

**ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL FORUM FOR SURFACE FWATER FLOODING ISSUES
NOTES OF MEETING HELD 1 NOVEMBER 2021**

Rochford District Councillors: Cllr Mrs J R Gooding, J L Lawmon, Mrs C M Mason, Mrs J E McPherson, Mrs C E Roe, Mrs L Shaw, P Shaw, C M Stanley, D J Sperring, M J Steptoe, I H Ward, Mrs C A Weston, S A Wilson and S E Wootton.

Other Agencies: M Lloyd (ML) – Anglian Water
R Webster (RW) – Environmental Agency
D Chapman (DC) – Essex County Council

Officers: J Stacey (JS) – RDC Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Officer
W Szyzka (WS) – Democratic Services Officer, Minutes

Agenda Item	Key Observations
Opening Statement from the Leader of the Council, Cllr S E Wotton	<p><i>Good afternoon Members and members of the public that are tuning into the RDC YouTube channel. This is the meeting of the Flood Forum on 1 November, and I would like to welcome everyone. Warm welcome to Cllr Mrs Mason and Cllr Stanley following a conversation with the Portfolio Holder to ensure that all minority parties are represented.</i></p> <p><i>23 February was when this Flood Forum was formed – this is not a statutory function but it is right and proper that we do have the responsibilities with agencies an that we work with them across the District.</i></p> <p><i>Thanks to Jeff Stacey who will be leading us this afternoon through various items.</i></p> <p><i>We are looking at the next meeting to be in person moving forward to make sure that it is not through a virtual platform, and this will be discussed with Members at the end of the meeting.</i></p>
1. Apologies for Absence	Apologies have been received from Cllr S A Wilson, Cllr Mrs C E Roe and Matt Harwood-White.
2. Agree Minutes of Meeting held on 9 March 2021	Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9 March 2021 were agreed as a correct record.
3. Matters arising	<p>Cllr Steptoe pointed out that the agenda is missing ‘Declarations of Interest’ as an item. This has been noted by WS and future agendas amended to reflect Declarations of Interest.</p> <p>The following Declarations of Interest have been noted: 1. Cllr M Steptoe Member of the Flood Forum for Essex County Council, Member of the Environmental Agency Group</p>

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	<p>2. Cllr Mrs C Mason By virtue of living on Englefield Close.</p> <p>3. Cllr C Stanley Member of the Royal Flood Action Group</p> <p>4. Cllr D J Sperring Member of the Rayleigh Town Council.</p> <p>5. Cllr J R Gooding By virtue of living on Rectory Road.</p> <p>6. Cllr I H Ward Member of the Rayleigh Town Council, Member of the Rochford 100 Golf Club; which appears on the agenda because of flooding matters.</p> <p>7. Cllr S E Wootton Member of the Rochford 100 Golf Club.</p>
<p>4. Verbal Updates from Partners</p>	
<p>Environment Agency</p>	<p>Roger Webster: Advised that he has been working with DC and Cllr Stanley looking at the issues in Rawreth. The Environment Agency are currently looking at options for the scheme at the three main rivers across Rawreth and are seeking to work with Weir Country Park to slow the flows off Rawreth to make these more manageable.</p> <p>RW met with JS at Kimberley Road with other future visits potentially planned which includes the Fire Station in Rochford that has a reported flooding issue.</p>
<p>Anglian Water</p>	<p>Mark Lloyd: Currently no firm updates, however, will assist throughout the list moving forward.</p>
<p>Essex Flood Team</p>	<p>David Chapman:</p>

