

MINUTES OF MEETING OF HUGHENDEN VALLEY DIG

Hughenden Village Coffee Shop (The Cabin), Coombe Lane, Hughenden Valley, High Wycombe
Bucks HP14 4NX

Tuesday 12th January 2016 at 6.30pm

Attendees:

David & Debbie White (DW/DAW)
Paul & Carolyn Woodford (PW/CW)
Iain Lemon (IL)
Matt Hopkins (MHo)
Sarah Mustapha (SM)
Simon Cook (SC)
Martin Hall (MH)
Angus Idle (AI)
Dave Carroll (DC) Bucks County Councillor
Simon Kearey (SK) Hughenden Parish Councillor
John Gladwin (JG) Chiltern District Councillor

Apologies: Deborah Lemon, Sam Morrison, Steve Kirkpatrick

Agenda:

1. BCC Select Committee Inquiry into flooding in Bucks
2. BCC/DEFRA project
3. Thames Water Draft Drainage Strategy Document
4. HVDIG Website
5. AOB

		Action
1.0	BCC Select Committee Inquiry into flooding in Bucks	
	<p>On 8th September 2015 HVDIG (Dave and Debbie White and Matt Hopkins) presented evidence to the Bucks County Council Select Committee Enquiry into Flooding in Buckinghamshire on the experiences of residents in Hughenden Valley in 2014 and the responses of the various Agencies involved.</p> <p>It was felt by HVDIG attendees that many councillors had a superficial knowledge of the problems residents faced in 2014 and that many failed to understand the main issues. However, DW pointed out that the Inquiry was useful in that the evidence HVDIG members presented was now in the public domain to show that whilst nothing could have been carried out to mitigate the effects of the extreme weather in 2014, they could have been controlled.</p>	

	<p>SK asked whether or not anything has now been put in place since the Inquiry which changes the status of property affected in 2014 in terms of home insurance, disclosure when selling a house etc. DW felt that there was no change in status and that this could only be maintained by challenging loose legislation and ensuring that relevant authorities (Environment Agency /Bucks CC/ Thames Water) discharged their responsibilities for managing groundwater, surface water and sewer infiltration and ensuring that documents in the public domain contained accurate and substantiated information on flooding events in Hughenden Valley.</p> <p>DC told the meeting that in December 2015 a report and recommendations from the BCC Select Committee Inquiry were presented to Bucks County Council Cabinet for agreement (but not sent to the HVDIG). DC agreed to forward these for SM to circulate and ask Kelly Sutherland why this was not distributed to HVDIG.</p> <p>DW asked if DC could reassure the HVDIG that if a similar situation to 2014 happened again Transport for Bucks staff would be suitably briefed to help residents rather than telling them that they would face legal action if they pumped sewage away from their property. DC responded that a similar situation had arisen in Aylesbury recently and that this had been the case.</p> <p>DW then asked DC why the “Flooding Procedure for Hughenden Valley” that Alex Back and Karen Fisher have been working on has not been put up on the Bucks CC website at Thames Water’s request. DC to investigate. DW thought that the wording of the advice to residents on pumping sewage discharges from their properties potentially into the Hughenden Stream may be the reason and he agreed to contact the Environment Agency for advice on suitable wording that could be used.</p> <p>DW asked DC to look into HVDIG’s outstanding issue with Bucks CC in that the same department has responsibility for both the enforcement of Riparian duties in Hughenden Valley and the management of Bucks CC’s own Riparian duties with a very real potential conflict of interest. HVDIG wrote to Martin Tett last year asking for this to be resolved. His response in June 2015 was that he is satisfied with the current situation and HVDIG requested that Bucks CC Chief Executive, Chris Williams write to HVDIG to confirm Bucks CC’s stance under corporate governance with reasons why. As yet HVDIG has had no response. DC agreed to ensure that HVDIG gets a response from Chris Williams or whoever replaces him.</p>	<p>DC</p> <p>DW</p> <p>DC</p>
2.0	BCC/DEFRA project	
	<p>Bucks County Council has received funding to undertake a feasibility study for flood alleviation in four areas of the county (Bishopstone, Monks Risborough, Saunderton, Hughenden Valley), as part of the “Small Schemes Pathfinder” fund created by Defra. This funding pot was created by Defra in order to encourage “innovative” schemes that serve smaller, disparate communities to be packaged together, to make the appraisal process more efficient and make it was easier for them to enter the government capital investment programme. Bucks County Council’s bid was one out of 6 projects to be funded out of 23 applicants.</p> <p>Bucks County Council propose a combination of:</p> <p>a) Upstream natural flood management with techniques for slowing down flows</p>	

