

FLOODING MEETING HELD WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
PARISHES WITHIN SOUTH DERBYSHIRE

11th October 2005

PRESENT:-

South Derbyshire District Council Representatives

Councillors Atkin, Whyman M.B.E. and Mrs. Wheeler.

M. Alflat (Director of Community Services) (Chair), C. Payne (Engineering Technician), P. Spencer and D. Townsend (Democratic Services).

Derbyshire County Council Representatives

County Councillor Harrison.

I. Shuttleworth (Emergency Planning) and L. Unwin (Highways Department).

Parish Council Representatives

C. Barker (Barrow on Trent Parish Council), B. Cowley (Egginton Parish Council), D. Strain and L. Brown (Egginton Flood Committee) J. Bates, T. Beresford (Foston and Scropton Parish Council), R. Buxton (Hatton Parish Council), S. Brown and L. Kolkman (Hilton Parish Council), M. Clifton (Shardlow Parish Council) and K. Gibbs (Willington Parish Council).

Environment Agency Representatives

S. Kirkman, M. Swain and M. Wray.

P. Crossley and S. Saranga (Halcrow Consultants).

Apologies

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Mark Todd M.P., District Councillor Mrs. Walton, representatives of Elvaston Parish Council and Mr. L. Hand (Severn Trent Water).

14. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th April 2005 were received. Mrs. C. Barker of Barrow on Trent Parish Council requested an amendment to Minute No. 9 - the Environment Agency's report, particularly relating to a paragraph on flood defences in the Barrow-on-Trent area. Mr. Beresford also clarified that the request for a written report to Hatton Parish Council had been incorrectly attributed to him. Mrs. L. Brown referred to Minute No. 12 and was not aware of any improvements to flooding conditions in Egginton. The amendment and points raised were noted.

15. **MATTERS ARISING**

Further to Minute No. 7, Mr. R. Buxton reported that there was a tree and a portable toilet in a ditch at Hatton. Chris Payne sought clarification of the locations of these obstructions and gave an undertaking to deal with the matters. An update was also sought by Mr. Buxton on progress in the

discussions with riparian land owners. Mr. Payne confirmed that the landowner in question Mr. Spurrier had undertaken clearance works in April and further works were planned for the autumn. He suggested that this section of the ditch needed to be widened, but was not presently sure how funding could be provided. In response to a question from Mrs. Kolkman, there was further discussion on this obstruction and that reported by herself to a previous meeting, with regard to the Hilton Brook.

Arising from Minute No. 8, Mrs. Barker reported that she was still awaiting feedback from Severn Trent Water about the inspection of public sewers at Brookfield in Barrow on Trent. Mr. Payne explained that the Officer that had attended the previous Flood Liaison Meeting, Mr. Timms had since moved on. The new contact, Leon Hand had promised to look into the issues raised. It was noted that this issue had first been raised in November 2004 and Mr. Payne offered to continue to pursue Severn Trent. The Director of Community Services suggested that a letter be sent expressing the Meeting's serious concern because of these delays. Mr. Beresford requested contact details for the Officer at Severn Trent Water.

With regard to the Environment Agency's report, Mrs. Kolkman sought further information on the flood modelling for the River Dove. It was confirmed that a presentation would be made later in the Meeting. Under the same item, the Shardlow representative had provided photographs to the Environment Agency to show concerns about the design of bridge arches near the Shardlow Marina. The particular concern related to a solid wall that obstructed one of the arches and the representative was considering taking this issue to the media, in view of the lengthy delays. To date, the Environment Agency had not had sufficient resources to address the situation. The Environment Agency Officer asked to speak to the representative outside the meeting and to agree a strategy to address this problem. The Chair noted the previous request for a report on these issues to be forwarded to Shardlow Parish Council, the District Council and County Councillor Harrison.

