

Thatcham Flood Forum



Minutes of a meeting of Thatcham Flood Forum Steering Group held on Wednesday 28th May 2014, at 7.00 p.m. in the Thatcham Town Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road

Present: Iain Dunn (Chairman)
Mel Alexander (Thatcham Town Council Officer)
Peter Lavarack (Local Resident)
Leo Pieri (Local Resident)
Nick Townsend (Local Resident)
and Garry Poulson (Volunteer Centre West Berkshire)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Brian Barnes and Brian Woodham. It was noted that Cllr. Geoff Findlay had resigned from Cold Ash Parish Council due to ill health.

2. Flood Warden Scheme

Garry Poulson from Volunteer Centre West Berkshire (VCWB) presented a proposal to introduce a Flood Warden scheme for Thatcham, whereby volunteers could sign up to react to flood events within the community. The VCWB would assist with setting up the scheme which would be affiliated to Thatcham Flood Forum. It was agreed in principle to establish a Flood Warden Scheme, with the help of VCWB, and to include Cold Ash within the scheme boundary. Garry and Mel would liaise to pursue establishment of the scheme.

3. Ground Water Flooding

A local conservationist had approached the Flood Forum with a request to discuss concerns over ground water flooding in Thatcham. Unfortunately the resident was not present for this item but would be invited to attend a future meeting.

4. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19th March 2014 were agreed and signed as a true record.

5. Matters arising from previous meeting

Item 3 The Forum was still very keen to meet with Bryan Lyttle, West Berkshire Council Planning Officer, to discuss how the Surface Water Management Plan was considered as part of the planning process. It was agreed that Bryan should be invited to attend the next meeting.

6. Proposed Future Developments

The Forum considered whether it should be expressing an opinion on all proposed large developments. It was agreed that it should and that Mel would continue to circulate the agendas for Thatcham Town Council's Planning Committee meetings. Mel also agreed to circulate the Strategic Housing and Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) document to the Steering Group. The Forum was keen to engage with a local expert who could offer opinions on flooding matters relating to relevant planning applications.

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7. Financial Contributions to flood alleviation schemes

The Forum discussed whether it should be seeking financial contributions from the community towards flood alleviation schemes. It was agreed not to pursue for the time being but to reassess in the future if shortfalls were identified.

8. Updates:

8.1 Rainsford Farm

There were no updates.

8.2 Surface Water Management Plan

As the funding application for the Tull Way flooding alleviation scheme had not been successful, and as Cold Ash phase 1 had provided increased protection, the feasibility of transferring funding awarded for Cold Ash phase 2 to the Tull Way scheme instead was being explored.

8.3 National Flood Forum

There were no updates.

8.4 Water Bill

There were no updates.

8.5 West Berkshire Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

There were no updates.

9. Action Plan

Leo, Nick and Peter agreed to visit all visible drainage assets to record details and take photographs, for the drainage asset register. Mel agreed to speak to the Thatcham Neighbourhood Wardens to seek their support in inspecting assets and recording findings for onward reporting by the Flood Forum.

It was noted that not all assets were visible as some were located underground.

10. Any other business

The following information had been received from West Berkshire Council:

10.1 National 3 Digit DNO Emergency Phone Number

*The electricity industry is currently investigating the potential of a **national three digit telephone number for all electrical emergencies and power outages.***

We are very interested to hear and understand your views on this, and have created a short survey with some key questions for our stakeholders.

We would be very grateful if you could take five minutes to complete our short survey by following the link below:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/3DigitEmergencyNumber>

10.2 Thatcham Family Fun Day

It was agreed that, as nobody was available to man a stall at the Thatcham Family Fun Day on Sunday 29th June 2014, that an information only display would be provided.

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11. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 15th July 2014, commencing 7 p.m. in the Thatcham Town Council Chamber.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.20 p.m.

Signed: _____ Date: _____