	<p>across farm or open land and storage of water using low bunds and scrapes.</p> <p>b) Temporary defences to attenuate water during a flood and pumping water away to less flood risk areas in situations. To be used in areas where more permanent schemes may not be financially viable.</p> <p>c) Provide frontline flood response resources and equipment at the Parish and Town Council level by developing a realistic and site-specific assessment of need as well as for existing Flood Action Groups.</p> <p>The idea is that once the feasibility projects are complete, local authorities will report on their findings and will then have the opportunity to apply for funding from the Government's £2.3bn six year flood defence programme. The results from these trials will be shared with other local authorities and allow them to use similar approaches when developing schemes which benefit small communities.</p> <p>HVDIG attended a meeting with Bucks CC and their appointed consultants Atkins in December 2015. Atkins has been commissioned to produce a hydrological model of the area. We expressed an interest in any simulations from the model regarding the Hughenden Stream course along Boss Lane with the issues there and also on surface water from flash flood/storm events at Valley Road/ Coombe Lane, Trees Road, Orchard Close, The Harrow and the Warrendene Road crossroads.</p> <p>Bucks CC hope to have results of the modelling work commissioned from Atkins on the groundwater/surface water conditions in the Hughenden Valley catchment area ready for presentation to an HVDIG meeting in mid February 2016 where potential future actions for Hughenden Valley that Bucks CC could seek DEFRA funding for can be discussed. We can also discuss how to take forward constructing a Flood Resilience Plan for Hughenden Valley and how it might fit with the overall Resilience Planning of Hughenden Parish Council.</p> <p>DW/MHo expressed concern that the proposed measures to alleviate flooding are not relevant to the problems Hughenden Valley has experienced but are still keen that Bucks CC apply for further funding from the project.</p>	SM
3.0	Thames Water Draft Drainage Strategy Document	
	<p>The document follows the 'Drainage Strategy Framework' - an approach developed jointly by the Environment Agency and Ofwat, which has now been adopted by the water industry. Developing the Drainage Strategy is a four Stage approach, which will allow Thames Water to understand the relative impact of overland flow from saturated land, groundwater infiltration and surface water misconnections and how this will affect the performance that their network has in respect of flooding. The strategy has to address the future challenges of climate change, population growth and 'urban creep' which is the paving over of front gardens and loss of green space resulting in more strain of the sewage network when it rains heavily. This will allow Thames Water to consider how to best alleviate sewer flooding, through effective, economic and sustainable drainage.</p> <p>DW was disappointed that Sarah Sanders (Thames Water) had not corresponded directly with HVDIG and did not consider them stakeholders who might want to respond to the document. Instead, the Thames Water Draft Drainage Strategy document was forwarded by Marcos Gold, David Lidington's caseworker and</p>	

	<p>Hughenden Parish Council to HVDIG. DW continues to be in contact with TW to establish how HVDIG can input comments and questions relating the draft document.</p> <p>Overall, it was agreed that this was a promising document proposing how Thames Water will address the issues in Hughenden Valley going forward. DW requested that all HVDIG members try to read the document, particularly in relation to Page 6.</p> <p>DW highlighted the following points within the document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No mention that the Hughenden Stream is winterbourne – its geology needs to be acknowledged • As a statement of fact, the sewage system in Hughenden is permanently under water due to the water table – this needs to be managed • No reference is made in the document to the events of 2001 • The last part of Page 16 ‘ During these events, other sources of flooding have also been observed ...’ – this section is factually incorrect and specific instances need to be stated <p>MHo also noted that Transport for Bucks had still not logged its assets in Hughenden Valley – DC to chase.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>DC</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Website</p>	
	<p>Everyone who has had a look at the new website was happy with the content and structure. SM and PB have had a meeting re formatting.</p> <p>When the website is launched, AI requested that a link is sent to Derek Armstong, Secretary of the Residents Association so that it can be included on their website.</p> <p>PW to ask Sam Morrison for assistance with photos to include on the website.</p> <p>Documents will gradually be added to the site once they have been cleared by the relevant parties, i.e. Thames Water /Environment Agency /Bucks CC</p> <p>DW to create some text to add to the blog section.</p> <p>PW to ask Steve Kirkpatrick and John Gladwin to contribute towards the conservation section.</p> <p>PW to source a map for the site perhaps via the Chiltern Society.</p>	<p>PW</p> <p>PW</p> <p>DW</p> <p>PW</p> <p>PW</p>
<p>5.0</p>	<p>AOB</p>	
	<p>PW reminded the HVDIG that we need to start thinking about money for the HVDIG – to be considered at the next meeting.</p> <p>PW to arrange £20 to be paid to the village shop as a donation for using The Cabin for this meeting.</p>	<p>PW</p>

