

## FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

### BOVERTON

MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2013 @ 3:00 P.M.

BOVERTON CASTLE PUBLIC HOUSE, LLANTWIT MAJOR

#### Attendees:

Miles Punter	(MEP)	Director of Visible Services
Councillor Gwyn John	(GJ)	Elected Member
Councillor Rob Curtis	(RC)	Elected Member
Jane Hutt	(JH)	Assembly Member
Kerry Keirle	(KK)	Welsh Government
Tim England	(TE)	Natural Resources Wales
Phil Pickersgill	(PP)	Natural Resources Wales
Colin Bright	(CB)	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Clive Moon	(CM)	Vale of Glamorgan Council

Notes taken by Jane Hobbs

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1. MEP opened the meeting with an explanation of his role within the Council. Officers introduced themselves to the residents present.
  2. MEP thanked JH for taking the time to attend the meeting as he was aware of her busy schedule.
  3. MEP stated that the Vale of Glamorgan Council has put monies into its Capital Programme to help resolve flooding issues, with an additional £750k identified specifically for flood alleviation schemes. This provisionally includes £1/4m for a scheme in Boverton. MEP stated that a culvert replacement scheme could cost in the region of £700k to £1m.
  4. MEP advised that the Council is not in a position to apply for additional flood risk management funding in this case, therefore traditional funding avenues are not open to them. MEP stated that the Council is therefore looking at other options for meeting the funding gap. One possibility could have been to try to obtain some funding from the

- electricity company, but unfortunately this is now not possible as the company have already dealt with their flooding issues separately.
5. MEP handed the meeting over to CM and CB to advise of the current position with a culvert replacement scheme.
  6. CM and CB provided an overview of details of the proposed new culvert scheme. CB stressed that they are still at the very early stages and are currently looking at the affect of the modelling exercise which NRW are working on.
  7. CM stated that the Council has a preliminary design for the culvert though needs to consider if the culvert was to be made bigger whether it could put residents who live downstream at a greater risk of flooding.
  8. MEP stated that initial work suggests that the scheme is 'buildable' and that the money which is already provisionally allocated can be slipped and added to as necessary. MEP stressed the commitment of the Council to address the issue at Boverton and was confident that something could be built to give added protection to the residents.
  9. PP stated that it was important to ensure that no residents downstream are impacted upon and that other alternative models / options should not be ruled out at this stage. If more storage upstream is required rather than a further culvert, these options will be looked at. PP stated that he very much appreciated residents' frustrations and advised that a contribution would be sought towards any scheme but that funding for the modelling is already in place. The remainder of any monies to construct a scheme would have to come from the NRW's capital budget which is available to provide all flood risk throughout Wales. Any scheme in Boverton would have to be prioritised against other schemes in the region.
  10. MEP asked if there was a timescale for the modelling work to which PP stated that he hoped it would be completed by end of this calendar year. MEP advised that all information will be shared with residents.
  11. JH stressed that Boverton is a priority. JH stated that she was impatient about the modelling but understood the importance of getting it right. JH would like a timeline of when works could begin.
  12. RC added that flooding is becoming more and more of an issue and realises that Boverton has always had an underlying flood risk, therefore he stated that it was important to ensure that this flood risk is always on the agenda. RC stated that he believed the answer was not only in increasing the culvert but also retention of the water upstream.
  13. GJ stated that he has been down this road so many times and that a solution was promised in 1999 by the previous Cabinet Member. GJ stated that this is the first time that the Vale of Glamorgan Council have

committed monies to the project and this was as a result of the coalition Cabinet making monies available.

14. MEP stated that a report to Cabinet will need to be prepared with regard to which monies are to be set aside and that it may also be possible to contribute to any attenuation scheme. This however would be a matter for the Council's Cabinet. MEP stressed that ecology assessments are pre-works which need to be completed before any construction commences. An examination in respect of services, i.e. direction of sewers / traffic etc has already commenced. MEP stated that it will be a 'shovel ready' scheme so that whenever the funding gap becomes available the Council would be ready to start works immediately. With regard to the construction period, the works could take between 10 to 15 weeks.

Questions were submitted from residents.

15. **Mr Colm O'Shea** – Advised of his concerns that the Council is organising a survey when a survey was carried out back in early 2000's and cost £35k.
16. MEP stated that it was to assess the culvert against the model. MEP stated that modelling technology has moved on over the years.
17. PP stated that the last modelling work was undertaken 10 years ago and that techniques have changed. The new model will give a more complete picture of how patterns of flooding will develop as water levels will increase throughout the catchment.
18. Mr O'Shea asked if the 1970's design was being used at all.
19. PP stated that they were checking to ensure the new design would be 'buildable' as well as assessing its impact on the wider catchment.
20. CB stated that they would look at whether it could be constructed without major works to other services though stressed that the work being undertaken was all preliminary at the moment.
21. Mr O'Shea suggested that there was not a great deal of work to be done other than habitat. He stated that he had concerns with regard to the modelling of the water flows and attenuation and referred to the survey undertaken in 1999 / 2000. Mr O'Shea suggested that the hydraulic model based its findings on the flow of water in 1998 which flooded the village. Mr O'Shea stated that attenuation was no good to the residents of Boverton and that they know the lay of the land. When the flood happens it happens very quickly and the Council need to prioritise the scheme based on life and death.