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	<p>Following on from RW regarding Rawreth, Essex Flood Team are looking at delivering Highway upgrades which will be comprised of a 2-phase approach. DC advised that he possesses a contact that looks at smaller sites. DC also advised that he had discussions with Cllr Stanley and Marcus Hotten – still awaiting updates but will provide these as soon as more information becomes available.</p>
<p>5. RDC update and reports of flooding issues</p>	<p>JS advised Members that he will be going through all the issues that have been notified to RDC. This is an opportunity to look at progress and to see where we are as well as work collaboratively with partners. Comments from external partners have been incorporated into the report that lists the different issues within different areas to ensure that Members of the Flood Forum as well as members of the public are aware of where we are in terms of progress.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ashingdon – Lower Road – Ashingdon Road</p> <p>Comments from ECCH: unable to attend site due to traffic management and permit difficulties. ECCH are not aware of any serious flooding within this area, however, will be attending should the need arise.</p> <p>Lead Agency: Essex County Council Highways</p> <p>Cllr SW expressed that we have flooding in infrastructure that is designated to remove water and is clearly not maintained. There are many drains in the area that are blocked from natural causes or people who have had building work done. It appears to be a way for builders to sweep their mess down the drains which causes frustration.</p> <p>Cllr MS stated that RDC is partly involved with this. Warners Bridge has drains that are getting blocked up by the side of the road. RDC is not clearing the side of the road regularly which results in a significant build up of mud down the side of the road. The road sweeping issues should be addressed by RDC.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">29 Brays Lane – Ashingdon</p> <p>JS advised that there was an issue that was reported however upon investigation, no specific problems were found. No further action required.</p> <p>DC advised Members that this site was investigate and all outstanding actions have been acted upon through official consent.</p>

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Moons Close to Highliff Crescent

JS advised that flooding was reported due to blocked drains.

JS informed Members that the site was last attended in December 2020 by the jetting group and at the time found no issues in the drainage system. This now remains with Anglian Water.

Currently there are no updates on the matter.

Lead Agency: Essex County Council Highways/Anglian Water

621 Ashingdon Road

Comment from ECCH: block dishes were attended in this facility years ago. A defect was raised earlier this year. The defect was attended on 28 October and cleared.

Battlesbridge

JS visited the site and produced a report specifically on that area as there were a number of issues present.

Comment from ECCH: this is a private road and not a public highway. We are not aware of any drainage issues at Chelmsford Road Junction.

Action: this matter is to be followed up.

Cllr C Stanley questioned whether the gate at Battlesbridge was maintained as open and closed at any particular time. JS responded that this is not something that he is aware of.

Battlesbridge:

RW and DC are also not aware whether the gate was maintained.

Cllr C Stanley expressed that it seems strange that not much is known about this particular matter and responsibility must lay with someone.

Action: this matter will be noted on the next agenda.

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Canewdon Mill – Canewdon

Comments from ECCH: they do not possess the location details. Once details have been provided, they will investigate the site.

Lead Agency: Essex County Council Highways

Cllr L Shaw noted that the drain on the corner of Anchor Lane, Scotts Hall was filled with rubbish following ECCH tarmacking the road. This was happening for a couple of years.

Paglesham

Comments from ECCH: This was passed for further investigations to be carried out as part of the surface water alleviation scheme. The site was visited and explored upon which it was concluded that it would require more extensive works following recent discussions with Anglian Water. In the meantime, preventative measures will be taken and reactive maintenance will be undertaken accordingly.

Cllr S E Wootton expressed that the word reactive is not acceptable. This has been discussed for three years and it is more than just clearing the soak ways. The area is regularly flooded and no solution is found.

Cllr L Shaw also noted that Terry Cutmore brought this into attention in 2008 and we are still in discussions on who is responsible for resolving the matter. This must be sorted out due to consistent flooding.

Lead Agency: Essex County Council Highways

Apton Hall Road

Comments from ECCH: the system now falls into an open ditch which is a private drainage system. This is not seen as a Highways matter. It is now being reported that the ditch is overwhelmed. The question now is attempting to establish who has responsibility over the maintenance of the ditch.

This is to be noted as an outstanding action.

Cllr C Stanley pointed out that although it may be a private ownership, it fundamentally comes down to where the water is coming from, along the ditch which has to drain away. If it is blocked, then naturally it will overflow. It is vital that someone finds out where the ditch actually runs to.

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Action: JS to find the responsible body.

DC advised that if the details of approximate location are sent to the Flood Team, then the ownership of this matter can be investigated and confirm whether this is the responsibility of the landowner.

Clements Hall Way – Hawkwell

JS produced a report that links all the Hawkwell matters into one document. The blockages are related to fly-tipping, however at the time of the visit conducted by JS/RDC, the only item of garbage found was a bike.

JS advised that high water levels have been reported in the ditch by the side of Clements Hall Way. The blockages appear to be connected to dumping of garden waste. The site was visited by RDC and further details can be found in the Hawkwell Brook Report Document.

