

Minutes of Meeting

Date: 11 March 2021
Time: 10:30 -12:02
Place: Zoom Virtual

Actions

1 Present

Newbald PC: Gavin Steward (C), John Howard , Becky O'Sullivan (part), Suzanne Smith (Clerk)

North Cave PC: Richard Ellis (VC), Jackie North, Geoff Pile (C)

South Cave PC: Bob Munby (VC)

Ellerker PC: Claire Wood (C), Mike Barnett

Brantingham PC: Richard Powell (C)
Richard Shillaker

Environment Agency: Amanda Foster,
Becky Preston

Yorkshire Water: Millie McCormick
(Flood Risk, taking over from Seraya)

ERYC Flood Risk: Mike Kitching

2B: Bill+Elizabeth Blackledge

ERYC Ward Cllrs:
Victoria Aitken (part), Richard Meredith
(part)

2 Apologies

Cllr Linda Bayram (and NCPC),

Cllr Bernard Gateshill

3 Next Meeting Date

Friday 7 May, 10am

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

These have been written up but not yet circulated. All previous meeting Minutes will be circulated prior to the next meeting.

5 What is WWSTF?

BB worked through a mind-map showing the organisations and people involved in WWSTF. See PDF attached to these minutes (personal names omitted from PDF).

Noted that:-

- Hotham PC is not amongst the listed PCs, but they are welcome if they convene again as a PC.
- WWSTF is in line with Government (EA / DEFRA etc) policy generally and on flood risk and future agricultural payment scheme (ELM).
- Technical support from FR Agencies and Hull University, including possible sensor network, GIS.
- PATT Foundation / Green Task Force may be able to deliver NFM measures on the ground
- Possibility of bringing the more technically interested people together to form a Technical strand to WWSTF
- Interventions would tend to be small scale, widely distributed interventions require cooperation of landowners. Currently experiences with landowners have not been as positive as they might be. However, Govt policy/payment

will be directing landowners towards enabling more positive contributions from landowners. AF mentioned **Countryside Stewardship, Investment Readiness Fund**. Many are waiting for more info. Important that landowners be encouraged rather than expected to take part.

- RM mentioned **ERYC's new Environmental Policy & Management System**, last month a Climate Emergency was declared. Climate Change Strategy in next 12 months, looking at impact of Environment Bill and Agriculture Act. He noted that the various incentives to encourage farmers to manage their land in a particular way are changing and East Riding will be working to encourage landowners to manage their land in a more sustainable way.
- **Legal Status of WWSTF:** Discussion arising from Ellerker PC meeting included one of the Councillors asking what is the legal status of WWSTF? As an ex-solicitor, she was concerned about the description 'partnership' and whether it committed the partners to any form of joint liability, the way it would in a business partnership.

We subsequently approached both Living With Water and the HEYwoods Partnership and asked them. They were clear that they are *"not a legal entity, rather a voluntary coming together of like-minded organisations and individuals based around the shared principles and objectives conveyed in the Terms of Reference"*. Which is exactly what WWSTF is, so we are in good company!

That still leaves some issues as to how we organise, fund raise, hold funds etc, but we are collectively working on those. We have considered charity or CIC route but are wary of the considerable work involved in setting these up. Have also asked if ERYC could be the accountable body for WWSTF, but this raises the issue that it would have to then do the same for any other community-based group. RM also noted tensions around budgets and statutory responsibilities and ERYC do not design by consultation and are happy to receive information fed into them.

- WWSTF is focussing on one relatively small area, whilst ERYC Officers, YW etc have the whole region to consider. Issues need to be discussed across organisations to reach a collaborative approach. MK explained that Flood Agencies do meet and challenge each other and MK does take matters relating to the West Wolds area to those meetings.

CW noted that discussions with Agencies are often reactive, but WWSTF needs to be proactive.

- JH said that he had been in touch with YW but had not received any reply. MM asked JN to direct correspondence to her. CW noted that Ellerker's contact at YW had changed - MM confirmed that everything could be directed to her and she would then make sure that it is forwarded to the relevant person/team.
- MB noted (with reference to Ellerker) that issues have recurred for years, but often dropped off the agenda, only to return when there is heavy rain causing problems. Also that hard infrastructure is also required alongside green infrastructure.
- BB noted that the FRAs tend to be focussed on hard solutions so WWSTF is intended to shift the balance towards nature-based solutions, whilst accepting that hard infrastructure must be developed and improved. The Terms of Reference of WWSTF is a live document and can be modified if the group consider it necessary.
- AF noted that the stresses on the hard infrastructure are a result of excess surface/ ground water and that NFM measures, such as increasing soil

organic content by 1%, can have a dramatic effect on soil water retention (200m³ per hectare). Would also take up more carbon, need less fertiliser etc. The benefits of a whole catchment approach are sometimes undervalued - natural measures can reduce the pressures on hard infrastructure in ways that are often overlooked.

