

Item 5 - Matters Arising

Update on Flooding in the Whitstable Road area:

Helen Whately MP along with members of the public who are affected by flooding were in attendance at the September 2021 Eastern Area Committee meeting along with Earl Bourner, the Kent County Council Asset Manager (Drainage and Structures) .

The Area Committee and invited guests listened to how the residents are being affected by the increasing problems of surface flooding and the lack of action by Southern Water.

It was agreed that Helen Whately MP would lead on setting up a meeting with all the relevant agencies and residents who had brought the matter to the attention of the Area Committee. Swale Borough Council (SBC) requested that a number of councillors and officers attend this meeting including the Chair of the Area Committee, the Cabinet Member for the Environment and the Head of Environment and Leisure.

On Friday 12 November 2021, Helen Whately MP chaired a meeting at the Alexander Centre, Faversham with the Chief Executive of Southern Water and representatives from Southern Water, Kent County Council (KCC), Swale Borough Council and Faversham Town Council. SBC were told that they could only send one representative to this meeting and the Leader asked me as the Cabinet Member for the Environment to attend.

During the meeting I understood Southern Water to have committed to working with KCC officers and local community representatives including councillors to develop discrete plans to improve the situation in locations in Faversham where there are sewage discharges during flash floods.

They reported progress on this on the 18th January as follows:

“A first meeting was held on January 13 between Southern Water and Kent County Council to look at the issues in East Street, Whitstable Road, Tanners Street and Church Road (The Brents)”.

“Attending this meeting from Southern Water were Scott Pring, Regional Operational Manager for Kent, County Engineer Mark Macey, Field Investigations Technician Lionel Hutchins and Sewer Network Manager Michael Cook. Earl Bourner, Asset Manager for Drainage and Structures, and Alex Brauninger, Drainage Asset Team Leader attended from Kent County Council”.

“Each area was discussed in detail in a productive meeting”.

“The next step will be a second meeting between SW and KCC within the catchment to carry out inspections on the outfalls, cover lifting and a walk round in the known problem areas to create a plan to reduce the risk of flooding”

The Swale Cabinet has also met with the Chief Executive and Environment Director of Southern Water recently and information from that meeting is likely to be communicated soon.

Cllr Julian Saunders
Cabinet Member for the Environment and Vice Chair Eastern Area Committee