

Flood Risk Action Group (FRAG)
15 September 2022 at 3.30pm - Virtual Meeting via Teams

Meeting Minutes

Present

Councillor Karen Shore – Chair
Councillor Hugo Deynem
Councillor Paul Roberts
Councillor Sam Naylor
Councillor Andrew Cooper
Councillor Gillian Edwards
Councillor Paul Donovan
Ian Ratcliffe (IR) – Senior Communications Manager
Jayne Black (JB) – Head of Highways
Andrew Coward (AC) – Major Flood Event Management Engineer
Lewis Williams (LW) – Flood Risk Engineer

Apologies

Jim Gibbins – Place Area Commissioner
Cllr Paul Williams

1. Welcome and Introductions

Cllr Shore

Ian Ratcliffe, the Council's Senior Communications Manager was invited to this meeting to discuss the Council's flooding website that now includes information on the Section 19 reports following Cabinet on 14 September 2022.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

Cllr Shore

The minutes from the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record

3. Storm Christoph S19 Website update

Ian Ratcliffe

Ian Ratcliffe provided an update of the information that is now available on the Council Website for the Section 19 reports for Storm Christoph.

- Progress made regarding information available from the Council and other bodies.
- Residents can sign up for flood warnings.
- What the emergency actions are.
- Policy regarding sandbags and how to apply for them.
- Section 19 reports have been uploaded. These have been broken down by general area for easier access with a summary of key points of the works as well as the in-depth reports.
- A section of completed and planned works is available for residents to see future plans.
- An overview of the Council's response plan is available to answer FAQs that residents may have and to give easy information for residents.
- Any other recommendations are welcome.

Cllr Naylor – Concerns that public perception is poor of progress and this update to the website should help with that.

Cllr Roberts – A couple of queries of the Farndon area reports data and who to contact to change the information.

IR – Myself or Jayne Black.

Link to Section 19 Reports -

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/highways/flooding/flood-investigations>

4. Storm Christoph Section 19 update on recommendations borough wide

Andy Coward

AC presented a number of slides for each affected area from Storm Christoph and provided an update on the Section 19 reports. The following summary is below:

Blacon, Abbots Mead and Parkgate Road

- Work around trash screen by Browning Close with Landowner and EA
- Cleanse Culvert under A540
- Scheme to relevel A540 Abbots Mead. Criticism of response for Road Closures. Property Level protection
- Investigate Attenuation Options
- Review gullies on Browning Close, Chaucer Close
- Quicker response for Traffic management on A540 during floods
- Encourage residents to sign up for Flood Alerts to raise awareness and response
- Explore Property Level Protection

Saughall

- Inform riparian landowners of their responsibilities
- Explore Property Level Protection

Upton Park

- Investigate drainage systems and progress business case to improve drainage in the area.
- Parish Council to release findings of heavy metal contamination investigation.

Ellesmere Port

- Property Level Protection and community plans (area unparished)
- Investigate attenuation options alongside EA
- Work with other RMA's to asses drains in the area
- Ensure new development runoff is controlled
- Continue to work with the URENCO site
- Traffic management response times to be reviewed
- Maintenance of Rivacre Brook to be assessed
- Assess Chase Way culvert

Cllr Shore – raised an issue of reports of cars driving through the flood and causing waves into properties. We need to look at the response and how we can improve the traffic management.

Cllr Donovan – Surface water runoff has been an issue recently and residents have been anxious with poor weather approaching. Sandbags were deployed by residents last week privately. Would the members be able to purchase sandbags to deploy? Can we replenish the sandbag supply through the members budget?

Residents blocked the road off with a van due to previous concerns. Is there any scope to allow them to deploy Traffic Management/have us at the ready quickly?

The residents now have a hotline to the Environment Agency who were in attendance in the previous flood. One thing that may be missing from the Section19 reports may be land ownership of the brooks, with it running through schools and properties and we need to understand responsibility.

Cllr Shore – Noted for Minutes but we need to move on due to time constraints.

