

FLOOD LIAISON GROUP

WEDNESDAY, 31 JULY 2019

PRESENT: Councillors David Cannon (Chairman), Neil Knowles and Ewan Larcombe Malcolm Beer, David Burfitt, Martin Coker, Mike Williams, David Cannon (Chairman) and Larcombe Dick Scarff, Ian Thompson, and Andrew Moran

Also in attendance: Denise Kinsella (Thames Water), David Bedlington and Brianne Vally (The Environment Agency)

Officers: Wendy Binmore, Carolyn Richardson and Simon Lavin

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 April 2019 be approved.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE FLOOD LIAISON GROUP

The Chairman explained that the suggested changes to the Terms of Reference would bring them up to date. The suggested changes were agreed unanimously by the Forum and it was also agreed to have a Forum Representative from Horton Parish Council added to the Membership as well as the appropriate Emergency Planning Manager. Members of the Forum agreed that it was up to each Parish Council to nominate their representatives and that there should be one representative nominated per Parish Council.

Members noted that the Flood Liaison Group would continue to meet four times per year and that additional meetings could be called as and when required, for example during a flooding event. The Chairman also explained that if there were any items to be added to the agenda, they should be submitted to the Forum Clerk and the Chairman at least two weeks in advance of the meeting which would allow full responses to be prepared.

MEETING ARRANGEMENTS AND VENUE

The Chairman gave the option to Members of the Flood Liaison Group to meet at York House and alternate venues for the meetings between the Town Hall in Maidenhead and York House in Windsor. However, the Forum Members agreed to continue to hold the Flood Liaison Group meetings at Maidenhead.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Flood Liaison Group meetings would continue to be held at the Town Hall in Maidenhead.

ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Flood Risk Manager to let Ian Thompson know when the CCTV survey work was being carried out by Volker Highways

Simon Lavin, Flood Risk Manager stated Volker Highways had issued an order for the works but had still to confirm a start date for the works. The order was for the works to be completed as soon as possible, he added he would chase Volker Highways for an update on when the works were to be carried out.

- ❖ **Action** – The Flood Risk Manager to request a start date for the works and then let Ian Thompson know.

Members requested an update on the Fowles Crushed Concrete site in Wraysbury, from an EA aspect. Brianne Valley confirmed she would bring an update to the next meeting.

Brianne Vally, Environment Agency (EA) had been in touch with the Hertfordshire and North London Team regarding this issue but, as enforcement action is ongoing, she was unable to discuss details. However, there were some community meetings taking place in August 2019 so she would be able to provide a much more detailed update at the next meeting. The Chairman stated that the community had been very active on this issue. Brianne Vally responded that the dates for the meetings had been set for the beginning of August 2019 but, she did not think they were public meetings. The Chairman asked if official people such as elected Parish Councillors and Ward Councillors could be involved as there was an expectation that Borough and Parish Council representatives would be involved.

The Joint Emergency Planning Manager to email Members an invitation to attend a teleconference of flood wardens

The Joint Emergency Planning Manager confirmed the teleconference was due to take place on 26 November 2019 at 6.30pm

UPDATE FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

David Bedlington from the EA gave an update on the River Thames Scheme. He explained that developments on the RTS had been relatively quiet while funding for the scheme was sought. The basis of a funding solution was now being worked through and was being led by Surrey County Council. The government's sponsorship group met on the week commencing 22 July 2019 and said they were satisfied and confident that the scheme should progress, so it was now progressing at speed. An outline business case had been submitted, and this would go to the Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and then to the Treasury for approval. At this stage the scheme would need to demonstrate that full funding was in place. The Chairman commented that following a meeting between Councillor Simon Dudley, Tim Oliver (Leader, Surrey County Council) and himself, a paper would be presented to both Surrey and RBWM Cabinets. It is likely that this paper will go to the RBWM's Cabinet on 26th September. The Flood Liaison Group would then be informed of the outcome.

David Bedlington explained that the next phase was to complete the technical work which needed to be ramped up again and then enter a phase of public engagement prior to submission of a planning application in Summer 2021. He anticipated a couple of rounds of public consultation with the planning submission planned for two years from now. David Bedlington stated pre-planning application advice had been received and that helped to work through any potential issues and address impacts prior to submission. He then confirmed that the scheme was still going through internal EA approval, then it would go to DEFRA and then onto the Treasury for approval which allowed more scrutiny earlier in the process which the project would benefit from. David Bedlington confirmed the project was still in the approval stage and the funding was not quite finalised at this point in time.

David Bedlington indicated that he had some presentations which illustrate the likely timeline of progress of the project that he was able to circulate to the Forum. If everything went really smoothly construction could start as early as 2023, depending on any public enquiry and ministerial approval. The build period was estimated at four to five years and the EA were

engaging with the market as it was a bespoke project and needed a bespoke procurement exercise. David Bedlington confirmed there would be no Development Consent Order for the scheme, and that consultation in the form of public events would take place prior to submission of the formal planning application as the EA wanted real engagement on the project. Councillor Beer commented that the public would want to see traffic management in place during construction. David Bedlington indicated that all three channels would be completed at the same time to keep construction as swift as possible.

