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**Minutes of the meeting of the Essex Flood Partnership Board (Private Meeting), held in Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH on Thursday, 05 April 2018****Present:****Members of the Board:**

Cllr Simon Walsh (Chairman)	Essex County Council
Dave Bill	Essex County Fire and Rescue Service
Peta Denham	Environment Agency
Cllr Ray Howard	Castle Point Borough Council
Rachel Keen	Environment Agency
Peter Massie	Essex County Council
John Meehan	Essex County Council
Cllr Danny Purton	Harlow District Council
Cllr Vic Ranger	Uttlesford District Council
Cllr Andrew St Joseph	Maldon District Council
Lucy Shepherd	Essex County Council

**Other persons present (having signed the attendance book)**

Milaila Bentz	Southend Borough Council
Linda Blundell	Aquobex
Trudie Bragg	Castle Point Borough Council
David Chapman	Essex County Council
Gavin George	Aquobex
Paul Hayden	RFCC
Oladipo Lafinhan	Essex County Council
David Orrin	Environment Agency
David Prudence	Essex Highways
Lee Sencier	Essex County Council
Lisa Siggins	Essex County Council - Democratic Services
Tim Simpson	Essex County Council

- 1 Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest**  
The report of the Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations was received and It was noted that

1. Peta Denham has replaced Graham Verrier as an Environment Agency representative. On behalf of the Board the Chairman offered his thanks to Graham Verrier for all his hard work.

2. The following apologies were noted:

Cllr A Ball – Basildon District Council  
 Cllr W Breare-Hall – Epping Forest District Council  
 Cllr G Collins– Thurrock Council  
 Cllr M Cory - Colchester Borough Council  
 Cllr D Sperring – Rochford District Council  
 Cllr W Schmitt – Braintree District Council  
 Cllr M Skeels – Tendring District Council  
 Graeme Kasselmann – Thames Water  
 Jonathan Glerum – Anglian Water

3. There were no declarations of interest

## 2 Minutes

With regards to Minute 8 Councillor Howard pointed out that the River Roach was in fact in the neighbouring District of Southend.

A manuscript amendment was made to reflect this and thereafter the minutes of the meeting held on 25th January 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## 3 Reorganisation - Environment and Waste

The Board received a verbal introduction from John Meehan Head of Sustainability and Resilience. This gave an overview of the new structure with members being shown a chart detailing the new staffing design. It was agreed that an electronic copy of the chart be distributed to members.

John Meehan advised that there would now be an increase in cross - disciplinary project working. In response to some questions, he confirmed that he could still be the first point of contact and thereafter would involve other relevant officers.

Some Members asked if there were any links with Strategic Planning in the new structure. Concerns were raised that engagement with water companies (Thames/Anglian Water) on strategic plans such as Water Cycle Studies and Garden Community Plans can be difficult. There seems to be little incentive for them. It was asked that Anglian Water provide the board with details of their approach

**4 2017-18 Essex Capital Flood Programme update**

The Board received report (**EFPB/05/18**) and verbal update from Dave Chapman, Delivery & Enforcement Manager, on the progress of schemes in the Capital Programme 2018/19.

Mr Chapman pointed out that the above mentioned report contained all the relevant information and welcomed questions from the Board which included:

- Councillor Howard raised his concerns regarding Canvey Island Western Esplanade and asked when this project was likely to be completed. He also requested an update of several other projects in his division. In response David Chapman advised that he could provide a list of all the roads that had already been surveyed and those that were planned to be surveyed this year.

David Prudence of Essex Highways proceeded to provide an update to Councillor Howard on the projects in question. In relation to some, he advised that remedial works will be required to the gardens of several privately owned properties and would welcome assistance from Castle Point District Council in respect of public relation work in connection with this.

- Councillor Howard, on behalf of the leader of Castle Point District Council raised an issue regarding Bramble Road and again David Prudence was able to provide an update in this regard.

The Board **NOTED** the report and the update.

**5 Essex Community Flood Improvement Fund and Property Level Resilience grant update**

The Board received report (**EFPB/06/18**) and a verbal update from Oladipo Lafinhan, Flood Partnerships Funding Co-ordinator, regarding flood grants. Members were advised that the aforementioned report contained all the relevant information.

The Board also received a PowerPoint presentation from Linda Blundell and Gavin George of Aquobex (the company appointed by Essex County Council to deliver the Property Level Protection project). The presentation included:

- A summary of the past 3 years
- Products offered/supplied
- Challenges faced
- Processes
- Customer feedback
- New initiatives

It was noted that there had been a number of “drop outs” from the scheme, the reason for which included homeowners not wishing to provide some financial contribution, or disagreeing with the independent surveys conducted.

In response to a Member question, it was confirmed that 364 applications had been received. Whilst it was acknowledged that this is a relatively small percentage overall in relation to properties at risk of flood within the County, the Board were advised that this scheme is specifically targeted to properties who would benefit from it.

John Meehan advised that this is an excellent scheme, with the customer at the centre of it.

On behalf of the Board the chairman thanked the Aquobex representatives for their presentation.

The Board **NOTED** the report and the update

## **6 End of year Finance Reporting**

The Board received PowerPoint presentations from key partners regarding end of year spend on flood and water management in Essex.

These included:

- The Environment Agency –Peta Denham gave the Board a high level overview of Essex schemes during 2017/18.
- Anglian Water – particularly highlighted was the upcoming “Make Rain Happy” campaign. Peter Massie raised concern regarding the intention to plant a high number of trees and stressed that there will need to be discussions in this regard with Anglian Water.
- Essex Highways – details were given of the works undertaken in 2017/18.

Councillor Howard raised his concern regarding the RSPB site in his division. He expressed his disappointment and frustration that the issue had still not been resolved. John Meehan explained that due to the location of the site it was very difficult to alleviate flooding, but would welcome discussions with Councillor Howard and RSPB in order to reach a suitable solution.

## **7 Development and Flood Risk Update**

The Board received a verbal update from Tim Simpson, Development and Flood Risk Manager, regarding the Essex Development and Flood Risk (SuDS consultee) service.

The update included the following information:

- There has been an increase in applications received (25%)

- There have been staffing issues regarding retention and recruitment
- The 21 day turnaround has in the main been met
- Tim Simpson will be taking a period of paternity leave, a replacement has been appointment to cover for this period.

## **8 European Project City as a Sponge**

The Board received a PowerPoint presentation from Lee Sencier Project Design Engineer.

Members were advised that the Essex Pilot Project is located in the Cardiothoracic Centre at Basildon and Thurrock University Hospital, Basildon and is currently in the detail design phase with stakeholder consultation moving alongside this. Proposed works are expected to start on site in June 2018.

The works will be carried out over a 10 Week period and are planned for completion by August 2018 in preparation for the September 2018 mid-term partner conference.

Continued monitoring will take place on completion of the works to determine benefits delivered and the outcomes will be fed back to the SPONGE partnership as required

## **9 Any Other Business**

Councillor Howard wished to express his thanks to everyone involved in providing assistance following the flooding in Canvey Island over the Easter weekend.

Paul Hayden informed the Board that there are currently several vacancies on the RFCC and he could provide details if required.

Councillor Ranger requested an update regarding Monk Street Junction/A124. Councillor Walsh provided an update, advising that there were problems regarding gas mains and with adjoining landowners.

## **10 Date of Next Meeting**

The Board noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 5th July 2018 at 10.00am County Hall Chelmsford.

The meeting closed at 12.20 pm

**Chairman**