



**Minutes of a meeting of Thatcham Flood Forum Steering Group
held on Wednesday 24th July 2013, at 7.00 p.m.
in the Thatcham Town Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road**

Present: Iain Dunn (Chairman)
Brian Barnes, Stuart Clark (West Berkshire Council Officer) (part meeting),
Peter Lavarack, Leo Pieri, Cllr. Martin Shemmans (Cold Ash Parish Council)
and Brian Woodham

In attendance: Mel Alexander (Thatcham Town Council Officer) and Steve Kelly (Thatcham Weather Station)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. John Boyd (Thatcham Town Council).

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd May 2013 were agreed, subject to amendment of the last paragraph of Minute number 6 to read "Cold Ash Greening Group" instead of "Greening Group". The Minutes were amended and signed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising from previous meeting

Item 5.1 – first attenuation pond, east of Cold Ash Hill:

Stuart confirmed that the land owner had now verbally agreed to a revised design plan, which was necessary due to an obstruction, and written agreement was awaited.

It was agreed to move to agenda item number 5 to enable Stuart Clark to leave.

4. Updates:

4.1 Rainsford Farm

Stuart reported that Thames Water had not yet successfully inspected the pipe due to a suspected leak. Stuart would update further at the next meeting.

Stuart commented that the draft Action Plan looked good and advised that he was currently working on various flood related documents, including one on communication, and would report more on this at the next meeting.

Stuart Clark left the meeting.

4.2 Surface Water Management Plan

It was reported that good progress continued to be made. West Berkshire Council was confident that the first attenuation pond, east of Cold Ash Hill, was still on course to be built in this financial year.

Stuart had been advised to contact Cold Ash Parish Council with a view to presenting details of the attenuation pond to the Council. Stuart had confirmed that he would pursue this.

4.2 Surface Water Management Plan continued

Tull Way – the project appraisal report was due to be completed in the next week, ready for submission to the Environment Agency (EA) for funding approval. The EA would consider in mid November for proposed funding in the next financial year.

Stuart had confirmed that funding was available to complete preliminary design works on three further ponds; Floral Way, west of Cold Ash Hill and Dunstan Green. Designs for Floral Way and west of Cold Ash Hill would be completed by the end of 2013 and Dunstan Green in February/March 2014.

4.3 National Flood Forum

It was reported that DEFRA was currently running a consultation on flood risk insurance. The closing date was 8th August 2013. The consultation could be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/insurance-in-areas-of-flood-risk>

Iain agreed to circulate an email he had received from the National Flood Forum regarding this consultation.

4.4 Flood Action Group

Nothing to report. An update had been requested from the group administrator but no response had been received.

5. Thatcham Weather Man

Steve Kelly was welcomed to the meeting; he had been operating as an amateur weather man since October 2002. Steve talked through the various information he had kindly prepared on rainfall in Thatcham and agreed that the Flood Forum could use this data as it wished. Steve advised that he could prepare data to suit the Flood Forum's specific requirements, if needed.

Steve was thanked for providing this information and for attending the meeting.

6. Contacting residents set to benefit from first attenuation pond

It had been suggested that the Flood Forum should consider contacting residents set to benefit from the first attenuation pond, east of Cold Ash Hill, to highlight the work that had been carried out and to ensure residents were properly informed about the benefits of the scheme, before work started. It was agreed that this information should be distributed prior to publication of the planning application.

Mel agreed to draft a press release and letter/flyer to residents. This would be circulated to the Steering Group members for approval prior to publication. Members of the Forum agreed to hand deliver the letter to residents.

7. Action Plan

The draft Action Plan was considered and a few amendments were made, as reflected in "Thatcham Flood Forum Draft Action Plan – Version II". It was agreed that fulfillment of the dependency roles would be addressed at the AGM. Mel confirmed that Thatcham Town Council had formally agreed to offer the Flood Forum administrative support, which would include publicity, and this support would be provided by Mel.

It was agreed that the amended draft action plan would be considered further at the next meeting.

8. Other matters

It was agreed to consider the following points, raised during preparation of the draft action plan, at a future meeting:

- should the Forum change its name (i.e. to become an Action Group)
- should the Forum become a fundraiser and if so to what extent
- should the Forum become a charitable trust / charity status

9. Any Other Business

It was agreed that the Forum should request details of drain maintenance regimes and certification of when maintenance had been carried out.

It was agreed that signage for the Cold Ash Hill attenuation pond should be pursued.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 18th September 2013, commencing 7 p.m. in the Thatcham Town Council Chamber.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.04 p.m.

Signed: _____

Date: _____