Dick Scarf asked if there would be any liaison or negotiations with Heathrow due to the third runway. David Bedlington responded that the two schemes were totally separate schemes. The EA were however looking at how the third runway works could be a potential risk to the RTS (in terms of potential impact on the construction market). The Chairman stated Staines, Datchet, Wraysbury and Horton would suffer massively due to the construction traffic. David Bedlington stated there was also a proposed gas pipeline being built from Southampton to Heathrow so the area could be very busy.

Brianne Valley from the EA indicated that there were two pieces of strategic work regarding flood risk management that needed to be carried out; A Thames Flood Risk Management Plan (as required by the Flood Risk Regulations 2009), a collation of all measures the EA took to alleviate flooding and also, a River Basin Management Plan. Consultations would take place over the next couple of years. Users could view a map to see what measures were available to them in their areas, all the information would be made available in one place.

Brianne Vally confirmed that a decision had not been made regarding the transfer of the Environment Agency's navigation role to the Canal and River Trust and that she would try to find out more information on this issue. David Bedlington stated the transfer over of responsibility to the Canal and River Trust was not an EA decision, it was a government decision. The EA tried to provide information to the government to advise on any changes.

Councillor Larcombe stated there was a problem with the Wraysbury Drain and the recently completed repair of the weir on the Horton Drain. Following repair of the weir water would get as far as the dive centre where there was a bridge. Gravel had been allowed to build up in the watercourse at this point and would obstruct flow. He requested a leaflet about landowner's responsibilities similar to an older publication prepared by the Environment Agency called Living on the Edge. Brianne Vally responded all the information on landowner's responsibility was kept online. She offered to download the documentation and forward it to Parish Councillors and Ward Members for circulation. The Chairman stated he was happy to discuss that offline, outside of the meeting with Brianne Vally. Simon Lavin said he would also look into it as he was quite sure the Borough had also produced literature on landowner's responsibilities for maintenance when living on the edge of the waterways.

- ❖ **Action** – The clerk to circulate the presentation on the likely timeline for progression of the River Thames Scheme to the Members of the Flood Liaison Group.
- ❖ **Action** – Brianne Vally to find any information on the possible transfer of responsibilities for navigation to the Canal and River Trust and to circulate prior to the next meeting.

UPDATE FROM THAMES WATER

Denise Kinsella, Thames Water, stated she had attended meetings regarding Ham Island Sewage Treatment Works with the Parish Council and another meeting was being scheduled as questions around capacity of the works have been raised. Thames Water felt that the site was compliant, is operating within its capacity and that there is sufficient capacity for future development. There were no plans to do any extra work to the site apart from general maintenance. Councillor Knowles stated there was a Neighbourhood Plan going through for Old Windsor and the capacity of the sewage treatment works was mentioned within it. A survey was carried out to form the Local Plan. Effluent is currently directed into storage lagoons when capacity is reached; there was however talk of removing the lagoons and

sewage would then go directly into the Thames when capacity was reached. Denise Kinsella responded that she would check, but some other sites followed the same procedure. Each treatment works operated differently during a flooding event, some will go to storm storage lagoons and some could go to a watercourse via a combined sewer overflow. Thames Water were providing details to Parish Councils on how Ham Island treatment works operates.

Denise Kinsella summarised the rest of her update stating Thames Water were continuing with their Bin It, Don't Block It campaign and also with their programme of planned maintenance.

RBWM UPDATE

Simon Lavin, Flood Risk Manager stated that the work on the Horton Drain Weir had been completed and that he understood that water was now flowing over the weir.

The Coningsby Lane Flood Risk Management scheme, previously delayed due to the presence of great crested newts, had now been substantially completed.

Feathers Lane land drainage enforcement issues were still ongoing and planning enforcement had served a notice requiring the removal all hardstanding. It is likely that a land drainage enforcement notice will be served requiring removal of the recently laid pipework and the restoration of the ditch to its previous condition.

Ian Thompson stated the pipe at Eton End Road at the junction of Slough was blocked due to rubbish and leaves but, it was clear at the other end so he did not think the water was flowing down there. When there was flooding in 2014, that made the flooding worse. The Chairman stated Volker would be looking at that and clearing it.

The Flood Risk Manager confirmed that he had written to the Council's Park and Countryside Team setting out their responsibilities to maintain the watercourses crossing the common and the consents they will need prior to undertaking any works in the vicinity of the watercourses or raised flood defence bunds.

PARISH UPDATE

Cookham Causeway– Carol Long, the Flood Coordinator for the Parish, will be giving training to volunteers when the causeway is brought into operation during a flood event and is having conversations with Volker Highways as traffic lights will need to be erected. The training has been offered but no date has been set.

Horton – Councillor Larcombe had been invited to Bells Lane as the ditch to the west of the lane was impassable due to overgrowth; he had asked the Parish Council to find out who owns the land to get the overgrowth cut back. The Chairman stated if there needed to be a conversation about it, to approach him as the Lead Member as he was happy to discuss proposals.

The meeting, which began at 6.00 pm, finished at 7.50 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....