- MB wanted to gain some clarity as to the focus of WWSTF - is it to lobby MPs or is that the focus of the individual PCs? There are references in PC meeting minutes of YW's plan but the plan has not been shared with all the resource issues, budget requirements etc. There is good engagement within the parish but it does not seem to follow through.
- RM suggested that we need multiple agendas and a high level of demand placed by the PCs etc on the FRAs. WWSTF can coordinate information and provide an opportunity for all parties to exchange information and that information can then be collated and provided for residents to explain the issues and possible solutions. It is about understanding and education and encouraging individuals to help protect themselves. WWSTF can be a hub and a leader in this area.
- **Should WWSTF continue?**

Taking into account various comments around what WWSTF is, and stands for, and the fact that there are Agencies working within the area, and the fact that 2B have already spent a 'shed load' of time on this agenda; BB asked "Does the group consider that there a purpose to what WWSTF is doing?" He stated that we do not want to waste anyone's time pursuing something which people think is already being addressed - we need to decide whether it is a worthwhile thing to do.

JN stated that she felt that it is worth continuing. She asked whether the first step could be for 2B to draw up a plan of what is needed, that can then be fed through to the various agencies. BB responded that it is important to take account of all the technical support and available, together with Parish Councils and the wider local community, to develop the most appropriate solution to the many varied problems being faced.

Having thought that we would be able to get up and running in 2020, the reality is that we cannot. However, during 2021, as we move out of the pandemic, using Zoom etc, we can have more and wider community engagement and start to document firstly where the issues are. 2B is happy to be a medium through which the information is captured and put onto paper and mapping, and then talk with all the agencies to find way to resolve the issues.

An example was given that YW, under the Water Act, get fined if any sewage gets into the surface water systems. They, therefore, have a strong financial interest in resolving the issues to ensure that they do not recur. Some of the causes are in the infrastructure but a lot of them are from the wider catchment so if we start to resolve the catchment-scale issues, we would be going a long way to help solve YW's issues. This could mean that there is funding from YW that could address their aims and objectives whilst contributing to the objectives of WWSTF. BB stressed that there is expertise and knowledge within the wider community that should not be ignored. For example the University and what the Geologists understand about the underlying chalk aquifer and issues around potential contamination of drinking water supplies.

6. Water Issues and Connections between Parishes

Newbald

BO'S commented that in Newbald there have been a number of conversations

with YW in recent days about the issues there. One representative from YW had commented that the underground aquifer reservoir on Burgate was closed in 2018. She said that seems to be some correlation between that being closed and the excessive surface water in the village and why it has been closed. MM replied that she was not aware of why it had been closed but there have been investigations as to whether opening it back up would help the alleviate the current flooding issues. She reported that the answer was that there would be marginal benefit and offered to get a formal statement sent to Newbald, which BO'S said would be very welcome.

MM(YW)

BB commented that what is really needed is some formal conversations so that there is greater understanding of how and why conclusions are being reached and being able to feed into the discussion. There might be other ideas of how to solve a problem and it is important to get away from silo working as opposed to working collectively to achieve a collective answer.

AF asked if the problem was being caused by a new spring. BO'S stated that there are lots of springs in the area. An issue has been that the Beck has overflowed this year - it has never overflowed in living memory. It was noted that the ground water has been high but it has been high in the past and has never resulted in the flooding issues that have occurred recently.

AF commented that there have been issues in the past with the impact of the abstraction and its impact on the SSSI. She suggested that, with it being a wetland SSSI, it could be looked at as a group to find a way to alleviate the issues. Newbald PC had worked with YWT to build two ponds in the area but this has not been enough to alleviate the problems of the excessive water issues.

AF reported that long-term British Geological Survey is planning to map all the chalk, which has not been done since Victorian times, so whilst the chalk itself has not changed as the underlying rock, its cracks and fissures and how they work are likely to have changed.

Brantingham

It was noted that water levels across the area have been higher this year. RP reported that Brantingham has experienced similar issues of excessive surface water runoff and older residents have not seen anything like it before.

