



Oldbury on Severn Parish Council

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Minutes of the Flooding and Planning Committee Held on Wednesday 20th January 2021 at 10:00am via the Zoom platform

V Bailey, Clerk to the Council

Present: Chair Keith Sullivan, Vice-Chair Dylan Griffiths, Cllr Matthew Riddle, Cllr Sheila Bedford, Cllr Chris Jennings, Glynn Poole, Barry Turner, Jim Nicholls, Ian Bell, Andy McGrath, Colin Taylor (EA), Malcolm Lynden

1. Apologies: Kieran Warren LSIDB, Peter Walley SGC, Scott Jones SGC, Melvin Wood EA

2. To approve the minutes of the previous meetings held on Friday 20th November 2020

All in favour

3 To discuss and agree action on the following Flooding matters (with reference to FPC work plan):

Section A Reduction of water volumes/flow rates entering the catchment

A-1 Thornbury area surface water management plan

KS reminded all Councillors present that they had received a paper from him. BT reported SGC have to do a statutory Local Plan (2020) and will be updating the Flood Risk Assessment SFRA1. This is a key document as it is intended to evaluate the risk of flooding from all sources for the life of the plan and into the future. It should consider the impacts of climate change and assess the effect development will have on flood risk. There is a concern that the scope of this assessment will not adequately inform the flood risk information required for the Local Plan (2020.) There is a general concern that Peter Walley and his team are not following the statutory requirements. There is general concern that SGC Officers (who have not attended this FPC meeting) are showing a lack of engagement with and concern for Oldbury on Severn's flood risk.

An e-mail from Matthew Riddle resulting from questions BT had posed regarding the strategic flood risk assessment proposed to be used by SGC provided a response from Patrick Conroy. This advised that SGC were in the process of engaging with consultants to update the technical evidence for the whole district. This was step in the right direction but there is concern over the scope that will be agreed with the consultants. We need wants a strategic flood risk assessment which is fit for purpose which also investigates the cumulative effect of water on Pickedmoor Catchment and its impact on OoS. BT said Patrick Conroy is a planner and Peter Walley is a flood man; they have two different interests, and we need them both on our side. KS added that LLFA and LSIDB need to work with OoS as the relationship is fraught at the moment. KS explained how a SGC 2017 report says Hill Pill is okay, but the Burton report contradicts this; KS wants clarity over this issue.

DG said LSIDB and SGC should be told that the FPC are disappointed they chose not to attend, especially as the entire years meetings were changed to accommodate LSIDB attendance

KS to write a letter to LSIDB and SGC members who failed to come today expressing FPC's concerns over their lack of engagement

NOTE: KS has since had an apology from Kieran Warren who intended to attend but mistook the time.

IB enquired whether Luke Hall MP could be helpful. KS responded saying he couldn't do more than the FPC. DG thought Luke Hall ought to be invited to the next FPC meeting but this will not be actioned at present.

A-2 SUDS monitoring

A-2.1 Review Somerset SUDS report

KS asked all in attendance if they had comments on the Somerset SUDS report. BT said that when he responded to the SUDS Consultation he cited the Somerset SUDS report as an example of how people are not doing their job.

DG commented that 2 per cent of SUDS in Somerset are maintained. AM said he'd never heard of anyone maintaining a SUD.

A-2.2 Monitor existing schemes

It was felt this was covered during discussions.

A-2.3 Inclusion of SUDS in Local Plan etc.

BT said he's submitted consultation comments in December to meet the 4th January deadline which he offered to circulate again. All thanked BT for his work on this. BT, IB and AM to form a working group on the Local Plan.

BT, IB and AM to meet to discuss Local Plan

A-4 Improvements to Hill Pill

The only report that had been received was an internal report prepared by LSIDB staff. What was required was the report prepared by consultants. KS informed all present that Kieran Warren said that they were going to look at Hill Pill a year ago. No report has been received on this. Discussions over the report. MR said he would get a copy of the SGC 2017 report to forward to the committee.

MR to email a copy of SGC 2017 report to FPC

A-5 LSIDB pumping and flood management strategies

KS concerned the Burton report said at times of high water the pumps should be turned off but no one is doing this. Discussion over the lack of logic surrounding this. MR informed all that LSIDB now has an out of hours helpline 24 hours a day.

AM said he'd like to see monitoring sensors which measure the water level in the rhine. (Sensors are fitted at the pumping station) DG had asked for one on the bridge on Chapel Road but it was refused.

