

To: Members of the Communities  
Scrutiny Committee

Date: 14 October 2021

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Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **10.00 am** on **THURSDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2021 BY VIDEO CONFERENCE**.

Yours sincerely

G. Williams  
Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services

## **AGENDA**

### **1 APOLOGIES**

### **2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS** (Pages 5 - 6)

Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any business identified to be considered at this meeting.

### **3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

Notice of items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

### **4 MINUTES** (Pages 7 - 14)

To receive the minutes of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 9 September 2021 (copy enclosed).

### **5 SECTION 19 FLOOD INVESTIGATION REPORT INTO THE FLOOD EVENT ON 20TH JANUARY 2021** (Pages 15 - 90)

To consider a report by the Council's Flood Risk Manager (copy attached) which presents the Committee with the statutory Section 19 report into the January 2021 flood event and seeks members' support for assurances to be sought from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) that the recommendations identified within the report will be acted upon.

**10:05am – 11:05am**

**6 FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE RHYL CUT AND PRESTATYN GUTTER (Pages 91 - 94)**

To consider a report by the Council's Flood Risk Manager (copy attached) which presents the Committee with the conclusion of the joint study, led by Natural Resources Wales (NRW), into potential improvements in the management of the Rhyl Cut and Prestatyn Gutter. The report seeks members' feedback on the study's findings and conclusions.

**11:05am – 12:05pm**

**7 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 95 - 116)**

To consider a report by the Scrutiny Coordinator (copy enclosed) seeking a review of the committee's forward work programme and updating members on relevant issues.

**12:05pm – 12:25pm**

**8 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

To receive any updates from Committee representatives on various Council Boards and Groups

**MEMBERSHIP**

**Councillors**

Councillor Huw Williams (Chair)

Councillor Graham Timms (Vice-Chair)

Brian Blakeley  
Alan Hughes  
Hugh Irving  
Tina Jones  
Merfyn Parry

Anton Sampson  
Peter Scott  
Glenn Swingler  
Cheryl Williams

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## LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

### Code of Conduct for Members

### DISCLOSURE AND REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS

I, *(name)*

a \*member/co-opted member of

*(\*please delete as appropriate)*

**Denbighshire County Council**

**CONFIRM** that I have declared a **\*personal / personal and prejudicial** interest not previously declared in accordance with the provisions of Part III of the Council's Code of Conduct for Members, in respect of the following:-

*(\*please delete as appropriate)*

Date of Disclosure:

Committee *(please specify)*:

Agenda Item No.

Subject Matter:

Nature of Interest:

*(See the note below)\**

Signed

Date

\*Note: Please provide sufficient detail e.g. 'I am the owner of land adjacent to the application for planning permission made by Mr Jones', or 'My husband / wife is an employee of the company which has made an application for financial assistance'.

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## COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held via Video Conference on Thursday, 9 September 2021 at 10.00 am.

### PRESENT

Councillors Brian Blakeley, Hugh Irving, Tina Jones, Merfyn Parry, Peter Scott, Graham Timms (Vice Chair), Glenn Swingler, Cheryl Williams and Huw Williams (Chair)

Cabinet Member – Councillor Tony Thomas, Lead Member for Housing and Communities

Observers – Councillors Ann Davies, Meirick Davies, Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones, Martyn Holland, Barry Mellor, Rhys Thomas and Emrys Wynne

### ALSO PRESENT

Head of Finance and Property (SG), Head of Highways and Environmental Services (TW), Ecology Officer (JW), Climate Change Programme Manager (HVE), Scrutiny Coordinator (RE) and Committee Administrators (KEJ & SLW [Webcaster])

Plantlife Representative – Dr. Kate Petty, Plantlife Road Verge Campaign Manager

#### 1 APOLOGIES

Councillor Anton Sampson

The Chair welcomed Councillor Hugh Irving to his first meeting. Councillor Irving had been appointed by the Conservative Group to replace Councillor Rachel Flynn as one of its representatives on the Committee. The Chair thanked Councillor Flynn for her contribution to the Committee's work during her term as a member.

#### 2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declaration of interests had been raised.

#### 3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent matters had been raised.

#### 4 MINUTES

The minutes of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 1 July 2021 and the special Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 26 July 2021 were submitted.

##### (a) Communities Scrutiny Committee (1 July 2021)

No accuracy points.

Matters Arising – Item 6: Section 19 Investigation Report on the February 2020 Floods in Denbighshire (page 10) – The Scrutiny Coordinator confirmed that the information requested from Natural Resources Wales would be presented to County Council at its meeting in October 2021 (rescheduled from September 2021).

**(b) Special Communities Scrutiny Committee (26 July 2021)**

No accuracy points or matters arising.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meetings held on 1 July 2021 and 26 July 2021 be received and approved as a correct record.

**5 WILDFLOWER MEADOW PROJECT**

Councillor Tony Thomas, Lead Member for Housing and Communities introduced officers present for this item which included the Head of Highways and Environmental Services and the Ecology Officer who had produced the joint report together with the Climate Change Programme Manager. Dr. Kate Petty, Plantlife Road Verge Campaign Manager was also in attendance.

Councillor Thomas explained that the report sought the Committee's support for the principle that residential/urban areas could be an appropriate location for wildflower meadows and proposals for improving publicity and engagement for the project. The project had started as a pilot in 2020 with 21 sites selected, further sites had been added and there were currently 58 managed wildflower meadow sites which contributed to improved species enrichment. Sites were managed by small border cuts, there was no cut between March and August, and the whole site was cut by specialist mower equipment enabling the meadow to set seed and provide the greatest benefit to wildlife with some extra wildflower planting undertaken if necessary. The project also supported the Council's Bee Friendly status.

The Head of Highways and Environmental Services added that the purpose of the report was to provide an update on the project and to address complaints/concerns received from some residents and members who believed wildflower meadow sites should not be developed in residential locations. Consequently the Committee's support for the project was sought subject to a more robust engagement strategy.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the following points –

- the project was an important element of the Council's Climate and Ecological Change Strategy adopted in 2021 and drive to become an Ecologically Positive Council by 2030 with all supporting the principle of tackling climate change
- the specific issue under consideration related to the appropriateness of residential/urban areas as locations for the wildflower meadows with opposition from some residents regarding a small number of sites generally based on aesthetic preferences and loss of municipal or amenity space
- having taken into account those concerns officers responded that (1) aesthetic preference was subjective with differing views in that regard but it was important to note that the project had not been undertaken for aesthetic purposes but in



responding to the climate emergency, therefore aesthetic preference was not considered a reason to continue or stop the project, (2) the loss of municipal/amenity space was considered a valid reason which was taken into account but there was little evidence to support concerns with only two known cases where parents had raised the issue about children not being able to play on those sites. In most cases no previous activity had taken place on the site that could not still be undertaken and planning officers had confirmed the change in management did not represent a loss of public open space. However, on larger sites where there was clear amenity use areas had been cut accordingly to ensure continuation of use, such as Violet Grove Park in Rhyl

- calls to remove any sites in residential/urban areas from the project were a cause for concern and would destroy the connecting wildflower corridors currently being established; the basis of the grant funding used for the equipment to carry out the project was to ensure everyone had access to nature on their doorstep and therefore sites needed to be close to where people lived
- in considering the complaints in context it was important to note that there had been almost universal support for the vast majority of sites with only a handful of the 58 sites subject to complaint, and there had also been support from local residents in areas where complaints had been received. Whilst most complaints had been allayed through subsequent dialogue with residents there were still some areas where people remained unhappy. Responding to complaints had been time consuming and the Committee was asked to confirm its support for the continuation of the project to make it easier to respond to future complaints
- the principle of developing wildflower meadows in residential/urban areas had been consulted upon in 2020 and unanimously supported by members when the Climate and Ecological Change Strategy was adopted by Council in 2021
- the project had been incredibly successful despite still being in its early stages, most sites had doubled or tripled the number of species recorded and rarer species had also been recorded
- it was acknowledged that communication on the project could have been better and some complaints had been received as a result. Consequently a new communication and engagement plan had been developed for the project (appendix 4 to the report) which would reduce the number of future complaints.

During a lengthy and detailed debate members took the opportunity to discuss with officers various aspects of the wildflower meadow project. Whilst all members fully supported the aims of the project and were committed to responding to the climate change emergency, comments and concerns were raised regarding a number of elements relating to the project. Main issues related to the initial communication on the project with assurances sought regarding meaningful engagement with members, residents and communities in the future; the management and control of weeds, in particular ragwort, thistles and docks within wildflower meadow sites; closer working with the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency (NMWTRA) and Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB) to improve grassland management within the county, and the need to consider compromise solutions in areas where there were concerns or opposition to the sites including the potential to improve the visual appearance through the introduction of plug plants.

Members commented on the impact of the wildflower meadow sites within their individual ward areas with a range of views across the sites and it was recognised that the majority of sites had been supported by the community. However there were a number of sites where opposition had been encountered, some of which had been successfully resolved through compromise solutions but a minority remained ongoing. Councillor Ann Davies in particular highlighted the detrimental impact on residents in Ffordd Nant and Nant Close, Rhuddlan due to the wildflower meadow which had resulted in a petition presented to Council in July 2021 and she urged officers to reconsider that site. Councillor Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones added her concerns to the imposition of wildflower meadow sites against residents' wishes, specifically the use of small pockets of land within small communities for that purpose.

Officers responded to members' comments, concerns and questions as follows –

- the concerns raised regarding the initial consultation on the project had been accepted and assurances were provided regarding meaningful engagement going forward. A comprehensive communication and engagement plan had been developed to ensure members were made aware of potential sites at an early stage and for discussions on their suitability to take place before wider community engagement; any issues or concerns raised would be carefully considered. It was agreed that members be asked for suggestions on potentially suitable sites in their ward areas as part of the next phase of the project
- highlighted the complexities of ragwort which was an important pollinator but recognised concerns about its impact on livestock. An information factsheet on the issue was being prepared for publication on the Council's website. The Council's management type did not encourage ragwort growth, many control measures could exacerbate the problem, and there was a lack of capacity to deal with the issue across all sites. Therefore a balanced view in controlling ragwort was required on a case by case basis to ensure compliance with codes of practice, Weeds Act 1959 etc. and that serious problems would be addressed
- officers were unaware of the approach taken by the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency (NMWTRA) in the management and control of weeds but agreed to contact NMWTRA directly in that regard and provide a response to members
- detailed the involvement of schools across the county within the project including the initial competition for the logo design and provision and planting of locally grown wildflower plants, creating wildflower areas in school grounds. There were plans to further engage with school children and involve them in planting out sites in their locality in order to learn about the project first hand
- noted comments by Councillor Graham Timms that references in the Wellbeing Impact Assessment to enhancing attractiveness of the area and improving the visual impact be tempered given that aesthetic preferences were subjective, and to ensure that the visual depictions of a wildflower meadow over time included in the report provided a true representation to ensure realistic expectations
- explained that standardised signage had been provided on sites, including those in the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB), but agreed to further discuss the issue with operatives in the AONB to ensure that signage was in keeping and sympathetic to that area
- mention had been made about the use of roundabouts as potential sites but road safety issues also needed to be considered as part of that process. Some

roundabouts referred to in Flintshire had been used for pictorial meadows which Denbighshire was not currently looking to take forward at present as they did not deliver the same biodiversity benefits and required greater management

- advised that there were often only small pockets of land available for use in residential areas in relation to the project
- officers would not support the vetoing of sites by councillors or communities which would result in the loss of current and future sites and project benefits; whilst there may be opposition to some sites there was also support for them
- the type of management to create more space for wildflowers would ensure that the visual appearance of the sites would naturally be improved over time with increases in wildflower species but where sites were more isolated or without those species present, work was being done via the Woodland Skills Centre to introduce plug plants grown from local provenance to those sites. Further work in that regard was also planned to enable more plants to be added to sites and within communities, primarily to increase the biodiversity value and create habitat for pollinators which would also improve the visual appearance
- in response to concerns that the wildflower meadow site at Maes Bedwen, Rhuddlan was excessively untidy officers agreed to look into the issue
- with regard to opposition to the wildflower meadow in Ffordd Nant and Nant Close, Rhuddlan officers empathised with residents' views but stressed the purpose of the project was to deliver environmental benefits and tackle climate change which was of paramount importance. Some background was provided to the site situation in Ffordd Nant/Nant Close together with efforts to engage residents. Officers did not consider such sites to be visually unattractive and referred to the wealth of public support for the project and visual appearance of the sites. However the intention was to introduce plug plants on the site to help address aesthetic concerns. It had to be accepted that 100% agreement on the issue would not be achieved
- assurances were provided that discussions took place with individuals regarding issues raised and most concerns had been allayed through subsequent dialogue and/or compromise solutions where possible. In general it was only possible to consider compromise options for larger sites and compromise positions had been implemented on some sites. However if a site was too small it would be ineffective and therefore not worth developing
- there had been other sites in the project subject of residents' complaints and concerns over the suitability of their location which had since been accepted in those communities and where some of the best results had been achieved with the recording of rare species, therefore the removal of sites when complaints were received would not be the right thing to do and best efforts were being made to allay concerns and engage with communities in those circumstances
- confirmed that the wildflower meadow sites had been mapped and published on the Council's website.
- officers agreed to respond directly to Councillor Martyn Holland outside of the meeting regarding his report on visibility concerns related to a site in Llanferres and also to Councillor Glenn Swingler regarding the potential for the Council to remove litter from overgrown land behind Denbigh Retail Park in order to encourage further plant growth
- confirmed that existing county quarries formed part of a review of all grasslands to consider how it could contribute to the climate change and ecological agenda

and the Climate Change and Ecological Manager agreed to contact Councillor Martyn Holland directly outside of the meeting regarding potential opportunities for disused quarries in private ownership in his ward area.

At this juncture the Chair invited Dr. Kate Petty from Plantlife to address members.

Dr. Petty explained that Plantlife had been running a campaign for approximately ten years to save wildflowers on road verges and provide advice and guidance to councils. She believed the Council's wildflower meadow project to be one of the flagship wildflower projects currently in the UK but recognised such projects also had some challenges. In terms of managing grassland in residential/urban areas a short turf full of low grain wildflowers could be created to provide a compromise in some areas. The short turf wildlife friendly approach was not suitable for all areas and the taller wildflower meadows being developed would deliver greater benefits in terms of restoration and conservation of wildflowers. Whilst the pictorial meadows in Flintshire had their place, for what Denbighshire wanted to achieve in terms of environmental benefits the approach taken would help capture the unique flora of the area and support the local natural character. Reference was made to the consultation and engagement practices of other councils which could prove useful. In closing Dr. Petty offered Plantlife's support to the project.

Officers responded to further questions regarding the different ways of managing grassland confirming that reduced height cutting was an option and compromise solution which would be discussed further with Plantlife as the project developed. The current approach to site management had been chosen to maximise impact and provide the greatest benefits; there were also operational issues around reduced height meadows and resource implications which needed consideration.