Hooton

- Vehicles were causing waves by driving through the open road that was flooded.
- Extensive cleaning has taken place of the drainage system here which is approx. 1.2km long
- PLP
- Investigate Attenuation upstream
- Flood alert options

Willaston

- Property level protection and flood resilience.
- Increased gully emptying as placed as a high-risk area
- Increased response including sandbags

Acton Bridge, Weaverham and Crowton

- Property level protection
- Gully emptying frequency
- Quicker closing of roads
- Upstream storage options
- Flood Warnings
- Check Local infrastructure
- Include Pickering's Lock in Integrated Catchment Modelling exercise
- Emergency Response Including Sandbags

Antrobus

- Explore potential schemes

Davenham

- Investigate attenuation in the upstream section
- Ensure developments have limited discharge
- Investigate drainage systems and ownerships
- Correspondence with residents

Kingsley

- Confirm Drainage system
- Risk based gully emptying to be carried out

Tarporley area (3 sites)

- Check and cleanse highway drainage
- Property level protection
- Scheme in the works for Corkscrew Lane

Winsford

- Increase gully emptying in the gyratory
- Investigate stocks hill drainage

- Caravan Park to be aware of the issues and move caravans away from the flood area

Ashton Hayes

- Work with the EA to ensure drainage channels are kept free and clear
- Investigate storage upstream
- Develop emergency plans
- Property level protection
- Future development controls
- Investigate drainage improvement options
- United Utilities (UU) to complete a programme of cleansing works
- Pilot scheme with Chester University to place level sensors on the system to give a better idea of the drains performance

Cllr Deynem – Good news with the Chester university level sensors. Have the UU cleansing works taken place? AC – advised that he would check with UU and feedback at a future FRAG meeting.

Farndon

- Evacuation development
- EA to inspect Riverbank
- Flood Warnings
- Property level protection

Great Barrow

- Assess development on Mill Lane for Overflow opportunities.
- Investigate upstream Survey
- Further work around Hawkins View
- Review Mill Bridge Structure and maintenance due to silt build-up
- Property level protection
- Sandbag deployment

Kelsall

- Ditch Clearance in Gretsby's Waste
- Investigate drainage system

Mickle Trafford

- Further works with Landowners
- Property level protection

Tattenhall

- Further investigations into historic drainage
- Explore options of natural flood management and storage
- Better understand ground water and its affects (bore hole)
- Flood alerts
- Welsh Water to investigate foul system
- Quick Win System available

Tilston

- Risk Based Gully emptying
- Limited contact with residents

Northwich

- Sumps, valves, gully tops on London Road
- Property level protection for residents
- Integrated Catchment Model
- Continue to work with the other Risk Management Authorities

Cllr Deynem – Road closure improvements. Alongside sandbags, could we provide Road Closure Signs or Flood Warning Signs? This may help with the waves created by people driving through floods. Could communities have access to put road closure signs when a flooding occurs?

Cllr Shore – A widespread issue but there is the TRO process for road closures.

AC – Placement of the signs on the public highway is the issue as Insurances and training is needed. This would put residents in harm's way.

JB – In previous authorities, training was provided to certain residents through the school streets initiative. JB to look into more detail around this issue and feedback at a future meeting. **NEW FRAG ACTION 29**

Cllr Deynem – There may be people who already have the training available for speed indicator devices who may be able to pick this up and assist.

IR – Appreciating the legal aspects, we could put a QR code on signs that residents could scan to update people.

Cllr Roberts – Fully understand the complexity of complying with the regulations. May be possible to offer specific delegations to specific people during emergency flooding periods.

Cllr Shore – Previous working with Reg Services for other types of work, can delegated powers be given to a Parish Council? JB depends on what we are trying to delegate including the necessary training. JB has agreed to look into this in more detail and feedback to a future meeting. **NEW FRAG ACTION 29**

5. Northwich Town Centre Flood Resilience Update (inc ICM) Andy Coward

Meeting planned with UU and EA to finalise flood emergency plan which will include the pumping arrangements for Northwich Town Centre. UU have confirmed 450l/s from their infrastructure, however there is an issue with access into Dock Road pumping station.

CW&C are confident with the pumping capacity that we can provide as well as the EA. A meeting is scheduled shortly to finalise these arrangements.

Cllr Shore – have you agreed tentatively a 1000l/s between the RMA's (CW&C, EA and UU) as there was an understanding that UU of around 600l/s?

AC – UU have reduced their capacity due to transport constraints. Other locations are being considered for efficiency and not just Dock Road and Barons Quay.

Cllr Cooper – If they are bringing 500l/s, are we above our target of 1000l/s?

AC – Yes, we may be marginally over.

