

Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held at Ewyas Harold Memorial Hall, Pontrilas Road, Ewyas Harold, Herefordshire, HR2 0EL on Thursday 27 February 2020 at 2.00 pm

Present: **Councillor David Hitchiner, Leader of the Council (Chairperson)**
 Councillor Felicity Norman, Deputy Leader of the Council (Vice-Chairperson)

 Councillors Gemma Davies, John Harrington, Liz Harvey, Trish Marsh and Ange Tyler

Cabinet support Councillors Ellie Chowns, Peter Jinman and Alan Seldon
members in attendance

Group leaders in Councillor Jonathan Lester
attendance

Scrutiny chairpersons in Councillor Jonathan Lester
attendance

Other councillors in Councillors Christy Bolderson, Jeremy Milln and David Summers
attendance:

Officers in attendance: Chief executive, Director for economy and place, Solicitor to the council,
 Chief finance officer, Director for adults and communities and Assistant
 Director Education Development and Skills

128. FLOODING UPDATE (Pages 7 - 10)

The chief executive gave a briefing on the recent flooding in the county. The text of the briefing is attached as appendix 1 to these minutes.

Following the briefing questions were permitted from those present, including members of the public and attending councillors.

Points raised in the discussion included:

- Business flood recovery grants of £2,500 were available to small and medium sized enterprises and the council was apply to process applications very quickly, other support was being investigated subject to government rules;
- The council was also looking at providing temporary alternative work spaces for businesses whose premises were out of action;
- Businesses who had not suffered flood damage but had suffered indirectly such as by road closures were also encouraged to apply to the scheme and set out the details of their losses, applications would be considered on a case by case basis;
- The challenges of encouraging landowners to take responsibility for run off from their land and to work collaboratively;
- Following years of budget reductions the council could no longer afford to fund maintenance on land that it did not own and was seeking new ways of working with landowners and parish councils;
- The council was considering the relationship between the locality stewards and Balfour Beatty Living Places and exploring having the stewards employed by the council to strengthen their independence;
- Culverts and drainage should be considered when roads were re-surfaced to prevent the new surfacing being washed away during heavy rainfall or flooding;

- The council had declared a climate emergency and was moving towards being carbon zero, this would include being more resilient in the future to the impacts of the climate changes already experienced;
- A suggestion that communities should be able to bid for capital works to improve drainage and prevent flooding;
- Concerns about the ability to get insurance and the cost of premiums where insurance was available;
- The need for improved communication and support.

Councillors thanked all those who had worked to provide support to households and businesses impacted by the flooding and praised communities for coming together. The need for better government guidance and improved strategic approach was recognised. This would need to be raised at a national level.

129. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Pauline Crockett.

130. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

131. MINUTES

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

132. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Questions received and responses given are attached as appendix 2 to the minutes.

133. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

There were no questions received for this meeting.

134. QUARTER 3 2019/20 CORPORATE BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

The cabinet member finance and corporate services introduced the report and summarised key areas of performance. The report reflected performance to the end of December 2019. The highlights included:

- A small projected overspend of £51k which it was hoped could be addressed by the end of the financial year;
- 70% of measures showing equivalent or improved performance from the same point in the previous year;
- A review of the capital programme would be undertaken including adjusting timelines as necessary to make them more realistic;
- An increase in the number of council staff taking up the flu vaccination through the Council's workplace programme;
- Key Stage 2 results from primary schools put Herefordshire in the top 20 of education authorities nationally, there had been some backsliding on performance at secondary schools but Looked After Children were now showing better improvement on performance;
- Further support to the NMiTe university project and the Hereford Enterprise Zone;
- Continued work on measures to address the Lugg catchment phosphate moratorium;
- Continued progress on delivery of superfast broadband and improved fibre connections in rural areas.

The head of corporate performance explained that the council was now in the final year of the current corporate plan and that two thirds of the current delivery plan actions were on track as complete or due to be completed by the end of the year. He highlighted changes to the corporate risk register where three risks had been removed, the risk around information governance had been increased and five new risks had been escalated and added to the corporate risk register as explained in the report.

