

Committee: Full Council

Date: 16 November 2021

Title: Flood and Resilience Report

Purpose of Report

For members to consider the recent flooding in Ilminster

Recommendation:

Members RESOLVE to put together a Community Flood Plan for Ilminster in place as soon as is practicable.

Background:

1. Ilminster has a history of being flooded. At various times in the past two decades various organisations have investigated the causes of this flooding and the various contributory factors that have exacerbated the issues for both householders and businesses.
2. Various recommendations have been given by a number of organisations and these have been implemented to a greater or lesser extent. The building of a bund was carried out but this has since been allowed to disappear.
3. In 2013 money was made available for some flood defences to protect the Park homes sites off Station Road, Green Lane and Home Farm Way.
4. In 2017 a study was carried out and a Flood Investigation report was produced by Somerset County Council. This report has been circulated to members in the past and can be found on the Town Council's website.
5. The report identified a number of probable causes for the 2017 flooding as well as a number of steps which the Lead Local Flood Authority were to monitor the delivery of. **(Appendix 7A)**
6. Also referred to in the report were a series of steps that had already been completed and/or were in the process of being completed.

Report:

7. October 2021 saw several very several instances of flooding occurring once again in Ilminster. The floods once again affected the Park Home sites off Station Road as well as the area around Ditton Street. Members of the Town Council saw first-hand the impact that the flooding had, but unfortunately were not alerted to the unfolding events at the Park Homes sites
8. Both District Councillor Keitch and County Councillor Vjeh were alerted and they were able to get some resources sent to the Park Homes area and get assistance to those who were in most need. Although this was not accomplished without some issues.
9. Following the events of the past weeks a number of residents and their relatives have been in touch with various organisations who have a remit in the areas most affected. It is hoped that these organisations will be sending representatives to this meeting to outline what steps have been put in place to help minimise any impact of future events.
10. Members of the Town Council have been actively looking at what it can do to provide some assistance in advance of any flooding and also if and when flooding occurs. Some of these steps might include:
 - a. Developing a Community Flood plan (**Appendix 7C**)
 - b. Create and distribute quick reference cards – these would have emergency contact numbers and helplines
 - c. Make Resilience stores accessible in key areas of town
11. Whilst the Town Council is limited in the amount of direct action it can take, it can assist members of the public by ensuring that information is made available through its web site and social media. The major works for alleviating the flooding risk lie with other bodies and as such the officers will continue to report issues as they are made known to them.
12. Members of the public have been in touch with the town council and a number of their emails have already been forwarded to members and several letters are attached for members to consider. These are included in **Appendix 7D, 7E**.
13. Also attached to this report are two documents written by Mr Lansdown, (**Appendices 7F and 7G**) who has asked for members to be given sight of both his original document written in 2017 and his observations from this October.
14. Dr Angus Murdoch has been in touch with Community Infrastructure Commissioning at Somerset County Council (SCC) requesting that a Section

19 Report be commissioned into the events surrounding the flooding in Ilminster. Sam Archer from SCC has responded and this has also been provided to members ahead of this meeting, confirming that a meeting was due to take place on the 10 November to consider his matter.

15. In his communication with SCC, Dr Murdoch points out that in his opinion one of the biggest contributory factors to the recent flooding was the removal of the Bund on land adjacent to the Park Homes sites and is requesting that this be reinstated as a matter of urgency.
16. Having been out to see the devastation that was caused by the floods Cllr Taylor drafted a report called "Building Community Resilience to Flood Events for members to consider as part of this meeting. This is included as **Appendix 7H**. Information contained in this report can be built into the Community Flood Plan.
17. At the Full Council meeting on the 2 November members agreed that the resilience funding identified in the budget be made available if necessary for additional support for flooding.

Mark Tredwin
Town clerk
4 November 2021