

Flood Advisory Group – 2 May 2018

Public Questions from Susan Chapman

Question 1. Bournemouth is asking for help to prevent flooding on the website's Flooding Link. Two things are needed: first is action to deal with the current crisis and second is action to prevent further damage. There is need for speedy decarbonisation and a move to renewables and batteries.

Please can Bournemouth spell out the overdue need for everyone to act robustly on climate change as it alters our coastlines, maps and harvests?

Reply from the Chairman of the Flood Advisory Group, Councillor Philip Stanley-Watts:

We have a robust programme of reducing our carbon emissions. We have a new recycling facility in Bournemouth using government funding to improve our recycling in the town. We're a partner with Dorset Waste Partnership to develop a local recycling sorting facility. This means we won't need to send our recycling elsewhere which will reduce transport costs and indeed carbon emissions. There is also Business Assistance. Businesses can become more efficient and save money. We can help you do this with our sustainable business advice service. There is better transport links and I support trams, helping people making smarter travel choices and that is a key priority for Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset. The three councils have been allocated almost £20million by the government to improve the sustainable transport links between the three towns. Reducing home energy emissions, the largest portion of Bournemouth's carbon emissions come from energy use in homes. We are working to help households reduce their energy use and cut bills. We have worked with The Carbon Trust to create Bournemouth's Carbon Management Programme. The target for the Council is to reduce our operational carbon emissions by at least 34% by 2020. Our Carbon Management Programme identifies the following five areas as priorities:

1. Encourage all council employees to reduce their energy use.
2. To replace inefficient lighting, heating and insulation.
3. To reduce the need for and cost of travel to work and on Council business.

Thank you.

Question 2. We see from the November minutes of 2017 that actions 27 and 28 were to "publicise and educate" the public on flooding issues. Apart from the BH Life magazine how else will this information be communicated please?

Reply from the Chairman of the Flood Advisory Group, Councillor Philip Stanley-Watts:

Over the last couple of years we've had some major flooding incidents and we need the help of the public to prevent flooding as much as possible. We share the information we gather about local flooding with the Environment Agency and water authorities to manage flood risks by highlighting areas most likely to flood. All reports made to us are confidential. If you report a flood to us we'll only share information about the flooded area and not your details. From previous experience we've found that sandbags aren't effective. We don't have a legal duty to provide them, but we will in an emergency to help you protect your home or business. We can only provide general advice and information about flooding. If you think your property is at risk of flooding, speak to us and we may be able to provide engineering advice on how you can reduce the risk.

Question 3. In the same November minutes there was mention of green roofs. However blue roofs, brown roofs, water harvesting and water capture as well as tree planting were not mentioned. Please can the Advisory Group consider all these measures and raise questions with Network Rail -now they have removed significant soakaway from the railway lines (in the breeding season!)- about the future safety of the tracks from mudslides?

Reply from the Chairman of the Flood Advisory Group, Councillor Philip Stanley-Watts:

The item in the minutes was to educate / inform members about new flood reduction ideas and green roofs is one such idea that can have an important role to play. (Along with ideas like rain water capture and re-use.) Blue and brown roofs are variations on the same theme of attenuating rainwater before it enters the piped drainage systems.

Trees have a valuable role in managing flooding and indeed urban temperatures and pollution. However, they need to be carefully managed because tree roots can damage pipes / road surfaces and leaf fall every Autumn is a major problem. The Council would not wish to dictate Network Rail's tree management policy as they are the responsible body and have to take many factors into consideration. On a personal issue I shall be raising the subject of what Network Rail have done to their trees at the next Planning meeting also as a planning policy we do have a tree strategy which is very important to the town, many trees within the borough have got a TPO.