



Notes of the Multi Agency Stakeholder Flood Defence Meeting held at 1.30pm on
Wednesday 25th June 2025 at the Lydney Town Council,
Council Chambers, High Street, Lydney

PRESENT: **Chairman** Cllr Carol Harris, Lydney Town Council **(CH)**
Cllr Pam Johns, Lydney Town Council **(PJ)**
Cllr Sue Hillier, Lydney Town Council **(SH)**
Cllr Steve Dunford, West Dean Parish Council **(SD)**
Cllr Bob Freshwater, West Dean Parish Council **(BF)**
Cllr Andrew McDermid, Forest of Dean District Council **(AM)**
John Thurston, Watts Group **(JT)**
Andrew Bryant, Watts Group **(AB)**
Sarah-Jane O’Kane, Severn Trent **(SK)**
Rose Christodoulides, Lakeside Resident Rep **(RC)**
Tom Curwell, Environment Agency **(TC)**
Lawrence King, Forest of Dean District Council **(LK)** *(Arrived 1.36pm)*
Nathan Choat, Gloucestershire County Council **(NT)** *(Arrived 1.50pm)*

Michael Greenfield, Town Clerk, (Note Taker) **(MG)**

| Item | | Action |
|------|---|--------|
| 1. | WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS | |
| | Cllr Carol Harris (CH) chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone. Introductions were made. | |
| 2. | APOLOGIES | |
| | Cllr Tasha Saunders, Lydney Town Council (TS) Cllr Jackie Fraser, Forest of Dean District Council (JF) Cllr Alan Preest, Forest of Dean District Council (AP) Cllr Beth Llewellyn, Forest of Dean District Council (BL) <i>(Note: Not on the invitation email list - but apologies provided by AM)</i> Alex Thrift, Forest of Dean District Council (AT) Joe Baker, Gloucestershire County Council Highways (JB) Jo Miles, Clerk, West Dean Parish Council (JM) Severn Rivers Trust | |
| 3. | NOTES OF LAST MEETING held on Wednesday 19th March 2025 | |
| | Notes received and accepted as an accurate record | |

| | | |
|----|--|--|
| 4. | ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING NOT INCLUDED ON PREVIOUS AGENDA | |
| | <p>The Chair raised a query with the EA from the notes of 19.03.25</p> <p>Query:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>It was commented that the flood warning gauge was set at too high a 'trigger' level and can it be lowered a lower 'Red' warning as by the time residents are aware of the water it could be too late and they are already flooded.</i> <p><i>EA commented that they will review this request and also speak with Forestry England on the matter in relation to other data and decide accordingly.</i></p> <p><i>LK arrived 1.36pm</i></p> <p>TC noted that a summary had already been provided at the previous meeting.</p> <p>It was reported that only a limited amount of data is currently available. The River Lyd remains within the gauge fluctuation curve, as recorded by the monitoring system. The gauge continues to collect relevant data.</p> <p>Responsibility for adjusting the gauge setting has been passed to the appropriate monitoring authorities. Some members of the meeting expressed concerns that the gauge is currently set too high and suggested it should be lowered to provide residents with earlier flood warnings.</p> <p>TC clarified that some of the flooding is due to surface rainfall, and even if the gauge were lowered, challenges would remain. The River Lyd would still be prone to overtopping during heavy rain. It was highlighted that flood warnings are triggered by river gauge data, not by conditions on the High Street, and therefore do not address surface water flooding.</p> <p>TC emphasised that the combination of steep slopes and upstream catchment areas means that heavy rainfall can lead to water entering dwellings. When there is excessive rainfall in the upper catchments, river levels rise rapidly, resulting in flooding.</p> <p>TC reiterated that the Environment Agency works closely with Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) on these issues and further investigations into localised flooding may be warranted.</p> <p>TC also commented on the impact of Storm Bert, which involved both rainfall and river flooding. Water levels peaked at a natural narrowing point, restricting flow and causing the river to overtop. The excess water then flowed towards the lowest point – the High Street.</p> | |