In discussion of the report it was noted that:

- The council would be moving to new indicators for 2020/21 with the approval of the new county plan;
- Sickness absence figures related to average days absence in a 12 month rolling period and showed an upward trajectory compared with the same point in the previous year, the chief executive agreed to provide further information on the actions being taken to manage this;
- The proportion of 16 and 17 year olds participating in training had reduced slightly but the council was highly engaged with apprenticeships and was actively looking to do more to promote these options;
- Commissioning of major council contracts included requirements for the provision of apprenticeships and the council also promoted these through its relationship with Hoople, the chief executive agreed to provide further information on this area of work;
- As corporate parents all councillors and officers had a responsibility to support and encourage children in care and care leavers to participate in education and training, the cabinet member for children and families highlighted that the council would shortly be appointing a champion for young people;
- The legal services team were in the process of reorganisation and it was hoped that recruitment to vacant posts would commence this year however experience had shown that Herefordshire struggled to recruit in this field;
- The number of people killed or seriously injured was monitored very carefully as the county's roads needed to be safer for everyone to use, each accident was studied to understand the causes and what could be done to prevent further incidents;
- Drivers were encouraged to take particular care as there were still road closures and diversions resulting from the flooding, road closure signs should be respected and drivers should not attempt to drive through flood water;
- It was queried whether the number of people killed or seriously injured was better or worse than the same point in the previous year and the head of corporate performance agreed to review this and confirm following the meeting;
- Recruitment of social workers and other staff to children's social care was proving a stubborn challenge and the risks highlighted in the register were not moving in the right direction;
- The council needed to recognise that extreme weather events were more likely in the future and it was suggested that the need for increased resilience should be reflected in the risk register.

Group leaders were invited to comment and ask questions, the following points were noted:

- The projected underspend in the adults and communities directorate was an excellent achievement and officers were praised for achieving this;
- There were no current plans to introduce fluoride into the water supply as this was not straightforward and could be controversial, the council was focussed on encouraging parents to ensure children had regular dental check-ups and consider having a fluoride varnish treatment which was seen to be effective;
- Cabinet members noted that many properties across the county would have private water supplies and would not benefit from fluoride in the mains water system, it was suggested that the lack of fluoride in the water system should be

advertised so that families were aware and to help them make choices about products and treatments;

- The number of looked after children continued to be a concern and it was hoped that the extra resources provided for the legal team would help;
- The chief executive stated that recent Ofsted reviews had not identified any child in care who should not have been there and that work was ongoing to manage these numbers, which included children settled in long term foster care and those subject to special guardianship orders;
- It was suggested that the withdrawal of the LEP grant funding for the South Wye Transport Package, risk of clawback and need to write back costs already incurred should be reflected in the risk register, in response it was noted that the current report covered the period to the end of December 2019 and that the register would be reviewed for the next quarter to ensure it was up-to-date with the latest developments.

It was agreed that:

- (a) Cabinet reviewed performance and financial outturn for quarter 3 2019/20, as set out in appendices A - G, and did not identify any additional actions to be considered to achieve future improvement.**

135. REVISED HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME FOR HEREFORDSHIRE 2020

The cabinet member housing, regulatory services and community safety introduced the report. She highlighted that the council was required to have an allocation scheme for determining priorities for allocating housing even though it did not currently own any housing stock. The delivery of the new scheme had been delayed due to difficulty with the IT system but this time had been used to further review the scheme and to take on board the requirements of the homelessness reduction act.

In discussion of the report it was noted that:

- The operational housing team worked closely with strategic housing to ensure that the policy worked on the ground and discussions has also taken place with a range of internal colleagues and external partners in developing the revised scheme;
- The housing associations had agreed in principle to pay for the addition of Band E for existing tenants and general applicants who did not have an identified housing need, the details of how this would operate were still under negotiation;
- The equality impact assessment was queried and officers confirmed that individuals with disabilities would likely access housing through specialist schemes rather than Homepoint, and those who were unable to use a computer would receive support from the council or housing association to make an application;
- There was an intention to include private landlords on the Homepoint system in future, once the initial phase with the housing associations had been delivered;
- The new system had an increased character limit for information about properties and this should include the energy performance of the property, cabinet members requested that the importance of including energy efficiency information be raised with landlords;
- The changes to the categories could lead to an increase in numbers on the waiting list however those in higher categories would still have preference, a longer waiting list might be seen as a more accurate reflection of need and would be reviewed after a year to judge the impact of the revised scheme;
- Properties around the borders of the county would be listed according to which authority they paid council tax to;
- The changes to criteria giving priority for military personnel were introduced by the government in a series of measures to support them and their families;

- Post graduate students might be eligible if they could demonstrate their local connections and employment status;
- Medical needs would be considered based on the information provided by applicants and referred to experts such as an occupational therapist, housing staff would not be assessing medical conditions but would make decisions on the information and expert advice provided.