The Chair brought the debate to a close and highlighted a number of issues raised by members for consideration by the Committee when formulating their resolutions. After a final discussion on the resolutions the Committee –

***RESOLVED***, subject to the above observations –

- (a) *to confirm its support for the principle that residential/urban areas can be appropriate locations for wildflower meadows;*
- (b) *to require officers to improve engagement and publicity with local members, city, town and community councils, and communities themselves in relation to the project in their areas and its development going forward;*
- (c) *that 'injurious and noxious weed' species, such as ragwort, docks and thistles are controlled more effectively within the Wildflower Meadow sites;*
- (d) *request that officers liaise and work with colleagues from the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB) and the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency (NMWTRA) with a view to ensuring that they all manage their grass verge and wildflower meadow areas in a similar way with a view to complementing each other's approach*

*and supporting the biodiversity and ecological health of the area whilst safeguarding the health and safety of road users;*

- (e) to request that an update report on the progress made with the delivery and development of the Wildflower Meadow Project be presented to the Committee in 12 months' time, and*
- (f) to confirm that as part of its consideration it had read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment, attached as Appendix 1 to the report.*

All the above recommendations were agreed unanimously apart from recommendation (c) which was approved by a majority decision.

## **6 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Scrutiny Coordinator submitted a report (previously circulated) seeking members' review of the Committee's work programme and provided an update on relevant issues.

Discussion focused on the following –

- the reasoning behind the amendments to the Committee's work programme since the last meeting together with potential future changes
- possible additional items to be allocated to the Committee following the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group meeting that afternoon for the October and December meetings in relation to flood defence schemes
- members were asked to submit any proposal forms regarding topics for scrutiny to the Scrutiny Coordinator in good time for the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group to consider at their meeting in November
- the Committee agreed to review the latest position with regard to items on their forward work programme at their next meeting in October.

***RESOLVED*** that, *subject to the above amendments and observations, and subject to any revised recommendations that may arise from the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group which was due to be held that afternoon, to confirm the Committee's forward work programme as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.*

## **7 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

Councillor Brian Blakeley reported upon his attendance at the Service Challenge meeting for Highways and Environmental Services on 23 July 2021 which predominantly focused on issues relating to Cemeteries, Waste Service Remodeling and Staffing. Councillor Meirick Davies highlighted the lack of response from the Council to issues of vandalism at Coed Bell Cemetery in Prestatyn and the Scrutiny Coordinator advised that it would likely be an issue for the Prestatyn and Meliden Member Area Group to consider but agreed to raise the issue directly with officers.

**RESOLVED** to receive the information provided on the work of the various groups by Committee representatives.

The meeting concluded at 12.05 pm

<b>Report to</b>	<b>Communities Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>21<sup>st</sup> October 2021</b>
<b>Lead Member / Officer</b>	<b>Cllr Brian Jones: Lead Member for Waste, Transport and the Environment / Tony Ward: Head of Highways &amp; Environmental Services</b>
<b>Report author</b>	<b>Wayne Hope</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>20<sup>th</sup> January 2021 Flood Event – Section 19 Flood Investigation Report</b>

## **1. What is the report about?**

- 1.1. On the 20th of January 2021, extensive flooding occurred across Denbighshire as a result of Storm Christoph. Council officers, as well as officers from Natural Resources Wales and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water, have since carried out investigations into the flooding to understand the reason why the flooding occurred, the likelihood of it happening again and to assess whether measures can be put in place to reduce flooding in future

## **2. What is the reason for making this report?**

- 2.1. Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act requires that the Council investigates instances of flooding in the county and subsequently publishes a report of the investigation's findings. The purpose of this report is to examine the findings, actions and recommendations emanating from the investigation into the flooding incidents that occurred in the county in January 2021

## **3. What are the Recommendations?**

- 3.1. That the Council seeks assurance from Natural Resources Wales that the recommendations identified in Natural Resources Wales' flood investigation reports will be carried out.

## 4. Report details

- 4.1. Between 18th and 20th January 2021, Storm Christoph brought strong winds, heavy rain and snow, with the most intense rainfall occurring over North Wales and northern England, bringing localised flooding to many areas. The Met Office reported that 50 to 100mm of rain fell widely across Wales and north-west England, with over 100mm across upland areas of Wales. Denbighshire experienced the effects of this Storm, with heavy and prolonged rain flooding around 67 homes and 6 businesses on the 20th January. The majority of the flooding was from main river sources. Natural Resources Wales, as the relevant flood risk management authority for main rivers, has carried out its own flood investigations. Natural Resources Wales' flood investigation reports are included as appendices to this overarching investigation report.
- 4.2. Denbighshire County Council, as a Lead Local Flood Authority, has a duty under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act to investigate flooding in its area. The Act states:
- (1) On becoming aware of a flood in its area, a lead local flood authority must, to the extent that it considers it necessary or appropriate, investigate -
    - (a) which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions, and
    - (b) whether each of those risk management authorities has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood
  - (2) Where an authority carries out an investigation under subsection (1) it must –
    - (a) publish the results of its investigation, and
    - (b) notify any relevant risk management authorities.
- 4.3. The purpose of this investigation report is to address the following key questions:
- Why did the flooding happen?
  - How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?
  - What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?



- 4.4. The most significant sources of flooding during the January 2021 event, in terms of numbers of properties affected, were the River Clwyd at Ruthin and River Ystrad at Brookhouse, Denbigh. These are classified as main rivers and the responsibility for the detailed investigation of each flood location rests with Natural Resources Wales, as the risk management authority with flood risk management functions in relation to main rivers. There was also main river flooding at Llandyrnog (River Clwyd), Loggerheads (River Alyn) and Corwen (River Dee).
- 4.5. Whilst the main sources of flooding were main rivers, the impacts of Storm Christoph were felt across much of Denbighshire
- 4.6. The Council's overarching flood investigation report is included as Appendix 1 to this report. The investigations of flooding at each of the main river locations are included as appendices to the overarching report.

## **5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

- 5.1. One of the Council's corporate priorities for 2017 to 2022 is to provide an attractive and protected environment, supporting wellbeing and economic prosperity. One of the measures identified in the Corporate Plan to enable this is to reduce the number of properties at risk of flooding in Denbighshire. The flood investigation report has highlighted opportunities to help achieve this measure, some of which will involve working in close collaboration with Natural Resources Wales and Welsh Water.

## **6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

- 6.1. The costs to the Council of carrying out flood investigation work are met within existing revenue budgets.

## **7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?**

- 7.1. This report doesn't refer to a particular project, so a Well-being Impact Assessment hasn't been carried out. However, should the Council have any future proposals to carry out a scheme or project as a result of the flood investigation report, a Well-being Impact Assessment will be carried out.

## **8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

8.1. The flood investigation has involved discussions, meetings and exchanges of correspondence with County Councillors and members of the communities that were flooded. Numerous meetings have taken place with officers from Natural Resources Wales and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water.

## **9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

9.1. As noted in Section 6 the costs to the Council of carrying out flood investigation work are met within existing revenue budgets. Any additional works will be subject to normal Council approval procedures if required.

## **10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

10.1. The Flood and Water Management Act places a responsibility on the Council to investigate flood events in the county and an implied duty to improve its understanding of flood risk. If the Council fails in this, there is a risk of reputational damage and flooded communities will continue to be at risk.

## **11. Power to make the decision**

11.1. The Council has powers in relation of flood risk and drainage matters under the Flood and Water Management Act (2010) and the Land Drainage Act (1991).

11.2. The Committee's powers in relation to policy development and review and scrutinising the Council and other public bodies' performance are outlined in Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and Section 7.4 of the Council's Constitution.

# Denbighshire County Council Investigation into the January 2021 Floods Flood Investigation Report



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## **Executive Summary**

Between 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021, Storm Christoph brought strong winds, heavy rain and snow, with the most intense rainfall occurring over North Wales and northern England, bringing localised flooding to many areas. The Met Office reported that 50 to 100mm of rain fell widely across Wales and north-west England, with over 100mm across upland areas of Wales.

Denbighshire experienced the effects of this Storm, with heavy and prolonged rain flooding around 67 homes and 6 businesses on the 20<sup>th</sup> January. The majority of the flooding was from main river sources. Natural Resources Wales, as the relevant flood risk management authority for main rivers, has carried out its own flood investigations. Natural Resources Wales' flood investigation reports are included as appendices to this overarching investigation report.

The main communities affected by the Storm were Ruthin, Denbigh (Brookhouse), Llanrhaeadr, Llandyrnog, Llanynys, Dyserth, St.Asaph and Llanfair D.C. High river levels caused flooding of properties at Ruthin and Denbigh (Brookhouse), with a small number of isolated properties being flooded at Llanarmon yn Iâl, Rhuddlan, Loggerheads, Llanrhaeadr and Llandyrnog. Surface water and ordinary watercourse flooding also affected numerous locations across the County, with properties flooded at Llanynys, Corwen, Llanfair DC, Dyserth, St Asaph.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background to the Flood Event

Storm Christoph brought exceptionally wet weather to North Wales from 18th to 20th January and was one of the wettest 3-day periods on record.

Figure 1 below shows area-average daily rainfall totals across north-west England and North Wales from September 2020 to January 2021. This region experienced three consecutive very wet days from 18 to 20 January with area-average rainfall totals of 18.2mm, 35.7mm and 25.5mm – overall 79.4mm making this provisionally the wettest 3-day period on record for this region in a series from 1891 – marginally wetter than 3 to 5 December 2015 (78.2mm) – the latter including the record-breaking rainfall from storm Desmond. (Met Office, 2021).

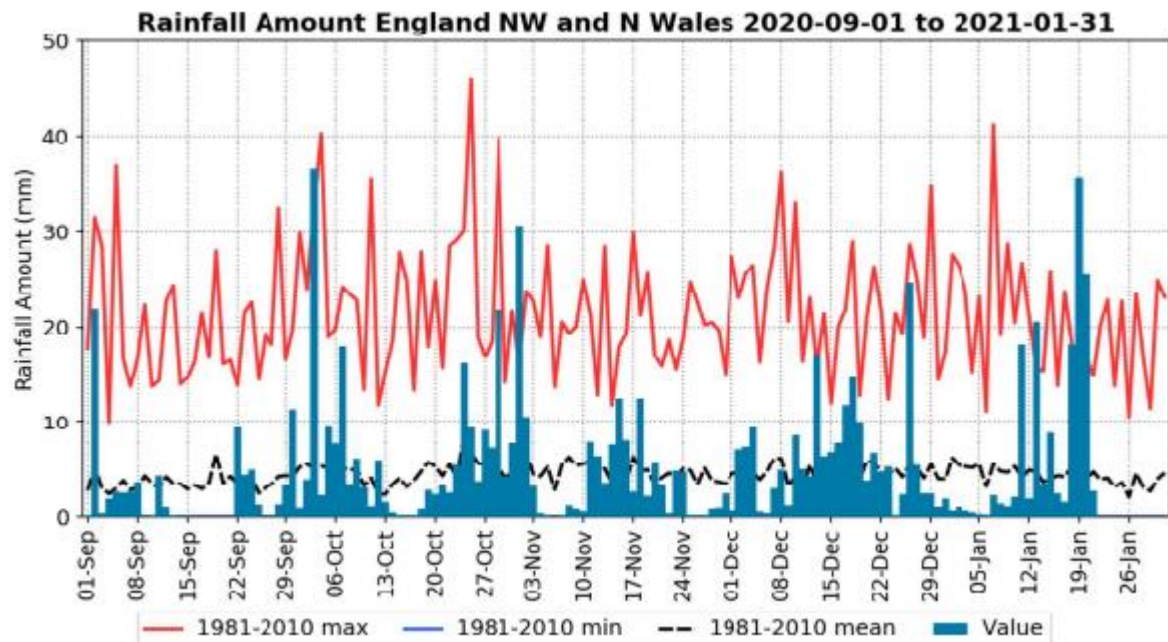


Figure 1: Area-average daily rainfall totals across north-west England and North Wales from September 2020 to January 2021 (Met Office, 2021)

It is in this context that the flooding that affected communities in Denbighshire on 20th January must be viewed. For example, Ruthin recorded 76.4 mm of rain over the four days from 18th to 21st January, which is more than the long-term monthly average for that Month (*Natural Resource Wales, 2021*).

## 1.2 Purpose of the Investigation

The purpose of this investigation report is to address the following key questions:

- Why did the flooding happen?
- How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?
- What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?

## 1.3 Legislative Context

Denbighshire County Council, as a Lead Local Flood Authority, has a duty under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act to investigate flooding in its area.

The Act states:

- (1) On becoming aware of a flood in its area, a lead local flood authority must, to the extent that it considers it necessary or appropriate, investigate:
  - (a) which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions, and
  - (b) whether each of those risk management authorities has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood
- (2) Where an authority carries out an investigation under subsection (1) it must:
  - (a) publish the results of its investigation, and
  - (b) notify any relevant risk management authorities.

The main sources of flooding during the January 2021 event were the River Clwyd River Ystrad and River Alyn. These are classified as main rivers and the responsibility for the detailed investigation of each flood location rests with Natural Resources Wales. There were five separate locations affected by main river flooding. These ranged from large communities, such as Ruthin and Denbigh (Brookhouse), to individual isolated properties within the Llandyrnog, Llanrheadr and Llanarmon yn Iâl Communities.

There was also some localised surface water flooding experienced at Llanynys, Llanfair D.C, St.Asaph, Bodelwyddan and Dyserth Communities, with the latter Community also experiencing flooding from the section of ordinary watercourse Known as Afon Ffyddion . The responsibility for the investigation of these events rests with Denbighshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority.

## **2 The Flooding Locations**

There were more than fifteen flood locations across the county. For the purposes of this report, the flooding details for each location have been arranged by flood source, that is, main river and surface water/watercourse flooding.

### **2.1 Main River flooding**

#### **2.1.1 Ruthin**

An Investigation carried out by Natural Resources Wales has identified that the River Clwyd overtopped its banks, causing flooding of 22 residential/commercial properties at Mill Street & Clwyd Street. A single property at Maes Ffynnon was also flooded.

Because the River Clwyd is a main river, the responsibility to investigate the flooding at Ruthin lies with Natural Resources Wales. A copy of its Flood Investigation Report for Ruthin can be found as an appendix to this report.

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

#### **Why did the flooding happen?**

Storm Christoph brought several days of rain to the UK between 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021. Natural Resource Wales' Brynhyfryd rain gauge recorded 76.4 mm of rain over four days, which is more than the long-term monthly average. As a consequence, levels in the River Clwyd through Ruthin (recorded at Pont Howkin gauging station) began to rise steadily from around midnight on 18th January, peaking at 7:30 pm on 20<sup>th</sup> January. This caused the River Clwyd to overtop the Cae Ddol flood defence embankment, flooding areas of Mill Street and Clwyd Street. In addition, the areas around Maes Ffynnon estate and Park Place/Mwrog Street were also affected by floodwater from the River Clwyd.

