

**MINUTES OF THE GRINTON PARISH COUNCIL EMERGENCY MEETING – FLOOD RESPONSE**  
**TUESDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2019**  
**In**  
**GRINTON PARISH CHURCH**  
**At 7PM**

Present:

Grinton Parish Council Members:

- Geraldine Coates – Chair
- Mandy Barningham
- Jo Fletcher-Lee
- Mark Forrest
- Mark Jones
- Stephen Porter

Public and Voluntary Sector:

- Richard Good – Richmondshire District Councillor Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Ward
- David Bowe – North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) Corporate Director Business and Environmental Services
- Emily Mellilieu - NYCC
- Tony Clark – Richmondshire District Council (RDC) Chief Executive
- Angie Dale - RDC Council Leader
- Neil Longden and Chris Ashcroft – Environment Agency (EA) Representatives
- Leah Humphries – Yorkshire Water (YW) Representative
- Alan Hulme – Yorkshire Dales National Park (YDNP) Head of Park Management

**Opening Remarks**

**Geraldine Coates – Chair of Grinton Parish Council** paid tribute on behalf of the Parish Council to North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue, North Yorkshire Police, Swaledale Mountain Rescue, Yorkshire Water, local people and volunteers and RDC Councillor Richard Good for all their efforts in the immediate aftermath of the flood.

Councillor Coates confirmed the purpose of the meeting is for public to hear from relevant agencies and their plans for recovery. She emphasised we need immediate action to clear Grinton Beck. Until that is done, rebuilding of boundary walls and foundations cannot begin. We are still in danger of being flooded again.

**Councillor Richard Good** echoed Councillor Coates' Geraldine's comments and asked that those with any relevant Individual matters to contact him directly. He thanked those who are attending and introduced those from official agencies attending.

## Statements from Public Sector Agencies

### **David Bowe NYCC Corporate Director Business and Environmental Services**

Mr Bowe confirmed the role of NYCC in this situation is primarily Highways and Transport. He explained the reinstatement of roads is a complicated area, cutting across a number of organisations and it might not appear clear who has primary responsibility. NYCC are working and will continue to work closely with other agencies and know where responsibilities fall. NYCC will communicate with everyone clearly. This includes the provision of a specific website with updates and social media posts.

Mr Bowe confirmed the key issues and action to reinstate the B6270 and Grinton Moor Road:

The B6270: The landslip was caused by a ground water issue which wasn't known, and which has undermined the road. Thursday this week (8<sup>th</sup> August) a temporary bridge will be in place however the key problem is the landslip. Excavation of the whole part of the landslip will be taking place and the road will open on 16<sup>th</sup> August. This will include temporary traffic lights as it is narrowed due to the landslip. A secondary structure will be built parallel to the landslip as a culvert causeway. This won't start until next Spring.

Grinton Moor Road Bridge. This was an unusual collapse caused by the volume of stone debris which hit the bridge with such force it couldn't withstand it. It is not possible to introduce a temporary structure, therefore a culvert arrangement 3.5 metres wide on the upstream side, 4 metres away from the existing bridge will be created. Work will start Friday 8<sup>th</sup> August. A large amount of earth will need to be removed to create the temporary upstream route – the same diameter of the previous route. Target date for opening the temporary bridge is 30<sup>th</sup> August.

The current thinking is the new bridge will be in the same vernacular as previous.

Permanent structures for both the road and the bridge are expected to be in place in a year's time.

Grinton Beck: Mr Bowe explained that the situation with regard to Grinton Beck was "tricky". There is some legal complexity, however he emphasised NYCC are seeking a solution. He explained that The Environment Agency are responsible for main rivers and landowners are responsible for subsidiaries. NYCC is responsible for the coordination of this but has no resources to specifically solve any issues. Yorkshire Water will produce a Section 19 report, a statutory obligation after an incident such as this, which will clarify exactly what the options are both for repairing and for mitigating future flooding.

NYCC plan to help remove the large volume of debris by utilising Government funding provided under emergency measures: The Bellwin Scheme. This scheme covers immediate recovery and threat to life. NYCC will coordinate the work whilst RDC will create a working fund and commission the work. RDC will bring in contractors to remove debris and seek to recharge these costs through the Bellwin Scheme. Rishi Sunak is currently lobbying very hard to access funding and help to access the Bellwin Scheme.

