



MINUTES

Flood Working Group 25th February 2026

10.30am – Parish Council office – Adastra Park

1. Working Group members - Cllr Frances Gaudencio, Cllr Peter Richardson, Cllr David Bunting, Cllr Ian Weir. Cllr Maria Angelaki-King, Cllr Kristian Berggreen. Cllr Sue Hatton (MSDC)

Deputy Clerk – Helen Valler

2. Apologies for absence – There were no apologies
3. Election of Chair - Cllr Berggreen nominated Cllr Gaudencio, who then asked for a vice chair for the group. Cllr Gaudencio was elected Chair of the Working Group with Cllr Bunting as Vice-Chair.
4. To agree new Terms of Reference.
 - After some discussion new ToR were agreed. These will be ratified at the G&E Committee meeting on 5th March.
5. Enhanced street sweeping regime to clear leaves and debris before they block drains and gullies.

All members agreed that there are some actions the Parish Council can take to directly provide assistance and mitigate issues. Then there are wider issues that are under the direction of WSCC and MSDC, where the Parish Council can lobby relevant members and liaise closely with our County Councillor Erika Woodhurst-Trueman.

The two main flood risks are streams overflowing and causing a major incident which impacts a large proportion of residents or smaller isolated incidents which are more frequently seen. Leaf fall, rainfall and windy weather cause issues of blocked drains and surface water flooding. Or underground pipes do not have the capacity to deal with heavy rainfall.

Could a volunteer group be set up to be called upon when there is a severe weather alert/heavy rain forecast. Members of the group would then clear the paths and any blocked drains in advance of heavy rain fall. Health & Safety, training and organisation would require the resources of the Parish Council office.

- Cllr Richardson said he would be happy to unblock some drains himself.
- It was agreed that actions could be taken to try and gather a volunteer group to assist in clearing gullies. The challenges discussed were:
- When would the group be required to be most active.



- Would they concentrate on Keymer Road or other flood prone areas such as Lodge Lane.
 - Someone would be required to manage the group and contact members.
 - Any volunteers would need to have advice and training and suitable clothing provided. Our insurance company would need to be informed.
 - Once the leaves/road debris had been collected, how would they be moved, into a trailer or wheelbarrow? How would the debris be disposed of? It was suggested that it could be deposited at the back of the Garden of Remembrance and mulched into compost, but it might have become contaminated with rubbish/stones/gravel.
6. Members discussed whether the Parish Council could engage a contractor to undertake clearing of gullies and drains at particular times of the year. Cllr Peter Richardson has drawn up a boundary map of areas that could be targeted by a contractor for enhanced cleaning.
- This option was discussed and the map of the drain gullies produced by Cllr Richardson was used for reference.
 - Cllr Angelaki-King to research street cleaning companies and costs.
 - Cllr Weir to investigate appropriate vehicles for transporting leaves to a dedicated location.
 - A contractor might include disposal of debris within the price.
 - There are Earmarked Reserves available for flooding projects of £2096
7. WSCC Flood Strategy.
- Cllr Richardson explained this is a high-level technical document that covers the whole of West Sussex. The Hassocks Surface Water Management Plan, although created in 2016, is still relevant today. He has read this document and walked the village during periods of heavy rain to assess risks.
8. Any other matters – Riparian Responsibilities
- The office received an email from a solicitor representing a resident of Hassocks, asking for advice regarding a culvert at the end of the garden. Although the resident may not be aware of her Riparian responsibilities, as the parish council it was felt that assistance could be provided to explain this. Cllr Bunting agreed that he would visit the resident, take a booklet have a look at her garden culvert. Deputy Clerk to contact the solicitor.
9. Proposed date of next meeting – 25th March 2026 10.30am