Cllr Cooper – If UU have an option to pump water out at Lock Street, assuming we are mean out of the river, as there could be ecological concerns such as sucking fish or other wildlife up? Will there be concerns of pumping sewage?

AC – There would be sewage being pumped but would be very dilute, and this is permitted due to the emergency level from the EA.

A start up technical meeting has been held between Atkins Ltd, UU, EA and CW&C to start the modelling process. Atkins are starting to build the model. There have been some technical issues relating to ICT software between the RMA's that are being worked through. An updated program will be available soon.

Cllr Shore – is there any other information available relating to the ICM?

AC – the model should be finished for April 2023, but it is in the early stages of development. Currently information needs to be released by the RMAs and we have good information of the highway systems.

Cllr Cooper – Can you set out the timetable of deliverables? How long do they anticipate the process will take to see improvements?

AC – When the model is finished, previous flood events can be run to calibrate its accuracy.

Cllr Cooper – Could we host a meeting or a short engagement event with locals to let them give their thoughts and local knowledge?

AC – We can do, but the data brought out by the system may be quite raw and difficult to interpret.

Cllr Cooper – Its quite likely that over time that people will say we need to dredge the river despite the fact it is not needed but the model may let us run scenarios for the residents to prove its effect.

AC – One thing we will be looking at is where the critical assets are, it might be that residents may be able to help with that element. An engagement event could be useful earlier in the process and this could be discussed with the modellers.

6. Attendance of RMA's and other stakeholders Cllr Shore/Andy Coward

Been in contact with the RMAs who are aware that the FRAG has been re-started and that they will be asked to attend. Questions in advance would be helpful if they are given to the RMAs in good time for them to answer.

Cllr Shore – Emergency planning and the good work that is currently going on and whether Emergency Planning could be moved closer for attendance.

Cllr Roberts – I do wonder if there is an advantage to having UU and Welsh Water at the same meeting sue to them carrying out the same roles in different areas. Would also be useful to compare answers.

Specific issues regarding specific areas would benefit from inviting relevant businesses or members of the Parish or Town Council in attendance. The meetings could be by a specific case-by-case basis.

Cllr Shore – We could invite visiting Members to the meetings, if there is a desire from the Group?

Cllr Cooper – My priority is an engagement event for Northwich for local businesses on the emergency plan, If we can get that arranged? Local businesses have a petition looking for information. If they are informed this could have been avoided.

Cllr Donovan – Communication is a key part of this regarding the residents and businesses. Not all areas have Parishes or Town Council's and may just have community representatives.

Cllr Shore – Can we have an engagement session with regards to the Northwich Emergency Flooding Plan with Members and businesses. Cllr Shore to have a discussion with JB and AC to how we may go about undertaking this. **NEW FRAG ACTION 30**

Cllr Shore – A proposal to bring the RMAs to the following meeting, if FRAG Member are happy with this?

AC – Emergency Planning are happy and content to attend with notice.

Cllr Naylor – Need to address the petition in Northwich and arrange an engagement event to give them the information and alleviate their fears. Cllr Shore – Agree

7. Development of Forward Works programme **Cllr Shore/Andy Coward**

AC gave a synopsis of the previous meeting that have taken place. AC to seek availability from the Emergency planning team and the RMA's to the next meeting, but this will depend on availability.

Cllr Shore – Residents will be worried about having an emergency plan for this winter so would be helpful to address and what we have in place for the forthcoming winter period. AC – We will invite Emergency planning, UU and the EA to the next meeting.

8. Actions Matrix update and approval **Cllr Shore/Andy Coward**

AC shared the actions matrix on the screen.

FRAG 9 – Questions about the sumps in Northwich

FRAG 13 – CRT have confirmed that two sluices were not working at Dutton.

FRAG 21 – In relation to the sumps (to close with no 9)

FRAG 23 – More investigation required with regards to this action

FRAG 24 – Jim Gibbins has asked the EA about return rates

FRAG 26 – Another operation meeting with the CRT next week

FRAG 27 – Flood engagement events, more detail required with suggested dates

FRAG 28 – Chris Samuel from Emergency Planning Team happy to attend

9. Any Other Business **All**

Cllr Roberts – Comments in the chat, are they confidential?

Cllr Shore – No, this is in the public domain.

10. Date and time of next meeting **All**

29 September 2022 at 4pm