Mr. Swain gave general advice about the issues involved in taking enforcement action. If the Environment Agency could resolve this through another route, avoiding significant legal costs, this might be better. He offered to take this issue back to the Environment Agency and to raise the profile of this matter, given the concerns expressed. The Chair requested that a report be provided to the District and Parish Councils and Mr. Wray agreed to pursue this with the Chair and to provide a date when the report would be available.

With regard to Derbyshire County Council issues, Mr. Unwin explained the plans to provide additional drainage, to alleviate flooding problems in Repton Road, Willington. He confirmed that the responsibility for closing highways due to flooding rested with Derbyshire County Council. Mr. Gibbs sought contact telephone numbers from Mr. Unwin. Councillor Mrs. Wheeler suggested the installation of permanent signage in this area, of a design that would enable local wardens to display the flood warning message at appropriate times. Mr. Gibbs thought this was a useful idea and Mr. Unwin agreed to look at the suggestion. There was also some further discussion on Minute No. 12 - Report from Parish Councils, about flooding conditions in Egginton, which the Chair considered to be an issue for Egginton Parish Council to resolve.

16. **REPORTS FROM AGENCIES****(A) South Derbyshire District Council**

Mr. Payne provided a report on the works undertaken to areas that were most vulnerable to flooding. The report covered the Hatton Flood Alleviation Works and clearance of vegetation in the watercourse from Uttoxeter Road to Marston Village. The Leader of the District Council wished it to be recorded that the Hatton community was grateful to the District Council and particularly to Mr. Payne for the works undertaken. This was endorsed by Mr. Buxton on behalf of Hatton Parish Council.

Mr. Payne then outlined works undertaken in the Scropton and Hilton areas. In Egginton, part of the watercourse known as the Drain had been cleared. At the request of the Egginton Flood Committee, details were given of highway drainage systems provided by Derbyshire County Council. Efforts had been made to arrange a meeting between the Flood Committee and Severn Trent Water, but unfortunately no response had been received from the Company.

Mrs. Cowley reported on a recent incident where raw sewage had been discharged from inspection chamber covers into Fishpond Lane, Egginton. There were storm drains in close proximity and due to the concerns of contamination, some works had to be undertaken. Chris Payne sought further information about this problem, which was duly provided. He reminded that this was the responsibility of Severn Trent Water, but the District Council's Environmental Health Division could assist if there was a problem of contamination. Mrs. Cowley also sought further works to the ditch in Fishpond Lane. The Officer explained the nature of this watercourse and its lack of gradient. It was suggested that he meet with Les Unwin of Derbyshire County Council to discuss the problem and seek to identify a way forward.

The Officer provided reports on improvements in the Willington, Ticknall, Shardlow and Stanton areas. With regard to Barrow on Trent, the report identified works undertaken to the watercourse from Brookfield to the River Trent. Mrs. Barker noted that at least one further section of this watercourse was still to be addressed. Mr. Payne confirmed there were plans to contact the respective landowners to resolve these issues.

Mr. Payne then reported on the enmainment of critical ordinary watercourses (COW's) being transferred to the Environment Agency. Councillor Whyman M.B.E. sought clarification that riparian landowners would remain responsible for their respective sections of each watercourse, despite the transfer to the Environment Agency. This was confirmed and Mr. Swain added that the Agency would now have the power to act in default where landowners did not complete required works. Councillor Whyman M.B.E. referred to a particular problem in the Hatton area and he spoke of the action taken by Mr. Payne to resolve the issue. He sought assurances from the Environment Agency that a similar level of service would be provided. Mr. Swain recognised the District Council's excellent track record and explained the geographic area covered by this section of the Agency. He also touched upon the other issues taken into account by the Agency of an environmental

or conservation nature and in some instances, obstructions would not be removed if there was no additional flood risk.