Group leaders were invited to comment. The reasons for the delay to the implementation of the new system were understood and the implementation of the new scheme was welcomed.

It was agreed that:

- (a) The revised Housing Allocation Scheme at Appendix 1 is approved;**
- (b) Any minor amendments to the scheme necessary to enable implementation are delegated to the Cabinet member housing, regulatory services and community safety.**

136. BETTER WAYS OF WORKING IMPLEMENTATION

The cabinet member commissioning, procurement and assets introduced the report supported by the strategic property services manager and the assistant director corporate support. It was highlighted that the principles of better ways of working (BWOW) had been in place at Herefordshire Council for around 10 years and this represented the next phase. Objectives included keeping the cost of back office functions to a minimum and being mindful of the declared climate emergency. A key element of this next phase was to move staff out of Nelson House in Hereford in order to release the lease on that property and to increase usage of the Plough Lane offices. The move was expected to improve collaborative working and integrate staff from children's and adults social care.

In discussion of the report it was noted that:

- There were a lot of potential benefits to the approach but also some issues that would need to be addressed such as confidentiality requirements and sufficient parking for those staff who had emergency duties and required access to a vehicle;
- The desks currently in use at Plough Lane were quite deep and it was felt that by using narrower desks more staff could be accommodated in the same space without overcrowding;
- The council had been trialling new software to improve access to conference calling facilities and refurbishments of the multi-agency offices would increase capacity and encourage more staff to use them;
- Adaptations would be made to ensure that there were suitable areas for confidential discussions;
- Assessment of tenders for contracts such as providing new furniture and equipment would take account of the climate emergency, score bids against their ability to recycle and on their social value
- There would be specific consultation with staff moving from Nelson House to Plough Lane and reminders to staff currently in the Plough Lane offices of the standards they should be operating in terms of desk ratio and clear desk policies;
- Many staff who worked at Nelson House already used the car parks at Plough Lane so the impact on parking would be modest, it was recognised that there was more that could be done to encourage different ways of travel to Plough Lane;

- There was scope for increased flexible working subject to the specific needs of each service and ability to respond to public demands as the Plough Lane offices were open from 7am to 7pm;
- The wellbeing of staff was important and changes would include things like use of breakout spaces which could have a positive impact and the views of unions would also be taken on board.

Group leaders were invited to comment on the report. Key points noted were:

- Changes to working patterns could be disruptive to staff;
- The multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) had particular requirements and these needed to be addressed in its move to Plough Lane, the strategic property manager confirmed that discussions had already taken place to ensure that these requirements could be met.

The chief executive noted that a recent difficulty with the fire alarm system at Nelson House had required many staff to work remotely or from different offices for a short period and that this could be seen as a dry run. There had been positive feedback from that experience. He stated that there needed to be a whole county solution focussing on staff rather than buildings, getting them closer to communities and reducing traffic and travel stress.

It was agreed that:

- (a) notice is served to vacate the Nelson building from 30 September 2020 making an annual saving of £155k;**
- (b) approve spend of up to £850k to deliver the better ways of working project as detailed in this report through delegated authority to the chief finance officer in consultation with the cabinet member for commissioning, procurement and assets; and**
- (c) the principles of better ways of working are adopted by Herefordshire Council (point 21).**

The meeting ended at 4.23 pm

Chairperson

Statement from Alistair Neill to Cabinet regarding recent flooding

Thank you for this timely opportunity to update Cabinet on the recent flooding in the County.

Communities across Herefordshire were heavily impacted by Storm Dennis, with a month's worth of rain falling in two days over the weekend of Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 February 2020. The sheer volume of water caused generalised flooding in many areas severely affecting properties and roads, and the rivers Wye and Lugg both rose to their highest ever recorded peaks bursting their banks. What this means is that these levels were the highest in over 200 years. At one point around 700 tonnes of water per second were flowing under the Old Bridge in Hereford. With widespread disruption experienced by residents and businesses, a major incident was declared on Sunday 16 February 2020 at 11.20am.

