Wyre Flood Forum Agenda 13 June 2013

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Wyre Flood Forum

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 13 June 2013 at the Civic Centre, Poulton

Present:
Carl Green (CG)  Wyre Council (Chairman)
Cllr Roger Berry (RB)  Wyre Council (Councillor for Highcross Ward)
Cllr Ramesh Gandhi (RG)  Wyre Council (Councillor for Staina Ward)
Cllr Tom Balmain (TB)  Wyre Council (Councillor for Garstang Ward)
Paul Long (PL)  Wyre Council
Neil Greenwood (NG)  Wyre Council (Head of Environmental Health and Community Safety)
Paul Snape (PS)  Lancashire County Council
Kevan Williams (KW)  United Utilities
Matthew Connor (MC)  Environment Agency
Nicola Evans (NE)  Natural England
Kathryn Oddie (KO)  Natural England
Barbara Mackie (BM)  Out Rawcliffe Parish Council
Phil Orme (PO)  Preesall Town Council and LALC
June Jackson (JJ)  Stalmine with Staynall Parish Council
Graham Hargreaves (GH)  Hambleton Parish Council
Edward Greenwood (EG)  Fleetwood Town Council
Irene Horner (IH)  Thornton Action Group
Iain Johnstone (IJ)  Fleetwood Civic Society
Suzana Ilic (SI)  Lancaster University
Sylvia Oatridge (SO)  Stalmine Resident

Apologies:
Dan Blacow  United Utilities
Howard Philips  Thornton Action Group
Katherine Bentley  Lancashire County Council
John Blundell  Wyre Council
Cllr May Ghandi  Wyre Council (Councillor for Carleton Ward)
1. **Introduction**

   CG welcomed all to the meeting and introduced NG, Head of Environmental Health and Community Safety for Wyre Council, who would be giving a brief update on the Fylde Peninsular Management Group meeting on 12 June.

2. **Apologies**

   Apologies were received from Dan Blacow (UU), Howard Philips (TAG), Katherine Bentley (LCC), John Blundell (WBC) and Cllr May Ghandi

3. **Minutes of meeting, 14 March 2013**

   CG ran through the minutes from the previous meeting and the following was noted.
   - (item 2) MC confirmed that he had received the information from JJ about the clearing of gullies in the special protection area on the Pilling marshes

   The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2013 were noted and confirmed as a correct record.

4. **Fylde Peninsula Management Group**

   CG reported that he and NG had attended the Beach Managers’ meeting on 12 June; NG gave a brief update on the meeting. A copy of his presentation is included with the Appendices to these minutes.
   - The meeting included representatives from local government, agencies and other interested parties
   - NG explained how the EA takes water samples
   - Ian Dunhill from the Environment Agency had given a brief presentation and discussion about short term pollution events,
   - Short term pollution events are a mechanism whereby poor sampling results can be discounted due an event (such as heavy rainfall) which could skew sampling results in the short term.
   - Poor results often occur due to short term events leading to spikes in pollution levels due to the event (such as heavy rainfall)
   - It is required that the local authority sign any beach where there has been an event which could affect short term water quality. It was noted that using this mechanism would improve bathing water quality at Cleveleys from poor to sufficient; Fleetwood would remain poor.
   - There has been some discussion with the Environment Agency about what signage should be used to notify the public, including the type of sign and what information should be displayed.
   - It has been proposed that Wyre Council be used as a trial authority to formalise signage.

   NG gave details of the Turning Tides Board; a group of Authorities and Agencies formed to help influence investment, improve water quality and improve the perception of NW bathing waters. The Board have suggested a project to provide a standardised electronic message across the NW to show water quality.

   RG asked about funding for such signage. CG replied that electronic signs such as those shown in presentation (see Appendices) cost in the region of £20k, mainly because of the cost of cabling to remote areas, but may be cheaper at Cleveleys and Fleetwood as there was existing cabling.
It was noted that no mention had been made of polluted water coming down the local rivers as these can have a substantial effect on pollution readings. NG noted that the EA have to follow a testing protocol to ensure that all readings were standardised. MC noted that the EA takes water samples along the whole of the rivers and has been working with farmers to help reduce pollution entering the rivers. The EA was working toward achieving a rating of good for water quality by the mid 2020s.

IH asked how often samples were taken; CG replied that these were taken weekly during the bathing season, May to September.

IH asked how it was determined what is causing the pollution - dog fouling has been put forward as a key problem. CG replied that DNA sampling has been undertaken and noted dog, cow and sheep DNA in samples. He added that human DNA had also been found, presumably from cross connections and overflows. He noted that water in the region is very silty and this doesn’t allow sunlight to break up any pollution in the water as well as in other places.