Councillor Whyman M.B.E. asked the Chair whether the Council could revisit its decision on enmainment. He assured that he would pursue this issue and asked the Director of Community Services to provide further information to him. Councillor Harrison questioned why the decision had been taken to transfer this service. Mr. Buxton also recorded his concerns, given the information provided. He recognised the previous service provided, the need for regular maintenance and he urged the District Council to reconsider its decision on transfer of responsibility. Mr. Payne referred to the decision made by the Council's Environmental and Development Services Committee. He felt that the Environment Agency would provide a good service and commented on the resources that the Agency had available. The Egginton representatives had found the District Council to be more responsive than the Environment Agency. Mr. Swain accepted that as a national organisation, the Agency could not respond as quickly as the local Council. Mr. Shuttleworth of Derbyshire County Council spoke of the concerns of a number of sectors about enmainment. However, there was little choice for local authorities, as whilst they could contract back the service for a period of up to two years, it would then have to be re-tendered. Mr. Swain added that even where local authorities contracted back the service, there were a range of issues to be taken into account, including the approach to conservation. Mrs. Barker sought further information about the conservation issues and this was duly provided by Mr. Swain. It was agreed that the District Council would look at this issue.

(B) Environment Agency

Mr. Swain provided a report on issues in the upper Trent area. This included further information about the enmainment of the Stanton Brook and Salt Brook and the plans to employ the consultants, Halcrows to undertake an asset survey of the watercourses. He referred to ongoing maintenance works and the Agency had been asked to justify all routine maintenance. This was undertaken by looking at each location, the likelihood of flooding and the potential impact of any flooding. The combination of these factors led to a location being graded as a low, medium or high risk. All locations on the River Dove down-stream from Sudbury were classed as a high risk, together with the Foston Brook and the Hatton Brook, downstream from the A50. Mr. Swain reported on the clearance of the vegetation and silt to speed flows through Monks Bridge.

He then referred to flood mapping. A presentation would be made by Shirell Saranga and Paul Crossley of the consultants, Halcrows on the study being undertaken for the River Dove and adjoining watercourses. He gave a brief outline of the areas covered by this study. Councillor Whyman M. B. E. questioned the timescale for completion of the study and this was likely to be March 2006.

The presentation concentrated on the technical aspects of planned works. Details were given of the project team involved, a catchment description of the watercourses and a schematisation of the Dove catchment area. Ms. Saranga demonstrated how computer modelling was used to assess the one in one hundred year flood risk. The presentation included photographs

showing particular flooding issues over the past decade, together with details of peak flows, based on the November 2000 floods.

Paul Crossley demonstrated the modelling, which showed flooding areas from Rocester, into South Derbyshire at Scropton and through to the Dove/Trent confluence. It was reported that the data source used for modelling was very accurate when compared to other studies, such as that for the River Tame. An explanation was given of the one dimensional and two dimensional modelling used. In response to a question, Mr. Crossley confirmed the accuracy for modelling purposes of the data from the 2000 floods.

The presentation included animated images showing the depth of flooding in the Rolleston on Dove and Egginton areas. Mr. Crossley explained how this had been modelled and was based on the one in one hundred year flood. There was a discussion about planning issues for developments in the flood plain, the role of the Planning Authority and the ability for applicants to have refused applications overturned on appeal. Comment was made on the number of affected properties in the Egginton area and whilst the majority of properties were protected by flood defence measures, the Village did become isolated.

Reference was made to the flow restrictions caused by bridges. It was important to gather calibrated data, in order that solutions could be designed, to alleviate potential flooding problems. Mr. Crossley explained that one dimensional modelling gave the ability to examine the impact of individual structures. A velocity projection was also shown. Further presentation slides explained the continuing work for the Dove strategy, together with the successes and problems experienced to date. In response to a question from Councillor Whyman M.B.E., it was confirmed that the Dove strategy report would be available by March 2006. Mrs. Kolkman asked how the report would be circulated. Initially this would be provided to the Environment Agency, although Mark Swain agreed to talk to the District Council about circulation of the information.

Mrs. Brown thanked the consultants for the presentation, which she felt demonstrated the problems for the Village of Egginton. The situation was complex and a further element not covered by the study was problems with drainage.