22. Mr O'Shea stated that 5 months was not acceptable and asked how much longer it would take to find a solution. Mr O'Shea reminded JH that she mentioned Boverton was a priority but that it doesn't get the same attention as Llanmaes. Mr O'Shea also stated that he fully appreciated that the Vale of Glamorgan has been more proactive this year but stressed that JH has not done anything other than to make promises.
23. With regard to the cost benefit arrangements, residents failed to understand how Llanmaes has been protected when it floods purely from water from fields when Boverton is flooded by river water. Mr O'Shea stated that JH had announced from the Assembly that considerable monies had been made available for flood alleviation but not 1p has been spent by WG on Boverton.
24. MEP stated that the Vale of Glamorgan had received a considerable share of flood alleviation funds for Wales over the past few years, with funding from WG and Europe received for both the Coldbrook Catchment in Barry and Llanmaes. The Council were now trying to resolve the issues with Boverton though these would have to be addressed in a slightly different manner due to the 'main river' issue. MEP recognised the concerns of Boverton residents and thanked Mr O'Shea for his input into the matter since his time in post, which he viewed as constructive.
25. RC wished to respond on one key point which was that the Authority since last May had been positive and that since 1976 there had been a different Political party in power. RC stated that there has now been 12 or 13 open Cabinet meetings which have allowed Cabinet Members to meet with residents head to head at a range of locations. RC wished to point out that the previous administration had not done this.
26. GJ wished to add that the cost benefit analysis had been being talked about for years. GJ also stated that he was aware that when flooding does take place in Boverton anyone taken ill could die as an air ambulance would be required. GJ stressed to JH that money is required. GJ stated that he is aware of an amount of land which has been bought as part of metrix project which will be used at some stage in the future and raised his concerns about this and any potential affect on flood risk.
27. JH asked KK to explain the funding process. JH stressed that she was as disappointed as residents that a scheme has not been delivered at Boverton though residents need to consider the long history of problems at Llanmaes. WG can only provide funds for flooding schemes when applications are submitted and whilst VOG did put a scheme into WG year on year for Llanmaes they did not apply for any such monies for Boverton. NRW now have to consider this scheme along with their other priorities and WG will need to ensure that enough money is available in the relevant capital budget. JH advised that

regrettably she cannot conjure up money and any requests for flood alleviation works must go through the correct processes. She stated that flood alleviation has however gone up the Political agenda due to flooding problems in recent years. JH hopes that when she next meets with residents there will be good news to discuss and asked for the continued patience and support of residents throughout this process.

28. KK explained the process of WG funding in that it fully funds the NRW for all its flood risk management activities. This includes the funding for the flood storage areas already completed upstream of Boverton. KK stated that the difference between Boverton, Coldbrook, and Llanmaes was that the Coldbrook and Llanmaes were affected by watercourses and not main river. Boverton is main river and therefore under the jurisdiction of NRW. KK stated the WG cannot accept applications from the Vale of Glamorgan Council for main river schemes as it doesn't have powers as a flood risk authority to do works on main rivers.
29. PP stated that the important part is to get to a solution point, to obtain a scheme which doesn't impact people downstream. If the culvert goes in it will have a limit to its capacity and the modelling will provide details of the appropriate size of the culvert, though there is the possibility that upstream works will be required. PP asked residents for their patience but stressed that he did appreciate their frustrations.
30. MEP noted that Alun Cairns had now joined the group and welcomed him to the meeting
31. **Mr John Fellows:** Stated that there had been no mention of Ham Manor Park. Mr Fellows stated that the properties there are expensive and at risk and were unable to obtain sandbags as they had been taken off the flood register. Mr Fellows stated that the Barclay Leisure Group who own the park rebuilt a wall to protect 3 properties. They also had a survey completed by a structural engineer to survey 3 culverts on the park. The survey stated that there was limescale build up of 1.5m within the culverts which in turn were running at 1/3<sup>rd</sup> capacity. Mr Fellows stated that the decision was taken that they would have the limescale dug out and involved the Environment Agency (NRW). The NRW agreed to this work. There are currently 2 prices but they are an astronomical amount of money and have been quoted a price of circa £800 tonne to dump the waste. Mr Fellows also stated that in 1998 there were 4 properties which were lost due to flooding.
32. MEP agreed there are issues of maintenance throughout the catchment.
33. **Mrs Eileen Bruton:** Mrs Bruton confirmed that it had been her wall which had had to be re-built and stated that if just 1 more house is built

it sends more water down to Boverton. Mrs Bruton stressed that something had to be done.

