



Steering Committee

Minutes of meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at Thatcham Town Council Chamber, Brownsfield Rd, Thatcham @ 7.30pm

1. **Attendance & Introductions:** Brian Woodham (SWMP Chair), Mark Lillycrop (Thatcham Town Council), Richard Crumly (Thatcham Town Council), Peter Lavarack (Resident) Leo Pieri (Treasurer), Iain Dunn (Chair Flood Forum), Keith Hoddinott (resident), Mark Robbins (resident), Denise Kinsella (Thames Water), Bell Kelly (Thames Water), Lynn Sorrie (resident & minute taker)
2. **Apologies:** none
3. **Minutes of Meeting** 7<sup>th</sup> November 2109- Agreed & signed by Iain Dunn
4. **Matters arising:** see items below
5. **Website Update:** Mark Robbins confirmed that the website has now moved to the new host at a cost of £50pa. As soon as the Flood Forum minutes are available each month, Mark will update the website. Iain will speak to Thatcham Town Council and ask that the Flood Forum manages the £500 yearly donation themselves to make it easier to pay out various expenses.
6. **Thames Water update:** Denise Kinsella attended the meeting and replied to questions put to her as our point of contact at Thames Water by Keith Hoddinott recently.  
The problem with access to the pipe/syphon from the Pipers Way pond/dip to Rainsford Farm underground via Network Rail land continues. Denise confirmed that they have been trying now for a year to get authorisation from Network Rail to access the pipe that runs underneath the railway to clean it out to prevent any blockages & potential flooding. The pipework had been inspected in 2017 & 2018 but not in 2019. A dialogue with Network Rail continues but Thames Water are no further forward at present. Brian asked Denise to find out if Thames Water have any emergency override procedures in place should flooding occur as this could affect the whole of Thatcham. Brian suggested to the Flood Forum members that we should be approaching our new MP for assistance in resolving this issue. Denise confirmed that the Pipers Way pond and Gables Way pond are maintained and cleared by Thames Water yearly.  
Guidelines for the new five year funding period have not yet been finalised between Thames Water and the regulator Ofwat. Thames Water have put questions to the regulator and are expecting a response in March. Thames Water still want to fund SUDS in partnership with local authorities but at present the possibility of funding is still undecided. In the Thames Valley there are separate foul water & surface water drainage systems in operation, combining the sewers to accept both is advantageous especially in areas likely to flood, at the moment Ofwat are only looking at London.  
Denise and her colleague have now provided the forum with up to date email addresses and will endeavour to attend each meeting going forward.

7. **Progress of projects in progress:** Brian updated the group with regard to Dunston Park/Dunston Green & Siege Cross. Regretfully all have been badly affected by the poor weather conditions leading up to Xmas 2019 . Revised completion dates are now end Feb/end March dependant again on weather. The ground at Dunston Park had become completely sodden and unworkable and Siege Cross has come to a complete halt. The bund at Siege Cross needs some remedial work as it is currently too high. As soon as work is completed the landscapers will be on site. Remedial work on Kennet school fields also needs to be undertaken as the site was left in a 'poor' state by the contractors. The rugby posts are too close to the ditch and the ground is very stony.  
West Berks Council are arranging a press release to update the public on the progress to date.
8. **With regard to North & East Thatcham,** a final draft business case from JBA Consultants is due to be submitted to the Environment Agency by the end of March. To date the Flood Forum have not been given an indication of a potential need for fundraising to support these projects.
9. **Memorial Fields:** No update
10. **Community Involvement:** The forum discussed attending as many community events as possible this year to raise awareness of the Flood Forum and to update residents on projects both in progress and planned. Iain will discuss further with Mark Lillycrop (town councillor) and provide an update at the next meeting. Thatcham Fun Day and VE Commemorations were mentioned.
11. **Flood Wardens:** Iain mentioned that 'Thatcham Together' is another community group and joint contacts are preferable for all sorts of problems in and around Thatcham. Iain is in regular contact with them.
12. **AOB:** Leo mentioned that the community should be made aware of the insurance industries view on properties that have been flooded in the past. Each homeowner has an individual liability to maintain flood prevention on their property.
13. Next meeting is planned for 24<sup>th</sup> March @ 7pm.
14. Meeting closed at 8.25pm