Mrs. Kolkman sought information on the data used for modelling the Hatton and Hilton areas. It was confirmed that the focus was on the confluence of the Rivers Dove and Trent. However, flood outlines would be available for the Hilton and Foston areas within the next three weeks. Councillor Whyman M. B. E. pursued the point about sewage problems and felt that the Hatton flood defence measures would not have been effective without improvements to the sewage systems. There was a need for Severn Trent to work more closely with the Environment Agency to provide complete solutions. Mr. Buxton provided further information on improvements to the sewage pumping systems in the Hatton area. The Environment Agency could write to Severn Trent on the issues raised.

There was a discussion on the need for a full strategy for affected areas in South Derbyshire. Mr. Swain spoke of the competing pressures for available funding and one of the key criteria was the number of properties at risk, compared against a DEFRA scoring system. A comparison was made to the

River Tame, close to Birmingham and the number of properties at risk of flooding in that area. Practically, it was unlikely that schemes in South Derbyshire would rank as a higher priority. However, there was recognition of the significant funding attracted to the area in recent years.

Mrs. Brown repeated concerns about the isolation of Egginton at times of flooding. There was a lack of access for emergency services and this was a problem particularly for the Village's elderly and disabled residents. A further issue recognised was the lack of maintenance of flood defence measures. There was a need for the different agencies to liaise, to ensure that such measures were well maintained. Mr. Beresford pursued an earlier point about consultation questionnaires, seeking information on flooding problems. As Chair of the Foston Flood Committee he was not aware of this consultation process. Further information was provided on the consultation undertaken. Councillor Whyman M. B. E. reinforced the points raised by Mrs. Brown on the flooding problems in Egginton. He voiced thanks for the presentation, but recognised the concerns raised and was sure that discussions would continue.

Morgan Wray gave an update on Environment Agency issues in the lower Trent area. He referred to the River Derwent strategy and the difficulties in calibrating the actual position to the model data results. Work was ongoing towards a project appraisal for the Derby area and this should be completed by May 2006. The results of this study would provide information for the Ambaston and Shardlow areas of South Derbyshire. There had been a request to raise flood defences in these areas, but there was a need for accurate data before proceeding with projects.

The transfer of critical ordinary water courses was due to take place in April 2006. The Environment Agency was to appoint consultants to undertake asset surveys and identify required flooding works for the future. A meeting would take place with Mr. Payne to gather the required information. In the Willington area, outfall repairs would take place to address known problems and these should take about three weeks to complete. Mr. Wray referred to the Environment Agency's corporate reorganisation and the new structure was outlined, including the responsibility of the various sections and the functions delivered. He gave an update on refurbishment of the Shardlow Pumping Station and the pumps would be replaced by the end of the current financial year.

County Councillor Harrison commented on residents' concerns about the Ambaston Flood Bank, which had nearly been breached in the November 2000 floods. He explained that there was a County Council minerals planning application to extend a nearby quarry. There were differing opinions on the impact of this development on the flood plain and the possibility to require a Section 106 agreement for improvements to the flood defence measures. The costs of increasing the flood bank by half a metre overall and one metre at the lowest points were unknown. Mr. Wray replied and suggested an alternate forum where the quarry issues could be discussed. He felt there was a need for a study before the Environment Agency could give definitive answers. It was noted that this was a live planning application and accordingly no further discussion took place on this matter.

(C) Derbyshire County Council

Les Unwin gave an update on those schemes being progressed and those still to be undertaken, primarily to the culvert under Uttoxetter Road, Hilton, at Watery Lane, Scropton and Wilne Lane, Shardlow. In Repton Road, Willington the numbers of gullies would be increased. Mr. Unwin confirmed that road closures due to flooding was a County Council responsibility. He also commented on the joint scheme in Ticknall with Severn Trent Water.