#### **How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

Natural Resources Wales is currently reviewing the standard of protection provided by its flood defences at Ruthin. As a temporary measure, Natural Resources Wales has used sand bags to increase the height of the Cae Ddol embankment to a level which should provide an increased standard of protection for properties on Mill Street and Clwyd Street.

#### **What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

In its report, Natural Resources Wales makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1.1 - Review performance of the Ruthin flood alleviation scheme using the new survey data to update the existing flood hydrological model for Ruthin. This will also allow a look at the impacts of climate change.



Recommendation 1.2 – Use the new survey information of defence crest levels to check current flood warning thresholds / trigger levels.

Recommendation 1.3 – If required, following the modelling, Natural Resources Wales should undertake an initial assessment to identify ways to further reduce the risk of flooding through Ruthin and/or improve the standard of protection of flooding from the River Clwyd

Recommendation 1.4 - Natural Resources Wales and DCC to work together to improve community engagement, giving consideration to a possible Community Flood Plan, and the establishment of a Flood Partnership Group.

Recommendation 1.5 – Natural Resources Wales to consider developing a flood forecasting model for Ruthin.

### **2.1.2 Brookhouse, Denbigh**

The investigation carried out by Natural Resource Wales has identified that the River Ystrad overtopped its banks, causing flooding of up to 8 properties (5 confirmed, 3 suspected) at Brookhouse Terrace. A copy of the flood investigation report can be found as an appendix to this report.

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

#### **Why did the flooding happen?**

The flooding was caused by the River Ystrad overtopping its banks, although this was not directly as a result of the prolonged rain, since the actual amount of rainfall for this area was modest, but coupled with heavily saturated conditions within the Ystrad catchment, this resulted in notable flooding impacts to the residents of Brookhouse.

#### **How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

There is insufficient information available to determine the precise scale of the event. However, Natural Resources Wales's flood map shows that the properties would flood in a 1 in 100 chance event.

#### **What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

The Flood Investigation Report carried out following flooding on 9th Feb 2020 made several proposals. To date no progress has been made in considering/actioning these. Natural Resources Wales' 2021 addendum report does not propose additional actions to those recommended in 2020, but the following observations are made:

**09/02/2020 Proposal:** “*NRW to consider the viability of the implementation of a river level monitoring site on the Afon Ystrad to assist in earlier warning issued to residents.*”

- Consideration of the ability to provide improved warning and informing to residents, allowing additional time to prepare for flooding, could provide significant betterment at this location.

**09/02/2020 Proposal: “NRW to review the hydraulic modelling to take into account the findings of this 2020 flood investigation report.”**

- Whilst including up to date hydrological and topographical datasets will increase confidence in the understanding of risk to the community of Brookhouse, this will most likely confirm the existing understanding and mechanisms of flooding. Consideration of improved warning and informing services to the community may result in more timely provision of service improvements at this location.

### **2.1.3 Llandyrnog**

Two isolated properties were affected when the River Clwyd overtopped its banks. One property had individual property protection, but given the scale of the event, it wasn't effective in preventing extensive internal flooding.

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

#### **Why did the flooding happen?**

The flooding was caused by heavy, prolonged rainfall falling on saturated ground which resulted in the River Clwyd overtopping its banks at multiple locations.

#### **How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

Whilst no information is available regarding the severity of the flood event at this location, rainfall levels were some of the highest recorded in the Clwyd catchment for this time of year, therefore the likelihood of that scale of flooding happening again is low. The River Clwyd has no formal flood defences at this location, which means that a flood could occur with less than a 1 in 100 chance.

#### **What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

It is unlikely that formal flood defences would be cost effective to defend a small number of isolated properties, which already have individual property protection installed. Natural Resources Wales continues to have discussions with affected residents regarding measures that can be carried out to reduce the risk and impacts of flooding. In addition, the Council is in discussions with residents regarding possible improvements to highway drainage in the area.

### **2.1.4 Pentre Llanrhaeadr**

Two properties were flooded from the River Nant Mawr, which over-topped its banks due to the heavy prolonged rain from the 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> January. However, one of the properties also suffered from surface water flooding from the public highway.

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

### **Why did the flooding happen?**

The flooding occurred due to the River Nant Mawr overtopping its banks following three days of heavy and prolonged rain.

Flooding to one property, located adjacent to the river in the village itself was possibly exacerbated by blockages in the river channel. A second property was also affected by the over-topping of the River Nant Mawr, and in addition suffered surface water flooding from the public highway.

### **How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

No detailed information is available, however rain gauge data suggests that this was an extreme rainfall event, so the likelihood of this scale of flooding happening again at this location is statistically low.

### **What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

It might be possible to reduce flood risk by locally raising the height of the river bank adjacent to the first property referred to above. This work would require consent from Natural Resources Wales. It is also recommended that vegetation maintenance is considered, which might improve the capacity of the channel.

Carry out a survey of the river channel upstream and downstream of the flood location to check for any blockages / channel restrictions that may impact upon flow capacity.

Denbighshire County Council are to investigate possibility of carrying out a highway drainage improvement scheme to reduce the risk of surface water flooding.

## **2.1.5 Loggerheads**

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

### **Why did the flooding happen?**

Flooding occurred due to the River Alyn overtopping its banks following three days of heavy rain.

### **How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

No detailed information is available, however rain gauge data suggests that this was an extreme rainfall event, so the likelihood of this scale of flooding happening again at this location is statistically low.

**What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

Natural Resources Wales should work with Denbighshire County Council Countryside Services section to investigate possible measures to reduce flood risk during extreme rainfall events.

**2.1.6 Llanarmon yn Iâl**

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

**Why did the flooding happen?**

Flooding occurred due to the River Alyn overtopping its banks following three days of heavy rain.

**How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

No detailed information is available, however rain gauge data suggests that this was an extreme rainfall event, so the likelihood of this scale of flooding happening again at this location is statistically low.

**What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

Natural Resources Wales should investigate whether improvement measures can be put in place to reduce flood risk during extreme rainfall events.

**2.1.7 Corwen**

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

**Why did the flooding happen?**

A single property flooded as a consequence of the River Dee overtopping its banks following prolonged heavy rainfall.

**How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

No detailed information is available, however rain gauge data suggests that this was an extreme rainfall event, so the likelihood of this scale of flooding happening again at this location is statistically low.

## **What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

Natural Resources Wales should investigate whether improvement measures can be put in place to reduce flood risk during extreme rainfall events.

### **2.1.8 Rhuddlan**

Considering the three key questions to be addressed by the investigation:

#### **Why did the flooding happen?**

The local watercourse and surface water drainage system in the vicinity of Pont Robin, Rhuddlan, became overwhelmed following a prolonged period of heavy rainfall, leading to flooding of a single property.

#### **How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

No detailed information is available, however rain gauge data suggests that this was an extreme rainfall event, so the likelihood of this scale of flooding happening again at this location is statistically low.

#### **What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

It is recommended that Natural Resources Wales investigates whether improvements can be made to the main river watercourse at Pont Robin to improve capacity during extreme rainfall events.

## **2.2 Surface Water/Ordinary Watercourse Flooding**

### **2.2.1 Bodelwyddan**

#### **Why did the flooding happen?**

Watercourses to the south of Tyn y Borth crossroads, A547 (Rhuddlan Road) became overwhelmed due to prolonged heavy rainfall, leading to flooding of three properties.

#### **How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

No detailed information is available, however rain gauge data suggests that this was an extreme rainfall event, so the likelihood of this scale of flooding happening again at this location is statistically low.

#### **What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

The drainage system in the area comprises a main river, ordinary watercourses and highway drainage. A solution to reduce flood risk is likely to be difficult to achieve, given the complex interactions between the various systems during extreme rainfall events. Nevertheless, it is recommended that Natural Resources Wales and Denbighshire County Council work together with landowners to investigate whether improvements can be made.

### **2.2.2 Cyffylliog/Bontuchel**

#### **Why did the flooding happen?**

At Bontuchel, one property flooded as a consequence of a culvert which became blocked due to debris being carried downstream during heavy rainfall. In Cyffylliog, a property was affected by groundwater flooding, again due to prolonged heavy rainfall.

#### **How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

The risk of flooding due to blockages that occur due to debris being carried downstream during extreme rainfall events is difficult to determine. There is no recorded history of groundwater flooding at Cyffylliog. The future likelihood of groundwater flooding is also difficult to determine.

#### **What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

Denbighshire County Council should investigate whether measures can be put in place to reduce the risk of a culvert blockage. The owner of the Cyffylliog property has been provided with advice regarding possible measures to reduce the likelihood and impacts of groundwater flooding.

### **2.2.3 Denbigh Green**

#### **Why did the flooding happen?**

A single property was flooded from the public highway due to extremely heavy rainfall which overwhelmed the highway drainage system. It is possible that a partial blockage of the drainage system occurred during the rainfall event.

#### **How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

Highway drainage systems are designed to deal with heavy rainfall, but there will always be a possibility that they will be overwhelmed during an extreme rainfall event.

#### **What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

The highway gullies have been checked and cleaned. There are no recommended improvement actions at this location.

#### **2.2.4 Dyserth**

##### **Why did the flooding happen?**

In total, seven properties flooded at Dyserth; five due to the Afon Ffyddion overtopping its banks and flood defences, and two due to surface water. The flooding occurred following a prolonged period of heavy rainfall.

##### **How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

No detailed information is available, however rain gauge data suggests that this was an extreme rainfall event, so the likelihood of this scale of flooding happening again at this location is statistically low.

##### **What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

Denbighshire County Council is in the process of developing a flood risk management scheme for Dyserth, which will reduce the likelihood of flooding during a similar rainfall event.

#### **2.2.5 Gwyddelwern**

##### **Why did the flooding happen?**

A single property was flooded due to surface water runoff from the Public highway during a period of exceptionally heavy rainfall.

##### **How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

Highway drainage systems are designed to deal with heavy rainfall, but there will always be a possibility that they will be overwhelmed during an extreme rainfall event.

##### **What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

Denbighshire County Council will investigate whether improvements can be made to the highway drainage system to reduce the risk of flooding in future.

#### **2.2.6 Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd**

##### **Why did the flooding happen?**

Three properties were flooded when surface water ran off adjacent farmland during a period of prolonged heavy rainfall.

**How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

No detailed information is available, however rain gauge data suggests that this was an extreme rainfall event, so the likelihood of this scale of flooding happening again at this location is statistically low.

**What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

Denbighshire County Council commissioned a flood risk assessment and has included this location in a project to assess how a natural flood management approach can be used to manage and reduce flood risk.

**2.2.7 Llangollen**

**Why did the flooding happen?**

A single property was flooded due to surface water runoff from the Public highway during a period of exceptionally heavy rainfall.

**How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

Highway drainage systems are designed to deal with heavy rainfall, but there will always be a possibility that they will be overwhelmed during an extreme rainfall event.

**What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

Denbighshire County Council will investigate whether improvements can be made to the highway drainage system to reduce the risk of flooding in future.

**2.2.8 Nantglyn**

**Why did the flooding happen?**

A single property was flooded from multiple surface water sources during a period of exceptionally heavy rainfall.

**How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

No detailed information is available, however rain gauge data suggests that this was an extreme rainfall event, so the likelihood of this scale of flooding happening again at this location is statistically low.



**What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

Denbighshire County Council has carried out a flood risk assessment and has secured Welsh Government grant funding to carry out repairs and improvements to the existing drainage infrastructure.

**2.2.9 Prestatyn**

**Why did the flooding happen?**

A single property was affected by a localised surface water problem during a period of exceptionally heavy rainfall.

**How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

This was an isolated incident and it is impossible to accurately determine the likelihood of a similar event happening again.

**What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

The property owner has carried out measures to reduce flood risk in future.

**2.2.10 Meliden**

**Why did the flooding happen?**

Two properties were flooded due to a combination of surface water and the main river overtopping its banks.

**How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

No detailed information is available, however rain gauge data suggests that this was an extreme rainfall event, so the likelihood of this scale of flooding happening again at this location is statistically low.

**What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

Denbighshire County Council and Natural Resources Wales are to carry out further investigation into the cause of the flooding and carry out measures to reduce flood risk if appropriate.

**2.2.11 Rhyl**

**Why did the flooding happen?**

Flooding affected two properties at Grange Road and a number of commercial properties at Clwyd Retail Park due to a period of exceptionally heavy rainfall.

**How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

No detailed information is available, however rain gauge data suggests that this was an extreme rainfall event, so the likelihood of this scale of flooding happening again at this location is statistically low.

**What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

Denbighshire County Council has commissioned a study to review flood risk and Grange Road and to make recommendations for improvement works. At Clwyd Retail Park, regular inspections of the surface water drainage system and receiving watercourses should take place to ensure that the system is able to operate as intended.

**2.2.12 St Asaph**

**Why did the flooding happen?**

Three properties flooded at Llys y Felin due to the surcharge of a Welsh Water sewer. The sewer was unable to discharge properly to the River Elwy because of high water levels in the main river during the extreme rainfall event.

**How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

The surcharge risk only occurs when the River Elwy is in spate, which won't always coincide with heavy rainfall conditions in the catchment that feeds the Welsh Water sewer. Therefore, it is difficult to accurately determine the likelihood of flooding happening again.

**What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

Denbighshire County Council and Welsh Water are working collaboratively to investigate a proposal which will reduce the likelihood of surface water entering properties.

**2.2.13 Prion**

**Why did the flooding happen?**

A single property was flooded during due to a combination of surface water and groundwater during a period of extremely heavy rainfall.

### **How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

No detailed information is available, however rain gauge data suggests that this was an extreme rainfall event, so the likelihood of this scale of flooding happening again at this location is statistically low.

### **What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

Denbighshire County Council should carry out further investigation of the highway drainage system at this location and identify possible improvements.

#### **2.2.14 Llanrhaeadr**

### **Why did the flooding happen?**

Two properties were flooded due to surface water from the public highway during a period of extremely heavy rainfall.

### **How likely it is for that scale of flooding to happen again?**

Highway drainage systems are designed to deal with heavy rainfall, but there will always be a possibility that they will be overwhelmed during an extreme rainfall event.

### **What improvement actions are needed to ensure flood risk in the County is appropriately managed in future?**

Denbighshire County Council should carry out further investigation of the highway drainage system at this location and identify possible improvements.

### 3 Summary of Recommendations

#### Ruthin

Recommendation 1.1 - Review performance of the Ruthin flood alleviation scheme using the new survey data to update the existing flood hydrological model for Ruthin. This will also allow a look at the impacts of climate change.

Recommendation 1.2 – Use the new survey information of defence crest levels to check current flood warning thresholds / trigger levels.