34. MEP stated that one of the main problems was the planning process and that as a planning authority they were more switched on than ever before. MEP stressed that his Engineering Department was only a consultee and provided recommendations that may or may not be accepted as part of the planning process.
35. **Susan O'Shea:** Mrs O'Shea asked that with regard to the funding, as the Vale of Glamorgan had pledged money if there was a shortfall would they have to wait to apply for the funding difference until the model was complete.
36. PP stated that within the Capital programme there was a set sum every year and this was available annually and where there are projects which the NRW think may need funding, monies are set aside. Even though the project hasn't been fully developed it will already be in for consideration within the system.
37. **Mr O'Shea:** Asked if the cost benefit analysis had been completed?
38. PP stated that the cost benefit had been completed by the NRW in 2010. PP stated that there are elements to the project, one being risk to life, that will now also be taken into consideration.
39. MEP stated that within reason Authorities fair better if they have large schemes ready to go forward to construction in December / January as this is when excess money could become available.
40. **Mr Williams:** In 1998, 4ft was scoured from the bottom of the stream by flood water, this took the wall away and the water went through the greenhouse. Mr Williams stated that the EA replaced the bed but that in December the water started to scour out again. The narrow stretch shoots downstream and takes the bed away. Mr Williams stressed that there is a need to look downstream as well as in Boverton.
41. **Community Councillor Jeff Evans:** Boverton brook gets flooded often though planning permission has been granted for houses be built on a flood plain at the back of the brook.
42. MEP asked if comments from his officers as consultees had been read out at the planning meeting. GJ stated that he had fought against the application but unfortunately it had been approved in 2010 and the Planning Committee granted permission for 6 houses as it was claimed that they were not in a flood plain.
43. PP stated that the EA (NRW) would object to any development on a flood plain and this would fall under TAN 15.

44. GJ stated that the application was just outside the blue line of a flood plain hence the reason the EA didn't object. MEP stressed that the planning process was very important to the reduction of flood risk in the future.
45. **Mr Thomas:** Asked that when the culvert is looked at would the stream be dredged and if not, why not?
46. PP stated that dredging a stream would have an initial benefit but once it floods again the river would always find its own level. The NRW did not therefore consider it good practice to dredge.
47. **Community Councillor Marsh:** Stated that he has lived in his property since 1976 and during the last flood the water was a ¼ of the way into the field where the houses are to be built.
48. **Alun Cairns MP:** Firstly thanked the panel for organising the meeting and apologised if his query had been covered prior to him arriving. Mr Cairns asked whether capital funds had been made available in the past and, after the modelling has been completed, how would it compete with other projects?
49. PP confirmed that it would be able to compete with other projects and would be prioritised accordingly. KK stated that it is not purely based on numbers but also risk to life and health factors etc.
50. Mr Cairns asked that knowing where we are at the moment with experience of the other flooding problems in Wales, where did Boverton stand in the pecking order?
51. PP stated that NRW is split into 3 areas in Wales; South East, South West and the North. Boverton is within the top 20 schemes in the South West and PP reminded residents that the top 10 have already been completed. Therefore, it could be a case of whoever gets their project ready first when the money becomes available.
52. JH stated that there were in a very different place to 5 or 10 years ago and would also have to rely very much on cost benefit analysis. Risk to life is very important point which will now be considered within the analysis. JH suggested that a further meeting be organised by MEP which would allow residents to be updated.
53. **Jim Colston:** How far up / down the river would the modelling take place. Mr Colston stated that the flooding also comes from fields behind as well as from RAF St Athan. Mr Colston stated that had missed being flooded by ¼" or less. Mr Colston stated that the culverts were built in the 1850's.
54. PP stated that the problem with Boverton is that it sits in a bowl and that there are springs all around the area. PP stated that the Council

- have completed some road drainage but that ground water flooding cannot be helped and the majority of the problem is from river flows.
55. Mr Colston stated that there are 100 houses in Ham Manor to be affected. MEP stated that he remembered writing to Mr Colston in the past on this matter.
  56. RC also stated that the Council now has a Flood Risk Strategy.
  57. MEP stated that the Council now has legal duties which it didn't have a few years ago. The Strategy should be out this calendar year and will be updated regularly.
  58. GJ stated that the main river issue has nothing to do with what Mr Colston was talking about and that the most important thing was to stop debris going through the culvert. GJ stated that owners of woods should be reminded to keep their woods clear of broken branches etc.
  59. CM asked if Mr Colston would like to see him after the meeting to ensure that he has a record of the flooding instances he had been referring to.
  60. **Mrs Bruton:** Stated that it was her understanding that branches had to be left beside rivers for the animals and wildlife.
  61. PP stated that the NRW will not cut trees and just leave them by the river. Logs for biodiversity gain should be tied / wired down so that they cannot float away during flooding.
  62. MEP thanked all residents for attending the meeting on such a hot afternoon and stressed that the money has been set aside and that all that was needed to progress further were the results of the model and the funding balance for any suitable scheme. MEP stated that once these were received he would sit down with his colleagues and that any developments and updates would be sent to all attendees. MEP stated he would also look at being able to provide the information on the Council's website.
  63. Meeting concluded.
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