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| | <p>The group also discussed the adequacy of the local highways network. Concerns were raised that modern housing developments may not account sufficiently for drainage and sewage infrastructure, leaving some properties vulnerable during intense rainfall events.</p> <p>The Chairman noted that both GCC and the Forest of Dean District Council (FoDDC) had carried out significant remedial work around East Marsh. The Chairman encouraged group members to visit the area to see the improvements.</p> <p><i>NC arrived 1.50pm</i></p> | |
| 5. | GCC CO-ORDINATED PROJECT UPDATE | |
| | <p>MG provided an update sent by Joe Baker</p> <p>In summary:</p> <p><u>Lakeside Avenue</u></p> <p>-We have provided extensively clearance of the watercourse from Lakeside Avenue to the railway embankment, thanks to everyone who attended the site visits.</p> <p>-Since the site visit, we have cleared the culvert under the bypass and removed 250 tonnes of material, this should further improve flow conveyance through the system and it is now very clear that water is freely flowing from Lakeside Avenue until it reaches the bypass.</p> <p>Please see photo. We have identified issues with how the pipes were laid and they may lose some capacity due to this.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div> | |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | <p>The final stretch of watercourse to clear is on Rob Bendall's land, he has been very supportive and we are aiming to clear this before winter.</p> <p>-The watercourse then joins the Plummers Brook before joining the upper basin of the harbour.</p> <p>-GCC and the EA are not aligned on our views of the silt in the harbour. We have agreed to commission hydraulic modelling to determine the effect of the silt, or not, on how the Lakeside Avenue watercourse system drains.</p> <p>-To ensure the Lakeside Avenue flood storage area project is not held up, we have agreed with the EA to continue with this under the existing business case to obtain funding for delivery. The works carried out by GCC to de-silt the area may have reduced the sizing of the required storage, now downstream conveyance has improved. Our consultants are modelling the effect of the clearance and will demonstrate what standard of protection we've provided to the properties at the bottom of Lakeside Avenue from the works. This work should be completed this week. They will then get back to optioneering the upstream storage options, to store water and release it at a controlled rate.</p> <p>-The business case for funding is 30% written, it will be completed once we have the preferred option from the modelling. We will aim to submit this by September/ October.</p> <p>-We would need to get a design and planning for the scheme and aim to construct, subject to getting the funds and the landowner agreement in writing, next financial year.</p> <p><u>Cannop Catchment NFM</u></p> <p>-We've undertaken significant river restoration around the cycle centre area.</p> <p>-This will allow the fast-flowing artificial concrete channels to be slowed significantly, helping reduce peak flows and allow water to store across a previously disconnected floodplain.</p> <p>-If there is interest and people are able to walk across semi-difficult terrain we could organise a site visit to see these works over August/ September. If people are interested please respond to me and I will try and set something up/</p> <p>-We are going over our plans for construction for the next phases with a critical period of August-October in some section where we are limited to work to be outside of bird nesting season and outside of fish spawning season.</p> | |
|--|---|--|

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | <p><i>(End of Report)</i></p> <p>NC commented that a mini digger and dumper were used to clear the culvert, which is now operating at nearly full capacity.</p> <p>The railway culverts are scheduled to be jet washed, with particular attention given to the areas around Harbour Road and Bendall's.</p> <p>The canal area falls under the responsibility of the Environment Agency (EA), who are required to carry out the necessary maintenance work.</p> <p>RC commended GCC & FoDDC on their work to reduce flooding around the town area and Lakeside Avenue.</p> <p>SH noted that Lydney Recreation Trust has decided to leave East Marsh untouched for 12 months to observe how the area settles. Although the trustees have considered developing a nature walk, these plans are currently on hold.</p> <p>NC commented on the A48 highway, noting that water from Driffield Road may previously have flowed toward Lakeside. However, following deep ditch drainage works carried out by GCC Highways, routine rainwater will now be directed toward the A48 and continue on toward Awre and Newnham—preventing it from entering Lydney or Lakeside Avenue.</p> <p>The meeting continued with a discussion on the town's culverts and the historical buildup of silt levels.</p> <p>TC referenced research conducted in the 1970s concerning the weir. He also noted that the Environment Agency (EA) currently owns the harbour and the surrounding land, which was previously owned by Severn Trent (or its predecessor).</p> <p>A 1983 report from Severn Trent stated that the harbour was purchased with the intention of developing it into a commercial port and tourist attraction—plans which were never realised. The harbour and associated land were later sold to National Rivers in the 1980s.</p> <p>Currently, there is no sustainable income to support the upkeep of the docks. Revenue from moored boats is minimal and not financially viable. Additionally, desilting the river may not be feasible while vessels remain in the harbour area.</p> <p>River Levels, weir levels and silt levels were discussed by the meeting group. It was commented that GCC & the EA have met previously to discuss the viability of the harbour area.</p> | |
|--|---|--|

| | | |
|--|---|---------------------|
| | <p>TC commented that as the harbour is a national monument any changes to the area has to have the appropriate approvals.</p> <p>TC commented on Plummers Brook, referencing a survey from the 1980s which found that the brook's water level was below 7.3 metres. He noted that, unless the weir is modified, water levels are expected to remain roughly the same.</p> <p>The meeting groups discussed the estuary, boat navigation and river modelling.</p> <p>AB commented that if the water Plummers Brook was lowered then the silt can be seen and then easily removed/excavated.</p> <p>LK commented that GCC & EA still have further work to undertake at Lakeside and access private land may be needed, to help clear the culverts.</p> <p>Access to the culverts on private land were discussed and LK was able to clarify that FODDC have been granted access to the land, via a signed agreement.</p> <p>LK to locate document to reassure Lakeside Residents that it is in place.</p> <p>Further discussions occurred regarding the weir.</p> <p>TC commented that the structure is fixed in stone, with paddles installed to operate the lock system. However, there is currently no mechanism in place to actively control the water flow.</p> <p>Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) commissioned modelling work with Atkins focused on the locked gates. The Environment Agency (EA) is now reviewing this data to assess how the information was represented with the flood gates open, along with other related analysis.</p> <p>TC commented that the EA are implementing new policies, including that boats stored in the harbour must be sea worthy and must go into the estuary 2-3 times a year. This puts a greater standard on boat owners.</p> <p>TC to provide an update on the Atkins Modelling at the next meeting.</p> | <p>LK</p> <p>TC</p> |
|--|---|---------------------|

