

Warminster Area Board 13 January 2011

Chairman's Announcements

Results of Community Flooding Consultation

Over the last few months Wiltshire Council has been engaging with Town and Parish Councils to update its mapping systems with their local knowledge and to identify any local issues which are not apparent on initial inspection that may be exacerbating flooding and drainage problems. The work was done in conjunction with the Community Area Boards. Towns and Parish Councils were each sent a map of their area with a request that they identify any known flooding issues. It was hoped this would enable Wiltshire Council to consolidate its information on flooding and drainage issues ensuring that every location of flooding is established, including those affecting property and residential and agricultural land.

In addition Wiltshire Council has successfully carried out much of this work by asking highway and land drainage engineers to mark all known flood sites so they can be imported into its GIS (geographical information software) mapping system. Once the above information from Town and Parish Councils has been added in, it will be shared with the Environment Agency, helping Wiltshire Council to understand and evaluate all flooding within the county.

From the information received Wiltshire Council also hoped to get a picture of how parishes are able to respond to flooding emergencies. Where there is a Flood Warden scheme in operation it works very well; therefore an ambition, following this survey, is to expand the system to cover the remainder of the county over the coming months, by encouraging Town and Parish Councils to nominate a Flood Warden and form a local Flood Working Group, in particular those councils which are aware of flooding problems within their areas.

The Flood Wardens are usually members of the Town or Parish Councils with considerable knowledge of their areas which can be passed onto the engineers working with them. In turn, the Flood Wardens will develop knowledge of the causes of flooding problems and the options to solve them which can be shared with their fellow councillors. They are also the main point of contact during any incidents of flooding and may represent their Town or Parish Council Flood Working Group, if one has been established. External Agency funding can often only be delivered to a local area where a local Flood Working Group is in place to apply for such funding.

The information gathered from the Warminster Area Board will be on display at the meeting, showing what has been learnt about the issues and what Wiltshire Council is hoping to do with that information.