IH asked whether the current scheme to remove cross connections was having a significant effect on pollution levels; NG replied that there was still a good way to go to remove all cross connections.

EG asked whether pollution from the River Wyre was affecting readings at Fleetwood, CG replied that river pollution was almost certainly contributing to the poor results in Fleetwood; it was likely that signs warning of poor bathing water quality may be needed.

TB agreed that a significant source of pollution is a result of the River Wyre discharging at Fleetwood. He asked that testing at Fleetwood be carried out at the same time as other areas to ensure a fair comparison. CG supported this, adding that the time of day that the tests were taken could also affect the results. MC confirmed that additional staff had been taken on by the EA to improve water monitoring.

IH asked if the EA’s planned watercourse maintenance programme would have any bearing on future testing. MC replied that the EA scheme is principally concerned with flood protection and likely to have minimal or not impact.

It was suggested that free bags be provided for dog waste next to each rubbish bin; a similar scheme exists in Sefton

NG went through the Council’s Beach Management Plans; these include
- Regular sweeping of the promenade to remove debris and wind blown sand
- Regular raking of Fleetwood bathing beach
- Extending dog control orders in Fleetwood
- Encouraging community beach cleaning events
- Introduction of bigger rubbish bins
- Improving Promenade signage
- Additional inspections of litter, dog fouling and pollution

Other suggestions included providing awards for people using dog litter bins and the setting up a website detailing water quality, parking, local events and other relevant information.
5. **What’s going on in the Region**

(a) **United Utilities**

KW gave an update of works being undertaken by United Utilities.

- Work on Dobson Road is now expected to be completed in September 2013
- Work on Southfield Drive is expected to commence June 2014
- The Porters Row scheme has now been dropped due to the high cost; currently estimated at £3m. The scheme has not proved to be cost effective, and residents will be informed by letter of the decision.

JJ asked how the scheme had got to £3m for “sticking a pipe in the ground”. KW replied that the local surface water drainage records were not accurate and there was insufficient fall on Smithy Lane to put in a new pipe. JJ replied that she was “baffled” why a new pipe could not be laid. KW said that local resident Mike Tucker had been keeping the Parish Council informed; JJ was disappointed with this. KW added that the ground conditions in the field to the north of Smithy Lane was unsuitable for laying a pipe; JJ replied that she had worked this land and that it was fully drained.

RG asked if there was any appeal process against the decision - KW replied that this was the end of the project. He added that mitigating works already carried out had prevented any recent flooding.

(b) **Environment Agency**

MC detailed works being undertaken by the EA. These included,

- Knott End seawall works to be undertaken soon
- Study of Hillylaid Pool and Royles Brook watercourses (including Stanah pumping station) is ongoing and due for completion next spring.
- Rawcliffe Road, St.Michaels - ongoing embankment works
- West End watercourse - fencing to be installed
- Ainspool watercourse, Churchtown - works planned to embankment
- Flood risk modelling is being updated - noted that this may change flood risk area plans

In addition MC noted that the EA had held a Depot Day on 5 June at Churchtown during which the works that the EA are undertaking this year was publicised. A summary of these works can be viewed at the following website [http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/northwestmaintenance](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/northwestmaintenance)

The Wyre area is found under the ‘North Lancashire’ heading.

RB asked for further details of the investigation works into Hillylaid Pool and Royles Brook watercourses; MC replied that a study was being undertaken to establish which properties were at risk of flooding and once completed a bid would be made for work to protect these. There is a lot of work needed on this project and it was unlikely that works could be brought forward.

IH asked if any of the planned works had been approved yet; MC replied that a bid had yet to be made for money for these works and no works had yet been approved.
(c) Wyre Council

CG gave a summary of works currently being undertaken by Wyre:

- The scheme to replace the sea defences at Rossall is progressing well. A FEPA licence is expected soon and the Contractor is expected to begin works on site in November. Richard Benyon, Minister for Natural Environment and Fisheries, recently visited the site and was impressed by the joint working with Blackpool on the Rossall and Anchorsholme schemes. CG noted that the joint working had produced a saving of £14m over the two schemes.

- Beach management works at Fleetwood and Cleveleys are due to start on Monday 17 June. Sand/shingle is being moved from Fleetwood to Cleveleys and works on extending groynes are to be undertaken. The works are expected to be completed by the start of the school summer holidays.

PL noted that works had been recently undertaken to repair groynes around the Rossall Point area, and the flap valve referred to at the last Forum had been replaced.

(d) Lancashire County Council

PS confirmed that Lancashire County Council was now the lead local flood authority with the duty to investigate any significant flooding events. He added that additional staff had now been appointed and the Team were now able to get through more work to resolve flooding issues.