Recommendation 1.3 – If required, following the modelling, Natural Resources Wales should undertake an initial assessment to identify ways to further reduce the risk of flooding through Ruthin and/or improve the standard of protection of flooding from the River Clwyd

Recommendation 1.4 - Natural Resources Wales and DCC to work together to improve community engagement, giving consideration to a possible Community Flood Plan, and the establishment of a Flood Partnership Group.

Recommendation 1.5 – Natural Resources Wales to consider developing a flood forecasting model for Ruthin.

#### Brookhouse, Denbigh

The Flood Investigation Report carried out following flooding on 9th Feb 2020 made several proposals. To date no progress has been made in considering/actioning these. Natural Resources Wales' 2021 addendum report does not propose additional actions to those recommended in 2020, but the following observations are made:

**09/02/2020 Proposal: “NRW to consider the viability of the implementation of a river level monitoring site on the Afon Ystrad to assist in earlier warning issued to residents.”**

- Consideration of the ability to provide improved warning and informing to residents, allowing additional time to prepare for flooding, could provide significant betterment at this location.

**09/02/2020 Proposal: “NRW to review the hydraulic modelling to take into account the findings of this 2020 flood investigation report.”**

- Whilst including up to date hydrological and topographical datasets will increase confidence in the understanding of risk to the community of Brookhouse, this will most likely confirm the existing understanding and mechanisms of flooding. Consideration of improved warning and informing services to the community may result in more timely provision of service improvements at this location.

## **Llandyrnog**

It is unlikely that formal flood defences would be cost effective to defend a small number of isolated properties, which already have individual property protection installed. Natural Resources Wales continues to have discussions with affected residents regarding measures that can be carried out to reduce the risk and impacts of flooding. In addition, the Council is in discussions with residents regarding possible improvements to highway drainage in the area.

## **Pentre Llanrhaeadr**

It might be possible to reduce flood risk by locally raising the height of the river bank adjacent to the first property referred to above. This work would require consent from Natural Resources Wales. It is also recommended that vegetation maintenance is considered, which might improve the capacity of the channel.

Carry out a survey of the river channel upstream and downstream of the flood location to check for any blockages / channel restrictions that may impact upon flow capacity.

Denbighshire County Council are to investigate possibility of carrying out a highway drainage improvement scheme to reduce the risk of surface water flooding.

## **Loggerheads**

Natural Resources Wales should work with Denbighshire County Council Countryside Services section to investigate possible measures to reduce flood risk during extreme rainfall events.

## **Llanarmon yn Iâl**

Natural Resources Wales should investigate whether improvement measures can be put in place to reduce flood risk during extreme rainfall events.

## **Corwen**

Natural Resources Wales should investigate whether improvement measures can be put in place to reduce flood risk during extreme rainfall events.

## **Rhuddlan**

It is recommended that Natural Resources Wales investigates whether improvements can be made to the main river watercourse at Pont Robin to improve capacity during extreme rainfall events.

## **Bodelwyddan**

The drainage system in the area comprises a main river, ordinary watercourses and highway drainage. A solution to reduce flood risk is likely to be difficult to achieve, given

the complex interactions between the various systems during extreme rainfall events. Nevertheless, it is recommended that Natural Resources Wales and Denbighshire County Council work together with landowners to investigate whether improvements can be made.

### **Cyffylliog/Bontuchel**

Denbighshire County Council should investigate whether measures can be put in place to reduce the risk of a culvert blockage. The owner of the Cyffylliog property has been provided with advice regarding possible measures to reduce the likelihood and impacts of groundwater flooding.

### **Denbigh Green**

The highway gullies have been checked and cleaned. There are no recommended improvement actions at this location.

### **Dyserth**

Denbighshire County Council is in the process of developing a flood risk management scheme for Dyserth, which will reduce the likelihood of flooding during a similar rainfall event.

### **Gwyddelwern**

Denbighshire County Council will investigate whether improvements can be made to the highway drainage system to reduce the risk of flooding in future.

### **Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd**

Denbighshire County Council commissioned a flood risk assessment and has included this location in a project to assess how a natural flood management approach can be used to manage and reduce flood risk.

### **Llangollen**

Denbighshire County Council will investigate whether improvements can be made to the highway drainage system to reduce the risk of flooding in future.

### **Nantglyn**

Denbighshire County Council has carried out a flood risk assessment and has secured Welsh Government grant funding to carry out repairs and improvements to the existing drainage infrastructure.

### **Prestatyn**

The property owner has carried out measures to reduce flood risk in future.

### **Meliden**

Denbighshire County Council and Natural Resources Wales are to carry out further investigation into the cause of the flooding and carry out measures to reduce flood risk if appropriate.

### **Rhyl**

Denbighshire County Council has commissioned a study to review flood risk and Grange Road and to make recommendations for improvement works. At Clwyd Retail Park, regular inspections of the surface water drainage system and receiving watercourses should take place to ensure that the system is able to operate as intended.

### **St Asaph**

Denbighshire County Council and Welsh Water are working collaboratively to investigate a proposal which will reduce the likelihood of surface water entering properties.

### **Prion**

Denbighshire County Council should carry out further investigation of the highway drainage system at this location and identify possible improvements.

### **Llanrhaeadr**

Denbighshire County Council should carry out further investigation of the highway drainage system at this location and identify possible improvements.

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Wales

# Flood Investigation Report Ruthin 20 January 2021

## Document Control Sheet

Written by:	Name: Denika Moes	Date: 08/02/2021
Checked by:	Name: Richard Weston	Date: 20/04/2021
Approved by:	Name: Keith Ivens	Date: 05/05/2021

## Version History

Date	Version No.	Status	Summary of Changes
20/04/2021	1	Draft	
05/05/2021	2	Final	Minor amendments following draft comments

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## Executive summary

Under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act, the Lead Local Flood Authority (Local Authority) on becoming aware of a flood in its area must to the extent that it considers necessary or appropriate investigate:

- (a) which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions,  
*and*
- (b) whether each of those risk management authorities has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood.

Natural Resources Wales have agreed to investigate all main river flooding as part of this process.

Where a Lead Authority carries out an investigation then the report must be published, and any relevant risk management authorities notified.

This investigation report is a best estimate representation of the flood incident at Ruthin, written as a formal way for Natural Resources Wales to record the incident. It is based on evidence gathered by Natural Resources Wales' officers through several sources and is deemed as fit for purpose at the approved date.

It was considered appropriate to carry out an investigation as 23 residential/business properties suffered from internal flooding following heavy rainfall on the 20 January 2021. The Afon Clwyd overtopped the raised flood embankment between Cae Ddol and the Crispin Yard Car Park on the Clwyd's right bank and flooded 22 properties. One property was also flooded internally by the Clwyd in the Maes Ffynnon estate.

This report provides details of the investigation with conclusions.

# 1 Location

Ruthin is situated approximately 23 km west northwest of Wrexham, North Wales. The Afon Clwyd, which has its headwaters in Clocaenog Forest, runs through Ruthin in a northerly direction.

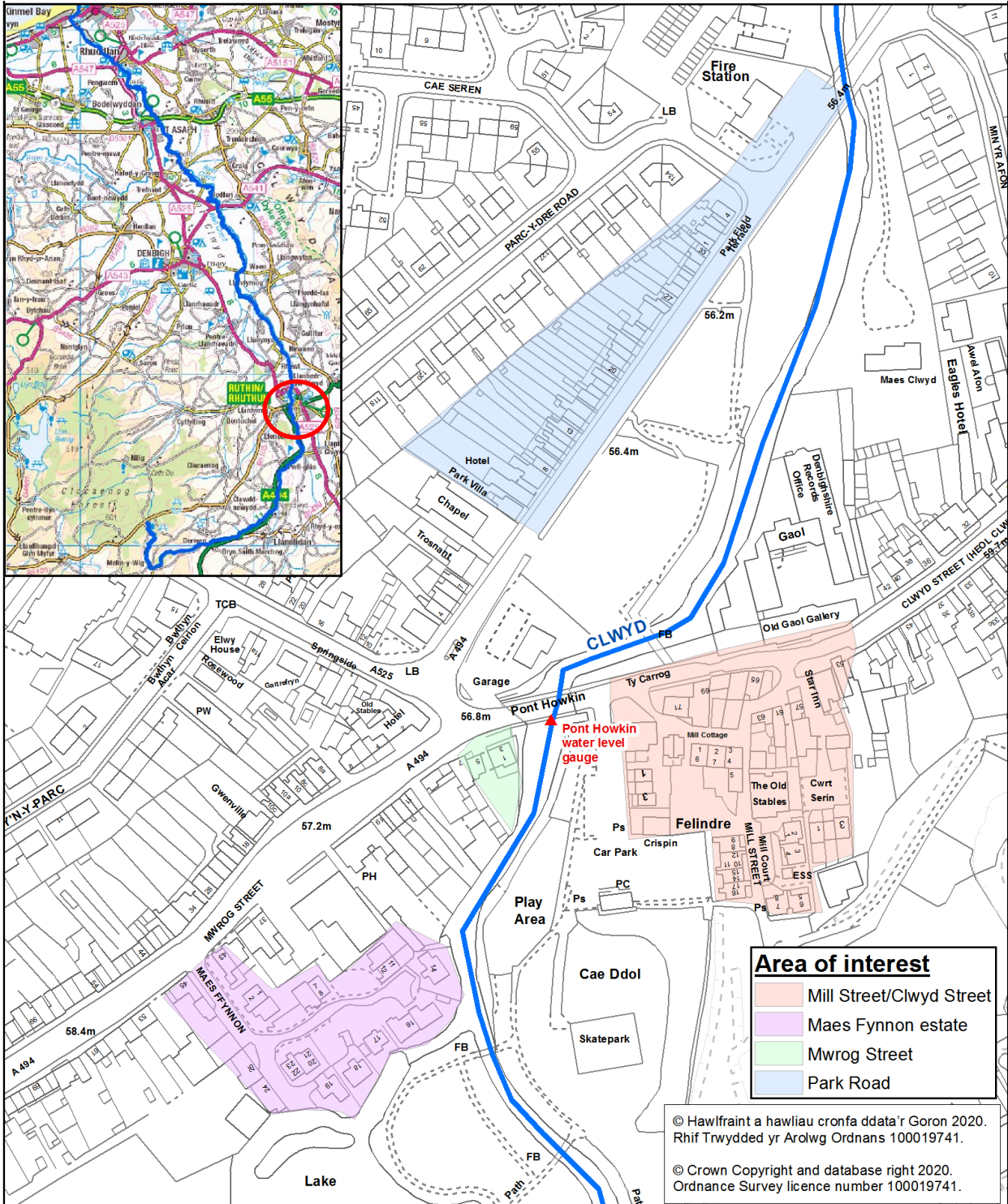
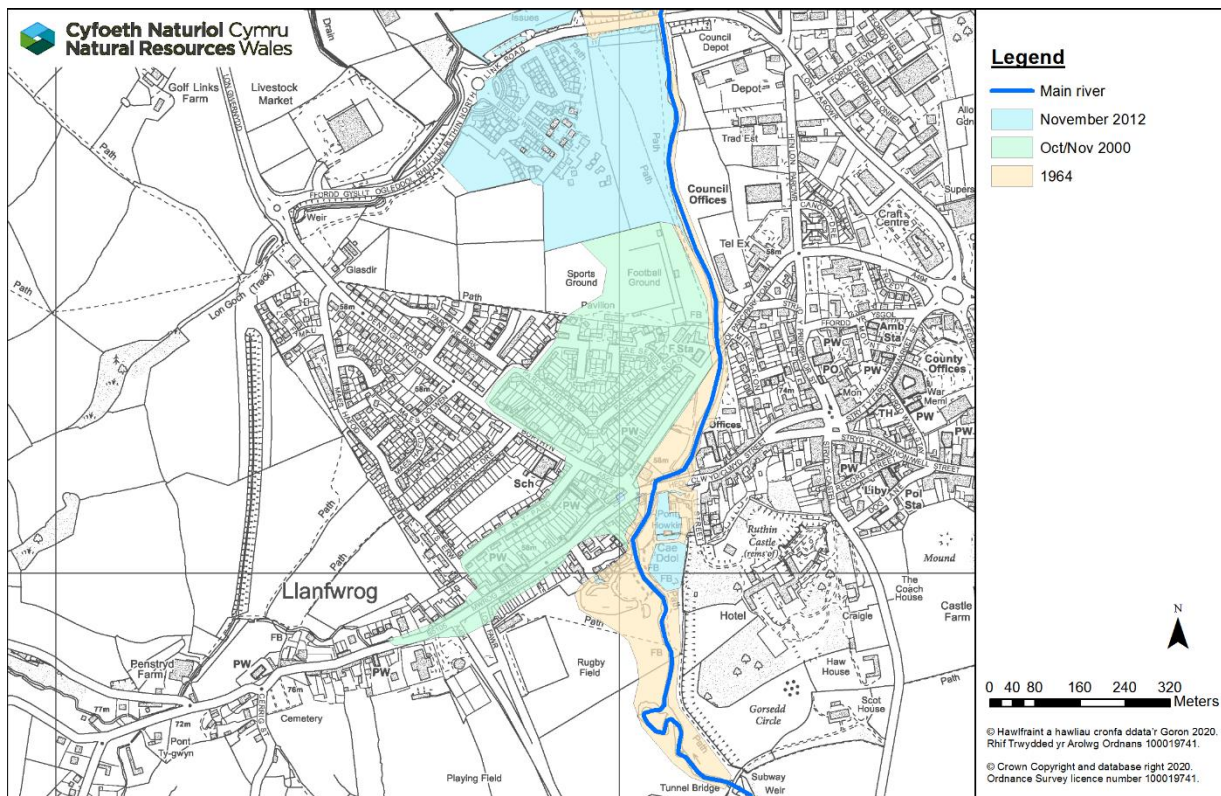


Figure 1: Location Map

## 2 Flooding History

Ruthin has been affected several times by flooding over the years, with the earliest recorded event occurring in June 1931. The two most significant events occurred in October/November 2000 and November 2012. Further details on Ruthin's flood history can be found in the Ruthin Flood Risk Study<sup>1</sup>.

NRW hold historical flood outlines for the events which occurred in 1964, October/November 2000 and 27 November 2012. The flood event outline shown for Ruthin in November 2012 only covers areas where properties flooded. Other areas of land, such as the rugby pitches and fields upstream of Pont Howkin, as depicted by the 1964 event, also flooded but no outlines were picked up during this event.