Major incident response

A Tactical Control Group (TCG) was convened working out of Plough Lane, chaired by Sue Thomas, Superintendent Herefordshire, West Mercia Police. This brought together a number of key agencies including Herefordshire Council, Public Health, the Environment Agency, West Mercia Police, Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, West Midlands Ambulance Service, our health partners and utility services. Through the TCG, services were coordinated to protect and provide assistance to Herefordshire residents and businesses, focusing our early efforts on the most vulnerable members of the community.

Travel and transport across the county was extremely difficult with around 80 major and minor roads impassable at peak flood. Road and bridge closures were put in place where they were flooded or where their condition had become unsafe. Whilst a priority was to keep Herefordshire moving, the top priority has been to keep people safe.

Some areas experienced power cuts, however these were generally short term.

More than 300 residential properties experienced devastating flooding. Recovery and rest centres were opened in Ross, Leominster and Holmer Leisure Centres and at Point4 for people whose homes were flooded, providing shelter and refreshment.

In Whitchurch, 24 residents were evacuated from a privately-run care home and moved safely to alternative accommodation. The eldest of the residents was 97. In Hampton Bishop a care home became inaccessible to normal vehicles, so staff were transported to and from the home by military and fire and rescue services, and the basement was continuously pumped so that residents could remain in their home.

In total, 204 people were rescued across the county by fire and rescue services from either properties or vehicles.

Due to its proximity to both the rivers Wye and Lugg, much of Hampton Bishop remained inaccessible by road for many days. The delivery of essential food and medicine supplies was arranged, with council staff visiting the local ASDA supermarket, who kindly provided the food free of charge, on behalf of stranded residents.

During this time information was provided to residents across the county through a dedicated page on the Council website and via the Council's social media channels - which were viewed more than 6.5million times in the last 11 days - with the latest situation updates and general advice on what to do if affected by the flooding. Information was also shared through local newspaper, radio and community social media sites, and interviews on regional TV. With national and international media interest, the online news reach (that is number of people who have read about the flooding) is 1.18billion to date.

In addition, video messages were sent to residents in Whitchurch and Hampton Bishop providing information specific to those communities. These were circulated through Whatsapp, the local parish council and local residents through electronic messaging.

On Tuesday 18 February 2020, under emergency provisions, the decision was taken to allocate £1million of council reserves to support local residents and businesses impacted by flooding. Since this decision, the Government (Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government) has announced community and business flood recovery grants, which the council will assist people to access, with £500 available to residents and £2500 for businesses. Payment of grants started on Monday 24 February 2020 to the 322 residents and 64 businesses who have applied to date. In addition council tax and business rate relief is available for three months for flooded properties. At the this time we await word from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) as to whether local farmers affected can access its Farming Recovery Fund.

Recovery

With the impact of further rainfall and possible raised river levels, the formal position of emergency response was maintained until Tuesday 25 February 2020 when we formally moved to a 'recovery' position. However recovery for many communities started sooner than this.

The council provides recovery support and signposting to assist affected communities during recovery so that they can work towards restoring local services and facilities and returning to normal.

Additional resources have been deployed across the county to expedite road cleaning and inspection and assessment of the condition of roads and bridges. Surveys using specialist equipment are being carried out. We have established that there are at least 71 locations across the highways network where repair work is required and of these 51 require extensive work to remedy the damage caused which is expected to cost upwards of £1.6million. Whilst work to repair damage has commenced, several roads and bridges will require longer term attention and investment to fully address flood damage and secure their resilience. As such I expect the final repair bill to multiply.

We are extremely mindful of the experiences of people who live and work in the communities affected by current road and bridge closures, however it will take weeks before many are safe to reopen. As of 27 February, there remain 28 road closures in place, with restricted access particularly problematic around Fownhope/ Holme Lacy and Walford/ Leintwardine. We ask people to continue to adhere to road these closures and bear with us while this work takes place. We will be looking for Government funding under the Bellwin scheme for the repair of roads and other infrastructure. Clearly travel through the county will continue to be impacted and additional bus services have been established in those areas that are impacted by prolonged road closure. School transport services have also been supplemented.

