

**RUISHTON FLOOD COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
HELD AT RUISHTON VILLAGE HALL  
ON 15 SEPTEMBER 2014**

Present: Karen Goldstone (Chair), Andrew Lukes (Vice Chair) Xanthe Lukes, Robert Powell, Chris Roberton, Mike Westlake, Michael Sparks, Jane Bartlett, Dave Morrow, Mavis Skeggs, Gill Ellis, Tim Powell-Gill (Avon & Somerset Police)

Apologies Ken Skeggs, Len Goldstone, Sheena Morrow, George Anderdon, Roger Mycock, Sue Sherry, Shirley Cozens, Ray Hancock

Action

The meeting opened at 20:00.

**1 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

1.1 It has been established that sandbags are supplied free of charge by Taunton Deane Borough Council and that no money should be demanded or paid for them. It was agreed that Taunton Deane have so far delivered sandbags speedily

1.2 Chairman of the Parish Council had tried to get an escape route from Carpenters Close without success

1.3 Dave Morrow is not requesting further help with sandbags.

1.4 The elderly residents of Dinhams require help only to put out and take up sandbags. WW will clear any sewage from Cheats Road and SCC will clear sandbags

1.5 Equipment (waders, hi-vis jackets and vests, torches, two-way radios, gloves, first aid kits) had been purchased and distributed.

1.6 The flood action plan was now on the Ruishton Parish Council web site.

1.7 Leaflets had been distributed to vulnerable households but Mavis Skeggs said she had not received any. Leaflets to be given to Mavis

Sue  
Sherry

**2 CHAIRMAN'S OVERVIEW**

2.1 Karen Goldstone said that following the remit given by the Parish Council the purposes of the Flood Committee fell into two categories:

2.2 Protection:

- Help neighbours
- Operate the Flood Action Plan ( disclaimer should mean we are not legally responsible?)
- Close the roads as necessary under the new Police-instigated community road closure scheme

2.3 Prevention

Liaison with the authorities and hold them to account

- Taunton Deane Borough Council
- Somerset County Council
- Wessex Water
- Environment Agency

- Police
- Parish Council
- MP

2.4 The Chairman has contacts with all of the above.

### **3 AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE COMMUNITY ROAD CLOSURE PROGRAMME**

Report by Inspector Tim Powell-Gill and Robert Powell

3.1 The launch of the scheme and the training day is to be Tuesday 14 October 2014.

3.2 The focus has now switched from fixed to mobile signs. This is because of the difficulties, delays and costs involved with fixed signs.

3.3 There will be 4 sets of signs for Ruishton: two for Lipe Lane, one by the Ruishton Inn, one on Cheats Road by Lawn Meadow.

3.4 There will be 2 sets of signs for Lower Henlade: one on the West side of the junction of Stoke Road and Greenway Lane and one at the junction of Haydon Lane and the Stoke St Mary turn-off.

3.5 A “set” of signs consists of a “Road Closed” sign and a sign warning of possible invalidation of motor insurance and/or traffic offence.

3.6 Robert Powell has sourced some lightweight signs well within budget and will order them on 16 September.

Robert Powell

3.7 Volunteers are asked to attend the training EVEN IF THEY HAVE NOT BEEN VETTED. The vetting process can follow.

3.8 The training will consist of

- visiting and authorising the proposed sites for signs
- safety considerations
- communication with motorists.

3.9 Ruishton road closure volunteers are to meet at the Old Vicarage at 10.30 a.m. on 14 October. *(At the meeting it was suggested that ALL volunteers undergo training in Ruishton and Lower Henlade but it has subsequently been decided to train two separate groups in the two locations. Lower Henlade volunteers will be trained in Lower Henlade later on the same morning.)*

3.10 Fixed signs have not been ruled out but can be actioned at a later date if required.

### **4 ENVIRONMENT AGENCY**

Report by Karen Goldstone

4.1 There have been changes in personnel at the E.A., resulting in delays.

4.2 The E.A. are consulting landowners but the Parish Council also wishes to be informed of progress.

4.3 Current phase of work to be finished by end October. The ring bank in Church Lane is to be raised by 0.4 m from 10.1m to 10.5m

4.4 Phase II will reinforce the ring bank from Church Lane to Lipe Lane. No dates have been given for this work.

## **5 WESSEX WATER/SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL**

Report by Dave Morrow

5.1 Pipes have been fitted at Barton Lane Pumping Station (responsibility of WW) to pump water from under the station to the sewer and thence to Ham.

5.2 There is also an emergency overflow to the River Tone. WW's equipment should automatically tell them when a pump is needed. They will then bring a mobile diesel pump which will discharge into the river even if the river level is high.

5.3 Concerns were raised that this plan could go wrong or be implemented too late, making problems worse in other parts of the village.

5.4 Dave Morrow was also concerned that the pipes from the Cheats Road pumping station (Somerset County Council responsibility) were not big enough.

5.5 Cllr Mike Marshall has pursued the matter with Dan Martin of SCC, requesting an additional pump at Goosey Lane/ Barton Road suggesting co operation between WW and SCC

5.6 Wessex Water will be attending the next Parish Council meeting on 1 October.

5.7 Dave Morrow will be abroad on 1 October. He was asked to prepare a list of questions to ask WW at the meeting/

Dave  
Morrow

5.8 Chris Robertson reported that he witnessed sewer pipes being lined to prevent drainage water ingress into the sewage system.

## **6 LOWER HENLADE**

Report by Gill Ellis

6.1 Works at Lower Henlade consisted of

- Clearing the watercourse
- Repairing and replacing the posts and railings
- Rebuilding the shoulders of the road that had subsided in parts
- Clearing the drainage pipe under the road

6.2 The road has now been reopened.

6.3 The landowners of the next part of the watercourse (towards Blackbrook) have undertaken maintenance works.

## **7 OVERLANDS AND DINHAMS VULNERABLE RESIDENTS**

7.1 There is no vehicular access between Overlands and Barton Lane as the road is blocked, quite legally, with a stone-built planter.

7.2 Karen Goldstone is concerned that there is no way that residents of Overlands can drive out in an emergency during times of flood. The same applies to residents of Carpenters Close when Cheats Road is flooded

7.3 Karen will contact the owner and ask whether he might consider a different means of blocking the road that could be opened in an emergency. Karen Goldstone

## **8 FINANCES**

8.1 £1966.88 was paid to Ruishton Parish Council. £1346.27 has been spent on equipment so far, leaving £620.61. VAT to be reclaimed £224.38

8.2 In addition an amount of £1438.80 was received for road signs. Current requirements for mobile signs add up to approximately £650.

8.3 Somerset Community Foundation are now operating a third phase of grants to households that have been flooded.

## **9 LINKS WITH OTHER GROUPS**

9.1 Andrew Lukes had contacted FLAG (Flooding on the Levels Action Group) on two occasions with little response

9.2 There is a fortnightly information-sharing meeting in North Petherton for interested parties.

## **10 SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

10.1 Prepare list of questions to ask Wessex Water (Martin Tidman) at the Parish Council meeting on 1 October Dave Morrow

10.2 Leaflets to Mavis Skeggs for distribution Sue Sherry

10.3 We are happy that the road closure programme is finally to begin. Volunteers to be called to the training on Tuesday 14 October. Karen Goldstone

10.4 See if the flower planter between Overlands and Dinhams could be changed to something openable. Karen Goldstone

10.5 Order road closure signs Robert Powell