

**FLOODING MEETING HELD WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
PARISHES WITHIN SOUTH DERBYSHIRE**

27th September 2012

PRESENT:-

South Derbyshire District Council Representatives

Councillors Bale, Ford, Harrison, Mrs. Heath, Lemmon, Mrs. Plenderleith, Roberts, Mrs. Watson and Watson, M. Alflat (Director of Operations and Chairman), C. Payne (Engineer) and P. Spencer (Democratic Services).

Derbyshire County Council Representatives

Councillors Ford and Harrison, N. Elliott and S. Mead.

Environment Agency Representatives

V. Candlish, S. Foster, S. Pymm and M. Swain.

Derbyshire Constabulary

Sergeant K. Bateman.

Parish Council Representatives/Meeting Representatives

P. Waters (Amberston Parish Meeting), A. Heathcote (Barrow-on-Trent Parish Council), R. Strand (Elvaston Parish Council), S. Bell (Findern Parish Council), T. Beresford (Foston and Scropton Parish Council), B. Walton-Knight (Hilton Parish Council) and P. Watson (Ingleby Parish Meeting).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from District and County Councillor Mrs. Patten, District Councillors Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Hood, K. Slater (Barrow-on-Trent Parish Council), J. Bates (Foston Parish Council), Mr. Taylor (Hatton Parish Council) and K. Gibson (Willington Parish Council).

1. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 29th March 2012 were received.

2. **MATTERS ARISING**

Sergeant K. Bateman of Derbyshire Constabulary responded to questions submitted about the flooding problems in certain parishes during the summer months. It was noted that South Derbyshire was the worst affected area of the County on this occasion. The particular concerns related to a lack of Police Officer cover in Hilton and poor communication about Officer support, from the Constabulary's call centre. Sergeant Bateman agreed to investigate the latter point.

It was recognised that all authorities had finite resources. Other issues discussed were the supply of sand bags and road closure signage. It was confirmed that only the County Council, as Highways' Authority could legally

close a road, because of flooding. The Chairman appealed for parish councils to provide storage areas for sand bags, explaining the time taken to fill them by hand and then transport them to the areas suffering flooding. If they were distributed beforehand and stored throughout the District, the sand bags could be used more quickly. The County Council's Officers were asked to investigate the possibility of powers being delegated to parish councils to take temporary action in times of emergency. A particular example highlighted was the surface water flooding problems in Twyford Road, Barrow-on-Trent.

3. **REPORTS FROM AGENCIES**

(a) **South Derbyshire District Council**

The Council's Engineer provided a report, initially about the summer flooding problems. He explained the areas affected in Swadlincote, Egginton, Scropton and Ticknall. Serious flooding was experienced in Findern, where the A38 trunk road had to be closed and houses were flooded. He also spoke about the emergency standby arrangements for a weekend in mid-July, because of the continuing wet weather and listed the vulnerable locations involved, to which local representatives added further areas.

The Officer spoke about the distribution of sand bags and repeated the suggestion to have sand stored locally, in readiness for flooding emergencies. The Officer then referred to other flood defence measures and to grant applications that had been submitted to the Environment Agency, for flood alleviation engineering works. It was confirmed that Derbyshire County Council, as the local lead flood authority had asked for details of flooding incidents that required formal investigation. The locations submitted were the A38 at Findern, Leathersley Lane at Scropton and Egginton Road in Hilton.

The Chairman confirmed that there was an alarming pattern emerging of flash flooding incidents in areas where problems had previously not been experienced. These were difficult to respond to in a largely rural area such as South Derbyshire.

With regard to the flooding problems in Findern, the need for a preventative maintenance regime was stated. The opportunity was taken to ask further questions, with particular reference to Frizams Lane in Findern and a culvert/watercourse in Hilton, where the inspection chamber cover had lifted in the bad weather.

Encouraging landowners to maintain field and highway ditches was discussed and related to this, the Officer spoke about enforcement powers. Derbyshire County Council was undertaking a project to identify all culverts in order to programme periodic maintenance where there were known problems. There were some 3,000 throughout the County and the strategy would refocus resources to give more periodic maintenance where it was required. The County Council sought to negotiate with landowners regarding ditch maintenance. It was updating its website to provide additional information and parish councils could

help by providing local knowledge of maintenance needs. Further flooding problems were reported along The Mease at Hilton and in Burnaston, which would be discussed by the agencies.

(b) Environment Agency

V. Candlish spoke about the Lower Derwent Flood Risk Management Strategy which would realign flood defences through the City of Derby. It was recognised that this could cause an increase in the flow on affected watercourses downstream. Information was also provided on the “Our City, Our Rivers, Masterplan” which had been developed in conjunction with Derby City Council. An update was given on planned works to improve the Ambaston flood bank during the current financial year, and general maintenance works to the Shardlow pumping station. Other issues discussed were river maintenance, including recent de-silting works, Japanese knotweed on the Willington Brook and problems with a culvert near the canal on Cuttle Brook.

M. Swain spoke about the guidance available on landownership responsibilities, highlighting a publication called “Living on the Edge”. This could be downloaded from the Environment Agency’s website <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/31626.aspx>.

Updates were provided on the works to remove gravel from watercourses at Monk’s Bridge, proposed bank repairs at Aston Bridge and the realignment of the Salt Brook, which was now carrying water. An update was also provided on the Egginton Brook scheme, which would commence imminently.

(c) Derbyshire County Council

Steve Mead of DCC Environmental Services provided an update and he thanked Chris Payne of the District Council for his assistance on joint projects. The Officer explained that ordinary watercourse consents had now passed to the County Council. Local feedback was sought where works were observed taking place on such watercourses. The County Council’s responsibility for land drainage was also confirmed and the Authority sought to negotiate with landowners, rather than use enforcement powers where this was possible. An update was given on flood risk mapping. Whilst negotiations took place with planning authorities to encourage developments to be sited appropriately, it was noted that the County was not a statutory consultee, as the Flood Risk Authority. Arising from this, the need to ensure a consistent view between the County Council and Environment Agency was stated. An update was also given on urban drainage schemes. A representative of Hilton requested copies of the revised flood risk maps for that area and it was confirmed that the County Council was going to publish these via its website.

On Emergency Planning, Nick Elliott spoke about the consultation on the Flood Risk Management Strategy. Copies of the documents were

available and feedback was sought. He spoke about the key aspects from the emergency planning perspective, that parishes kept themselves informed, knew the problem areas locally, who to advise, that people protected their homes and that there was community resilience. The earlier example of sand bag distribution showed how things could be improved.

It was questioned whether a further “Flood Fair” could be arranged. There were plans for the County Council to lead a joint public meeting of agencies, which would include the National Flood Forum. It was questioned whether articles could be provided on this for insertion into the parish magazines.

4. **REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCILS**

An issue was raised on behalf of Hartshorne Parish Council. This concerned the recent planning consent for the extension of an abattoir. Problems had been experienced previously with an industrial waste overspill into local watercourses. It was acknowledged that this was mainly a matter for Severn Trent Water, but became an enforcement issue when an overspill took place. The Agencies were asked to investigate this matter.

5. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next Flood Liaison Meeting would be confirmed in due course, but was anticipated to take place in late March 2013.

M. ALFLAT

CHAIRMAN

The Meeting terminated at 11.30 a.m.