



Communities
Overview Committee

23 March 2022

Item

3

Public

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24
NOVEMBER 2021
10.00 - 11.04 AM**

Responsible Officer: Emily Marshall
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Present

Councillor Robert Macey (Chairman)
Councillors Ted Clarke, Mark Jones, Nigel Hartin, Nick Hignett (Vice Chairman),
Duncan Kerr, Christian Lea and Elliott Lynch

22 Apologies for absence and substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dan Morris, Councillor David Evans was present as a substitute for Councillor Morris.

23 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

24 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 20th October 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

25 Public Question Time

One question was received from from Mr Bob Haddon - Shropshire Flood Action Group Forum (SFAGF). A full copy of the questions and responses provided is attached to the web page for the meeting and also attached to the signed minutes.

26 Member Question Time

There were no questions from Members.

27 Flooding

The Chairman welcomed Steve Smith, Assistant Director of Infrastructure and Andy Wilde, Head of Highways to the meeting. Andy Wilde began by introducing the report which provided an update to the Communities Overview Committee following the recommendations made by the scrutiny report produced in December 2020 which was linked to the significant flooding which impacted the County, communities,

residents and businesses during February and March 2020. This promoted a review and assessment of how the Council responds to these events and this informed the production of a Severe Weather Plan. The report also reviews climate change and how this will affect the way the Council responds to these events. Key points of the report were highlighted for the Committee.

In response to questions from Members of the Committee the Head of Highways and the Assistant Director of Infrastructure confirmed the following:

- There were projects ongoing within the area of Craven Arms including on the Clun Road which had experienced flooding and the Council were aware of some issues with grills which were prone to blockages which caused the roads to flood. It was explained that the Council were in conversations with Severn Trent Water with regards to the ownership of several grills referred to and an update had been requested. Once an update was received it would be shared with the Committee, in the meantime upon last inspection, the grills were clear and not blocked however until the issues around ownership of the grills was resolved, highways would monitor them in the interim.
- In response to concerns relating to the flood action line and contact with officers. Members were reminded that there was a dedicated contact number for use solely by elected members. In future it is planned to evoke an emergency line with one specific number for use by anyone. The out of hours service was currently handled by a third party and it would be until the end of the current financial year. In future this out of hours service would be brought back within the Council and it was planned to use the CCTV team to man the hour of hours service, they would be available 24 hours a day 365 days a year.
- With regards to specific issues within the Ludlow area, Members were advised that as that was classed as main river flooding, it was the Environment Agency who held responsibility for issuing flood warnings in the area. The importance of ensuring the local residents were signed up to the Environment Agencies flood warning system was highlighted.
- Shropshire Council have excellent working arrangements with multi agencies and engaged with joint projects.
- With regards to flooding of smaller tributaries, it was confirmed that Shropshire Council work closely with local landowners and those with riparian ownership to encourage them to maintain their watercourses and a lack of maintenance can have a significant impact. The land drainage team work closely with landowners to remind them to ensure that their water courses are maintained. Also, slow the flow initiatives were also being explored.
- National Flood Forum were supporting flood action groups within Shropshire, if there were any locations where further groups were required they could contact Shropshire Council who could support the establishment of new groups.

RESOLVED:

1. That the work done to date to improve Shropshire Council’s preparedness for future Severe Weather and Flood events across the County be noted.
2. That the Committee notes that the outputs of the updated Severe Weather Plan and updated Flood Action Plans will likely identify the need for additional funding and changes to ways of working, to ensure Shropshire is better prepared for future flood events.
3. That the progress made in supporting communities following the 2020 and 2021 flood events and support the creation of Community Flood Action Plans be noted.

28 Work Programme Review

Members considered the forward work programme.

In addition to the work programme, the suggestion was put forward that the issue of the lack of taxis and private hire vehicles within Shropshire be taken forward by one of the Scrutiny Committees. It was agreed that this should be taken forward.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed committee work programme attached as appendix 1 be agreed

29 Date/Time of next meeting

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting would take place on Wednesday, 26th January 2022.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: