

COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the FLOOD and MAJOR INCIDENT COMMITTEE
Held in the Community Room on Tuesday 16th July 2024, commencing at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs A-L Regan (Chairman)
 Cllrs, N. Bedwell, M. Brar M. Howard, and B. Perry
 Mr D. Scarff (Cookham Soc)

ALSO PRESENT: Mr J. Holder (Locum)
 Mr. D. Harding (Thames Water) -for part
 Mr. N. Westlake (RBWM Planning Case Officer) (virtually) -for part

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND WELCOME:

Apologies were received from Cllrs H. Fleming and L. Tull; and from Mr P. Willmott (Flood Warden) and Kate Sutherland (Odney Club).

The Chairman welcomed both Mr Harding and Mr. Westlake.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Cllr Perry noted he had occasionally been flooded.

3. TO APPROVED THE MINUTES OF THE FLOOD AND MAJOR INCIDENT COMMITTEE MEETING 16TH JANUARY 2024:

The minutes of the Flood and major Incident Committee meeting held on 16th January 2024 were **approved** as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

4. TO CONSIDER THE LETTER FROM THE COOKHAM SOCIETY DATED 3RD JULY 2024 RELATING TO SITE AL3 LAND AT LOWER MOUNT FARM

Mr. Scarff noted that that the Site specific requirements in the Local Plan require the sewer system to be reinforced prior to the houses being occupied. In light of the January 2024 flooding, he questioned the Thames Water comment that they were happy with the sewage system network although they would want increased capacity at the sewage treatment works. Mr Howard clarified that that comment was in respect of waste water and not with regard to a river flood, as took place in January. Cllr Bedwell queried how Thames Water, in a letter of 1 December 2014, could then describe the foul drainage system to be "inadequate" to accommodate the Whyteladyes housing scheme (50 homes) but yet now accommodate 200 homes along Long Lane on the Lower Mount Farm site.

Cllr Howard stated that in addition to the three developments proposed for Cookham, there was also planned for Spencer's Farm, just over the border in Maidenhead a 300 home development plus school, which would bring the total new homes to about 1,000. Whilst the Cookham sites were expected to be completed in the next 5 years, the Spencer's Farm site could be ready a year or so before that. Surface water from the Maidenhead development could be expected to flow down into the Cookham area and so into the same pipe. The Council was concerned with the cumulative impact of all these developments and on the basis that the developers were making profits from this, Thames Water might wish to look to them to contribute to provide a foul drainage system to meet the increased usage resulting from these developments.

Cllr Howard further enquired that where there might be a condition for a site like AL37 to enhance the foul water system, might this relate to increased pipe size or changes to the sewage treatment works. Mr Westlake said that was a specialist matter which would need to be determined by Thames Water whose infrastructure it was and would be advised pre-occupation.

Mr Harding firstly noted that Thames Water was not a statutory consultee and relied on developers to consult it. Whilst developers might choose not to take an holistic approach to all these developments, he said he would take that approach and check. **Action: Mr Harding(TW).**

Further, by Section 106 of the Water Industries Act, the developer has the right to connect its sewer onto the public sewage system, even if it results in flooding but it is open to the local Planning authority to impose conditions. **Action: Mr Westlake (RBWM) to consider.**

It was also agreed to map out flooding incidents; Mr Harding would check with the Field Operations Specialists who could map to postcode level and liaise with Mr Scarff who could provide his data.

Action: Mr Harding(TW) / Mr Scarff

Cllr Brar said that going forward, she would keep a log of incidents in her area which could feed into updating this. **Action: Cllr Brar**

Mr Westlake noted Policy EP5 for the requirement for drainage on a site and also Policy IF7, in respect of Planning Conditions, which might have application. It was **agreed** that within the next two weeks, Mr Westlake and Mr Harding, together with Nickie McHugh of Thames Water, should set up a TEAMS call to review matters further. **Action: Mr Westlake (RBWM) / Mr Harding(TW)**

5. TO CONSIDER ISSUES RELATING TO LIGHTLANDS LANE PUMPING STATION

Further to the movements on the graph headed Lightlands Lane Wet Well Level, in the paper provided by Thames Water in respect of January 2024 flood, Mr Scarff enquired whether one of the two pumps had failed and then the other. Mr Harding had been advised by the Pumping Team that only one pump runs at a time, with the other being the stand-by if the other fails. The station had been switched off when the electrics became wet. Mr Harding would however reconfirm that position.

Action: Mr Harding(TW)

The pumping station had closed down for 3 days between 8th -11th January but he agreed also to re-check those dates.

Action: Mr Harding(TW)

Mr Harding did not believe any changes to TW's manhole covers or building a wall on the fourth side of the pumping station would prevent such an occurrence, noting there are thousands of other ingress points and it would not cope with a fluvial flood, noting that no sewage system works under water. However, the pumping station could not operate without electricity and since the incident, the electric panels had been resituated to a higher level; he agreed he would check if the Environment Agency were happy with the new height.

Action: Mr Harding(TW)

Cllr Howard expressed the Council's appreciation both to Mr Harding for his attendance and positive approach to issues and to Mr Westlake and to their considering together the impact of the proposed new developments.

(Mr Harding and Mr Westlake left the meeting)

6. TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES ON OTHER FLOOD RELATED EVENTS SINCE THE LAST MEETING

The Chairman noted there had been a lot of flooding in the High Street. Cllr Brar agreed to check with Ben Crampin of RBWM whether the Penstock Valve had been re-opened. **Action: Cllr Brar**

Cllr Brar would further check with Ben Crampin what work investigative had been undertaken and whether there was still a blockage in the drains near the Bell & Dragon. **Action: Cllr Brar**

7. TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE ON THE REQUEST FOR A SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE SYSTEM MAP

Mr. Scarff said he had seen it but thought it was of little value. Cllr Brar would further progress with Ben Crampin.. **Action: Cllr Brar**

8. TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE AND REVIEW REPORTS FROM OTHER FLOOD GROUPS' MEETINGS (including but not limited to):

- i. RBWM Flood Liaison Group – 23rd January and 20th April 2024
- ii. RBWM / Environment Agency/Thames Water – meeting in May 2024

Mr. Scarff said he had previously circulated minutes of the meetings of the RBWM Flood Liaison Group held on 23rd January and 20th April 2024.

Cllr Howard said the RBWM / Environment Agency/Thames Water meeting in May had been attended by about 80 people. Discussions with the environment agency were to be led by Mr Panter. Cllr Howard thought more progress had been made at tonight's meeting than at that earlier meeting.

9. TO REVIEW AND PROVIDE UPDATES FOR THE FLOOD AND MAJOR INCIDENT COMMITTEE'S ACTION LIST:

Members reviewed the Action List, some of which dated back to 2021. It was **agreed** that a) the name of the Committee be changed from *The Flood and Major Incidents Committee* to *The Flood Committee*; b) that save as regards ongoing issues set out in these minutes and hereafter, the matters shown on the list were no longer active and c) going forward, the List to be discontinued and replaced with Action Points shown in the Minutes. **Action: Locum Clerk**

10. TO REVIEW THE UPDATED FLOOD ACTION PLAN FROM RBWM

Cllr Brar agreed to check with Ben Crampin of RBWM the current status and progress.

Action: Cllr Brar

11. TO CONSIDER FLOOD ALERT SIGNAGE

The Chairman noted she had flagged this with the General Purposes Committee. Cllr Regan proposed, Cllr Howard seconded and it was **agreed** to obtain 3 new flood alert signs, noting that the wording for the High Street to be same as current wording. **Action: Locum Clerk/Cllr Regan**

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting

.....Chairman

Dated.....