If funding via the Bellwin Scheme is not successful, NYCC will suggest all residents involved contribute to a community partnership fund. The Parish Council should also contribute and also has a liability and NYCC will seek contributions from other local riparian owners as this is only fair. No one can fund the project entirely, as it will create a precedent.

Mr Bowe then provided a summary of immediate works. The Environment Agency will clear the area where the Beck meets the Swale. NYCC will coordinate the work in regard to how far up the clearance goes and assessing where the debris can go. Disposal will cost however a crushing machine could be used to distribute material to farms and for footpaths. The focus in on clearance is up to the point where the Beck moves from the left-hand side of the road to the right (facing up the hill towards Leyburn).

Beyond this point, the options include creating a stepped dammed effect to restrain the flow, which would also get rid of material in an environmental way – possible gabion baskets. NYCC are not responsible for this and make no guarantees but they are in talks with contractors.

NYCC Has open its Household Waste Recycling Centres on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> in Reeth. Gully emptying is going on throughout, to get drainage back to its previous best.

### **Tony Clarke – RDC Chief Executive**

Mr Clark expressed on behalf of himself and staff, the sadness of what's happened across Richmondshire. He explained the role of the District council in supporting the blue light service, which is activated by the emergency services within the first 48 hours and is supported by multiple agencies to support of which RDC is one. After the first 48 hours the situation moves to a recovery phase when RDC takes the lead role in coordinating the key areas including:

Humanitarian: working with volunteers – paying for volunteers' accommodation etc, Volunteers are in Reeth until the end of the week, and the Council will then move to a stable period of assistance lasting for many weeks or months. Support will include assistance with council tax to those flooded, advice on accommodation etc.

Environmental: Ensuring skips are available until they are no longer needed and that sandbags provided.

RDCs role is to access the Bellwin Scheme and if not put money in to cover immediate icosts.

### **Chris Ashcroft – Environmental Agency Representative**

The EA role is to support NYCC and RDC and other partners. The EA is currently assessing how best to proceed in clearing the bottom of the Beck where it meets the Swale. The EA and NYCC met on site on 7<sup>th</sup> August and are considering options. There are around three hundred tons of material to move.

### **Leah Humphries - Yorkshire Water – Flood Risk Team.**

Ms Humphries explained that YW responsibilities are the provision of clean water and waste water disposal and reported how the Authority performed during the incident:

Clean Water - throughout the incident there was no disruption to the provision of clean water however a number of private supply pipes have been damaged. Within 24 hours, all properties were reconnected and there were no reports of further issues. YW is looking at permanent solutions but can't commit to action on private supply.

Waste water – 40-60 metres of sewage pipes in the village have been damaged. NY staff were mitigating the impact over the last week and removing sewage.

There is a large team on site today, looking at how to reinstate sewers. At The Corner Cottage area temporary pipes may be laid. YW is talking to property owners and mobilising resources to do this in the best way. There is a small collapse around The Grange property and YW are looking to reinstate with permanent pipe which should be done quite quickly.

At the top of the village there will be temporary mitigation and pipework around Beck Cottage.

The pipework near The Bridge Inn is ok.

### **Alan Hulme – Head of Park Management YDNP**

YDNP has surveyed 140 miles of public rights of way which revealed 28 incidents including 11 lost bridges and/or farm access. 3.2km of footpath/bridleway has been either washed away or covered with debris. YDNP and landowners are working together on this however YDNP only has the rest of its annual budget for repairs and will be lobbying through the Farm Recovery Scheme and Rights of Way Network for further funding. YDNP is also continuing to promote tourism, to manage those walking the Coast to Coast and to offer support to other agencies.

### **Questions and Answers and Audience Feedback**

#### **Catherine Weetman – Beck Cottage**

Q: Has anyone checked the stability of the road from Fremington up to Reels Head that it is safe to carry the volume/weight of vehicles?

A: From David Bove: Traffic control is being considered. The situation is being monitored however traffic control needs 400 metres of clear two-way road which might not be possible but is under consideration.

Q: The tree opposite Manor House is undermined, could it come down?

A: From David Bove: NYCC will look in to this.

