

Flooding Information – including mechanisms for reporting/responding to flooding issues

There will be two Operational Flood Working Groups (OFWGs), for the north and the south of the County. The northern OFWG will be chaired by Mr Howard Greenman and will cover the old NWDC area with the addition of Melksham, Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge and Westbury. As the name suggests they will deal with operational issues. There will also be a Strategic Flood Working Group chaired by Mr Dick Tonge, who as Cabinet member for highways also holds the portfolio for flooding, as the Council recognise that highway and land drainage are interlinked and now both sit with Highway Maintenance.

When experiencing/anticipating flooding problems Parish Councils should in the first instance contact 'Clarence' (Freephone 0800 232323) or the Divisional Highways Engineer which in the case of the Malmesbury Community Area is Mrs Sally Barnett, Area Highway Engineer. Tel: 01249 445554 or email: sallybarnett@wiltshire.gov.uk

If a solution to an issue is not readily available using the above route, the matter will be escalated to the Land and Highway Drainage Engineers to be dealt with and only after that will a matter become a topic for consideration by the Operational Flood Working Group (OFWG). The OFWG will largely consider cross parish boundary and 'sticky' issues.

Parish and Town Councils may be invited to attend meetings when particularly problematic issues relevant to their parish/town are being considered.

Adoption of the procedures outlined above, are to ensure that the OFWG addresses priority issues and that all parish issues get equal consideration. It is recognised that by alleviating flooding in one village/parish, can exacerbate issues in another and therefore a whole system approach will need to be adopted.

There is a countywide Land Drainage budget of £500k and a Highway Drainage budget of £250K available for the current financial year (2009/2010) and schemes are currently being prioritised.

The Operational Flood Working Group is currently considering producing a newsletter to enable matters to be communicated to the community. It is also investigating the value of nominated Flood Wardens (who would be recognised by the Environmental Agency) in flood affected parishes, following their successful use in the south of the County.

14 August 2009