South Cave

BM reported that some of the main problems in South Cave from the east is the flow of water off the Wolds down the Beck, which is steep and flashy, that overflows the various drainage channels and ditches, finds its way onto the road and flows down the road and into houses. From the West the issues relate to Ferry Beck, which flows across more low-lying, flatter ground so the flow is not as fast but it does build up. Both Becks meet and the flow then needs to go under the A63. The flow is very restricted by existing pipework under the A63 which results in flooding in the West End area of the village. There is also flooding at the other side of the A63 so it was recognised that if the pipes were enlarged to allow water through faster it would exacerbate the issues to the south of the A63. This leads back to the need to slow the flow. BB noted that Ferry Beck originates within Everthorpe.

7 Accountable Body

SS reported on the research that she had undertaken regarding the possibility that the Parish Councils could come together to form a joint committee to oversee funding relating to WWSTF. She had noted that it would be possible to create a Joint Committee but that committee could only discharge the functions of a Parish Council but not anything else. Financially, PCs can have constraints on what they can do with money, based on the qualification of the clerk. SS is a

fully qualified clerk and therefore Newbald can spend money how they like. SS has not been able to find any examples of joint committees at a PC level as yet to get an idea of how they might function.

BB pointed out that it was not the intention to ask PCs to contribute funds, rather to hold and distribute funds as required. It was noted that any joint committee would need to be formed of representatives from all the PCs to enable work to be undertaken across the whole area.

It was agreed to continue to explore the issue. 2B will speak to the National Flood Forum to see if they can offer any suggestions.

ALL

8 Virtual Public Meetings

BB reported that Zoom can deal with 100 attendees and suggested that meetings could be held through the individual PCs to seek understanding. Following discussion it was agreed that the meetings should be grouped

- Hotham, North Cave and Everthorpe
- Newbald
- South Cave, Ellerker and Brantingham

These meetings would be used to inform residents about WWSTF and what is being done and seek comments and views. It was pointed out that raising awareness within the wider community is important. It is to be hoped that we can attract further support and find other people with useful skills. If there is good support within the community, it helps the officers and organisations to understand that there is a swell of support.

It was agreed that PCs list the issues that they are aware of and send that information through to enable the mapping to be developed further and that this information should be shared with everyone. 2B will collate and add to the mapping but everyone would be able to comment.

ALL

ALL

It was agreed that individual PCs should discuss the proposal for public meetings and report back on their decision.

9 YWS Update

MM reported that the issues in Ellerker and Newbald are being investigated. BB requested that lines of communication be kept open and that YW not just suggest ways to solve the problem from a YW point of view but enable multi-agency solutions. Ellerker requested regular communications from YW.

MM(YW)

10 ERYC Update

10.1 Everthorpe

MK reported that a work was starting in Everthorpe, As far as new work is concerned, they are at the year end and are busy finishing off existing projects and new things should start happening from April.

10.2 South Cave FAS

There is no more information on this project at present.

10.3 Ferry Beck

MK and a colleague had walked the area and they had not seen where it might be possible to slow the flow. It was agreed that 2B and MK could have a further discussion and walk the area together to discuss on site.

MK/2B

11 North Cave Issues and Opportunities Map

Shared at the previous meeting but do not want this to go out into the public arena as yet - the issues are what need to start to be captured.

12 Newbald - Illustration of the issues and the different stakeholders

The area where some attenuation might be achieved (the Becksies) is a Wildlife Reserve, a SSSI, managed by YWT, has cattle on it every year as part of the management regime; it has a YW installation immediately upstream and YW have major issues with infrastructure downstream, MK of ERYC had suggested looking at the area; Hull University may be able to advise on the geology and springs and how they react over time; there is the landowner at Becks Farm which has springs that come out of their land and flow across the road into the Beck which creates an ERYC Highways issue, and the Becksies is owned by Newbald village. There is a lot that could be done but if any one agency were to try to solve the issues they probably would not succeed - there are so many inputs that are needed to resolve the issues. This is a microcosm of what is needed across the whole catchment.

JH thought that work on the Becksies would not achieve any major benefit and that there are springs elsewhere in the village that contribute. He also mentioned the Gauge Map and the peaks in the groundwater that had been measured and whether they had any bearing on the flooding issues. BB mentioned that John Trail, YWT, had said that he felt that work at the Becksies, under current conditions, might only buy an additional day. However, this might form part of a solution and demonstrated that the conversations need to take place.

13 Any Other Business

CW raised the issue of the publicity that Newbald has had around their sewage issues and the recent engagement of David Davies. There is also Graham Stuart who covers Newbald and Hotham. Does this issue need to be raised with the MPs and how do we engage with them? RM said that he was happy to act as a liaison between any parish and their MP. RM pointed out that as a Councillor he takes the requests to officers and acts as a voice of the people to the Council. He requested that he is made the link and that, whilst he cannot act in a parish that is not within his remit, he can be the contact point with fellow Ward Councillors who look after different areas within the WWSTF area.