Communities across the county are facing the unenviable task of cleaning-up their homes and businesses. Herefordshire Council are providing a free service to collect flood-damaged household items from outside residents' houses, and commercial vehicles won't need permits at household recycling centres in Herefordshire until Sunday 1 March, for the disposal of flood damaged items. Lost wheelie bins are being replaced.

Helping with the clean-up effort, Herefordshire Council staff joined with others from local response services to deliver cleaning supplies and assistance to a number of communities affected by flooding. The Talk Community Big Herefordshire clean-up has involved hundreds of staff who volunteered to visit residents and businesses in prioritised areas to distribute information about flood recovery, provide help with completing grant forms and deliver cleaning essentials to designated community hubs. These door-to-door visits by our staff have been very gratefully received by residents and businesses. Among the other volunteers were retired firefighters who had driven from Kent, east London and north Yorkshire to support

our efforts by clearing out flooded properties. In total more than 400 volunteers have now visited 42 different sites. Those volunteers were not only from the council, but also from:

- Police
- Fire and Rescue
- Herefordshire Council
- British Red Cross
- Tunnels to Towers provided support to lift and move heavy furniture and equipment out of homes ready for waste collection.

With many local play areas affected by the flooding, the council funded sessions in local leisure centres offering a safe place for children to play during the half term. And as pupils returned to school, the Council's school transport service put alternative services in place for those communities still impacted by flooding and road closures.

Information has been sent to local businesses and representative groups about how to access short-term desk or office space to aid with business continuity, and recovery grants. Our farming and agricultural businesses will be impacted beyond a single season.

Over the coming weeks we will be working with residents and businesses to access flood resilience grants, once details on this have been received from Government.

Future considerations

Although the recent high river levels and extent of flooding across the county was unprecedented, climate changes mean that it is sensible to assume that they will become a more regular occurrence. If unprecedented is the new normal, we need to think and plan differently. It must be a priority for us to work to build community resilience to flooding across the county and work with partner agencies to consider and plan flood defence and prevention measures.

We will be looking to Central Government to provide special funding to support this and repairs to our road network, bridges and other infrastructure to a standard that will be able to better withstand extreme weather conditions, and are writing to government departments and MPs in this regard.

In the longer-term, the council will need to give careful consideration to planning issues, where we build and how we manage our environment appropriately, and again we will be looking to Government to support this through policy and action.

I am mindful that whilst Herefordshire is well into recovery mode, our west Mercia neighbours in Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin in particular remain in emergency response, with once again, unprecedented flooding. We continue to liaise across west Mercia through the Strategic Control Group, where Herefordshire Council will chair the region's communications as all areas move into recovery.

I would like to round-off by recognising and thanking people from across the county during this time of extraordinary disruption. The impact of this flooding has been substantial and significant, and we do not underestimate how upsetting and disruptive it has been for many. It may take several months before the county can return to 'business as normal'. However, residents have responded with resilience and a wonderful sense of community.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 27 February 2020**Question 1****Mr R Board, Hereford****To: cabinet member, infrastructure and transport**

An Article in the Hereford Times identified as being written by Bill Wiggin indicates the following "This proposed spending seems extravagant when the council are considering rejecting £182 million from central government for the bypass that will improve air quality around the city." Could the relevant Councillor inform me if they are aware that this funding exists and what they are doing to pursue and retain this funding for the Herefordshire Bypass?

Response

The Council has not received any offer of funding from central government for the bypass and I have not rejected any such offer as your question suggests. Submissions were made by the previous administration to Highways England for the Road Investment Strategy 2 and Housing Infrastructure Fund but to be clear no funding offer has been made as a result of these submissions. Following the decision to review the southern link road and bypass schemes we have liaised closely with central government departments to keep them up to date with the timescale and process for the review and it is likely they will form part of the transport review steering group. We are also tracking a number of grant announcements recently made by government regarding sustainable funding (including electric bus and cycle schemes) and will be applying for relevant opportunities as the review of the bypass scheme progresses.

