

Notes of the Public Flooding Meeting held online on Thursday 4th February 2021 at 6.30 pm.

Present: Cllrs Mrs Howley, Mrs Duffield, Mrs Wadley, Ralph, Mrs Moseley, Beard, Mrs Gooch, Heathfield, Mrs Birkan, Mrs Marcovecchio, the Town Clerk and 30 Members of the Public.

Apologies: Cllr Mrs Draper

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed the objective of the meeting was to seek views regarding how the Town Council can assist with support and respond to future flooding incidents.

Gloucestershire County Council, the Lead Local Flood Authority and the Forest of Dean District Council are reviewing the flooding incident of 23rd December and investigating the causes. A number of residents have submitted information and they will be addressed directly by GCC/FODDC. The Town Council will continue to work with both authorities on this matter and would be happy to pass on any further information which is submitted by email, to the Clerk.

The Mayor explained the limitations of the Town Council. Some areas the Town Council can assist with are:

- Deciding on how sandbags are made available to those at risk. Or advise on other measures.
- We can send annual letters to riparian owners reminding them of their responsibilities with regards to maintaining watercourses.
- Write to Highways to ensure that the drains are cleared regularly (Watery Lane being an example) and then advise properties when the drains are to be cleared, so that cars are not parked over drains and the area is clear.
- Provide links or contact details of those officers that can offer advice on how to defend your property from flooding (property level protection), this could be on a personal basis once we are in safer times.
- Liaise with the Lead Local Flood Authority to look into additional flood measures for the town and help support funding applications.

All residents were given the opportunity to speak. Many residents spoke of how the flooding event affected their properties.

There were residents present from both upstream and downstream of the bund. Descriptions the water movements were given and many comments made including;

Several people mentioned the amount of debris in the watercourses.

The grill at the bund was full of debris and residents cleared this. A maintenance schedule is in place and a local resident has been given a FODDC contact to report any blockages.

The bund was overtopping again on 30th January.

The water levels upstream dropped when the town started flooding.

Huge amount of water is coming from the fields upstream, so further attenuation would help.

Very little has been done with regards to flood measures in the past 52 years.

A commercial property in the High Street was flooded from both the front and rear. The watercourse by the Library was not being maintained and GCC had to be contacted several times. The water next to the Library was not flowing through the culvert under the road, so there may have been a blockage further past the lake.

Flood measures undertaken in Newent will have an effect on Malswick.

Peacock Brook is not included on the flood warnings and the situation was no different to 2007.

Interested in the offer of sandbags, but not all residents are able to put them out and had to rely on neighbours. Need people to be ready to help.

The drain system in Watery Lane is inadequate and needs upgrading.

Development works at 9 Culver Street has restricted the bank which stops the flow of water. Manhole covers were lifting.

Irresponsible drivers were causing waves which exacerbated the flooding in properties. Broad Street should have been closed with barriers.

It was only the second time that a resident from Cliffords Mesne had seen the stream flooding that much in 33 years, which was largely due to debris. There are ongoing issues with the drains.

Rainfall figures were only 2 inches on the day and 8 inches that week.

A lot of the community were willing to help but there was no coordinated approach.

All the different networks in the town need to stand together to support the Town Council to get a response and action. The evacuation places need to be coordinated.

Flooding is becoming more regular and the A417 is closed more than open lately.

A resident has a lot of data and calculations from over the past 20 years which he would be willing to share with the authorities.

An alarm system should be considered.

Options for sandbags or alternatives should be looked into. Advice on property level protection is being offered by FODDC officers.

A multi-agency forum will be considered.

The Emergency Plan should not focus on flooding.

Several questions were raised including:

Why is the outlet pipe from the bund so small?

Could the brickwork to the left hand side of the culvert under Peacock Gardens be increased, as the funnel is on an angle and that is a weak point?

Is there anyway the Town Council can check if riparian owners are carrying out maintenance on the watercourses?

When will a report on the findings relating to the event be published by GCC/FODDC?

What are the follow up actions from this meeting?

What is the strategic plan to mitigate these issues?

Are all the drains being checked?

Does someone check all the rivers and brooks for blockages?

Could the drain covers in Watery Lane be replaced with sloping covers, so leaves etc do not sit on the top and block them?

Is the drainage system in Broad Street adequate? Request this is investigated.

The flood wardens, are they voluntary posts and are they affiliated to the Town Council and what is their remit, is there a call for more flood wardens? Could the wardens clear debris and unblock drains etc.

Could a rapid response team be set up? Coordination is key.

What has been the economic impact from this flood?

The Town Council will endeavour to obtain answers to all the above questions, which will be then published on the Council's website.

Residents were thanked for their input and supplying a lot of useful information. The suggestions and information gathered will be considered at a Council meeting within the next month, to help the Council decide on how it will support and respond to future flooding events.

The meeting concluded at 8.00 pm.