Section B Management of water within the parish

B-1 Improve discharge rate at the pill

CT attempted to play a video made by Melvin Wood entitled 'Oldbury Tidal Outfall' but unfortunately this did not work. CT will email it to FPC. CT described the video; Melvin Wood reported that the outfall is in good condition, the Environment Agency (EA) do a full structural survey every few years and that every month a check is done (which was shown in the video.) CT stated that the EA's purpose is to stop the tide coming in and there is a dynamic between balancing the fluvial waters which is seen by the EA as being driven by the LSIDB and the OPC FPC committee. CT reported that the current flood defences are fit for purpose although they are looking at how to improve them.

KS asked CT about the discharge rate at the Pill as high rainfall from Thornbury is more than the flaps can take. KS enquired whether wider flaps would remove some pressure; CT acknowledged this but said the LSIDB is responsible for starting this process. CT reported that the EA cannot actively investigate spill level flaps as they are limited by funding and they are looking along the entire stretch of the Severn Estuary frontage at flood defences.

JN enquired to CT how much the cost and rates of flow are however CT said this was explored in a SGC 2017 report and remains SGC's responsibility. CT could not estimate costs.

BT suggested it could be a waste of time modifying the Pill head if the banks are going to be raised along the estuary in the future.

MR questioned CT over the flaps looking different and asked if they hold water. CT responded that this was covered in the video and the EA believe they are functioning. MR asked if there are any flaps which allow water over the top; CT said he didn't have examples and did not know the cost of flaps which function in this way.

IB asked CT what the current flow rate is; CT reported there is plenty of capacity as demonstrated in the 2017 SGC report previously mentioned. KS added that at high tide flaps would be shut and the hope was that something could be done at the Pill head to increase capacity in the catchment. KS asked CT whether the flaps be changed to 2 flaps either side or on top. CT said this would need further investigating before it could be discussed and that he did not know the cheapest option out of KS's suggestions. KS continued that this would be cheaper than pumps and generators. CT was concerned over the power and said they'd need to be hydraulically tested. CT said the LSIDB ought to take the lead in these enquiries and that he'd be happy to work with them in partnership.

B-2 completion of Church hill works

KS has arranged to meet Nick Blanchard today to look at this further. MR asked KS to thank Nick Blanchard for draining the wet cricket club field.

B-3 Church Road north of the Pill

Note: KS had met Scott Jones and MR on site to discuss this and was awaiting his report.

MR to obtain report from Scott Jones

B-4 Flap repair/replacement in Chapel Road

KS thanked LSIDB for completing this work. AM said the weeds are interfering with the drains working fully. KS said this is SGC's responsibility.

VB to ask Scott Jones to clear weeds from flaps in Chapel Road and consider measures to prevent further weed interference

B-5 Bank heights in upper Pickedmoor catchment

KS has spoken to Paul O Connor who has a GPS who is going to measure the bank heights in the next 3 weeks.

Action:
KS to organise

B-6 Kington Road / Kington Lane road flooding

KS said this item was closed at the last meeting (he'd like this removed from the agenda) MR wanted it reintroduced. DG told of his recent experience of the flooding there. DG felt this ought to stay on the agenda.

MR explained how water comes from a right angle on Kington Lane; there is a big catchment of water so SGC are looking at improving the area in front of Kington House. KS said growing maize effects drainage and contributes to soil erosion. DG very concerned. MR said SGC are dealing with it. MR said a new national policy is being introduced to encourage farmers to hold water.

B-7 Development of flood plan

B-7.1 Support development of flood action plan

AM said FPC needs to look at community involvement. AM is developing a community response and has written a document on it. AM would like a working group to be formed.

B-7.2 Allocate resources

KS to liaise with AM and for KS write an article in 4Ward using AM's plan

Section C Coastal Protection and risks due to sea level

C-1 Global warming Climate-friendly policies in council strategic plan

VB reported that a working party is meeting on February 3rd to discuss this issue further whilst working on the Strategic Plan.

C-2 Coastal defences Bank raising

CT reported that the EA are working with Atkins to test a breach between Oldbury on Severn and the Power Station. They are also looking at the erosion of defences north and south of OoS. BT asked about the Shore Management Plan; it is a fact that this stretch of Oldbury is in need of work so why not talk about raising the banks not just the Pennstock; concern of flooding; how long is Atkins going to take? CT answered that they are developing an understanding of coastal modelling and Atkins are looking at where they should start. CT's colleague Chris Hayes should have an answer on timelines later in the year.

