

EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Flooding & Land Drainage Working Party

Notes of the Zoom meeting held at 2.00pm on Tuesday 25th January 2022

Present

Bruce de Saram	BdS	Chair, ETC & EDDC councillor Littleham ward
Tim Dumper	TD	ETC councillor, Town ward
Pauline Stott	PS	ETC councillor, Halsdon ward
Frank Cullis	FCu	ETC councillor, Withycombe Raleigh ward
Chetna Jones	CJ	ETC Deputy Town Clerk
Kate Pearson	KP	EA, Flood Resilience Advisor
Tom Buxton-Smith	TBS	EDDC, Engineering Projects Manager
Rob Butler	RB	EA, Exmouth Tidal Defence Project Manager
Kris Inch	KI	EA
Philip Morgan	PM	DCC, Neighbourhood Highway Engineer
Thomas Aldridge	TA	DCC, Flood & Coastal Risk Management
Lisa Greenway	LG	ETC, notes

Apologies

Jeff Trail	JT	DCC councillor
Steve Gazzard	SG	ETC & EDDC councillor, Withycombe Raleigh ward
Cherry Nicholas	CN	ETC councillor, Brixington ward

1. Welcome and apologies (BdS)

2. Notes of previous meeting of 19th October 2021

PS proposed and TD seconded the accuracy of these notes.

3. Matters arising from previous meeting (CJ)

a) Broken fence along Withycombe Brook

CJ sought advice from EDDC's legal team via TBS and confirmed that by taking any form of action will lead to becoming responsible for any issues and liabilities irrespective of what action is taken. It was suggested that as ownership is uncertain, we should try and locate a landowner to take responsibility.

Several discussions took place:

- (1) Investigate who owns the land using all avenues available.
- (2) Look into the history of when the houses were built to see if the developer is responsible.
- (3) The house next to the land put on an extension 10 years ago that encroached onto the land and has recently submitted a planning application for another extension. FCu will look at all planning applications relating to the property to see if they have requested permission from the landowner or agreed to take responsibility themselves.
- (4) CJ will look at historical maps. (TA suggested Environment Viewer)
- (5) TBS is waiting for a reply from Clinton Devon Estates to see if they have any information.
- (6) If all avenues are exhausted, letter drop to residents may highlight historical information, but this should be as a last resort.

KP confirmed that the EA has no duties to assist on private land. PM has done some searching and confirmed that the land is not HMPE (Highway Maintainable at Public Expense) therefore if no landowner can be found the land returns to the crown. BdS and TD agreed that a solution was needed without legal issues in line with the formal resolution made by the Town Council in September 2021.

b) Seafront lights

The brackets for the lamp columns have been delivered to Camperdown depot and will need to be installed along with the electrical control boxes prior to the festoon lights going up again. RB has asked ETC to provide a quote as Kier will not be completing the work. CJ advised that Street Scene cannot currently find the control boxes at Camperdown depot so RB will investigate this and ask Kier when they were dropped off. PS suggested that if the electrical control boxes were not found they will need replacing and added they were very expensive to purchase and ETC should be reimbursed.

4. DCC General updates (PM) discussed early as PM leaving the meeting at 14:55

Members voiced their concerns over blocked drains, surface water (some due to road re-surfacing work not being completed correctly) in locations around Exmouth. PM confirmed that the urban gully cleaning takes place on a 3-year cycle and rural gully cleaning on an annual basis. DCC will respond, on an ad-hoc basis, to reports of blocked drains and gullies which are causing standing water of a certain depth. Members were urged to use the DCC report a problem page with any issues so that they can investigate as quickly as possible. Technicians are currently running data analysis over all the gullies across the whole county using money left from the highway maintenance budget and a report will be produced to help resolve issues relating to surface water flooding. The town centre including Imperial Road, Victoria Road and St Andrews Road were areas identified with known problems.

5. To receive an update on the flood risk assessment of the northern Brixington area (TA)

CJ reminded members that concerns were previously raised over possible additional flooding when Goodmores Farm development is completed and asked if DCC Flood Risk team had investigated this. Other members pointed out that the flooding concerns may intensify in nearby areas. TA advised that although they are not conducting a study or assessment on Goodmores Farm part of the planning application included a flood risk assessment. DCC as a consultee reviewed the report in respect of surface water and EA in respect of fluvial concerns. An outline permission was granted with conditions to capture surface water in attenuation tanks during the build phase to minimise flooding. In addition, further permission was granted to reserve matters on the eastern parcel. TA confirmed that a developer cannot be forced to improve flood risks to the surrounding area, but the planning authority was able to insist that existing conditions were maintained. He added that whilst development at the site takes place the developer will be required to store surface water on site and release gradually into the environment as this is a requirement of the planning policy.

TA updated members that they are currently looking at a surface water risk study in the lower areas of Exmouth, but this was in its early stage and an update will be provided when the work is complete.

6. EA Tidal Defence and General Updates (KP & RB)

RB gave members an update on the landscaping work with trees and shrubs at the Imperial hotel ground and the estuary carpark. They were currently reviewing snagging issues and reporting these back to the contractors. Some work has already taken place including the render on the wall behind the Jubilee clock tower. EA will do a walk around the seafront area to make sure everything that has been built is safe and in good working order. More gate closure exercises will be carried out as some issues arose on the last exercise. As-built drawings are currently being updated to reflect what has been built but this will take some time to complete. A flood defence ramp in the alleyway on Camperdown Terrace will be installed next month.

As a separate project over thirty flood doors will be fitted in resident's properties in Camperdown Terrace and the Mamhead Slipway area, this work will start in April and take a couple of months. Once this work is completed all flood related project work in Exmouth will be finished.

BdS invited members to ask questions.

TD queried if testing would cause any road closures and RB confirmed that no road closures would be needed but traffic management may be in place when testing different types of gates.

CJ asked for an update on when the Memorandum of Understanding would be completed for the flood gates. KP confirmed that a draft document was prepared in November 2020 between ETC, EDDC and EA and this had been agreed in principle. The as-built drawings will help complete the MOU and will be included as an appendix. Once this is completed it will be ready to be signed by all parties.

FCu queried if the long gate tracks would accumulate sand/stone debris which might cause a blockage and hinder the opening/closing of the gates. KP confirmed that the tracks throw out debris as the gate slides across and RB advised that brushes were also available to use if this does not clear the problem. KI checked the gates last week and will be around to help with any queries until the project is completed.

7. SWW General updates (DS unable to attend Zoom meeting re SWW IT policies)

No report received. BdS requested we chase up any reports for future meetings.

8. EDDC General updates (TBS)

TBS updated members that no new issues have arisen since the last meeting. TBS confirmed that work on the beach near the RNLI building will be going ahead and this should enable the lifeboat to set off from the ramp rather than further along the beach. Work is also on-going with the groin markers at Orcombe Point. PS advised that the sand by the RNLI has come back and covered Maer rocks.

9. ETC Councillors Reports and questions to representatives of external organisations

No reports were provided.

10. AOB

None

11. 2022 meetings

26th April

12th July

29th November

The meeting ended at 15:14