

CLEVEDON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Special meeting of COUNCIL held in The Council Office, 44 Old Street, Clevedon at 7.30pm on Monday 11th August 2014

PRESENT: Chairman – Cllr N Pennycott
Councillors C. Blades, B. Garner, G Hill, L Knott, J Middleton, A. Shopland,
Town Clerk - Ms P Heath;
Members of the Public 2; NSC Officer 2,

14/464 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors; C Francis-Pester (work commitment), A Giles Townsend (work commitment), B. Hatch (illness), L. Little (illness), P. McNeill (family commitment), J. Norton-Sealey (other commitment), D Shopland (other commitment) G Watkins (illness), C Wring (family commitment)

RESOLVED: That Council **ACCEPTS** the apologies and reasons given for absence.

14/465 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest for the items on the agenda

*Proposed by Cllr Pennycott, seconded by Cllr Hill and **Resolved** to suspend standing orders to enable The North Somerset officers, Ian Wilson & Hannah Cornock to address the meeting.*

14/466 TO RECEIVE AND DISCUSS COMMUNITY RESILIENCE “WHAT IS IT? HOW DOES IT WORK

Ian Wilson is NSC Emergency Manager, he explained to members the background to Community Resilience (CR) and how it fits the government expectations as issued by the cabinet office “*Communities and Individuals harnessing local resources and expertise to help themselves in an emergency, in a way that complements the response of the emergency services*”

The project is designed to help local communities to identify what are the risks they could face in respect of a natural disaster or major accident, the resources and expertise available within the area; and how this could be utilised to assist in an organised manner to compliment the work being done by the emergency services. It was stressed that the volunteers, who would have completed CR training, are not undertaking the role of emergency services but provide eyes, ears, local knowledge and when required, and directed, practical support complimenting the roles and action of the emergency service.

NSC has facilitated the creation of a web site www.communityresilience-ns.org.uk this allows for 3 levels of access. From basic for general interest to a restricted section for those that have registered an interest and have completed the mandatory training.

This last level has information specific to the community and is accessible by the emergency services to provide information and contact details during an emergency or incident.

All volunteers have to go through a training process, this includes 2 mandatory on line submissions based on the basic understanding of CR and then face to face

training. There are workshop and training events volunteers can access. The emergency services are keen to engage with CR as they have the assurance that the information and level of structure is the same across all of North Somerset and that volunteers have a defined structure to operate and control structure. Volunteers once they have completed the training have a high visibility jacket with 'Community Resilience Volunteer' on the back and a photo ID, so that any of the emergency services personnel can identify them if required.

CR has a defined structure standard across North Somerset.

Trained volunteers are split into defined teams: - welfare, emergency feeding, evacuation and shelter, transport, safety. Communities may create additional teams if the risk assessment identifies a need.

These volunteers report to CR Co-ordinators currently most communities have 2 to 3 but larger areas may require more.

The Co-ordinators report to the CR Management group made up of co-ordinators from all over North Somerset along with emergency services and local authority. This group undertakes the practical liaison with emergency services that will be on the ground.

The Management Group feeds into the Avon and Somerset Emergency Forum where all the policy and tactical decisions are made and include senior officers from all the emergency services, health authorities, local government and environment agency.

The CR teams do not only act in an emergency their role, as eyes and ears, start from when they become a volunteer. Ms Cornock gave the case study of Congresbury. They identified that flooding in the village was primarily surface flooding. Using NSC own asset maps they plotted the gullies in the village and their condition. The survey showed that there were 103 gullies not recorded bringing the villages total to 900 a 13% increase. Some of the gullies were damaged and blocked. The survey results were transposed onto NSC asset map and works orders raised to get the damaged gullies replaced. The contractor now had all the gullies on his schedule for clearance, which ensured they would all now be cleared, albeit within NSC guidance of 1 – 3 years depending on location. The result NSC has an accurate asset map of the gullies; each gully has a defined reference number so incidents are accurately recorded; the volunteers continue to monitor the gully clearance schedule and can report missed gullies and those damaged so that when there is a major rainfall the risk of surface flooding is greatly reduced and practically eliminated for normal rainfall.