Q: The drains are still blocked today and regularly are as the annual cycle of drain clearing isn't sufficient. Can we have more regular drain clearing?

A: From David Bowe: This may be an inherent problem on the system and this is an opportunity to investigate this.

Q: How are the community being involved in the multi-agency approach? We want to be involved in setting the brief and the solutions and ensure these are catchment wide. Although it is reported as a one in a thousand-year event it is more likely to be more frequent, so we need to look at this as a wider solution. A lot can be done at low cost.

A: From David Bowe: Authorities are focused on the recovery period. The view of the future is a part of the Section 19 study which will help to inform longer term solutions. The key issue is how this is funded and is a mixture of different things. The issue is how this is funded and how affected communities are compared. Rural communities don't create a significant a cost benefit analysis, so we therefore need to be clever how we ask for funding.

NYCC Communities can be involved in this via the Parish Council. Or the community can create a Flood Action Group which becomes a sub group of the Parish Council. However, this depends on what the group is envisaged to do. NYCC will continue to provide information via a website and social media. The council can create a website and provide a TV screen which can be placed somewhere such as the pub or the church which plays the website, and which can be accessed across the community.

Alan Hulme YDNP: We are looking at the management of upland areas in terms of:

1 working with farmers in a number of ways

2 YDNP has been awarded a Lottery Fund Grant for Tees and Swaledale and this could be looked at as part of these projects such as landscape partnership projects and ways of slowing the impact of water. Specific impact in this area includes scheduled ancient monuments and looking at the whole catchment area to evidence funding opportunities.

#### Philip Morah – Blackburn Hall

Q: Who do we go to for accountability?

A: David Bowe: NYCC are definitive about its responsibility for the roads – we have to fund it. The Beck scenario is much more difficult. If there was an immediate risk to life and property we could activate councils flood plans and recharge the community. Don't want to do this as there isn't a threat to life. There is a way of achieving the outcome.

Q: When is the timing when the beck is going to be worked on and fixed?

A: David Bowe: There is no immediate time as the contractor is currently assessing what is best, how long it will take and at what cost. We also need to agree what order the work will be carried out in and how far are we going to go. Hence the area set as the location to work on. I have genuinely no idea how much this will cost. There are lots of processes and I can't give you a simple answer. It will be an ongoing process and we are figuring out.

#### Geraldine Coates

Q: When is the EA going to clear the mouth of The Beck? That needs to be done asap.

A: Neil Langdon EA: We were not aware until today of the impact of confluence of the Swale. The EA team and the contractor are working out how to do it and the contractor is coming

back with timeline and cost. We cannot give timeline, but we are treating it as important. We are moving people off work elsewhere to look at this and using experts in the supply chain.

#### Anne Coates – The Grange

Q: It is difficult to trust Highways after the road was closed for two weeks for the new cattle grid when it was supposed to remain open. Has anyone been out to test the main road up to the cattle grid? The Parish Council has been fighting to get speed control and a limit on heavy goods vehicles and the road may be undermined. The road could also have been undermined by large boulders and cannot be visually inspected as there are boulders and trees in the way.

A: David Bowe: It is hard to say why the cattle grid took longer. Target dates are being stated for activity which are the best scenario. Residents need to trust NYCC to do its best with the task in hand. Mr Bowe provided assurance he would confirm if visual inspection of the road has been carried out, but this would be confined to assessing side erosion and cracking as a road of that nature will not fail dramatically.

Geraldine Coates also stated that a temporary speed restriction and then long term a weight restriction is needed. Have been campaigning for a barrier so a combination of things would reduce the risk in the longer term.

David Bowe confirmed a temporary restriction of speed and weight may be possible, but he would not be able to get involved with ongoing issues outside of those caused by the incident.

#### Paula Stannard – Church View and Coal House on Corner House.

Ms Stannard reported that Mr and Mrs Coleman, the owners of Corner House are in France but have appointed a structural surveyor and his advice is that as long as there isn't a very heavy downpour there isn't a critical issue but clearly work needs to be done.

Ms Stannard posed several questions:

Q: Clearing the beck is an urgent issue but what will happen in relation to the bottom of the beck where the drains were, and the wall was?

Q: When the beck is being cleared, coordination is needed to protect the underlying foundations of my property – what will happen?