Lead Agency: RDC

Woodside Chase – Hawkwell

Site investigated is the culvert near junction with Elmwood Avenue which is in need of maintenance and removal of fly tipping. The site was also visited by RDC with more detail available in the Hawkwell Brook Report.

Lead Agency: RDC

Railway Bridge – Rectory Road

JS advised that the area affected is a low lying area of road where it dips under the railway. Increased jetting of drains has been put in place but it is still slow to clear.

Comment from ECCH: this was last cleared in March. It is difficult to attend due to issues with traffic management.

Cllr S Wootton commented that when these areas are blocked up around the bridges, it causes significant disruption on the road. A solution must be found in 2021 to ensure that this does not happen again. The

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number of bridged affected by rainfall that is a little heavier than normal is unacceptable. The cleaning regime must be stepped up.

Cllr J Gooding criticized ECCH's inability to attend the site due to traffic management. What are the authorities planning to manage the traffic? This site has to be cleaned out and this was agreed in the previous minutes, which was also reported a number of times in the past.

JS responded to Member comments that it is not down to him to comment on ECCH's operations. However, there is an increased frequency of cleaning which causes its own disruption with traffic management whilst it is being done. The comments will be passed on to ECCH.

DC will also investigate the site.

Belchamps

This site also falls into the Hawkwell Brook Report collated by JS.

There are currently no updates on this site.

DC advised that a planning permission went through in 2019 with a number of conditions placed on this site that must be adhered to. For further updates, this will have to be queried with the Planning Department at EDC to see if the conditions have been adhered to.

Cllr I Ward commented that from the residents' perspective very little had been done and the problem remains. There is an issue with planning and enforcement. A meeting was supposed to have taken place with Marcus Hotten to provide residents with firm updates and issues to be clarified.

Cllr S Wootton in support of Cllr I Ward outlined that this must be resolved particularly if there is a planning issue.

Plumberow Avenue – Hockley

Additional water flow to surrounding properties following construction around 126 Plumberow Avenue.

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JS advised that this has been referred to Lead Local Flood Authority as RDC Are unable to undertake any investigation. All the requirements have been met from a planning perspective.

Lead Agency: Essex Flood Team

Westminster Drive – Hockley

JS commented that this issue is a fairly recent one. JS visited the site to confirm what the concerns were, however further inquiries are yet to be made which will be reported back to the residents.

Lead Agency: RDC

Watery Lane – Hullbridge

ECCH Comments: a preventative cleanse was undertaken on 20/09/2021 which included cutting back vegetation. It is important to understand that the water clears once the rainfall clears. RDC are to clear the roads as some debris was found. Preventative cleanse to be done in the spring of 2022 depending on the rainfall that may happen in the remainder of this year.

Cllr C Stanley questioned whether Watery Lane is closed off on Wednesdays to allow for litter picking and cleaning of the drains.

Action: no answer was provided to Cllr Stanley at the time but the comment has been noted and response be given.

Malyons – Hullbridge

Concerns over flooding related to new Barrat David Wilson development were sent though to JS. On 17/06/2021, JS went on site where he met with representatives and the developers and looked at the arrangements to control flood. JS could not see that there was anything that related to the site affected by nearby properties. The main conclusions were that the flooding of the gardens in Malyons and Abbey Road are due to blocking of the ditch that runs through their gardens.

Cllr I Ward commented that he attended the site with Cllr M Hoy. During the visit, it has been noticed that there had been some building of a private pub at the back of someone's garden to extend their own area. It

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could have caused some of the blockages that were going on. We may need to have an enforcement officer to investigate the back of the garden. It is off the development area and within a private garden.

Dome Caravan Park – Hullbridge

Comment from ECCH: limited gullies which are dependent on the adjacent ditches being cleared. The ditches are not maintained by the adjacent landowners.

Lead Agency: ECCH and ditch clearing by landowner.

JS clarified that a site visit will be undertaken in due course with one of the Housing Team to meet with the person that deals with onsite maintenance to discuss what is happening. Contact will also be made with the general owners of the site who have been contacted in the past.

Action

JS to follow this up and provide update.

Cllr S Wootton, Cllr D Sperring and other interested Members to be included with the upcoming site-visit. Site visit scheduled for Tuesday 16 November at 10:30am.