The volunteers also logged the levels against the gauge boards on the river and tributaries that enabled the EA to calibrate their gauge accurately and amend their flood modelling to take in the additional water feed between their gauge and the village, enabling a better understanding.

Another case study was on snow wardens. Clevedon recorded the highest number of volunteers at 14. The snow wardens clear snow from designated areas, those not on the winter gritting routes, they monitor the current gritting bins conditions and level of grit. The Clevedon volunteers have surveyed all the grit bins and these have been logged on to the NSC maps indicating which have been purchased by the Town Council. This enables NSC to direct their contractors to the bins that need filling with

an accurate map. It also means any damage is reported. The wardens have provided a wish list of grit bins for areas of the town that are not covered, targeting areas that local knowledge has shown are the areas of greatest need either through geography or vulnerable residents.

Members questioned Mr Wilson & Ms Cornock

Query was raised as to the support and sustainability of the programme. The old Civil Defence programme was cited. This had been set up under Woodspring Council to bring the community organisations together but had been abandoned before it was completed.

It was explained that Civil Defence had been set up to enable a community to defend itself and the country in the case of a war or invasion, its primary aim as a response to that situation. CR was building on the Emergency Planning concept, this had been to respond directly to either a natural or man-made incident, by looking at how the incident could be reduced or prevented by prevention work. The CR programme would be community owned and community led with key figures in the community leading it and the whole community supporting and feeding into the programme.

Query was raised as to the number of co-ordinators earlier mentioned as being 1 or 2 per community.

It was explained that for many smaller communities this was sufficient but for Clevedon, depending on how the programme was set up it could relate to either local council wards or a geographical splits within the town into smaller units so Clevedon could have 2 co-ordinations per area managing the volunteers in their area. The front line teams could cover more than one area or it could be that the teams are each based in a different area with possibly 1 or 2 over co-ordinators. The model would depend on how the scheme was set up. In case of the Snow Wardens the volunteers were geographically spread across the town and lent itself to a natural split.

Query was raised as to the type of pressure that could be put on the district council and government departments to enable any preventative work to be carried out.

It was explained that the Avon & Somerset Forum into which the CR Management feeds have all the senior officers present around a table. Questions could be asked as to getting work done that would reduce or eliminate a problem, particularly if the other organisations budgets are being affected by that work not being done.

The Town Clerk explained some of the work that had been undertaken in Buckingham back in late 90's and early 00's, and how the involvement with senior officers had facilitated flood defence work and greater integration of response which led to targeted use of budgets.

Query was raised as to the continued support of NSC for the project and the budgets to enable the work to be done, when areas still had outstanding repairs. Also as the old civil defence had been cancelled with a change of mind set, will this continue? Local knowledge is useful but why would any emergency responded listen to the "man in the street".

It was explained that by working with NSC communities can identify problems that would enable the limited budget to be targeted more effectively, plus accurate data and mapping means that contracts can be managed more efficiently. As the project will be owned and led by the local Community, they control its actions and its future. Local Parish and Town Councils are not asked to fund the project unless they choose

to provide a donation or support in kind for their CR Team the CR project has applied for charity status which would enable the trustees to seek funding that is not available to local authorities to undertake the administration and support for the volunteers. Members discussed the presentation and thanked Mr Wilson & Ms Cornock plus the Snow Wardens for attending and agreed to set up a sub committee to investigate and carry forward the project.

Cllr Blades left the meeting

*Proposed seconded and **agreed** to reinstate standing orders.*

14/467 AGREE THE WAY FORWARD FOR CLEVEDON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Council will create a sub-committee directly reporting to the Council to investigate and establish a Community Resilience programme in Clevedon. The Initial sub Committee will be Cllr Middleton, Cllr Hill, Cllr Knott, Cllr Pennycott plus any other Councillor that indicates that they wish to join. The Town Clerk will draw up terms of reference for the first meeting.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm

APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN.....DATE.....