Q: When it's cleared – will the shoring up of the retaining wall be reinstated? The water pipes were re-routed inside the retaining wall by the Water Board many years ago.

A: David Bowe: Contractors are looking at how this work might be undertaken. This might take some time, and include the beck side up to the pub, but this is a tricky area you are referring to and will have to be done with a lot more care. An NYCC consultant will be on site

in a couple of days and will assess how best to do this. However, the retaining wall is householder's responsibility.

#### Mark Jones – Beck Cottage

My property has sewers and water pipes and we require close liaison with all agencies on how the sewers and water and reinstated. We have employed a consultant and want to use our contractors.

Mr Jones also challenged David Bowe regarding his comment that there wasn't an imminent danger of flooding as two nights following the flood, and after only a short, moderate downpour, there was flooding in the village which saw water running down the main street and in to The Old Post Office.

Keith Webster from Waterford House suggested an area should be designated area for stone debris could be created which could be accessed by landowners/farmers/YDNP as was the case in the Lake District after similar flooding.

#### Simon Baines - Greystones

Q: As the beck is cleared, who is responsible for checking/surveying trees as a number of houses are threatened by trees?

A: David Bowe: It is the landowner's responsibility.

#### Anne Coates – (house name?)

Q: Are contractors are in place starting work and if so why don't we know this?

A: David Bowe: We have contractors ready to start asap. We are doing everything as quickly as we can, and we are trying hard to inform everyone along the Beck but want to act as quickly as we can.

#### Geraldine Coates

Q: Is there a time limit based on the weather? As we will soon be coming in to Autumn, can work continue with water in the Beck?

A: David Bowe: We can do work with water in the Beck, but it would be more difficult.

#### Phil Scott-Priestly on behalf of Grinton Estates.

Q: How will the Bellwin Scheme work in terms of bankrolling it. Will it be a significant cost and if Bellwin takes time and who will bankroll the work in the meantime?

A: Tony Clark RDC: Bellwin is something we will claim for, but this is only done retrospectively i.e. RDC place an order and once invoiced, we claim from the Government. Depending on the timing, RDC will pay for the work first.

Q: There is substantial stone above the bridge is there any help to re-route it?

A: David Bowe: NYCC would not step in as its outside the immediate area and it would be up to landowners and the community to resolve. NYCC and the EA can give information and advice however The Section 19 study will help to clarify options and might create an opportunity for funding. If the community were involved, this could help to generate match funding for any work.

#### Mark Jones – Beck Cottage

Q: Is the Section 19 Study a watershed-based study? If so will it include recommendations?

A: David Bowe: Yes, it is a watershed-based study and yes it will include a series of options focusing on what can be done, how a Flood Action Group could work and how this group can access funding.

A: Alan Hulme: NYDP would be involved in this and already is, looking at grips on the moors etc. YDNP has limited resource but this might be a higher priority. Volunteers are already out repairing stiles, footpaths etc. YDNP has 200 volunteers who may be able to help.

Anne Coates pointed out that water is coming from underground, Cogden Gill comes from under the smelt mill on the Moor.

Phil Scott-Priestly stated that drainage surveys have been done across the estate by the Yorkshire Peat Partnership who established very limited man-made drainage which don't warrant remedial works.

#### Catherine Weetman

Q: As there is considerable complexity of ownership of land and property in the parish is it possible to create a map with owned and unadopted areas?

A: David Bowe: NYCC has undertaken a land registry search which confirms some of what is common land, but this is work in progress

#### Tony Calvert from Reeth

Q: Would the YDNP look at the Walls and Barns Scheme to help farmers with the costs to rebuild.

A: Alan Hulme: It would be a decision for members whether to provide support from the Walls and Barns Scheme. The Tees and Swale scheme could be used but can't give an answer.

Q: Silt on the land is significant along with possible lead contamination is that being undertaken by the EA.

A: Neil Langdon EA: The EA is working with the NFU but ultimately silt and lead levels are the responsibility of the landowner.



### **AOB and Closing Remarks**

Mark Jones suggested forming a flood sub group to link in to the Parish Council.

Councillor Coates thanked all official agencies for attending.

Next Meeting: 9<sup>th</sup> September at 7.15pm (**location??**)