**Figure 2: Historic Flood Outlines**

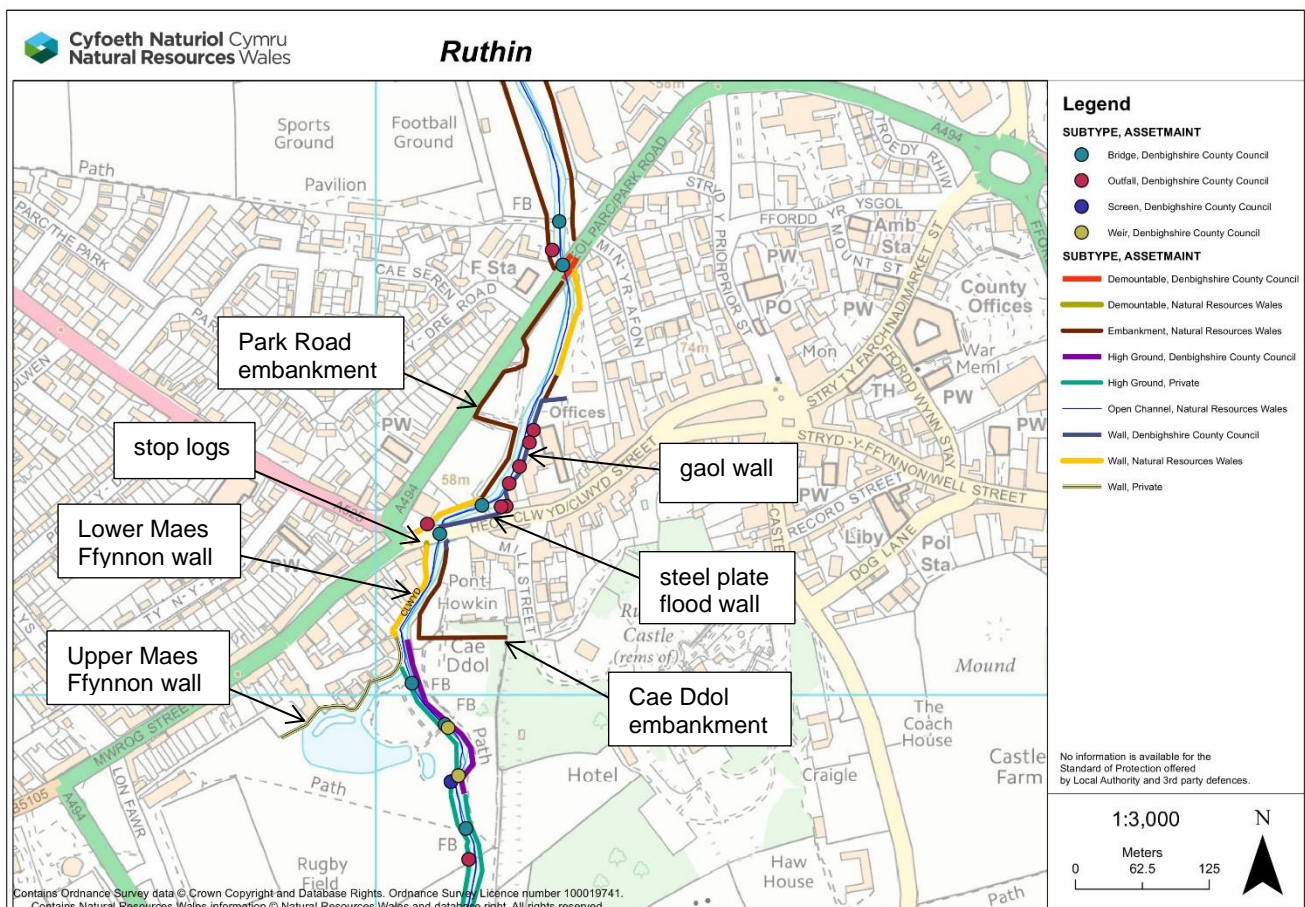
<sup>1</sup> Natural Resources Wales, Ruthin Flood Risk Study, April 2014

### 3 Flood Risk Assets

Following the flooding in 2000, NRW constructed a flood alleviation scheme along the Clwyd which comprise a series of flood walls and embankments. These defences start upstream of Pont Howkin and continue along both banks through Ruthin to around the football ground area. After which, only the defence on the right bank continues to just past the Ruthin weir.

All raised defences in the Ruthin area are visually inspected on a 6-month schedule. All assets have a condition score allocated in reference to the 2012 Condition Assessment Manual<sup>2</sup>. At the time of the January 2021 storm event, majority of NRW maintained flood risk management assets in Ruthin were performing at or above their target condition with only the lower Maes Ffynnon wall slightly below its target condition.

The most recent asset inspection of the Cae Ddol embankment did identify a localised defect with the condition of the embankment adjacent to the castle wall. Whilst not sufficient to decrease the overall condition assessment of the embankment the defect was raised with the Operations team and a repair was due to be undertaken this summer when conditions allowed.



**Figure 3: Ruthin flood risk management assets**

<sup>2</sup> Environmental Agency, Managing Flood Risk - Condition Assessment Manual (CAM), 2012

## 4 Flood Event – 20 January 2021

Storm Christoph brought several days of rain to the UK between 18-21 January 2021. Within the Clwyd catchment, the Brynhyfryd rain gauge recorded 76.4 mm of rain over the four days, which is more than the long-term monthly average. For more information in relation to the hydrological data please see Appendix A.

In response to this rain, the river level in the Afon Clwyd through Ruthin rose slowly from about midnight on the 18 January. From about 2:30 pm on the 20 January, the Clwyd river level started to rise more rapidly through Ruthin, peaking at 7:30 pm at the Pont Howkin river level station.

As a result of the rising river level, the Afon Clwyd overtopped the Cae Ddol flood defence embankment and flooded areas of Mill Street and Clwyd Street in Ruthin. Areas around Maes Ffynnon estate and outside of 1 Mwrog Street were also affected by Clwyd floodwater.

Ruthin town was visited by NRW staff on 21 January 2021 and met on site by a Denbighshire County Council representative. The following series of events are based on observations made by the staff and discussions with residents there at the time of the visit. Additionally, Waterco on behalf of Denbighshire County Council, undertook a walkover of various locations through Ruthin during the evening of 20 January. A summary of their observations is provided in Appendix B.

### 4.1 Mill Street/Clwyd Street

Residents detailed that around 3-4 pm, the Clwyd began to inundate the park areas around Cae Ddol. As the Clwyd continued to rise, the Cae Ddol embankment near the skatepark (see Figure 4) overtopped and floodwater began to fill the Crispin Yard Car Park and the public conveniences.

At about 6:30 pm, floodwater started to enter the bathroom of 'Crispin'. It entered through the side of the property from Crispin Yard Car Park, south of the property.

Around the same time (6:30 pm), floodwater entered 'Ty Carrog'. The floodwater had flowed north from the car park (south of 'Crispin'), towards the car park entrance on Clwyd Street and into Mill Street (see Figure 5). The properties along Mill Street were flooded not long after, with 1 Mill Street reporting internal flooding at about 7:15 pm.

The Clwyd floodwater ponded on Clwyd and Mill streets (Figure 6 and Figure 7) as it was unable to drain back into the river due to the steel plate flood wall (see Figure 9) along Clwyd Street, designed to stop the Clwyd downstream of Pont Howkin overtopping to Clwyd Street. The masonry wall alongside the gaol also trapped the floodwater from returning to the Clwyd.

The roadside gullies along Clwyd and Mill streets were overwhelmed by the volume of water (as they are designed for local runoff) and anecdotal evidence from residents suggested some needed unblocking, so were unable to drain the ponded water efficiently.

The fire service began pumping the floodwater from Clwyd and Mill streets into the Clwyd, downstream of Pont Howkin, at around 8-9 pm.



The floodwater on Clwyd Street peaked at about 9:30-10 pm, reaching the front step (did not enter) of 'Royal Oak' on Clwyd Street.

By midnight, the roadside gullies were able to drain the water efficiently back into the Clwyd.

In total, there were 17 residential and 5 business properties that were flooded internally along Mill and Clwyd streets due to the Clwyd overtopping the Cae Ddol embankment.

The location of overtopping of the Cae Ddol embankment was similar to that which overtopped during the 2012 flood event. According to residents, in February 2020, sandbags were placed along the crest of the Cae Ddol embankment which stopped the Clwyd from overtopping to the car park, it is presumed that Denbighshire CC undertook this work as NRW has no knowledge of this.



**Figure 4: Cae Ddol embankment near skatepark (source: NRW staff)**



**Figure 5: Floodwater at the car park entrance (Source: Real Fans of Ruthin Facebook page)**



**Figure 6: Flooding on Mill Street  
(Source: Real Fans of Ruthin  
Facebook page)**



**Figure 7: Flooding on Clwyd Street (Source:  
NWP Rural Crime Team twitter page)**



**Figure 9: Steel plate flood wall along  
Clwyd Street (source: NRW staff)**



**Figure 8: Overtopping of the Cae Ddol  
embankment (source: Sky News<sup>3</sup>)**

## 4.2 1 Mwrog Street

According to observations from Waterco staff, the floodwater from the Clwyd was seeping between the stop logs (Figure 10) immediately upstream of Pont Howkin bridge. This water was flowing towards properties (Figure 11), however there was no reported internal flooding in this area.



**Figure 10: Wrack mark at stop logs (Source: NRW staff)**



**Figure 11: 1 Mwrog Street (Source: Waterco)**

## 4.3 Maes Ffynnon estate

Denbighshire CC have confirmed there was internal flooding at 24 Maes Ffynnon, which was caused by water coming up through the ground outside once the Clwyd levels had reached a height above ground level. This was also the case for 15 to 19 Maes Ffynnon, with water coming up through the back gardens/patio over a period of 3-4 hours, accumulating in approximately 8-9 inches of water, but not enough to enter through conservatory/back doors. Levels started to drop around 8-9 pm.

The Clwyd did not overtop the Maes Ffynnon wall, peaking about 0.3 m below the top. Nor was water observed to be seeping through the stone wall. Instead, floodwater was coming up through the manhole and roadside gullies.

<sup>3</sup> Sky News, UK weather: Homes being evacuated amid 'danger to life' flood warnings from Storm Christoph, 20 January 2021 [https://news-sky-com.cdn.ampproject.org/v/s/news.sky.com/story/amp/uk-weather-boris-johnson-to-chair-emergency-cobra-meeting-over-storm-christoph-flooding-threat-12193179?amp\\_js\\_v=0.1&usqp=mq331AQHKAFQArABIA%3D%3D&fbclid=IwAR3uqz\\_7VfHEeXHob91LrC0s](https://news-sky-com.cdn.ampproject.org/v/s/news.sky.com/story/amp/uk-weather-boris-johnson-to-chair-emergency-cobra-meeting-over-storm-christoph-flooding-threat-12193179?amp_js_v=0.1&usqp=mq331AQHKAFQArABIA%3D%3D&fbclid=IwAR3uqz_7VfHEeXHob91LrC0s)



**Figure 12: Maes Ffynnon estate (source: Waterco)**

#### **4.4 Park Road**

There was no reported internal flooding to properties along Park Road or Parc-y-Dre. Residents were concerned of flooding, which was exacerbated by the emergency services pumping water from the Mill and Clwyd streets increasing the river levels downstream of Pont Howkin. They were concerned that this action would cause the Clwyd to overtop a low spot in the Park Road embankment near Park Road bridge. There was no reported overtopping of the Park Road embankment, nor any evidence to suggest as such.

## 5 Flood Outlines and Flood Flow Routes

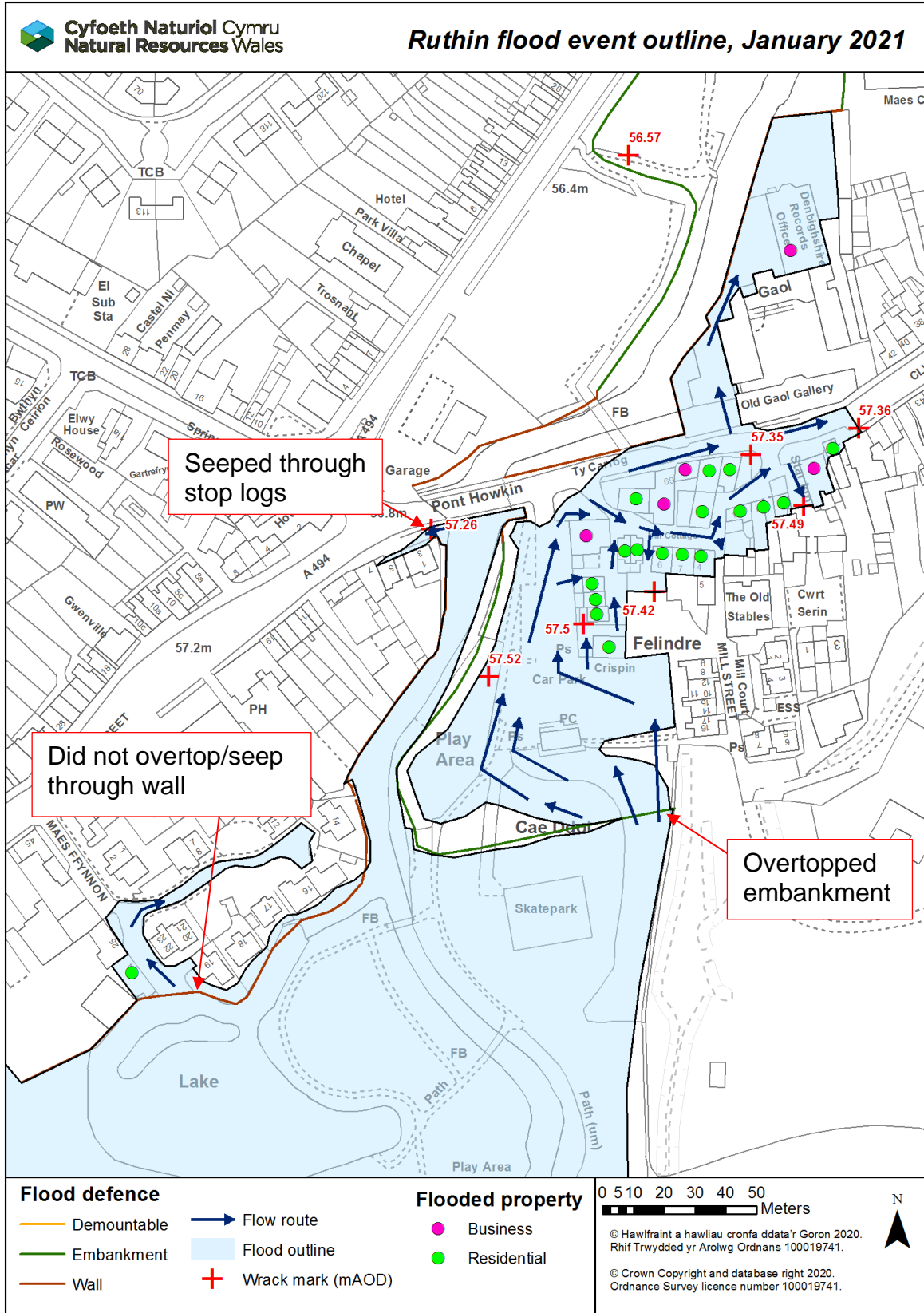
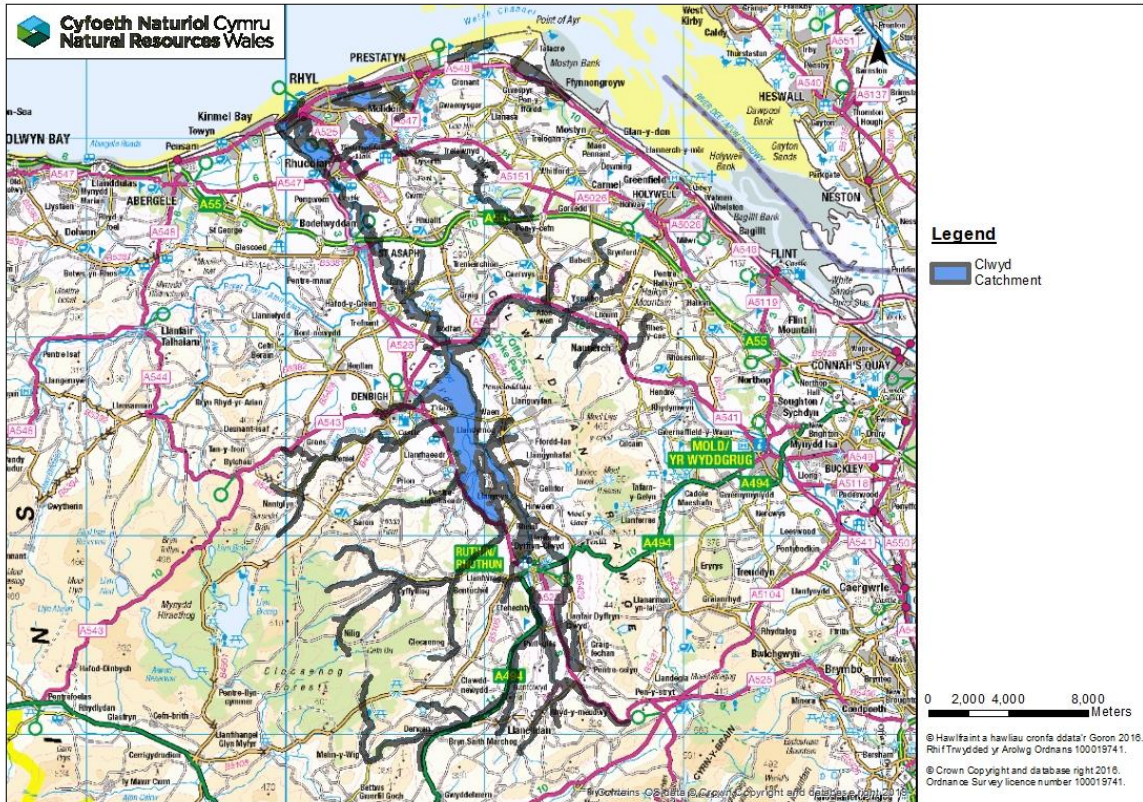


