

**ROCHFORD DISTRICT FORUM FOR SURFACE WATER FLOODING ISSUES
NOTES OF MEETING HELD 9 MARCH 2021**

Rochford District Councillors: Cllrs Mrs J R Gooding, Mrs J E McPherson, Mrs C E Roe, Mrs L Shaw, P Shaw, M J Steptoe, I H Ward, Mrs C A Weston, A L Williams and S E Wootton.

Other Agencies: M Lloyd (AW), R Webster (EA), D Chapman (ECC)

Officers: M Harwood-White (RDC Assistant Director, Assets & Commercial), M Hotten (RDC Assistant Director, Place & Environment), J Stacey (RDC Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Officer), S Worthington (RDC Principal Democratic and Corporate Services Officer) and K Smith (RDC Democratic Services Officer, Minutes)

Agenda Item	Key observations
<p>Opening Comments from the Leader of the Council, Cllr S E Wootton</p>	<p>The last form met on 27 January 2020. Recent rainfall has provoked urgency for today’s meeting. The circumstances in which we meet are not ideal because I passionately believe there should be an opportunity for public interaction with members and the various agencies so there can be appropriate dialogue with everyone so we can address this in an open and transparent way. Unfortunately, the system is dictated by limitations of Zoom and YouTube, and I would have preferred this to be an open meeting for the public to engage with us. I apologise that this cannot happen as a result of these virtual meetings.</p> <p>I have called for a traditional, physical meeting of the flood forum in Autumn. Today is a best fit meeting and I look forward to the return of a physical meeting in Autumn, when we will pick up on issues raised today and give people the opportunity to have a proper dialogue.</p> <p>I plan to go through the formal agenda, but I want to ensure we have plenty of time to deal with questions and current issues, rather than spending time on historical issues. We want to devote most of our time to live issues that have been raised.</p>
<p>Apologies</p>	<p>Apology received from Richard Baronowski (ECC Highways). Update for the forum provided in writing to the RDC Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Officer.</p>

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	<p>The Leader of the Council expressed dissatisfaction that ECC Highways were not represented at the meeting and asked those present to encourage them to attend the forum in future. When partners are invited it is because they need to be accountable for the services they are providing. Their attendance is required.</p>
Declarations of interest	<p>Cllr Steptoe declared an interest as both Parish and County Councillor for Barling, and in relation to the issue regarding Barling Creek, by virtue of a tributary running across his property.</p> <p>Cllr Mrs Gooding declared an interest as Ward Councillor for Hawkwell West and expressed an intention to cover the problem in Rectory Road.</p> <p>Cllr Hoy declared an interest by virtue of backing onto a development site in Hullbridge that will be discussed in the meeting.</p>
Minutes	<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2020 were agreed as a correct record.</p>
Matters arising	<p>Barling Creak – Sluice gate has been replaced by EA, but ongoing situation.</p> <p>Sutton Road – Still an ongoing situation.</p>
Essex County Council Flood Team –	<p>Rawreth – s.106 money is available and awaiting decision on where money can be spent. Hopeful for work to complete around August/September 2021.</p> <p>A member has arranged with AD Place and Environment for a walkthrough with relevant agencies to explore this site.</p>

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	<p>Magnolia Park – Ashingdon area. Phase one will not happen, but phase two will happen later this year. Delivery of scheme is dependent on planning application from Bloor Homes as the flood scheme is on this land.</p> <p>A member asked how the Bloor Homes area affects Magnolia Park and the officer explained there was no scheme viable linked to the park. The second phase is linked to Bloor Homes.</p> <p>Capital Flood Programme update - Now in the 6th year of the programme, with funding assured for 2021/22 so works will continue. There is funding earmarked up to 2024/25. ECC, along with partners, made a bid to the Innovation Fund for money up to 2027, and should receive a response to this bid in April.</p> <p>In response to a member question about where this money will be spent in the Rochford area, the officer confirmed this money will not be used in Rochford. The member responded that it does not seem there is money being distributed to the Rochford area.</p> <p>Nobles Green Ditch – Now attributed to River Roach on maps. Annual clearance work is taking place and local residents are very pleased with the work being done. A member asked if this is now on the annual clearance schedule, and another member confirmed this is the case.</p>
<p>Essex County Council - Highways</p>	<p>Paglesham Soakaway – The pub is constantly flooding. A member asked for ECCH to confirm what has been done. This was endorsed by the Ward Councillors for this area.</p> <p>A member stated they are working with the Clerk of the Parish Council. The soakaway is on private land and does not have an outlet, so this needs to be resolved. Officers confirmed that ECCH responded on this matter, stating it has been referred for a remedial surface water alleviation scheme, which is with the design team.</p>

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	<p>Eastwood Rise - Ongoing problem due to legal issues. Water misses the drains and ECCH refuses to accept responsibility.</p> <p>Eastwood Road – This still happens as drains are still blocked.</p>
Rochford District Council	<p>Timberwharf Cottages - Not able to confirm what the issue is, so can be removed.</p> <p>Great Wakering open ditch – Not able to confirm what the issue is, however, a member stated they will liaise with residents to check this before it is removed.</p> <p>Sactuary Housing – Discussions have taken place with them and Sanctuary advised that they cleared the area.</p> <p>Kingsman Farm Road – This was referred to planning enforcement but no update at this stage.</p>
Environment Agency	<p>Brook, London Road – This was completed.</p> <p>Lower Wyburns Wood - Assessments completed but work not carried out due to the cost/benefit ratio not being efficient. ECC were going to carry out maintenance. There were also issues of residents putting garden waste in the screen.</p> <p>A member mentioned the involvement of Southend Borough Council in this issue, and the EA and ECC responded that Southend are carrying this work forward. The officer explained that ECCH improved the pumps at Rayleigh Weir.</p>
Anglian Water	<p>Fairmead, Rayleigh - Contact was made with Sanctuary Housing after attending and deeming it was not an Anglian Water issue. They were reluctant to do anything until the threat of flooding to</p>

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	<p>residents was explained. They have attended and completed maintenance required and it was suggested a maintenance schedule is put in place, although Anglian Water cannot enforce this.</p> <p>Cornhill Avenue - Anglian Water previously attended, and all AW assets were jetted and CCTV'd with no issues found. The developer can request a s.106 via AW Developer Services in order to connect onto the AW main to try and remedy flooding, but this will need to be applied for by the developer.</p> <p>A member asked for this issue to be kept on the agenda and resolved as RDC granted planning permission on the area.</p> <p>Grove Road, Rayleigh - Pump internals were replaced in 2016, This issue is on the list to be looked at for hydraulic modelling to ascertain if the root cause is the AW network or the pumping station. Due to the pandemic, non-emergency work is currently on hold.</p> <p>AW agreed to attend a site visit as requested by a member. Another member stated that the local MP wanted a definitive answer about the pumping station, and it would be good to have this.</p>
<p>Any other business from 27 January 2021</p>	<p>Millview Meadows - Members stated this issue was resolved.</p> <p>Lower Road/Ashingdon Road – This remains an issue. A member received a reply from ECC that they are working on this area.</p> <p>Goose Cottages - This is still an issue.</p> <p>Canewdon – ECCH did an on-site visit and identified a blockage. They will schedule the work but there is no estimate of time at this stage.</p>

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<p>RDC update and reports of flooding issues</p>	<p>Areas identified through contact with Rochford District Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Clements HallMarylands Nature ReserveWoodside Chase, HawkwellRailway bridge on Rectory RoadOld London Road, RawrethWatery lanePlumberow Avenue,Ashingdon Lane and Greensward Lane junctionApton Hall Road, CanewdonHullbridge - The Dome, Grasmere Avenue, Malyons LaneEnglefield Close and Rectory Road, HawkwellHigh Street, Great WakeringLaburnham Drive, RawrethMucking Hall Road, Little WakeringBrays Lane, AshingdonPlough and Sail pub, PagleshamBelchamps, HawkwellElizabeth Gardens and Hall Road, RochfordSweyne Park <p>These will be looked into and replies sent to those who made the inquiries.</p> <p>In response to a member request for officers to talk to Andrew Weight regarding issues at Malyons Lane and Watery Lane, the officer responded that he has arranged to do so outside of the Flood Forum.</p> <p>A member noted they are aware of the issue on the High Street, Great Wakering, and liaising with ECC Highways.</p>
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Questions from the public	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="645 363 1989 472">1. The Environment Agency needs to check out the various blockages in Hawkwell Brook between Clements Hall and Windsor Gardens. It is a designated River and these blockages need to be removed to reduce the flooding risk. The Environment Agency completed clearance of branches and bricks but have not cleared the banks as this is not part of their programme. The need to remind landowners and residents of their responsibilities was discussed, with the Environment Agency stating this is a continual problem they face. There was agreement about the importance of informing residents and landowners of their responsibilities. It was suggested for a representative from the National Farmer’s Union to be invited to future meetings.<li data-bbox="645 995 1989 1136">2. With the issue of surface flooding being of importance is the council going to look into and adopt north street. After heavy rainfall the “footpath” becomes extremely difficult to navigate and the houses that all pay their council tax struggle to access there own homes. It is somewhat of a danger on this foot path at these times.

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ECC Highways replied to identify North Street, Great Wakering as a private road. Residents can make a request to ECC for adoption requirements and processes. A member indicated the issue is with a footpath that runs through the road.

Cllr Steptoe stated that the individual asking this question can contact him after the meeting to discuss.

3. We Live on the Hullbridge Road (opposite Lubbards Farm) and was severely effected by the floods in 2013. This was due to the ditch not being able to cope with the amount of water which then subsequently entered the sewer system, via the flooded road. This has also happened on two further occasions. After a lot of telephone calls, emails and contact with the local authority it was finally discovered that the ditch that runs alongside the road is owned and maintained by Essex County Council.

We have two questions in relation to this.

1) Why has the ditch never been maintained. The only maintenance that is carried out is to cut back overhanging trees and vegetation which are then left to fall back into the ditch blocking it further. I was told by a local resident of over 50 years that when the ditch was first there it was nearly 5 feet deep it's no where near that now.

2) Is in relation to the fencing and footpath that runs along side the ditch. The fencing has been non existence for at least 10 years. With this being the only footpath for the road it is also in very poor repair with pothole and cracks. I recently witnessed a gentleman on a mobility scooter almost loose control and fall into the road. With the increase in usage (especially with all the extra housing in the area) it will only be a matter of time before

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someone falls into to ditch or has an injury caused by the poor footpath.

If you could tell us the proposed programme to maintain the ditch, fencing and footpath it would be greatly appreciated

Essex Highways understand that the ditch is maintained by them, but they will arrange a visit to check the current condition of the site. They are aware of the fence and this was risk assessed and deemed not to be a high priority. The footpath was also risk assessed. There are no plans to resurface at this time.

A member stated that the ditch has not been cleared to any extent recently or in 2014 and does need maintenance, but suggested the footpath and fence are issues not linked to the Flood Forum.

4. I am a Southend on Sea Borough Councillor and on behalf of my Eastwood residents we are concerned about waterways that we share with Rochford District Council and their management. Will Rochford District Council be supportive of ensuring a good and proactive dialogue with its neighbours? Thank you

Chair responded that partnership working was discussed during the meeting and this is something that Rochford District Council fully supports.

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5. We live in Lower Rd opposite La Vallee Farm & it is well documented regarding the problems with the culvert on the south side of Lower Rd. The road was severely flooded for a total of 31 days from 15/11/20 to 26/1/21. Works were undertaken on 27/1/21 to clear the blocked pipes leading from the culvert with matters improving since then albeit with much less rainfall. I have recently heard from ECC that they anticipate investigating the possibility of undertaking further additional drainage works on the site. I feel that the culvert is in a very poor condition & yesterday I had to remove some items which were likely to have caused further blockages. I therefore would like to ask if the culvert could be repaired & some form of cover be installed to ensure debris does not enter the culvert. It could be considered dangerous as somebody could fall into it, especially at night.

ECC highways responded that they are aware of the issue and it is being investigated by the drainage team. Members are liaising with ECC but there is still flooding, and it was requested to keep the item on the agenda.

6. Flooding during and after moderate to heavy rain outside houses 251 and either side of High Street, Great Wakering, Essex, have been reported several times with latest update for (Reference Number) 2440788 being works complete. However, recent rain has highlighted this issue has not been resolved and flooding continues with the drain outside 251/253 quickly becoming overwhelmed. As indicated previously, this poses a significant risk to children and adults leaving these houses. We are not aware of flooding at either drain, either side of the affected drain which again has been mentioned several times during previous reports of surface flooding with Essex Highways. We are also not aware of any issues with the drains on

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	<p>the opposite side of the road. I'm intrigued as to how these completed works have resolved the issue when the issue still persists with the same level of flooding.</p> <p>ECC highways responded that works are ongoing, with footway works undertaken as pre-patching prior to the surface being overlaid. This work is not finished, and they are not aware of further issues with drainage issues but can direct crews to explore. Cllr Steptoe stated that he will discuss this further after the meeting.</p> <p>7. Ironwell Lane was, if not actually flooded, certainly very badly affected by water a few weeks ago. The big run-off pipe from the new estate SUDS discharges directly into the Lane side ditch, which is so shallow and overgrown it can't cope. (Further up it's the same, but without the extra input). One simple answer would be a modest sized culvert taking it over to the Brook, which had plenty of headroom at the time.</p> <p>The forum agreed to continue to work on this outside of the meeting, as there are a number of issues with the development. Discussion is ongoing with the RDC planning department. The Environment Agency stated that this issue can be discussed with them as they will be able to contribute to finding a solution.</p>
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8. When will the ongoing problem of surface water outside the Plough & Sail PH be addressed?
It has been going on for forever with promises of a solution, but so far no results!!

Members agreed that this issue has been going on since first reported in 2008 and they intend to make sure it is addressed.