KS stated that Avonmouth to Aust is speeding ahead and asked CT why Oldbury is being left behind. CT responded that Severnside Enterprises seems to be pushing it along; the funding from local enterprise partnership presents a unique opportunity. Atkins will look at funding opportunities for Aust to Sharpness; CT said that by losing Horizon the option of funding from there has gone.

ML asked CT the cost of raising the banks from Avonmouth to Aust. CT responded this would cost between £80,000,000 and £100,000,000.

ML suggested using material from Silt Lagoon 3 in raising the bank in Oldbury. CT said the material would need to be suitable but that this is a fair point to re-use what is there and if it is suitable it would need to be organised in partnership with Magnox

ML to pursue enquiries into whether the excavated material from Silt Lagoon 3 is suitable for bank raising

CT said the EA would consult with landowners such as ML when planning work on their land. Interestingly CT said that all new land developments have a flood risk assessment but this is done on a site by site basis and he would like to see a cohesive strategic approach linking local authorities and planning. CT said SMP2 policies were being updated to contain actions on coastal frontage.

BT added that he is currently working on the Local Plan and he is concerned SMP2 is not mentioned much in the Local Plan and there won't be the same opportunity to be heard for another 15 years. Barry said Atkins was involved with the Local Plan.

C-3 Effect of losing Horizon Project

MR recently attended a Rolls Royce event and is waiting to hear back; Fusion project may choose OoS as a location.

MR to send PowerPoint of this event

C-3 continued: KS stated he'd heard that a few businesses are interested in the site and could end up being involved with Horizon. CT said for the time being, with no project definitely going ahead, the EA lack the ability to engage with anyone.

CT announced that he had to leave the meeting; he was thanked by all present for his input. He said he would send a link to the video which failed to play.

CT to send video

VB to send all FPC dates to CT for 2021

C-4 EA revised approach to coastal protection

It was felt this had been discussed.

Section D Sewage problems in Oldbury Village

D-1 Discussion of problem

KS explained Anne Strong's letter and his own to Wessex Water regarding the Strong families flooding. CJ said he saw water going into Wessex Water manholes. GP said once water enters the vacuum chambers it won't work. Discussion over who is responsible; Wessex Water or their customers. GP said the system has failed over a number of years. MR said Wessex Water's system in OoS needs to be changed. Discussions over the permissible amount of surface water and associated discounts.

MR suggested inviting a representative of Wessex Water to the FPC. DG read the regulations on drain/ storm/ surface water. CJ suggested the current sewerage system is not fit for purpose.

5 To discuss and agree actions on any planning matters which will be sent before the meeting and shared on Zoom during the meeting

There were no new applications to discuss, however, it was noted that the retrospective application for a fence at 4a The Heathers, West End, Oldbury on Severn had been refused

6 To discuss the Local Plan

BT emailed OPC councillors on 06/01/2021 regarding his aim to get SGC's Local Plan to take greater responsibility towards coastal areas. ML and BT were last involved in the SMP in 2009. BT said that unless FPC contribute to the Local Plan there will not be another opportunity until 2038. Other issues can be added to the Local Plan at Stage 2 of the consultation. IB, AM and BT agreed to form a Local Plan group.

BT, IB and AM to form a working group to work on Local Plan

6 To discuss Thornbury High Street closure

This was discussed and DG offered to write a document with points raised from the meeting including traffic and parking issues, disability access concerns, local businesses success/ profitability under the new measures and safety. This will be submitted as part of the SGC Thornbury High Street Consultation by VB after being checked by CJ and KS.

DG to email OPC response to VB to submit to the Thornbury High Street Consultation

7 To discuss joining GloSES and working with local Parishes

BT updated the committee; Rose Hewlett sent him information on GloSES of which MR is a member. GloSES covers non tidal areas further up the estuary. KS will update the FPC on GloSES in the future. FPC planning a consortium of Parishes.

VB will email KS the names of other Chairs and Clerks of the parishes: Aust, Hill, Ham, Berkeley, Ham Fallow, Sharpness to discuss forming a consortium to deal with flood water from the River Severn

8 Any other items of report (not requiring a decision)

None raised

9 Date and time of next meeting & meeting closure

Meeting closed 12.42pm

Next meeting will be on Wednesday 17th March at 10am