drop her an email.

Martin Coker said that the password on the website did not work. He was advised to contact the Customer Services team if he was having any technical difficulties accessing any part of the RBWM website.

Councillor Brar asked why Cookham and Bisham were not part of the flood scheme.

Sue Fox explained that channel one was designed to protect the lower section of the Thames, in Datchet, Horton and Wraysbury.

The Chairman said that funding had already been provided for this scheme but there was general flooding funding available for the whole borough. If any areas needed to be looked at, RBWM could investigate.

Claire Taylor thanked RBWM for their work on Eton Wick Road on sorting out issues with standing water.

Councillor Baldwin asked why there was no written report for the RBWM update. He suggested that the information that had been provided should be available as a physical report in the agenda pack so that it could be easily distributed.

The Chairman said that the Flood Liaison Group was not a formal meeting and therefore written reports were not a requirement. He said that Sue Fox had asked for suggestions for the website and Councillor Baldwin could suggest that appropriate documents be made available there.

Dick Scarff asked if the outlets of the balancing pond in Cookham Dean would be added to the gully cleaning and maintenance programme.

Sue Fox asked Dick Scarff to send her the details of the location and she would look into it.

ACTION – Dick Scarff to send Sue Fox the location of the balancing pond in Cookham Dean.

Councillor Coppinger asked if there was any update on the work on the polo fields.

Janet Crame said that physical reports would be useful to have so that information could be distributed easily.

The Chairman said that he could discuss the idea with officers to see if it was feasible.

Sue Fox said that the capital programme had been scrutinised and passed as part of the Budget. She was happy to discuss with the Chairman and see what could be done for future meetings.

Bruce McArthur asked if there had been any further work on polo fields as flooding was becoming a problem. He felt that RBWM was not using the powers available to them in regard to planning applications being built on areas with high flood risk. He suggested that there should be more done to make sure that applications were only built on appropriate land.

The Chairman suggested that these comments could be emailed to Sue Fox so that she could consider them.

Sue Fox said that the Rolls Lane application was dealt with under different powers. A bid had been put in for the catchments and this would involve engagement work with all stakeholders in the area.

UPDATE FROM THE PARISH COUNCILS

Martin Coker said that Cookham Parish Council had changed their Flood Committee to be a major incident committee. Terms of Reference had been written and volunteers could be looked after and supported.

Colin Lemmings said that Bisham had a fairly new Flood Committee which was in the process of being set up. There was hope that it would be ready for the autumn, with a place confirmed of Bisham Abbey to store equipment and materials.

Councillor Baldwin asked how parish councils could inform the borough of flood risks that could be handled differently.

Martin Coker said that parish councils worked together on flood risks and managed risks effectively.

Councillor Rayner joined the meeting.

Claire Taylor said that there had been a lot of standing water in Eton but stakeholders and the council had dealt with it well. She asked if Martin Coker could restart his training programme soon.

Martin Coker explained that he had been ill recently so had been unable to run the programme.

Councillor Larcombe said that Datchet Common brook was blocked near Sunnymeads Station. He asked when Wraysbury drain would be fixed.

The Chairman suggested that Councillor Larcombe use the Report It tool to inform the council of the blockage.

Sue Fox noted the blockage at Datchet Common and said that enforcement action had commenced on Wraysbury drain. A number of the contractor team had been 'pinged' and were unable to undertake a site visit, this would take place in August.

Councillor Rayner said that the Eton Wick waterways group were key stakeholders in progress being made to improve flooding issues in the ward.

Bruce McArthur said that it would be good to have a bigger budget for flooding matters in the borough.

The meeting, which began at 6.00 pm, finished at 7.25 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....