

## **Public Meeting re Flooding in Halewick Lane**

**Held at: Harriet Johnson Centre**

**On: 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019, 7pm**

**Present:** Anne Godley, Chair, Sompting Parish Council; Caroline Baxter, Vice-Chair, Sompting Parish Council; Catherine Glynn-Davies, Chair, Amenities and Environment Committee, Sompting Parish Council; Cllr Brian Boggis, Adur District Council and Sompting Parish Council, Cllr Cat Arnold, Adur District Council; Mike Thomas, WSCC Highways; Heather Lealan, South Downs National Park Authority; Residents of Halewick Lane and Sompting.

### **1. Welcome:**

- a. The meeting opened with a welcome from Cllr Godley and a reassurance of Sompting Parish Council's intention to support residents with events at Halewick Lane. Cllr Godly explained that following reports and ongoing concerns, a meeting of stakeholders was being convened with our MP.
- b. Cllr Glynn-Davies presented background information and evidence of how concerns relating to the current land management project are being investigated by Sompting Parish Council and how SPC aims to establish:
  - c. A chain of accountability
  - d. To empower residents of North Sompting to demand action to prevent further incidents of flooding and ensure that the landfill and waste management sites are managed responsibly.

### **2. Open discussion took place and action points were established as follows:**

#### **a. Roads:**

- i. Speed of lorries was considered to be an issue. There have been up to 45 lorries a day. SPC have already requested that speeds are lowered. Residents would like a lower speed limit.
- ii. PJ Browns will be approached by SPC and the issue will be raised with SDNP.
- iii. Discussion took place about the possibility of speed humps. WSCC do not have a budget for this and statistics show a very low accident rate on Halewick Lane, so expenditure not justified at the present time.
- iv. At the junction with Meadowview road, the camber of the road causes water to be directed onto the pavements
- v. A discussion took place about raising the kerbs to prevent this. Mike Thomas requested some photographs of the site. Residents are to respond.
- vi. It is necessary to identify ownership of the highway to the north of the site, next to the public footpath, as this requires maintenance. WSCC do not accept responsibility for this important access route to the landfill site. It is believed to be Crown property (Mike Thomas) WSCC and SPC will make enquiries concerning this.

### **3. Toxicity of soil and management of site:**

#### **Residents are concerned that it has not been possible to identify:**

- i. The constitution of the soil that has been spread on the landfill site.
- ii. They have observed chalk, clay and rubble being brought into the site. A black sludge has been recently been spread across the site.
- iii. Whether existing soil (toxic) has been removed (residents report that they have not observed loaded lorries returning from the site.
- iv. The Environment Agency should have records of the CL:AIRE regime and samples of soils imported but have not so far engaged with SPC in respect of this.
- v. Tests are conducted regularly for methane/CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the site, but these records have not yet been released to SPC despite a FOI request.
- vi. Soil and debris is still present on the playground, allotments, properties and roadsides.
- vii. Whether checks on the children's play area and allotments has taken place.

**4. Maintenance of site:**

- a. The works taking place on the site were permitted under an Agricultural Prior Notification application, as such no planning conditions were required by SDNPA. SDNPA have admitted that in retrospect a full planning application would have been better as works to ensure that the gullies, catchpits and roads were maintained before works commenced in order to accommodate potential run off.
- b. This did not happen with the result that an extreme weather event took place in August and led to heavy flooding of gardens, roads, pavements. Drains were blocked with rubble, debris and silt, and these had to be cleared before works could commence.
- c. A further severe weather event occurred at night-time on December 18<sup>th</sup> 2018. Again, there was severe run off from the site.
- d. The eastern catchpit has been cleared and is now functioning, but the western catchpit has received no maintenance. It is understood that a survey would need to be undertaken to establish how well the pipe drainage system is working.
- e. **Bunds:** One bund has been built along the western boundary with the highway. A further bund is being constructed to the north of this, along the western boundary with the highway. A lot of clay has been imported to the site.

**5. Potential Solutions:**

- a. It is hoped that the current programme will ultimately address some of the issues. When the current programme of remediation is completed, and the site is seeded over, the growth of crops may reduce run off. The bunds, it is hoped, will manage the flow of the water onto the catchpits and roadway.
- b. The second catchpit to the west of the highway needs to be cleared and made functional as a matter of urgency.
- c. A suggestion has been made by Cllr Godley that a gulley is created in the centre of the road, and a cattle grid type ditch, to further divert run off in the direction of the catchpits. This is currently under consideration.
- d. Residents were furnished with contact details of Environment Agency hotline, and other stakeholders, and their elected representatives and advised to contact them with concerns. It is important that all incidents are reported to the Environment Agency to establish a record.

**6. Conservation:**

- a. Because planning permission was not requested for this project, a conservation survey was not undertaken. Evidence was presented of flora and fauna which had been present at the site before works commenced. It is regretful that these species have been destroyed.
- b. Run off from the site has contaminated the Cokeham Brooks site in South Sompting. This is an area of environmental sensitivity. Steps need to be taken to prevent this happening and Sompting Estates may be working with the Environment Agency to find solutions.
- c. A 'pilgrims' path' runs behind housing in Gordon Road. This is not a Public Right of Way but has been used by residents historically to access the South Downs to the West and to the East of Sompting. The housing along Gordon Road has rear exits onto this path but the area has been ploughed right up to these. Action: SDNPA/WSCC will be contacted by residents and SPC to further establish permission to use this route.

**Cllr Cathy Glynn-Davies**

**25/02/2019**