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| 6. | AGENCY REPORTS | |
| | <p>A. Environment Agency</p> <p>TC commented that following items can be removed from future agendas: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i <i>Lydney Flood Resilience Plan</i> ii <i>Flood Meter flow monitoring reports</i> <p>BF raised an issue of a bridge by Forest Road, just beyond Norchard Railway Station – near Norchard Cottages. It seems that it requires repairing.</p> <p>LK to notify Alex - to be reported back at the next meeting.</p> <p>B. Severn Trent</p> <p>SK reported that Severn Trent Water has successfully secured £28.3 million from Ofwat's Climate Resilience Fund. This funding is designated for specific projects, including support for Lydney through partnership-funded arrangements. While full partnership details are not yet confirmed.</p> <p>SK will provide an update to the group once more information is available.</p> <p>The funding is allocated over the next five years, up to 31st March 2030. It is anticipated that approximately £3 million will be available for Lydney, which could potentially support additional sewage infrastructure.</p> <p>JT noted that he had recently met with representatives from Severn Trent and the local MP. He explained that, as a private company, Severn Trent operates under government-imposed limitations regarding the scope of its activities. Furthermore, because it is not a statutory consultee in the planning process, its involvement is constrained by local housing development requirements.</p> <p>SK added that while Severn Trent may be consulted during the planning stages, they are still required to support new developments and typically plan their infrastructure investment on a five-year cycle.</p> <p>SK is engaging with FoDDC regarding storm overflows. This is a separate budget from the Climate Resilience Fund.</p> <p>SK to find out further information on the Storm Overflow Budget</p> <p>The following queries were asked</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Biometric Gauges – can you provide an update? ii. What is the financial commitment for partners? iii. Can you provide a list of the 10 projects for Lydney? iv. To note - Data should be linked to storm flows. <p>AM noted that surface water could potentially be redirected for garden use retrospectively.</p> | <p>LK/AT</p> <p>SK</p> <p>SK</p> <p>All = SK</p> |

| | | |
|----|--|----|
| | <p>JT added that the Watts Group had expressed willingness to contribute financially towards the partnership arrangements. However, they were not permitted to do so.</p> <p>C. FoDDC</p> <p>MG provided an update from AT. There are no major concerns. The work of GCC has helped to improve flood defences. LK commented that 1-9 dwellings – minor planning applications. LLFA for dwellings 10+. The team visits various sites and engages with GCC on matters.</p> <p>D. Highways Maintenance Programme</p> <p>NC commented that the Newerne Street Bridge is open to two-way traffic. Gulley cleaning is occurring. NC commented that JB has various priorities across the county, so future engagement may be y submitted reports from JB.</p> <p>E. LTC Data/Report consolidation</p> <p>PJ commented that the NDP Consultation is still open and ending on Tuesday 22nd July 2025.</p> <p>PJ & MG attended a DEFRA, Reforming our approach to Floods Funding, on-line session regarding Flood Resilience on Friday 20th June 2025. Funding is available for LLFA to apply for, following a public consultation.</p> <p>The funding is being reformed for communities, as there are some difficulties accessing the grants. Parish/town councils cannot apply directly, at the moment, DEFRA are to provide further clarification on this matter.</p> <p>Funding is under £3m, £5m+ then £10m+.</p> <p>Further information</p> <p>Reforming our approach to floods funding - Defra - Citizen Space</p> | |
| 7. | STAKEHOLDER GROUP UPDATES: | |
| | <p>A. Residents</p> <p>RC commented on Crumps Farm and how the land will be managed (topsoil being washed into the local areas). Currently they are using straw bales as a bund by the water course.</p> <p>LK to notify the developer regarding removal of bunds and to ensure that any removal occurs at the appropriate time.</p> | LK |

| | | |
|----|---|---------------------|
| | <p>RC commented about Crumps Farm and Public Right of Way. The PROW seems to have 'disappeared' and needs to be reinstated. NC to notify the PROW Officer at GCC</p> <p>B. Business Groups</p> <p>AB has been in contact with TC at the EA regarding flood defences, and drainage by the railway line.</p> <p>There are also issues with vegetation at the same site that required addressing. It would be ideal to undertake this task now.</p> <p>AB commented that some EA operatives attended the area (Mead Lane), but only undertook work at one specific area. It was reiterated that the Station Road connection to the River Lyd is still an EA issue.</p> <p>TC to follow-up.</p> <p>C. Environmental</p> <p>No Reports</p> <p>D. Other Parties Present</p> <p>No Reports</p> | <p>NC</p> <p>TC</p> |
| 8. | <p>CORRESPONDENCE & A.O.B.</p> <p>None</p> | |
| 9. | <p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING:</p> | |
| | <p>The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and for their contributions.</p> <p>Wednesday 29th October 2025 Time: 1.30pm Lydney Town Council, Council Chambers</p> | |
| | <p>Meeting ended 3.25pm</p> | |