Hullbridge Road, opposite Lubbards Farm – Hullbridge

JS made the Members aware that the site was visited following recent heavy rainfall. No flooding was observed and the ECCH ditch looks untidy with vegetation, however is working fine. Not aware of any issues with no works planned at this time. ECCH acknowledged responsibility for the ditch and will visit to assess.

Lead Agency: ECCH

Cllr C Stanley commented that where the drains have been built at the roundabout, they got blocked up by the leaves and therefore some of the water was going towards Hullbridge and not in a ditch. The ditch has been built at the site of the roundabout which takes considerable amounts of water with all the debris from Hambro Hill. The roundabout must therefore be maintained, including the zebra crossing.

Grassmere Avenue and The Drive – Hullbridge

JS commented that the predominant issue here is establishing who is responsible for the ownership of the land between the back gardens of the two roads. RDC has done some research, and it shows that it is

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unregistered land and therefore no agencies have any power to act. This matter is something that will have to be managed by the residents.

Cllr S Wootton commented that this seems fairly unsatisfactory from the residents' point of view and a way has to be found to work with the residents.

Lead Agency: for resolution by residents

London Road, Rawreth – Rayleigh

JS to update the section with the report to reflect the progress.

Cllr I Ward visited the area and went into one of the shops that was flooded along the affected site.

Cllr C Stanley commented that some of the ditches within the affected area have been dealt with and cleared, however one particular ditch does not function properly and is full of debris due to not being cleared for some time. The ditches in front of the shops have been cleared, however not further on. JS advised that several reports have been put forward revolving around Victoria Road and Sweyne Close following the recent heavy rainfall. Unfortunately, the information missed the deadline for reports to be put forward for this meeting, however this will be added to the agenda for the upcoming Flood Forum early in 2022.

Sweyne Park – Rayleigh

JS advised that no further updates at this moment in time.

DC commented that the consultation has not gone out yet but it is due to go out in the nearest future. An update will be sent out to provide further information.

Cllr Stanley pointed out that the car park entrance to Sweyne Park does get flooded. He has been in contact with Marcus Hotten and Adam Aldridge about putting a land drain into the ditch at the front of Sweyne Park. Currently awaiting for reports as a study of heights must be undertaken to understand where the water goes. The flooding is causing a problem to properties adjacent to the entrance.

Grove Road – Rayleigh

JS has no further updates to add.

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ML advised that the pumps operate as they should however this will be monitored to ensure that there is nothing wrong with the drainage on Grove Road. An update will be provided. This is currently with the Flooding Team at Anglian Water and surveys must be carried out to ensure everything is operational. ML will chase the Flood Team to put a report together with a proper update.

Cllr Ward commented that there was serious flooding there the other week which resulted in a number of complaints. Members would like to be given a report on what works have been done.

Action: RW to receive a copy of the update.

Eastwood Road – Rayleigh

On 16 June 2021, RDC performed an external site visit. Ground works have been completed and building works under way. The visit was undertaken after heavy rain and there was no sign of water running off the site.

ECCH commented that their stance remains unchanged and it is not a maintainable public highway.

Cllr Ward advised that this is an ongoing issue. When the works were done alongside Eastwood Rise, the road should have been adopted, which was promised to the residents with a letter by ECCH. The letter was sent to the Legal Department at Essex County Council which remains in situ to this day, as it is still being determined on how to proceed with it.

Hockley Road – Rayleigh

JS advised that further work has been done on this site and there are currently no maintenance issues here. This has also been confirmed by ECCH. If there are any issues, these should be addressed directly through the developer.

Cllr Sperring advised that the tank is in the wrong place – it is at the top of the development and it hardly gets filled up, however during rainfall, it becomes torrential down the road by the houses.

Action: RDC to address this with the Planning Department.

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Sutton Road – Rochford

ECCH have no further comments to add at this time.

Cllr M Steptoe received a notification with some drainage work being carried out at the junction with the road being closed for 6 nights. Currently unable to determine what the drainage work carried out is and whether this is connected to any issues.

DC stated that Essex Highways have not reported anything and this can be followed up by discussing the matter with Richard Baranowski.