Question 2**Mr D Mills, Ewyas Harold****To: cabinet member, infrastructure and transport**

When is the Herefordshire Council going to liaise with the other Agencies with a view to replacing the out of date and inadequate drainage system with a system 'fit for purpose and for future needs? We are continually experiencing flooding from the highway - B4347 - between Morgan's Garage and the bridge over the Dulas Brook - causing damage to the adjoining properties and making them inaccessible and also causing structural damage to the highway and pavements. Further - the lack of maintenance of the Dulas Brook and maintenance of the existing drainage system is exasperating the situation.

Response

I am aware that officers have been working with other agencies about this matter including the Environment Agency and Welsh Water. There have been discussions and a number of meetings to determine what can be done and responsibility of each organisation. There are a number of complex issues associated with this drainage system but officers are working with agencies on this to develop a coordinated programme of works and I will make sure officers update the ward and parish councillors as soon as possible.

Supplementary Question

There were concerns that the drainage in the village was inadequate, particularly taking into account the increase in the number of properties and increased runoff. It was recognised that this would take time to address but in the meantime existing facilities such as culverts needed to

Appendix 2

be maintained. There were also concerns over flooding from a foul sewer which was understood to be a Herefordshire Council asset.

Response

The cabinet member infrastructure and transport responded that these issues would be followed up.

Question 3

Ms Overstall, Dulas

To: cabinet member, environment, economy and skills

Is the Council aware the Biological Records Centre which is part of Herefordshire Council's Ecology service, is no longer supporting biological recorders within Herefordshire, which means it is not fulfilling its duty of submitting data to regional and national projects? It is also charging substantial fees to organisations that need biological data to develop projects, which means it is hard for environmental charities to pursue their goals.

Response

The Herefordshire Biological Records Centre (HBRC) is based in the Council's HARC building and operates as a not-for-profit partnership service, collecting, managing and distributing data relating to wildlife sites, species, habitats, biodiversity and nature. Its aim is to provide wide access to both species and habitat records for Herefordshire and assist in their protection, currently holding over 570,000 records.

As we face an ecological emergency, quality data on our local environment is of increasing importance. Our officers therefore continue to support recorders in a variety of ways as we always have done. This assistance has never ceased for any amount of time and nor do we plan to stop. We share data with many local and national recording schemes, as it is essential to the work of our HBRC. With regard to the charging element of your question, we apply fees in a comparable way to our colleagues in other Local Environmental Record Centres (LERCs). In fact, we recently found that we are nearer the lower end of the charges applied by LERCs across the UK, when we last benchmarked this.

I have asked that the HBRC contact you directly so that you can discuss this matter more fully.

Supplementary Question

It was suggested that new technologies existed which recorders could use by themselves and that the business model of the HBRC needed to be reviewed.

Response

The cabinet member environment, economy and skills responded that the council was open to new ideas about how things could be done differently in the future.

Question 4

Mr M Gardiner, Michaelchurch

To: cabinet member, infrastructure and transport

Appendix 2

Why aren't the local authority, Hereford County Council, speaking to local land owners and the farming community about water runoff from their land and attempting to minimise said runoff and so preserve our local roads?

Response

We do engage with landowners (including farmers) throughout the county about their responsibilities to maintain land drains, watercourses and culvert on their land. They are required to maintain these systems regularly and to undertake any necessary clearance after a flood event. Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) locality stewards speak regularly with landowners to support this and if needed we can take enforcement action if a landowner is not complying with what they are required to do in law. I have asked BBLP to issue parish councils and landowners with a fact sheet on who is responsible for what with regards to drainage maintenance (this is also now on the website) and to step up its efforts to make sure all landowners are aware of their responsibilities. This is an area the Council is giving a lot of thought and time to at the moment and I understand how essential it is that gullies, culverts and water courses are as well maintained as possible and BBLP now have 3 gully cleaning tankers out on our roads making sure we are doing all we can outside as a Council to do this.

Supplementary Question

There was concern that the locality stewards did not have the ability to contact landowners and that no noticeable action had been taken to minimise the impact of significant water levels on the local road surfaces. It was suggested that someone with more teeth was needed who could move issues forward.

Response

The cabinet member infrastructure and transport responded to say that he understood the frustration and the council was considering how to respond to issues with run off, being mindful of the available funding, and was working on improving communications with communities and how to resolve issues with culverts and drains etc. where these were not the responsibility of the council.

