

# EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

## Flooding & Land Drainage Working Party

Notes of the Zoom meeting held at 2.00pm on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2021

### Present

Bruce de Saram	BdS	Chair, ETC & EDDC councillor Littleham ward
Chetna Jones	CJ	ETC Deputy Town Clerk
Kate Pearson	KP	EA, Flood Resilience Advisor
Tom Buxton-Smith	TBS	EDDC, Engineering Projects Manager
Tim Dumper	TD	ETC councillor, Town ward
Pauline Stott	PS	ETC councillor, Halsdon ward
Cherry Nicholas	CN	ETC councillor, Brixington ward
Frank Cullis	FCu	ETC councillor, Withycombe Raleigh ward
Steve Gazzard	SG	ETC & EDDC councillor, Withycombe Raleigh ward
Tim Clatworthy	TC	ETC, notes

### Apologies

Thomas Aldridge	TA	DCC, Flood & Coastal Risk Management
Jeff Trail	JT	DCC councillor
Ben Harman	BH	SWW

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### 1. Welcome and apologies

### 2. Notes of previous meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021

BdS proposed and FCu seconded the veracity of these notes.

### 3. Matters arising from previous meeting

- a) Item 3, the dangerous broken fence alongside Withycombe Brook between Bradham Lane and Wood Lane: CJ has recommended that this issue be added to the agenda of the next ETC Full Council meeting.
- b) Item 4, David Hancock of EA to check whether work on the seafront lamp columns has been completed: DH was not present at this meeting. KP said that Flood Control International were soon to install the largest gate, which would involve use of a crane, and that the reinstallation of the festoon lights would be better left until after the plant had been removed.
  - **Action: KP to let us know when this work has been completed.**
- c) Item 5, TBS to provide date of LIDAR scan used in his presentation to Cllr Fred Caygill: This has been provided.
- d) Item 6, KP to check if phone numbers will be shown on the Mamhead Slipway gates: This work is still in progress, but they will be displayed before the winter period. Morton Crescent residents are stressing that this work needs to be completed urgently, as in the recent flooding event they were unable to close the gate as it was locked, and they did not know who to contact.
  - 6a: Marine resistant padlocks to be bought for the gates, with one standard key that opens every single gate to be issued to volunteers, EA and EDDC. These keys will open all gates, i.e. pedestrian and highway gates and Mamhead Slipway.
  - 6b: Additionally, the numbering of the gates is not yet in the correct sequence due to gates being added or removed vis-à-vis the original plan; there are no 'missing' gates! though gates may be temporarily removed for servicing. TBS is arranging for full servicing before the winter so the gates can be reliably operational, and thereafter for annual inspections of the seals and more thorough maintenance every 5 years.

- e) Item 12, damaged outflow pipes by Lifeboat Station: (1) The large pipe is almost certainly EDDC's; TBS is investigating costs for repair. (2) The smaller pipes are probably SWW's former outfall pipes, no longer used and could be removed; currently buried under sand but will likely be exposed again.