Figure 13: Outline and Route

## 6 Details of Warnings and Alerts issued

The **Clwyd Catchment Flood Alert** covers areas around the river Clwyd from Clocaenog to Rhuddlan (see Figure 14).



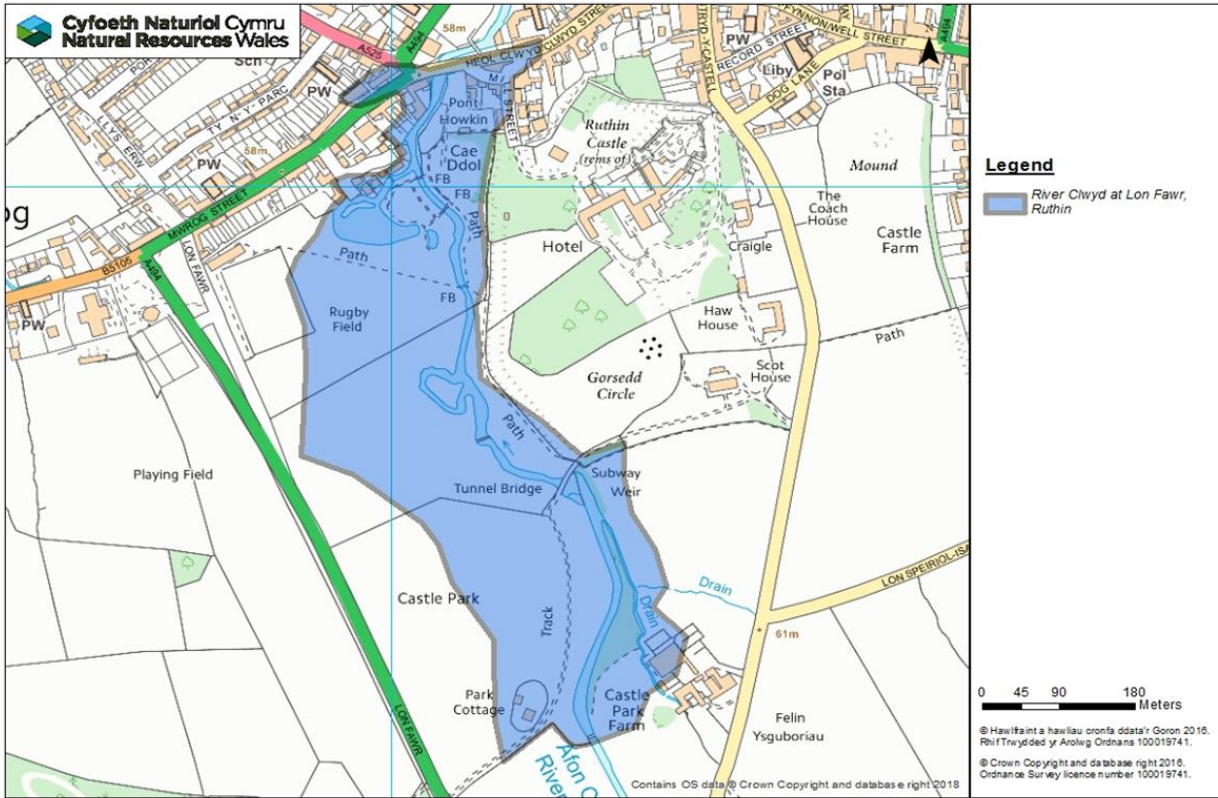
**Figure 14: Map showing the Clwyd Catchment Flood Alert Area**

A Catchment Flood Alert means that flooding of low-lying land and roads is possible, and for people to be prepared. Flooding of property is not expected to occur at this level of warning.

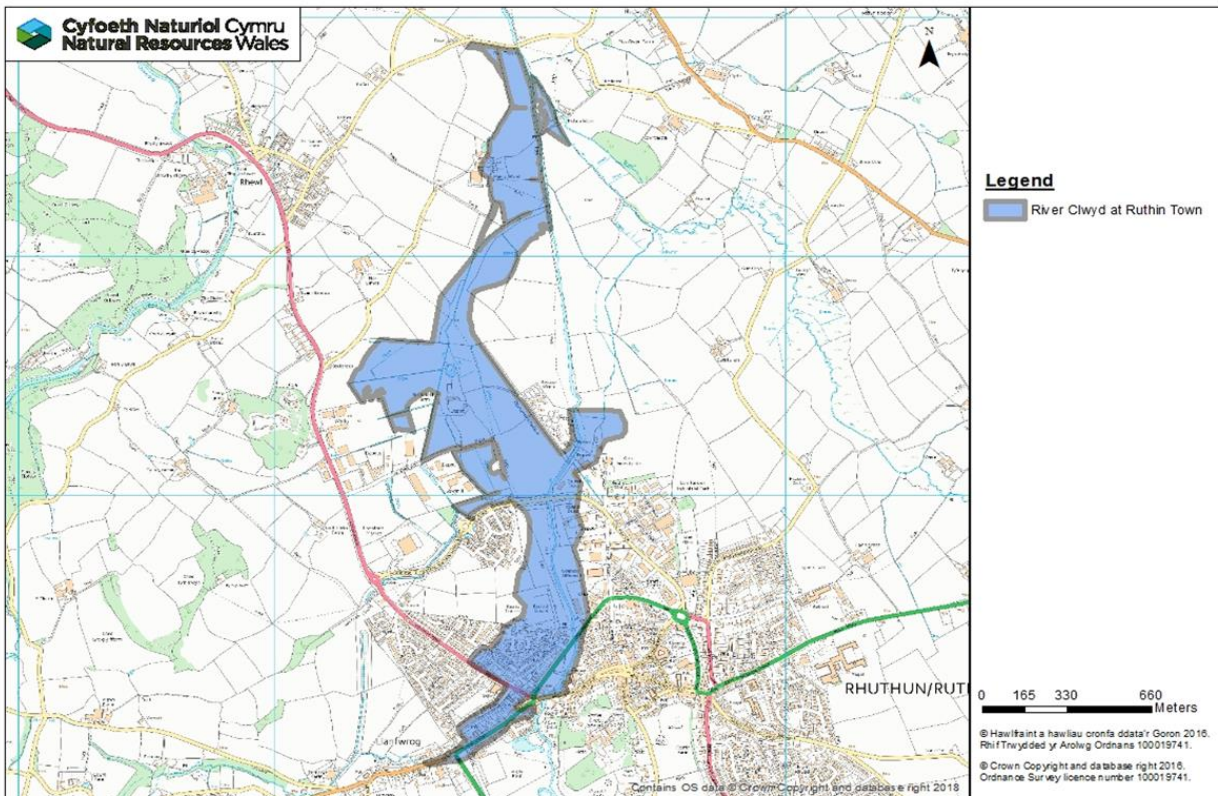
The Catchment Flood Alert is based on a pre-determined level at Ruthin Weir river level station, located at SJ1218259218.

There are also three site-specific Flood Warning Areas covering various parts of Ruthin. These are;

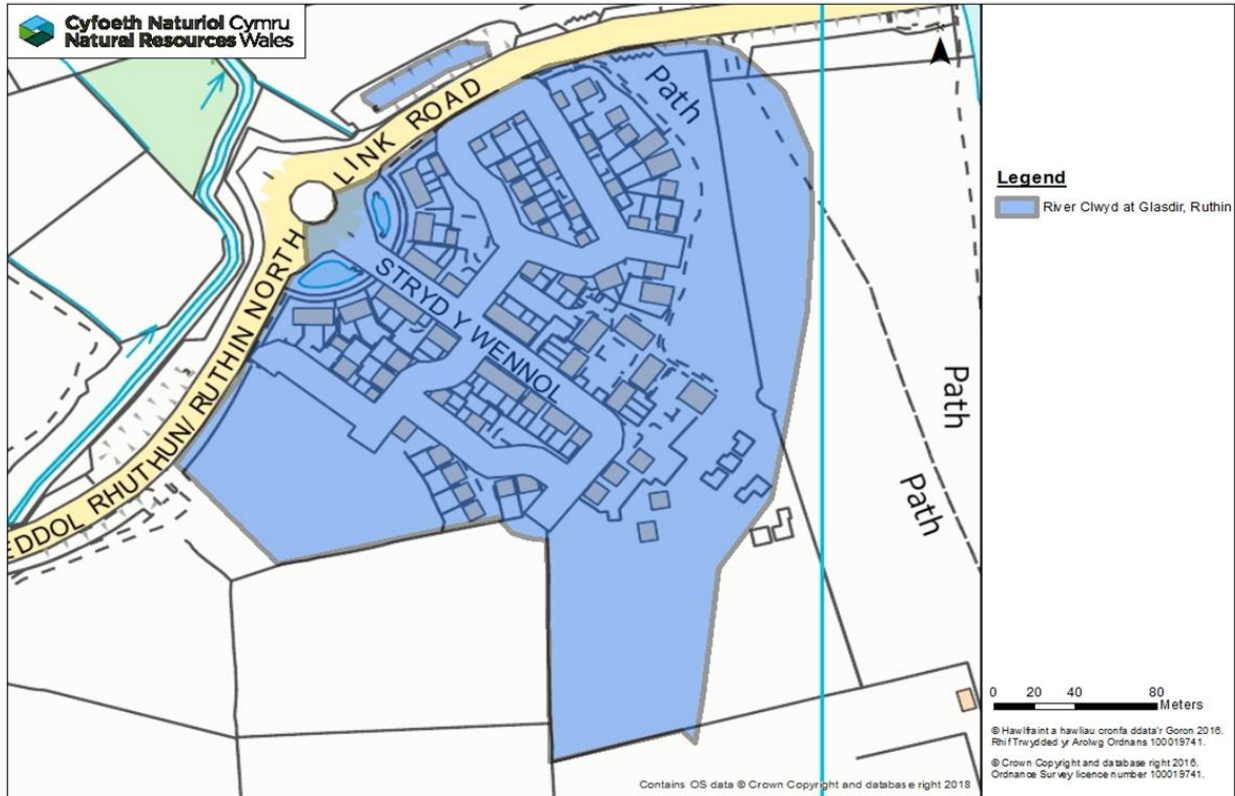
- **River Clwyd at Lon Fawr, Ruthin** (see Figure 15), which covers areas around the River Clwyd from Castle Park Farm at Lon Fawr, towards Pont Howkin, including Cae Ddol, parts of Maes Ffynnon, Mill Street, Crispin Yard, Mwrog Street and the Park Place Hotel.
- **River Clwyd at Ruthin Town** (see Figure 16), which covers parts of Ruthin from Pont Howkin towards the football fields, including Mwrog Street, Ty'n y Parc, Parc y Dre and Cae Seren.
- **River Clwyd at Glasdir, Ruthin** (see Figure 17), which covers the Glasdir housing estate in Ruthin.



**Figure 15: Map showing the River Clwyd at Lon Fawr, Ruthin Flood Warning Area**



**Figure 16: Map showing the River Clwyd at Ruthin Town Flood Warning Area**



**Figure 17: Map showing the River Clwyd at Glasdir, Ruthin Flood Warning Area**

The three site-specific Flood Warning Areas comprise of Flood Alert, Flood Warning and Severe Flood Warning messages.

A Flood Alert means that flooding of land and roads is possible, and defences are expected to be impounded but not overtop. Flooding of property is not expected at this level of warning.

A Flood Warning means that flooding of property is expected and for people to take action to protect themselves and their property.

These Flood Alert and Flood Warning messages are issued based on pre-determined levels at Pont Howkin river level station, located at SJ1207258143.

The River Clwyd at Glasdir, Ruthin Flood Alert and Flood Warning messages can also be issued based on pre-determined levels at Lon Goch river level station, located at SJ1136258553.

Severe Flood Warnings are issued based on onsite conditions and observations and involve duty officers agreeing whether the criteria of significant risk to life and/or significant disruption to communities has been met.