9. 1. Moons Close to Highcliff Crescent. First raised at meeting 8/11/2018. Situation deteriorated over last 7 months. Raised with C Cllr Steptoe 15 Jan 2021. ECCH reply " will raise issue again with Anglian Water". Did this happen and what is the outcome? Can the drain be regularly jetted if the problem is to do with the connection to the main drain?
2. Lower Road junction with Greensward Lane. First raised meeting 27 Jan 2020. ECCH to look at area. Did this happen as no improvement.? In fact the flooding is worse. Raised with C Cllr Weston 3rd Feb 2021.
3. Adjacent to 621 Ashingdon Road. Problem for over 6 years. Appears water runs off the field creating a river along the footpath and carriageway. Recent cold weather made the road treacherous. What steps are being taken to alleviate this problem? Possibility of a drainage ditch?
Raised with C Cllr Weston 3rd Feb 2021

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ECC Highways responded to each point in turn. 1) This was attended in December and ECC would again ask Anglian Water to check their system. In the meantime, ECC can send a jetting crew. 2) Jetting crew attempted work but had to abandon due to traffic management issues caused by the width of the road. ECC plan to attend again when appropriate. 3) ECC not aware of issues but can attend the site to investigate further.

Members are aware of the issue and liaising with relevant agencies.

10. Can anything be done regarding the consistent rainwater flooding at the junction where Poynters Lane meets Wakering Road? It's an accident blackspot as it is with poor left & right visibility when pulling out into Poynters Lane, with many motorists already on the lane not slowing down for potential hazards such as cars attempting to pull out, cyclists without lights, and people walking in the road. Thank you.

ECC Highways responded that they will be attending this location. A member stated this issue is coming up on the Local Highways Panel (LHP) with a scheme to improve the junction. It was suggested that in the meantime, ECC could clear the foliage at the location.

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11. More of an offer to help, I live in South Farnbridge Rochford and work with a Plant and award winning generator hire company, we can supply pumps and equipment to help, I would love especially as this is my area to get on the supplier lists of the council and agencies involved, please contact me and I can send over some details.

12. 1. Who is responsible for keeping the stream between little Wakering road and Kimberley road clear of obstruction and stopping it from flooding?
2. Who is responsible for clearing the street drains along little Wakering road - when it rains some of them are blocked and flood the road.

A member explained that as far as the gullies are concerned, they are the responsibility of ECC and they have performed maintenance there in the last week or so. The EA added that land owner letters have been sent out and we had some responses back. There has been some confusion about the work and EA have followed these up. Landowners have responsibility for bank issues and these will be addressed through ongoing correspondence as well as a site visit.

A member explained they had an upset resident who received a letter stating she had unconsented work, so asked for a bit of caution when letters are sent out.

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	<p>A member explained there are three or four tributaries running into this stream and they are working with partners to see what can be done about the flow of water.</p> <p>13. What will be done to help the pumping station in Kimberley Road cope with heavy rainfall ? It hasn't been able to manage for the past 20 years, enough is enough action needs to be taken urgently, especially with more homes being added to this system.</p> <p>A member asked for an answer from Anglian Water in relation to this matter. Another member explained that there is ongoing work on this issue with partners. It was noted that work was completed to replace the pumps but there has not been heavy rainfall since.</p>
<p>Any other business</p>	<p>Members raised the following additional issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Watery Lane continues to be an issue.- Malyons lane development.- Clearing of ditch in London Road.- In relation to the pumping station at Fairglen and water coming off new park, the flooding was caused by flood gates at Battlesbridge not being open. <p>A member asked for partners to liaise with Andrew Weight and officers explained they will be liaising about the issue in a separate meeting.</p>

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	<p>A member asked for the Chairman’s stance on how often these meetings will take place in future and to ensure members of the public can attend.</p>
	<p>Closing comments from the Leader of the Council</p> <p>Flooding is just as bad as fire or other hazards and we take this very seriously. As an authority we have no statutory responsibility for flooding, but we have one to our residents and to get partners together. Thank you to those who are present today.</p> <p>This isn’t ideal and virtual meetings are not a replacement for physical meetings. We will have a meeting in Autumn and welcome the opportunity for engagement with members of the public about this issue. I will encourage all partner agencies to attend the meeting. Can meetings that go on between councillors outside of the forum be captured and fed into this system and action plan so we have a public document that shows what action is being taken. We want to find a resolution to issues, not just look into them. I encourage member visits to sites to develop a better understanding of the issues.</p> <p>In conclusion, I would like to thank members of public who are watching on the Council’s YouTube channel and I want to make a personal apology that people could not engage. I almost cancelled the meeting but decided to go ahead, and I echo Cllr Williams’ statement that it has been productive. Under my leadership we will be dealing with this in a business-like fashion, logging these issues and coming back in the Autumn to see what issues have been addressed.</p>

The meeting started at 11.00am and ended at 1.12pm.