DRAINAGE MEETING Q & A DOCUMENT

MEETING HELD 02.10.12

PORTBURY VILLAGE HALL

Due to the flooding that Portbury Village experienced during August and September 2012, NSC was requested to respond to the concerns of residents. A representative attended a meeting held 02.10.12 and their replies are listed below;

Q1 Explanation of a 1 in 60 year event

A 1 in 60 event is the level of flood water expected to be equalled or exceeded every 60 years on average. It is the probability or likelihood of flooding in a given area in any one year.

2-year storm	*(50% chance of occurring)*
5-year storm	*(20% chance)*
10-year storm	*(10% chance)*
25-year storm	*(4% chance)*
100-year storm	*(1% chance)*
500-year storm	*.2% chance)*

The lower the chance of a storm occurring i.e. 100 year storm (1% chance) the greater the amount of rain that falls.

Q2 When were the drains in Portbury Lane area last jetted? It appears that NSC are under the impression that they had been cleared earlier in the year, is work by sub-contractors checked to ensure the work as been carried out.

According to our records the gullies on Portbury Lane were cleansed 25/05/2012, maintenance gully emptier, not jetted. Gullies in this area are on a one year cleaning regime year.

Gullies on Failand Lane cleansed once every two years, last attended 01/03/11, maintenance gully emptier.

The contractors work is checked, with the resource available.

The above was deemed accurate at the time but as discussed at the meeting GPS records for the gully cleaner identified that the gully cleaner was not on site at the above date. This has been followed up and the contractor has undertaken works at their cost to rectify this.

Q 3. What as prompted NSC to address the situation now and not a month ago, when the first flood occurred in August.

The Drainage Section was not aware of the flooding at Portbury Lane, the area officer did however update our database system with this information but this was not picked up by our drainage team until later.

Q.4. Confirmation that the drains will be inspected and cleared immediately.

Under normal circumstances N.S.C. do not have the resource to be able to inspect and clean highway drainage and associated systems immediately, however due to the issue identified in question 2 the council arranged for emergency works to be completed.

Q.5 Details of future maintenance programs.

As identified in item 2 above

Q.6 The police advise they are not responsible for road closures during flooding, what assistance can NSC offer to divert traffic away from Portbury.

This is correct, the police would deal with issues that are causing immediate risk to the road user until such time as the Council can make safe. Regarding flooding this will in the majority of cases be achieved through an emergency road closures.

Q.7 Sheepway (Rose Cottage) pooling of surface water - are the drains clear.

Sheepway (Rose Cottage) - Works order has been raised to empty gully.

Q.8 Portbury 100 Station Road JNC. - as above

Portbury100/Station Road Junction - 2 side inlet gullies blocked, Adam to have them cleared

Q.9 Portbury 100 - drainage ditches. Details of works schedule for digging out.

Portbury100 Drainage Ditches - As far as our records can confirm works were undertaken approximately 3 years ago to clear vegetation and clean the ditch. However, this is a reactive service and the council does not currently have a planned maintenance regime for Highways ditch clearance.

Q.10 Drainage at the front of the village hall which feeds into a drain, and in turn feeds to a drainage ditch. The drainage ditch crosses privately owned land and is heavily blocked, resulting in the drains ceasing to provide adequate drainage as soon as the drainage pipe is full. Is this contributing greatly to the flooding on the High Street. Do PPC OR NSCC have any powers over the land owner to make sure that this drainage ditch is kept clear.

Drainage at the front of the village hall feeds into a drain which in turn feeds to a drainage ditch. Ditch is heavily blocked.

John Inman will undertake a site visit to inspect the ditch then inform the landowner of the works required. It is the responsibility of the landowner to maintain these systems, however if in future you see blocked ditches please contact the council as we can start enforcement proceedings to get works completed.

Q.11 Who is responsible for the culvert under Caswell Lane? In particular responsibility for keeping it clear and the responsibility for ensuring the culvert is maintained and sufficiently sized to accommodate the water flow from the stream? NSC should note that the recent flooding of Caswell Lane was largely contributed to by the dam created by the culvert running at maximum capacity causing the stream to break its banks.

The culvert is a highways culvert and is therefore maintained by Highways Drainage. However, current resource does not allow for regular inspection of these culverts and we are very much reliant on the local community to report blockages through our customer call centre.

Regarding size, our culverts and drainage systems are not designed to deal with 1 in 60 year events. Unfortunately, this year has been the wettest for over 100 years and when the extreme weather hit they could not cope – This will of course been exacerbated by any blockages in the system. Under normal circumstances the culvert can cope even with some blockages.

Q.12 Given the number of extensions, removal of soakaways on driveways and ongoing developments in the village what have North Somerset undertaken to improve the attenuation, or flow of, surface water through the drains in the village. In particular there are a number of planning applications recently approved with conditions in relation to the surface water drainage. Can NSC please confirm what action has been taken to ensure the increased contribution of the surface water drainage from these properties isn't increasing the problems further down the village or for neighbouring properties?

Since recent changes in planning conditions of driveways and extensions, surface water from extensions or new developments does not flow through the Highways Drainage system. All new works requiring planning permission will be required to ensure that correct soakaway's etc are installed. This of course is not the case for extensions exempt from planning (conservatories etc) as the council would not be aware of these.

To ensure the above is adhered to conditions are applied to planning applications on new developments and the conditions are not cleared until the Principal Engineer (Drainage) is satisfied with the system.

Q.13 What monitoring do NSC undertake to ensure that water flow down Portbury Lane, and other roads, is being directed into the gullies installed? In particular whether the build up of debris or adverse road camber following maintenance works are not adding to the problems being experienced further down Portbury Lane in the village?

The camber of the road wherever possible should allow for water to run off into the gullies. However many historic roads may need extensive rebuild to achieve high performance in this area. Consequently when minor resurfacing works etc are undertaken it will not always be possible to sort out historic problems.

Any new works on the highway will be swept and the gullies cleaned after completion.

Q.14 What controls have NSC put in place to ensure developments both in the village and along Portbury Lane are not creating problems such as loose material being washed onto the roads and/or clogging up drains?

Developers, farmers and anyone else causing excessive mud or material on the highway that results in blocked gullies or creates a health and safety risk are responsible for clearing up. If there is a continued issue then this needs to be reported to the council as we can then take action. Again we are reliant of the local community to act as our eyes and ears in these instances as we only undertake annual driven inspections on the majority of our roads.

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