Action: Cllr Steptoe to be included in the email trail between DC and Richard Baranowski.

Hall Road Development Suds – Rochford

There have been concerns over the effectiveness of SUDS for the development with discharge to ditches along Hall Road into water course around Ironwell Lane.

The Environment Agency offered assistance alongside a meeting to discuss two areas that they seek to investigate, including the Rochford Hundred Golf Club.

Cllr M Steptoe highlighted that the SUD system on Hall Road runs into the drainage system and along West Street into the reservoir.

Lead Agency: RDC Planning Department

Rochford Hundred Golf Club – Rochford

Requesting assistance following increasing flooding of parts of the course.

Further information can be found within the report produced for the Flood Forum.

High Street Great Wakering

Comment from ECCH: the surface water alleviation scheme report 4: works were undertaken to drainage system in August 2021 which have been replaced and repaired and the system was left working and was monitored during rainfall despite reports of water still holding in the heavy rainfall which could be due to just the amount of water collected from the rainfall. This will continue to be monitored.

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Cllr J McPherson commented that house nos. 243 to 249 High Street still continue to experience flooding. It is not good enough for the residents to be told that it is merely due to flooding issues.

ML responded to Cllr McPherson by offering to send a CCTV unit to check and provide an update.

Barling Road Near Ye Olde Shoulderstick – Great Waking

Reports overflowing ditches near property.

Comment from ECCH: it is on the main river map and it is not an ECCH asset to maintain – this would suggest the Environment Agency.

Cllr Steptoe commented that the ditch referred to by JS is monitored by Environmental Agency but it is not maintained. Cllr Steptoe will return with more information regarding the pipe that runs out of the side of the road.

Kimberley Road – Great Waking

JS attended a site visit here with the Environment Agency to look at the issues there. There was a report about erosion of the fence from the watercourse. This is the responsibility of the owner. There is also a pumping station which has been replaced but there was no sufficient rainfall to test the capacity. The sluice gate was an issue but it was investigated and no issues have been found. The sluice garte was also replaced by the Environment Agency.

The only action outstanding is to contact the owners who suffered the erosions to inform them that it is their responsibility.

Cllr J McPherson informed the Flood Forum that there is still some overgrowth that concerns the residents but there have been no flooding issues since. A request has been put forward for ML and his team to check the service system and look at it on an annual basis.

ML advised that this should be done on a 6-month basis. It will not be a camera service every 6 months, but it will be cleared every 6 months.

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Cllr Steptoe declared a personal interest because of the extreme upstream running through his garden. In instances where the water was extreme under the road, there has been concern there may be a blockage there, however unsure on who the responsibility lays with. Clarification needed to confirm who this issue will fall under.

RW questioned whether RDC will be replacing the grille, however Cllr Steptoe responded that when the Flood Forum was initially created, the grille was handed over to Essex County Council and may now be under their responsibility as opposed to RDC.

RW commented that the grille is opened by kids with the flap which allows the water to come up and risk the properties with high tide which needs to be addressed.

Roger Webster: will RDC be replcing the grill? – confirm what is meant by that.

Cllr Steptoe to liaise with JS and provide an update to RW regarding who is responsible for replacing the grille.

Poynters Lane/Wakering Road – Great Wakering

Comments from ECCH: it was noted that the ditches need further maintenance due to flooding at junction.

A scheme to improve the junction is to be discussed at the Local Highways Panel.

Lead Agency: ECCH

Cllr Mrs C Mason made a comment with regards to the Hawkwell Brook report which indicates that the stretch is RDC. Going back over 10 years, Roger Cowell (?) was then in charge of these issues. A site visit took place which confirmed that there was flooding which went down to Hawkwell Chase. The responsible team at the time was in fact Anglian Water. At that point in time, Anglian Water had a lockable gate, giving the key to a gentleman who lived at no.1. The residents used to jump over it and clear it out themselves because of the infrequency of the authority doing so.

Cllr I Ward added a further comment regarding Hullbridge Kingsman Farm Road – one of the Members of Hullbridge Parish Council asked about the progress on insurance repair at Kingsman Farm Road. Will this have any impact on the site?