Mrs. Cowley sought a meeting with Chris Payne to discuss problems in Egginton. Mr. Beresford also reported debris in a watercourse at Watery Lane, Scropton including traffic cones and damaged reflective road edge markers.

Mr. Shuttleworth reported that most of the recent flooding problems were due to 'flash' flooding. He spoke of the importance of having local emergency plans and supplies of sandbags. There was a template available from the County Council to prepare flooding plans. In response to a question from Councillor Whyman, there was a discussion about the period of time that sandbags could be kept for. Information was provided on the different types of sandbags, whether they should be stored empty or full and mechanisms for filling sandbags quickly. Mr. Shuttleworth offered to find out more information about the time periods that sandbags could be stored for and he would report back to a future meeting. A further risk was E.coli once sandbags had been used and it was requested that an information leaflet be provided to all Parish Councils.

The County Council was undertaking a risk assessment process and flooding would be one of the first subjects considered. A report would be produced by November 2005 and the Officer explained the areas that would be covered by this review. Mrs. Barker asked how this information would be publicised and whilst there were no firm conclusions at this stage, the County would look at different options. Mr. Shuttleworth spoke also about a national initiative on flooding issues. He explained that a County Council Officer had been seconded to the District Council for two days each week and Rob Brittan could be contacted on Tuesday and Fridays on 01283 595713.

(D) Severn Trent Water

It was noted that no representative of Severn Trent Water was present. The Company had been invited to attend, but had responded that they were not able to do so on this occasion. Councillor Whyman M.B.E. asked that a letter be sent expressing disappointment as Severn Trent should be represented at these meetings. Mrs. Barker felt it might be useful to check how many occasions the Company had been represented at the Forum.

17. REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCILS

On behalf of Elvaston Parish Council, District Councillor Atkin reported problems at Borrowash Weir near to Elvaston Castle, where works had been undertaken to a cycleway over a culvert. There was a further problem near to the fisherman's car park, where a pipe had been buried and there was no outlet. He agreed to speak to Chris Payne after the Meeting, so that these items could be investigated. A query was also submitted about the Thulston Brook, running towards the River Derwent. This Brook had been widened

and the landowner could not keep it clear as it was too wide. Councillor Atkin requested maintenance works, but noted that there were bullrushes within the Brook, which restricted the flow, but might raise conservation issues. Mr. Wray confirmed that this enmained Brook was the responsibility of the Environment Agency and he offered to arrange for an Inspector to meet a local representative on site. Councillor Whyman M.B.E. hoped this highlighted the concerns about enmainment.

Mrs. Kolkman reported debris under the bridge forming part of the Hilton Western Link Road. The Environment Agency was asked to pursue this issue. Mrs. Barker sought further information about the environmental consequences of clearing watercourses. In Barrow-on-Trent, some trees had died and an arboriculturalist considered that this might have been due to the clearance of the nearby watercourse. Where clearance works were proposed, it was questioned whether there were certain times of year that should be avoided. Mr. Swain pursued this point and explained the number of interest groups that the Environment Agency had to consult. He gave a specific example of works undertaken in the neighbouring Staffordshire village of Tutbury to demonstrate this. He was not able to offer any advice about the tree problems following the clearance of a watercourse. Mr. Payne sought further information on the types of trees and the locations involved. Councillor Whyman M. B. E. asked for written advice on this to be provided.

18. **SUMMARY OF POSTION AND MATTERS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION**

Mr. Wray asked whether it would be useful to invite Officers from the Environment Agency's Flood Warning or Flood Mapping sections to attend a future meeting. Mr. Beresford sought further information about plans to alter the flood warning systems. It was confirmed there was a national project to change this process and further information was provided. Mr. Beresford asked that this be submitted to the Forum when the process had been completed. Mrs. Brown recorded her thanks to the representatives of the Environment Agency for their attendance and support.

19. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting be held on Tuesday 11th April 2006 at the Civic Offices at 10.00 a.m.

M. ALFLAT

CHAIR

The Meeting terminated at 12.50 p.m.