

## FLOOD LIAISON GROUP

TUESDAY, 17 JANUARY 2017

PRESENT: Councillors Jesse Grey (Chairman), Malcolm Beer, John Lenton, Richard Kellaway, Harry Clasper and Martin Coker.

Also in attendance: Jim Cooke (Bisham Parish Council), James McFarlane, Dick Scarff, Denise Kinsella and Cyril Mitkov from Thames Water and Nick Read and Brianne Vally from the Environment Agency

Officers: Wendy Binmore and Simon Lavin

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

### MINUTES

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2016 be approved subject to the following amendment:

**The item on the Update from RBWM, should read *Tylehurst Place* and not Tilehurst Place.**

### UPDATE FROM ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Nick Read from the Environment Agency gave a brief update on activities undertaken by the Environment Agency (EA). Members note the following key points:

- The EA confirmed that their position on dredging had not changed.
  - Parish Councils were waiting for an update regarding the Middle Thames Scheme modelling.
  - The EA were due to run scenarios around the Borough and they had been programmed in and would be running in the next month or so.
  - The EA had introduced a programme for standard maintenance works based on modelling and were also considering what could be done around imminent issues such as flash flooding which occurred outside of their standard maintenance schedules.
  - Bathymetric survey's had been carried out to see the changes in the river beds and there were some expected changes present in the levels but, they were not significant. A detailed report should be made available from the consultant which carried out the surveys.
- ❖ **Action:** Nick Read, Environment Agency to circulate the Bathymetric survey report to Panel Members.

PCllr Ian Thompson enquired whether the Borough were prepared to fund proposed small works in Datchet. The works would provide 10 years of flood defences and would be a win, win for the residents of Datchet. He added that flood defences had been modelled and the parish council had been told they would be included as part of the River Thames Scheme but, he wondered if they could be installed quicker. Simon Lavin, Flood Risk Manager confirmed that any programme of small works would need to go through the Cabinet Budget Prioritisation process. PCllr Ian Thompson offered to send the Chairman and the Flood Risk Manager a schedule of small works required in Datchet. The Chairman stated it might be possible to apply for funding from the Regional and Coastal Flood Group.

- ❖ **Action:** PCllr Ian Thompson to send the Chairman and the Flood Risk Manager a list of small works to potentially be carried out in Datchet.

## UPDATE FROM THAMES WATER

Cyril Mitkov, Thames Water stated there were currently no particular issues. Following the previous meeting of the Flood Liaison Group and the discussion around the heavy rainfall in September 2016, Cyril Mitkov confirmed that nothing had been reported to Thames Water. He added that although Thames Water did look into flooding due to the heavy rainfall, if it was not reported, there was not a lot they could do to rectify any problems. As soon as a flood event took place, if it was reported directly to Thames Water, they would get a crew out to survey the site and remedy any faults.

Denise Kinsella, Thames Water stated that ground water levels were low which meant they were not able to do a look and lift until the water levels were higher. She added that the Bin It, Don't Block It campaign continued in conjunction with maintenance works being carried out in the Borough.

The chairman stated there had been a vast improvement in communications with Thames Water and Parish Councils had also highlighted the improvements; he added that the improvements in communication had been well received. Denise Kinsella informed Members that their helpline number was printed on every customer bill and it was also on their website. She also confirmed for Members that the number to call to report anything was **0800 316 9800** and that all calls were monitored and followed up on to ensure issues were being dealt with.

The Chairman requested clarity on who had responsibility for drains as residents were not always clear. The Flood Risk Manager stated that any foul sewer serving more than one property was generally the responsibility of Thames Water. Any foul drain outside of the property was the responsibility of Thames Water and any showing on Thames Water's records were also looked after by Thames Water. Highway drains that were not showing on Thames Water records were the responsibility of the Borough.