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	<p>Action: JS will provide an answer to Cllr I Ward offline.</p> <p>A further comment was made by Cllr Mrs C Mason requesting to see more information on the reports. Cllr Mrs Mason expressed concern when Cllr L Shaw mentioned about Paglesham being an issue since 2008. Cllr Mrs Mason asked whether Members can be provided with a date when the items are first reported which would flag up if the items are making sufficient progress.</p> <p>Cllr S Wootton endorsed this idea as we must ensure that we get conclusive actions and resolved issues.</p> <p>Members expressed disappointment with the lack of presence from ECCH. They are a key partner in the process.</p>
6. Questions from the Public	<p>Question 1</p> <p><i>Question 1A</i> <i>This is the 3rd time we have been affected with flooding in Hockley in the last 7 years. We have a severely disabled daughter and currently have nowhere to stay after Friday (the hospice is helping us until then).</i></p> <p><i>We are waiting for a loss adjuster to come and assess the house, but I don't understand why this has happened. We have had multiple sokaways dug. Until 7 years ago, this was not a known issue.</i></p> <p><i>This has effectively made our home a nightmare to unsure (after this claim I'm not even sure we will be able to get insurance). We can't install big flood barriers because our daughter is in a wheelchair and needs to be able to access the house etc.</i></p> <p><i>What are the Council doing and how are you able to help families like ours? There needs to be a thorough investigation so that insurance companies don't list this as a risky area and the amount of building work locally needs to stop before this gets even worse.</i></p> <p><i>Question 1B</i> <i>Please advise more on the Flood Forum being held regarding the latest storm damage. I live in Cornhill Avenue and have lived here for 30 years. We have never had an issue up until the huge</i></p>

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damage in 2013. Since then, it happened 4 times. Recently water damage (not as bad for me as years past) but some of my neighbourhood has suffered big time again. My immediate neighbours have to move out of their home again with their disabled daughter. This is not acceptable. Surely somebody has to be accountable for this? Can you advise what help is out there for our neighbourhood?

Response: JS will produce a report on Cornhill Avenue to discuss with Partners in order to establish the reason for the flooding and establish who has responsibility or powers to take actions. Cornhill avenue will be added to the list of issues for update and future Flood Forums.

Question 2

When is the continual flooding situation in Folly Lane going to be properly addressed? This is a particularly dangerous as it is on a blind bend and vehicles cannot avoid it due to restricted view of oncoming traffic. Pedestrians also receive a soaking when using the pavement as there is no place of safety.

Response: JS will approach Essex County Council Highways and investigate possible links to flooding in The Astors. The area will be added to the list of issues for update at future Flood Forums.

Question 3

Why are we not paying the local farmers/landowners to clear or dreg the ditches and causeways?

Response: It was commented that there is a responsibility for land owners to maintain drainage ditches on their land.

Question 4

Whoever is responsible for the open storm drain behind me in Sweyne Close, and the growth either side of it, needs to fulfill their responsibilities and regularly maintain it. I am 71 years old and cannot balance on a 12" ledge between my fence and the drain to try to cut down the trees and growth. I have done it twice this year, but it needs cutting back properly and the stumps treated.

Response: Please refer to answer under Question 6.

Question 5

Road Surface Flooding on 20/10/2021 Sweyne Close (off Victoria Avenue, Rayleigh):

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Our road has been flooded on 3 occasions since 2013 with drains being overwhelmed and causing water ponding and property damage.

Residents would like to know what future proofing plans there are for what is currently inadequate drainage in lower Victoria Avenue and the roads leading off it. In light of environmental evidence that proves these events will become more frequent.

Response: Please refer to answer under Question 6.

Question 6

I am writing on behalf of my parents. They live in Victoria Avenue, Rayleigh.

In 2013 and again in 2014, their house was flooded as a result of surface water from a rainstorm overwhelming the drainage system in the vicinity. They were in their early 70s at the time and as you can imagine, it was extremely distressing for them. As I understand it, some work was carried out subsequently to repair a main drain at the clearing gullies, brooks, culverts etc. since then, we have seen many periods of sustained rain without any issues.

My parents are that bit older now. My dad has vascular dementia, and my mum has little use of one arm having had surgery postponed multiple times. We unexpectedly lost my brother in 2019, and this has had a profound effect on my mum's wellbeing.