The following table outlines the flood warning messages that were issued and removed for the River Clwyd during Storm Christoph;

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Flood Alert/Warning Area</b>	<b>Message Issued</b>
20/01/2021	03:38:00	Clwyd catchment	Flood Alert Issued
20/01/2021	13:04:16	River Clwyd at Glasdir Ruthin	Flood Alert Issued
20/01/2021	13:31:12	River Clwyd at Glasdir Ruthin	Flood Warning Issued
20/01/2021	15:24:57	River Clwyd at Lon Fawr, Ruthin	Flood Alert Issued
20/01/2021	15:50:16	River Clwyd at Ruthin Town	Flood Alert Issued
20/01/2021	18:40:14	River Clwyd at Lon Fawr, Ruthin	Flood Warning Issued
20/01/2021	19:17:15	River Clwyd at Ruthin Town	Flood Warning Issued
21/01/2021	06:38:51	River Clwyd at Glasdir Ruthin	Flood Warning Removed
21/01/2021	06:54:42	River Clwyd at Ruthin Town	Flood Warning Removed
21/01/2021	07:01:03	River Clwyd at Lon Fawr, Ruthin	Flood Warning Removed
22/01/2021	11:52:51	Clwyd catchment	Flood Alert Removed

## 7 Response

The immediate response to the event was from North Wales Fire and Rescue Service together with the North Wales Police. The fire service evacuated at least two residents from their homes via an inflatable boat and were pumping water from the Mill and Clwyd streets back into the Clwyd downstream of Pont Howkin.

Due to the significant nature of flooding across North East Wales, limited availability of resources (already deployed elsewhere) and the speed of the event NRW did not have any resource available to attend.

Residents in Mill and Clwyd streets and along Park Road used sandbags to protect their properties, with sand provided by a local building supplier.

NRW received two calls (at 6:42 pm and 7:34 pm) from residents in Ruthin reporting that the Afon Clwyd has burst its banks in Ruthin and that floodwater was close to entering their properties.

It was reported by residents in Mill and Clwyd streets that the notification they received from NRW regarding the issuing of a flood warning for Clwyd at Lon Fawr was after initial internal flooding had occurred or did not provide enough notice before flooding occurred.

## 8 Conclusion

On the 20 January 2021, after heavy rainfall fell on an already saturated Clwyd catchment, the Afon Clwyd overtopped the Cae Ddol flood defence in Ruthin. This floodwater that overtopped the defence, was unable to drain back into the Clwyd and as a result, 22 properties were flooded internally along Mill and Clwyd Street. There is evidence that other lengths of the defence scheme through Ruthin were close to overtopping as well, impacting on the design freeboard, which demonstrates the flood event experienced was significant.

The significant nature of the event and the extent of defences overtopped indicates that the flooding was caused by an exceedance event, in that the flood event was bigger than the defences were designed to protect against.

One property was also flooded on the Maes Ffynnon estate due to water surcharging up through the ground due to the elevated river levels adjacent to it.

Had the flood defences not been in place potentially around 200 properties could have been affected by flooding.

## 9 Next Steps

In the short term NRW have completed the following:

1. Temporarily raised the Cae Ddol embankment through the use of sandbags to increase the standard of protection for the properties on Mill and Clwyd streets.
2. Undertaken a full topographic survey of the Ruthin flood alleviation scheme.
3. Undertaken an asset condition walk through to check on any post flood defects.

In the longer term:

4. Review performance of the Ruthin flood alleviation scheme using the new survey data to update the existing flood hydrological model for Ruthin. This will also allow a look at the impacts of climate change.
5. Use the new survey information of defence crest levels to check current flood warning thresholds / trigger levels.
6. If required, following the modelling, NRW should undertake an initial assessment to identify ways to further reduce the risk of flooding through Ruthin and/or improve the standard of protection of flooding from the Clwyd.
7. NRW and DCC to work together to improve community engagement to include things like Community Flood Plan, Flood Partnership etc.
8. NRW to investigate the possibility of producing a Flood Forecasting model which would allow a greater lead time for predicting flooding.

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## **Appendix A   Hydrological Post Event Analysis**

## Version History

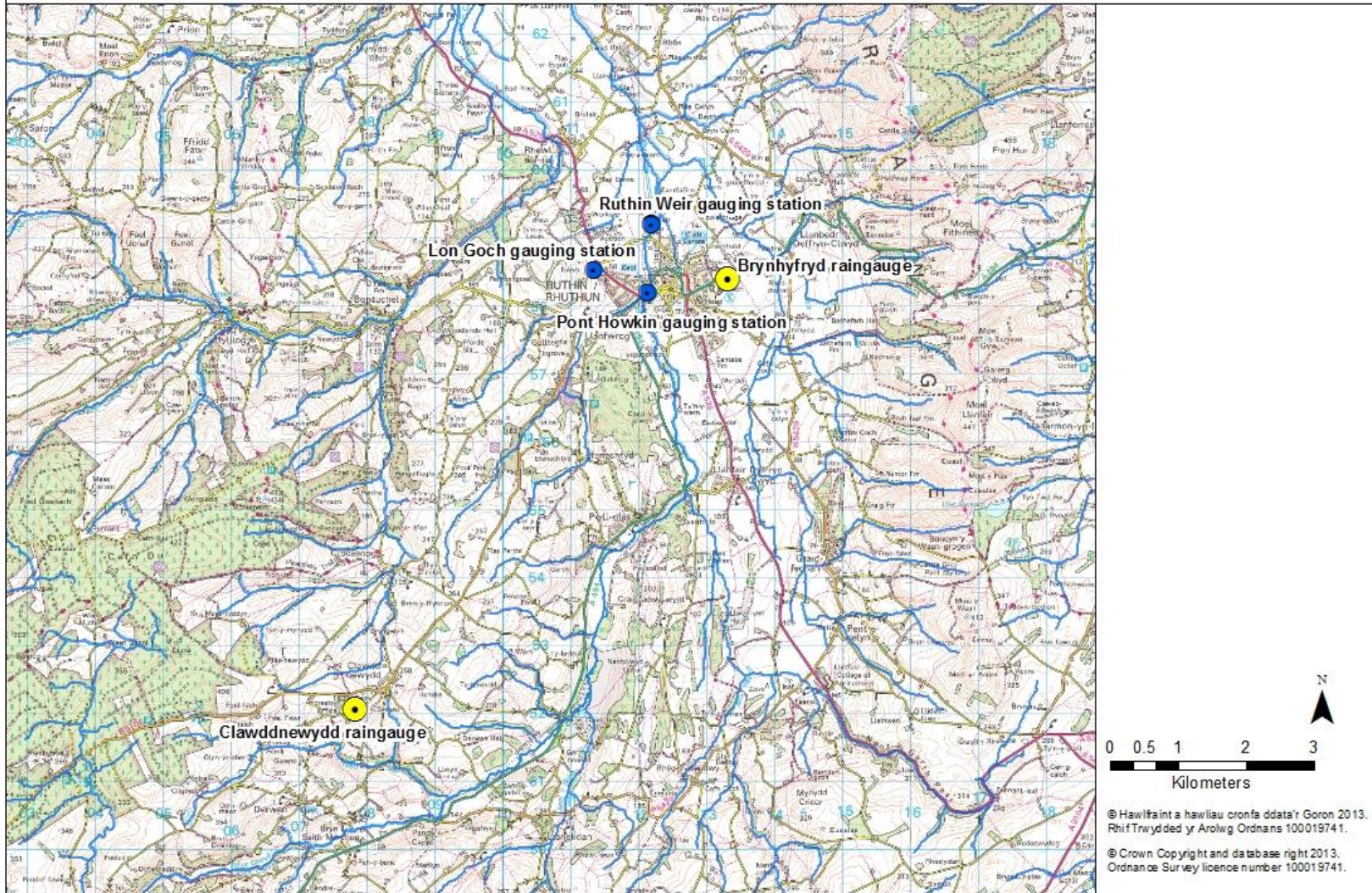
Document Version	Date Published	Summary of Changes
1	10/02/2021	First draft
2	23/02/2021	Correction to Section 2, Ruthin Weir reached its second highest level. Addition of Table 2 and comments added to Table 1

### 1. Background

This report provides a summary of peak river levels, flows and rainfall experienced in the Clwyd catchment at Ruthin during Storm Christoph (18 to 21 January 2021). Three flood warnings were issued for the Ruthin area in response to the rising river levels and parts of the town experienced flooding, the reasons for which are currently being investigated.

Natural Resources Wales monitor rainfall and river levels at several locations in the Ruthin area. The locations of the raingauges and river gauging stations used in this analysis are shown in *Figure 1*.

Datasets have not yet been quality assured and may be subject to change. Care should be taken when comparing recent peak river levels with historic data. For example, the refurbishment of Ruthin Weir gauging station in 2009 means river levels before and after this date may not be comparable.



**Figure 1.** Location of raingauges and river gauging stations used to inform this report.

## 2. River level & flow data

The peak river levels and flows experienced on the 20 and 21 January 2021 are summarised in *Table 1 and 2* (below), along with their rankings against the long-term historic record.

On the Afon Clwyd, Ruthin Weir gauging station reached its second highest level since the start of the record in 1971. However, a station rebuild in 2009 means stage data isn't comparable before and after. The flow recorded was the 4th highest on record but there is considerable variability in extrapolation of historic high flow ratings and so accuracy of peak flow data comes with some uncertainty. The variability in the historic high flow ratings and the station rebuild in 2009 accounts for the mis-match between the stage and flow rankings. At Ruthin Weir there is also an upstream access bridge which is known to restrict flood flows due to its low soffit. Hydrometric data recorded at Ruthin Weir has not been formally quality assured by the Wales H&T team since March 2020 leading to further uncertainty in its quality over the past year.

Pont Howkin gauging station is a level only site which was installed following the significant flood event in the area in 2012. The level reached at Pont Howkin during Storm Christoph is the highest reached since installation although this is a relatively short record.

Lon Goch gauging station is located on a flood alleviation channel. There is flow data available at this site although due to concerns about gravel build up only level data is presented in the table below and should be used with caution. Hydrometric data recorded at Lon Goch has not been formally quality assured since February 2020 leading to further uncertainty in its quality over the past year. The level reached at Lon Goch during Storm Christoph was the highest since installation in 2003.

Gauging Station	River	Date/Time of peak	Peak stage (m)	Rank	Record Start	Comments
Ruthin Weir	Clwyd	20/01/2021 18:30	1.154	2	1971	Highest recorded peak 1.167m on 27/11/2012
Pont Howkin	Clwyd	20/01/2021 19:30	2.519	1	2014	Second highest peak 2.180m on 16/02/2020
Lon Goch	Clwyd bypass channel	20/01/2021 15:00	1.123	1	2003	Second highest peak 0.949m on 09/02/2020

**Table 1.** River levels and flows recorded over 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and their rankings in the long-term record

Gauging Station	River	Date/Time of peak	Peak Flow (m <sup>3</sup> /s)	Rank	Record Start	Comments
Ruthin Weir	Clwyd	20/01/2021 18:30	23.84	4	1971	Highest recorded peak 26.03m <sup>3</sup> /s on 25/06/2007

**Table 2.** Peak river flow recorded during 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021 and their rankings in the long-term record. No flow data available for Pont Howkin and significant uncertainty in the flow data from Lon Goch so both sites are excluded from this table.

Note there is uncertainty in accuracy of peak flows for extreme events given uncertainty in rating accuracy at high flows and/or extent of bypassing of the gauges.

### 3. Rainfall data

Rainfall data from two raingauges have been used in this analysis. Clawddnewydd raingauge is located upstream of Ruthin in the Clwyd catchment. Brynhyfryd raingauge is in Ruthin. Rainfall data has not yet been formally quality assured by the Wales Hydrometry and Telemetry team but an initial check shows that the two raingauges used were in broad agreement with their adjacent check gauges.

Table 3 below shows the daily totals recorded at both gauges compared to the 81-10 long term average (LTA). All daily totals are water day i.e the total for the 18 January is from 09:00 on 18 January until 09:00 on 19 January. The table shows that Brynhyfryd raingauge located in Ruthin recorded more rainfall in the four days from 18 to 21 January than its average rainfall throughout the whole of January.

Raingauge	Daily rainfall totals (mm)				Total rainfall from 18 to 21 January 2021 (mm)	January LTA mm 81-10	% of January LTA
	18/01/21	19/01/21	20/01/21	21/01/21			
Brynhyfryd	10.8	22.6	38.2	4.8	76.4	75.09	101%
Clawddnewydd	12.6	26.0	25.6	9.4	73.6	114.03	65%

**Table 3.** Rainfall summary rainfall totals during Storm Christoph.

Rainfall return periods were calculated for a range of durations using the Flood Estimation Handbook (FEH) Depth Duration Frequency tool on the FEH Webservice. The maximum return period recorded at each gauge is shown in Table 4 below.



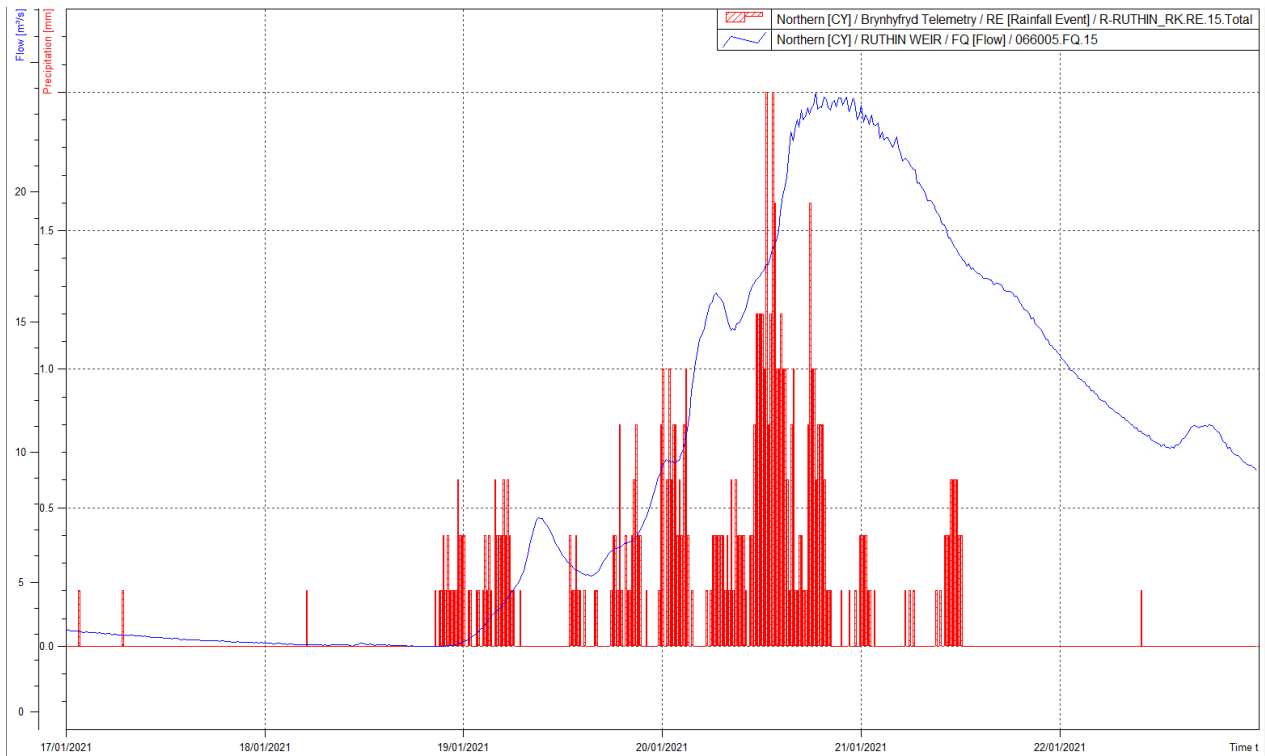
It should be noted that rainfall return periods often don't reflect the scale of flooding that has occurred. Pre-cursor conditions such as soil saturation, starting river level and floodplain inundation play a big part in determining how rivers respond to rainfall. These factors are not specifically accounted for in rainfall return period analysis. Furthermore, the raingauge network is only able to provide data where raingauges are situated and isn't necessarily representative of catchment rainfall.