- ❖ **Action:** the Flood Risk Manager to circulate to Members a list of contacts for different emergencies and also to clarify which drains are owned by RBWM and which drains are the responsibility of Thames Water.
- ❖ **Action:** The Flood Risk Manager to circulate the web link for private pump station guidance.

Members noted that a survey of surface water drainage had been carried out and that due to heavy rain, and a blockage in the drains, there was water coming out from under manhole covers. The Flood Risk Manager offered to meet with parish councillors to identify which manhole covers so he could send someone out to find the blockage and resolve the issues.

- ❖ **Action:** The Flood Risk Manager with Datchet Parish Councillors to meet and identify where the water was overflowing from manhole covers.

## UPDATE FROM RBWM

The Flood Risk Manager stated that following localised flooding in September 2016, the drainage had been checked in 12 separate areas. Questionnaires had been sent out to properties in the effected areas and responses received including from commercial properties; therefore, the Borough was likely to undertake flood investigations..

There had been discussions in December 2016 for finalise routes of channels through Datchet, Horton and Wraysbury for the River Thames Scheme. The EA were to provide an update on the preferred route in the near future.

The Chairman suggested that a site visit be carried out to walk along the proposed route of the channels to see where they went. He added there was still a funding gap with the scheme even though it had received the go ahead from central government. There was a dedicated team to raise funds to help close the funding gap. The Chairman confirmed the funding gap was approximately £150m.

- ❖ **Action:** The Flood Risk Manager to confirm the exact figure of the funding gap for the River Thames Scheme.

The Chairman confirmed that although the Flood Team was being outsourced, the intention was to ensure continuity of service through the meetings of the Flood Liaison Group. The Council had to deliver services differently and that was part of it.

## PARISH FLOOD GROUP UPDATE

Members noted that there had been localised flash flooding in June 2016 in Old Windsor. The Borough had carried out some work but still needed to go out to tender for the remainder of the works just off Straight Road. There was also water discharging off Windsor Great Park and there had been no news on that being prevented as yet. The Flood Risk Manager confirmed that a hole had been dug in a garden in Meadow Way and was progressing to completion.

PCllr Clasper read out Section seven of the Borough Local Plan policy on managing flood risk and waterways and stated the issue was the site at Hythe End Farm. There were works going on there that were potentially on the line of the River Thames Scheme route. The Chairman confirmed the site was where the channel would pass and would incorporate the site. The Flood Risk Manager confirmed that there was an appeal against enforcement and he thought the Borough was looking to protect the site for the channel. Cllr Lenton said significant amounts of concrete had been laid on the flood plane and the Borough had failed to introduce enforcement. The site had also been expanded and that could be seen using satellite images. The Environment Agency explained they could not comment on the issues that were ongoing but, they had communicated with residents at Hythe End regarding their ongoing concerns.

Cllr Lenton stated that Wraysbury Flood Group were unable to work out the insurance cover for volunteers helping out during flood events. Members noted that the insurance was provided through the Borough; when the flood wardens signed on in the parish office, they were then covered by the Borough. Cllr Beer said it needed clarifying as during the last floods, Old Windsor received no communications or information at all and were told that their nearest command centre was in Datchet but, no one was told that in Old Windsor. Cllr Lenton stated he would write to the Lead Member explaining that forms were required by the parishes so they could be signed when volunteers turned up to help and then they would be insured to help.

Cllr Beer confirmed the bridge to Ham Island was near completion and he had received communications from Ham Island residents that they were very happy with the works.

## ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- The EA had included Cookham Parish Council in correspondence regarding the Marlow Flood Alleviation Scheme.
- Thames Water had circulated their email to parish councils a pdf of their bin it, don't block it campaign.
- Regarding keeping the pumping station operational during flooding, Thames Water had extended their flood wall and replaced the soak away which would prevent ground water coming up into the pumping station. Denise Kinsella had spoken to the designers and there were no changes to the kiosk.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The meeting, which began at Time Not Specified, finished at Time Not Specified

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....