On Wednesday 20th October, I received a call from my mum around 9pm. There was a heavy downpour of rain as you probably recall, and she told me they are trapped in the house and the house was flooding again. I drove over there from Leigh and along with some very kind neighbours and the Fire Brigade, we did as much as we could. But frankly, there was little we could do other than offer comfort and use buckets to remove (relatively insignificant amounts of) water from the front garden which had become like a lake.

Water was coursing down from the Hatfield Road junction like a fast-running river, and as it reached my parents' house, it was flowing straight into their front garden. The water in the front garden was around 18 inches deep, and the level inside their house was around 3-4 inches across the entire ground floor.

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We have spent the following few days trying to clean up as best as we can, including removing all the carpets and cleaning tiled floors to rid the house of the foul smell. It is likely my parents will need to move out of their house for several weeks when work commences to make good all the damage and while industrial dehumidifiers are deployed to rid the house of moisture.

I would like some investigation work to be carried in the area to establish the cause of this flooding so that preventative measures can be taken. I would also like some help for my parents so they can get more protection from surface water flooding in the future. For example, the camber of the pavement outside their property funnels the surface water straight into their driveway. Also, there is a drain cover in the ditch beside their property which can be lifted in emergencies to allow water to disperse, and I would like to know why this cannot be changed to allow the water to disperse before it becomes a problem.

I am desperate to get some help for my parents, and I hope you can offer some advice.

Response: JS will visit the Victoria Avenue and Sweyne Park area in order to report back to partners to understand the issues and investigate improvements. The area will be added to the list of issues for update at future Flood Forums.

Question 7

In regard to this Flood Forum, could you investigate the following issues, so as to give you time to get the answers for the Forum.

Can you engage with Anglian Water for a definite date for when they are going to upgrade the pumping system for the Grove Road area as this has been scheduled for 2020, now since gone.

Serious flooding around the area last week is again causing great concern, and nothing has been done since the problem was originally investigated subsequent to the Great Flood of 2013, when pupils at Grove Road School were engulfed in sewerage.

Anglian Water have conceded that there is a major capacity issue, which they felt could be solved by installing a rapid pumping system, rather than putting in new, fit for purpose pipes, to take the greater capacity that is now needed. Please note the attached images sent by a resident.

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	<p><u>Response:</u> This question will be referred to Anglian Water.</p> <p><i>Could you also give ma date for the annual maintenance of Nobles Green Ditch (River Roach)?</i></p> <p><i>In regard to the latest flooding in Nobles Green Ditch, nearly topped out but fortunately nearby houses were not flooded.</i></p> <p><i>Due to the ferociousness of the current, parts of the banking have been dislodged, a possibly weakening it. The responsible authority is the Environment Agency, for structural maintenance, could you kindly arrange for a full inspection of the banking, also ascertain the last time any remedial work was done?</i></p> <p><u>Response:</u> This question will be referred to the Environment Agency.</p> <p>Question 8</p> <p><i>Is there a reason why the clean up team from Essex and Suffolk Water jet wash all the mud and detritus from works undertaken down the drain gully rather than shovel it up and remove from site?</i></p> <p><u>Response:</u> No further information was included to follow up in detail, but Essex County Council Highways will be informed in order to follow up with Essex and Suffolk Water.</p>
<p>7. Any other business</p>	<p>Cllr Mrs C Mason raised the issue around flooding in Lower Spencers, Hawekwell which is caused by blocked drains. She requested for this issue to be added to the list of agenda items and investigated.</p> <p>Action: This will be added as requested.</p> <p>The meeting was concluded by the Leader thanking members of the public for joining this meeting via YouTube. Thanks have been extended to Dave Chapman who was particularly helpful alongside Roger Webster and Mark Lloyd.</p> <p>Members expressed enthusiasm about making these meetings virtual, however we must ensure that technology is made appropriate for officers where it was quite slow.</p>

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	<p>Cllr M Steptoe expressed that it can be difficult for officers to attend all sites, therefore we should consider hybrid meetings with officers who cannot get to us easily and attend through electronic means, whilst other attendees are meeting in person. However, at this moment in time, RDC does not have suitable hybrid arrangements in place to make these meetings work sufficiently. Cllr Mrs C Mason endorsed the idea of having virtual meetings due to it being more carbon friendly.</p>
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