- **Action: TBS to contact SWW regarding their possible removal.**

#### **4. EA: General updates (KP)**

- a) Tidal Defence Scheme construction work is progressing according to schedule and the roads have been reopened, with only the Clocktower (Area C) pavement still currently closed. Landscaping to take place in the autumn, and final completion of the Scheme by December.
- b) EA to write to Morton Crescent residents to spell out their responsibilities regarding the wall. Painting will be down to the residents but they will be prevented from making structural changes, and any repairs needed from a flood prevention viewpoint (e.g. after a car collision) will be the responsibility of EA/EDDC. ETC will also receive a generic copy of this letter within the operations manual.
- c) Flood-gate volunteers: About half the Morton Crescent volunteers have now had practice operating the gates, and were impressed with the quality of the engineering and the ease with which the gates could be operated. They have been provided with a copy of the Risk Assessment and been asked if they are happy to abide by it – this is necessary for ETC's insurance purposes. They are also setting up a WhatsApp group to share information with each other. KP to schedule training with businesses that have their own gates, e.g. the Imperial Hotel, the Grove Inn, the Best Western Hotel, and hopefully Exe Sailing Club. Relevant manuals and plans etc. to be ready late August allowing the Memorandum of Understanding to be updated, and remaining volunteers to be trained up by late September. In the meantime should there be a flooding event before all volunteers are trained up, Kier staff will take responsibility for the gates; after they demobilise, EA will take over until our volunteers are ready.
- d) In the event of an emergency, volunteers should phone EDDC which has a 24-hour helpline. However EDDC does not have 24-hour staffing, unlike EA, but EA will only be asking for gates to be closed during working hours as they will know of an exceptionally high tide 6 hours ahead. A call to the operations centre would be transferred to Camperdown who would effect the response; but if necessary they would escalate the issue to EA. In the case of an emergency out-of-hours, a call to the same number should be made, but it will be transferred immediately to EA instead of Camperdown. EA will have a copy of EDDC's procedures and will therefore be able to put them into action. However, EA is there as a contingency and some thought will need to be given for a more permanent out-of-hours EDDC solution, eg. after 5pm on a Friday for bad weather over the weekend.
- e) Engagement Trail: Mindful of climate change and the increase in sudden extreme weather events, KP is creating an 'Engagement Trail' in Exmouth, attaching signs to e.g. street furniture to remind people to be better prepared, how to adapt to a changing climate, how to minimise damage personal damage, and minimise our impact on climate change. If ETC would like to push any of these messages through our channels, please let her know.

#### **5. SWW: General updates (BH)**

Due to SWW protocols, BH is unable to join Zoom meetings, but emailed this update: "Nothing really from my end. If you could pass on our apologies to the population of Exmouth for the mayhem that we have been causing digging up the road around Imperial Road car park over the past six weeks. We have a sewage pumping station underneath the car park and the pumped main started leaking some weeks ago. We dug and repaired this but every time we turned on the pumps and charged the main, it sprang a new leak in a different spot. We've repaired all of these now and tested the repairs, but we are leaving the

excavation open until Monday as it will rain at the weekend which will mean the pumps will be running a lot more just to be on the safe side and make sure there aren't any other problems."

TD raised the issue of tidal flooding at the junction of Halsdon and Hartopp Roads in the Colony, which has been recurring for at least 8 years, and FCu mentioned the ongoing and worsening flooding on Dinan Way which has been going on for many months.

- **Action: CJ to write to BH regarding these issues.**

#### **6. EDDC: General updates (TBS)**

The Estuary View car park, having been used as Tidal Defence works compound for the last 2 years, is due to reopen this week. Though the height of the sea wall has been raised there, EA have also raised the surface of the car park, so people may still enjoy the view from the comfort of their cars.

- **Action: TBS to ask EDDC communications department to write a press release advertising the reopening of this carpark as this news will be very welcome.**

Imperial Rec Playpark: This will also be reopened soon, with all its equipment.

RNLI station: RNLI are keen to make a start to lowering and extending their slipway before Christmas, as their planning permission expires in February. The beach at that point will need to be closed during these works.

EDDC regularly remove exposed parts of broken groynes (and even a WW2 jetty) as they are exposed by loss of sand.

New concrete steps down to the beach will be installed in September near Foxholes Café to replace the wooden ones which fell away with the loss of sand.

- **Action: TBS to check if the beach steps near the palm tree are scheduled for repair, as with sand loss they are missing the bottom 2 steps.**

#### **7. DCC: General updates**

DCC were not represented at this meeting and no updates were received.

#### **8. ETC Councillors: Reports and questions to representatives of external organisations**

Recurrent pooling after heavy rain at junction of Exeter Road/Belvedere Road, forcing pedestrians to walk on the road. This also occurs to lesser extents at the Exeter Road junctions with North Street and Church Road. This may be a SWW issue but it is thought more likely to be a DCC gully-clearing issue as so much debris is washed down into these drains in heavy rains.

#### **9. AOB**

No other issues were raised.

#### **10. Next meeting: 19<sup>th</sup> October**

#### **11. Close of Meeting: 3pm**