He noted that the key issues in Wyre are in Preesall (Sunnyside Terrace) and Hambleton (Kiln Lane, Carr Road and Sherbourne Road). He added that meeting had been held with residents from both areas and that works to resolve these flooding issues were being coordinated through the Making Space for Water Technical Group.

LCC to produce a presentation for a future Flood Forum meeting on their role on flood investigation. It was agreed that it would be useful that everyone was aware of who is responsible for what works.

RB asked whether an investigation had been undertaken into the flooding on Northumberland Ave, Thornton; PS replied that this had not yet been undertaken but, because of the rapid draining of the area, it was suspected that the flooding was due to a blocked pipe which may have been discharged by the efforts of officers on site during the event or simply cleared itself. LCC were planning to carry out an investigation into the cause of the flooding.

RG asked what progress had been made with regard to New Lane, Thornton. PS said that a draft report on the flooding was due to be published at the end of July.

RG asked that his thanks be passed on to the relevant persons for the clearing of the gullies on Skippool Road.

(e) Natural England

NE confirmed that Natural England had had no involvement with any flooding issues since the last Forum meeting.
6. **Making Space for Water Technical Group**

PL gave a brief update on the works undertaken by the Group.

The main areas currently being considered by the Group include:
- Highcross Road, Poulton
- Normoss Road (Dobson Road / Southfield Drive), Poulton
- Pinewood Ave., Preesall
- Hambleton (Klin Lane / Carr Road / Sherbourne Road)
- Sunnyside Terrace, Preesall
- Stricklands Lane, Stalmine
- Northumberland Ave., Thornton
- New Lane, Thornton
- Tarn Road, Thornton
- Beechfield Ave., Preesall
- Fleetwood Road North, Thornton (Marsh Mill)
- Ainspool, Churchtown
- White Brook watercourse, Great Eccleston
- Sower Carr Lane, Hambleton
- Broadway, Fleetwood
- Jubilee Drive, Cleveleys

Brief details of each issue are included in a copy of the minutes of the recent MSfW meeting appended to these minutes.

SO asked that her property at the junction of Stricklands Lane and Moss Side Lane be considered by the group. PS agreed to investigate flooding at this property; he thought that it may be related to flooding issues with the next door property.

GH brought up an issue on Pegs Pool East which is in need of maintenance. He introduced Peter Walmsley to the Forum, a resident of Shard Lane, Hambleton whose property backs onto the watercourse. It is alleged that Mr Walmsley’s neighbour is refusing access to her property in order that maintenance works are carried out to the watercourse. PL replied that he was aware of this and that he understood that the watercourse had been enmand and maintained by the Environment Agency.

PS explained that although the EA has permissive powers to maintain the watercourse, responsibility for any works resided with the riparian owner. He added that the neighbour is presumed in law to own to the centreline of the watercourse and could not refuse access to the watercourse to the adjoining neighbour to undertake maintenance of his side of the watercourse. If the neighbour continued to refuse access for maintenance LCC could give Notice for works to be done.

7. **Emergency Planning**

Item not discussed.

8. **Flood Action Groups**

MC gave a presentation on Flood Action Groups - a copy of the presentation is included with these minutes.

CG noted that a Flood Action Group can help prepare communities ahead of a predicted flooding incident and assist local authorities respond in the early stages of a flood event which can help significantly reduce flood damage.
9. **Proposed Agenda Items**
   - Lancashire County Council to give a presentation on their role lead local flood authority.

10. **Other Business**
    It was asked whether other areas held similar meetings to us re water quality. Water quality in Wyre is affected by areas to the south, such as Liverpool, 'exporting' their rubbish northwards.

    CG replied that the Turning Tides Group covers the area from Sefton in the south to the Scottish border. Wyre sits with Cell 11 Coastal Group and shares issues with authorities and agencies from North Wales to the Scottish border.

    PO asked for an update on the works by the Ferry slipway at Knott End. MC said that the EA were looking to work with WBR on these works; CG added that the works had been costed and passed to the EA for approval.

    PO suggested that MC and JB visit all parish councils to help update the Wyre Flood Plans. He suggested that MC attend the Wyre Area Committee meeting on 9 July to present his Flood Action Group presentation. PO to see if there is a slot in the agenda to allow this.

11. **Date of Next Meeting**
    Next meeting of the forum would be held at 2pm on Thursday 12 September 2013.

    The meeting started at 2.00pm and finished at 4.15pm

Appendices.

1. North West Beach Managers’ Briefing - Presentation by Neil Greenwood (WBC)
2. Flood Action Groups - Presentation by Matthew Connor (Env. Agency)
3. Making Space for Water Group - Minutes 10 June