Raingauge	Critical Rainfall (mm)	Duration (hours)	Start date and time of critical rainfall	Return Period (years)
Brynhyfryd	76.4	66	18/01/2021 18:30	10
Clawddnewydd	73.2	66	18/01/2021 20:15	5

**Table 4.** Ruthin area summary rainfall totals over a range of durations during Storm Christoph

The maximum return period recorded at Brynhyfryd raingauge was 1 in 10 years over a duration of 66 hours between 18:30 on 18 January until 12:30 on 21 January. Figure 2 below shows the rainfall recorded every 15 minutes at Brynhydfyd raingauge compared to the flow measured at Ruthin Weir Gauging station. The peak at Ruthin Weir can be seen at 18:30 on 20/01/2021. Rainfall return periods for shorter durations were less significant. At Brynhyfryd all rainfall with a duration below 24 hours had a return period less than 1 in 5 years.

At Clawddnewydd raingauge the highest return period of 1 in 5 years was also for the 66 hour duration. All other durations had a return period of less than 1 in 5 years.



**Figure 2.** Hydrograph showing rainfall at Brynhyfyd raingauge compared to flow at Ruthin Weir gauging station during Storm Christoph.

## **Appendix B    Waterco event summary report**

### Ruthin Flood Event 20th January 2021

Following reports of heavy rainfall and overtopping of the River Clwyd flood defence embankments at Cae Ddol, Waterco carried out a walkover of the Ruthin area to understand the impact Storm Cristoph on the town.

The following flood event summary presents the casual factors and impacts of Storm Cristoph, based on observations noted during the event.

Shaun Wasik and Chris Lewis walked various known ‘hotspots’ in the town between 19:15 and 22:00 on 20/01/21.

The map below references each site attended, with site photos appended to the summary note.

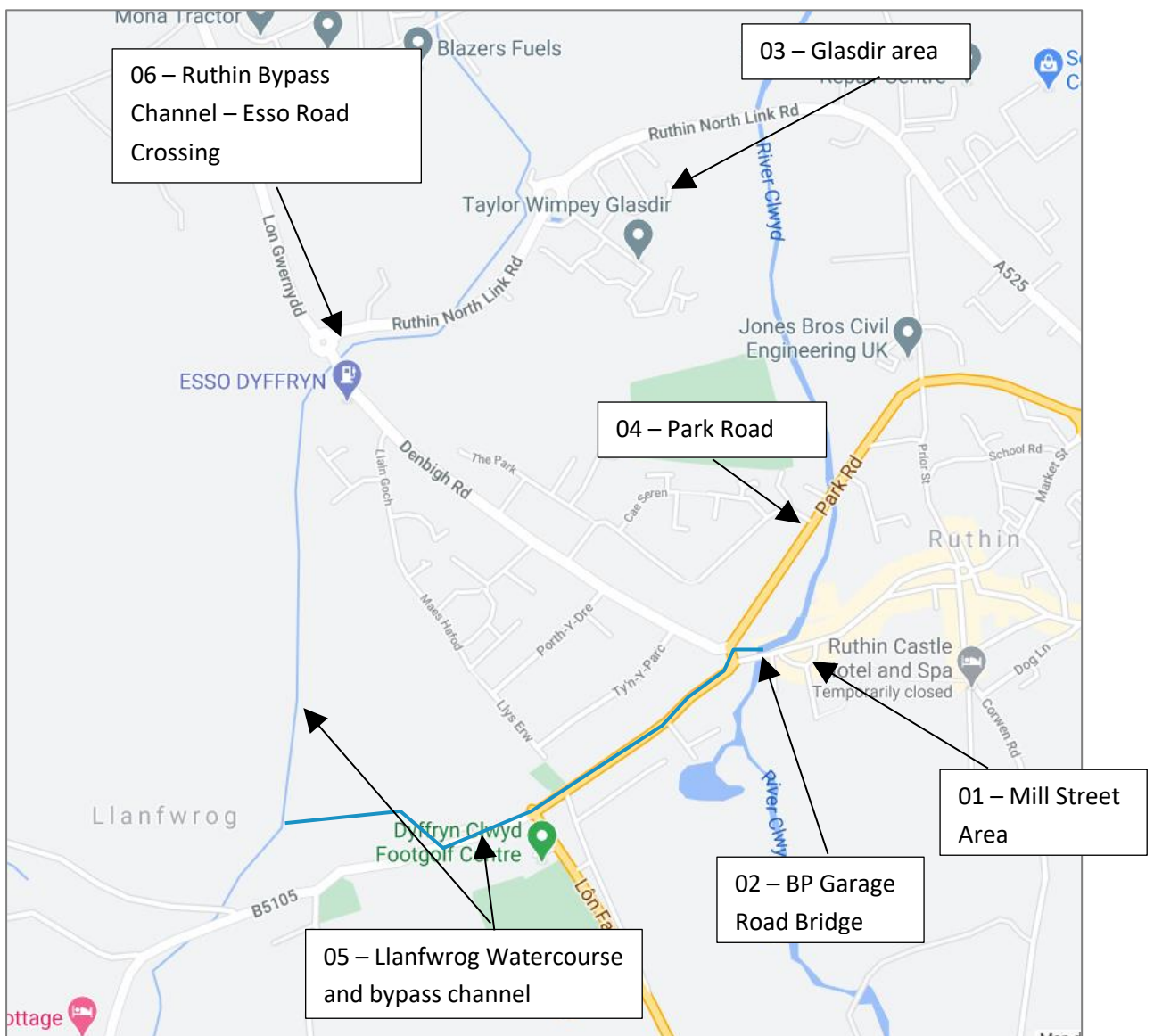


Figure 1 - Map of Ruthin taken from Google Maps

### 01 – Mill Street Area

Approximately 12 houses and 3no. businesses are reported to have flooded internally. It is reported that the River Clwyd overtopped the local flood defences in Cae Ddol park, upstream of the BP Garage road bridge. Flood water is reported to have flowed around the back of the Mill Street area, reaching a maximum depth of 400mm.

During the site visit, we observed the flood water extent to be from approximately 10m short of the local chip shop, Finns, to the eastern side of the BP Garage road bridge. Due to the depth of the flood water, we were unable to inspect further than the extent of the flood extent.

The water level was observed to have dropped by approximately 100mm between 20:00 and 21:15.

First responders were observed to be attempting to reach stranded residents via an inflatable boat. First responders were also observed to be pumping water from the Park Road area, into the watercourse downstream of the BP Garage road bridge. This raised concerns as there appears to be a low spot in the Park Road defences (see 04 – Park Road for further details). We did not observe anyone inspecting the downstream impacts of pumping the flood water away from the Mill Street area.

### 02 – BP Garage Road Bridge

The road bridge allows the River Clwyd to pass under the road (Clwyd Street), with the Llanfwrog watercourse discharging into the River Clwyd immediately downstream of the bridge. The road bridge appeared to be at full capacity with water up to the soffit. To the east and west of the road bridge demountable stop logs (wood) were deployed. Water was observed to be flowing/seeping slowly between each stop log. The result to the western demountable was that water was slowly flowing towards a shop and at least one property, with a low door threshold. The owners were attempting to block the water at their doors, but it was unclear if internal flooding had occurred.

We were unable to inspect the eastern demountable but it can be assumed that the impact was much the same.

The BP Garage appeared unaffected during our visit and remained open for business.

### 03 – Glasdir Area

The Clwyd had breached its banks adjacent to the Glasdir estate and the surround fields (existing floodplain) were holding flood water. The flood defences (namely the highway culverts and housing estate flood wall) were operating as intended. The water level at the culverts appeared to be approximately 100mm below the top of soffit and the water level appeared to be some 1m below the Glasdir flood defence wall top.

The surface water storage areas associated with Glasdir appeared to have capacity to hold approximately 50% additional flood water.

Glasdir appeared to be at no risk of flooding.

#### **04 – Park Road**

The residents along Park Road appeared extremely concerned about imminent flooding. Anecdotal reports suggest they were provided with free sandbags from a local contractor. We did not observe any property level protection (PLP), and the homeowners appeared to assume that sandbags would be sufficient.

We attended the area twice and no flooding was observed. Flood water stayed within the former Gaol bunded area.

A potential low spot in the flood defences was observed at the fire station road crossing. The parapet threshold appears to be some 300mm lower than the top of the earth bunds. The water level in the bunded area was approximately 500mm lower than the top of the bunds.

The road crossing at the fire station appeared to be at full capacity, with an imminent risk of overtopping. This could have caused flooding to the fire station and the properties along Park Road and into Parc-y-Dre and Cae Seren.

#### **05 – Llanfwrog Watercourse**

We walked the watercourse from the outfall at BP Garage (location 02) upstream to the Flood alleviation scheme at Llanfwrog Church.

The outfall at the BP Garage appeared to be discharging at full bore. The first upstream manhole in the highway (next to the Park Place public house) had been fenced off by residents. It was assumed that this action had been taken in advance of the manhole cover potentially blowing. We visited the manhole twice and observed minimal surcharging onto the road.

Approximately 200m upstream of the outfall, highway gullies were observed to be surcharging and flooding towards Maes Ffynnon. It is assumed that the gullies discharge into the culvert. The cul-de-sac appeared flooded, but no properties appeared to be affected internally.

Further upstream between Llanfwrog Church and the Community Centre, there is an open section of watercourse approximately 500m long. The water level at this point appeared to be approximately 300mm, with plenty of capacity for additional flows. Based on the downstream water level and the level at the open section of watercourse, it was assumed that a backwater effect from the River Clwyd was causing the manhole next to the Park Place pub to surcharge.

The watercourse is culverted upstream of the open channel section for approximately 100m. Upstream of this point the watercourse is an open channel through agricultural fields between Llanfwrog Church and Parc-y-Dre. We inspected this section of watercourse. Although the water level was high, it remained in channel upstream to the flood alleviation bypass.

No overtopping was observed from either the bypass channel or Llanfwrog watercourse. No flood water was observed in the fields at the back of Parc-y-Dre.

**06 – Ruthin Bypass Channel – Esso Road Crossing**

No flooding was observed at this location. This was confirmed following discussions with residents.

**Recommendations**

- 1) Educate vulnerable communities about the pros and cons of sandbags and advise those who consider themselves at risk of flooding to consider PLP measures.
- 2) Review the threshold of the fire station road bridge along Park Road. It appears to be a low spot in the flood defences.
- 3) Assess the risk associated with pumping floodwater away from the Mill Street Area. The process may be passing the risk downstream to Park Road.
- 4) Consider more impermeable demountables at the BP Garage Road Bridge.



Appendix A Photographs

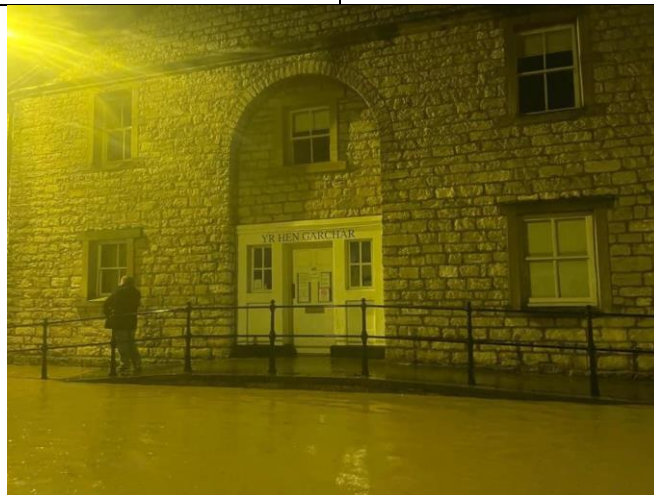
01 – Mill Street Area



View from the chip shop towards Mill Lane

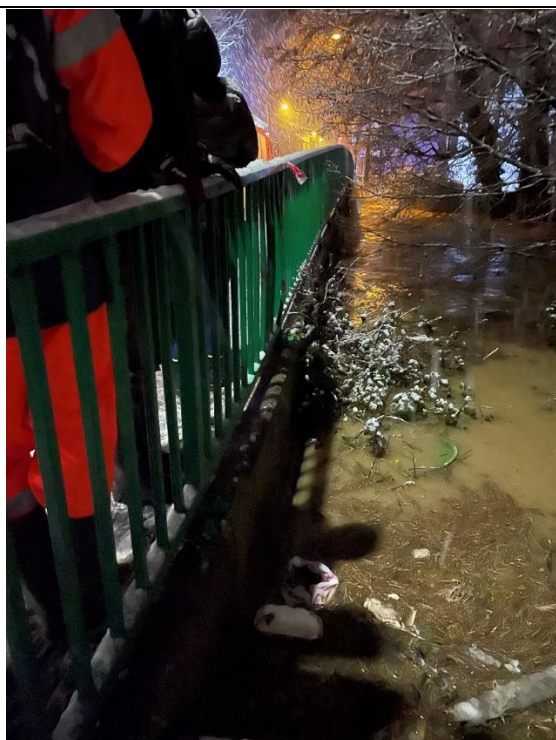


View from opposite the chip shop towards Mill Lane



View towards Gaol

02 – BP Garage Road Bridge



Upstream view across road bridge from western demountable






View from western demountable towards affected property and shop



View of western demountable defence

**03 – Glasdir Area**

	
<p>View south from highway culverts toward floodplain</p>	<p>View from highway towards Glasdir</p>
	
<p>View from Glasdir towards highway culverts</p>	<p>View from Glasdir towards highway culverts</p>
	
<p>Glasdir surface water storage area</p>	

**04 – Park Road**



View upstream from fire station road crossing

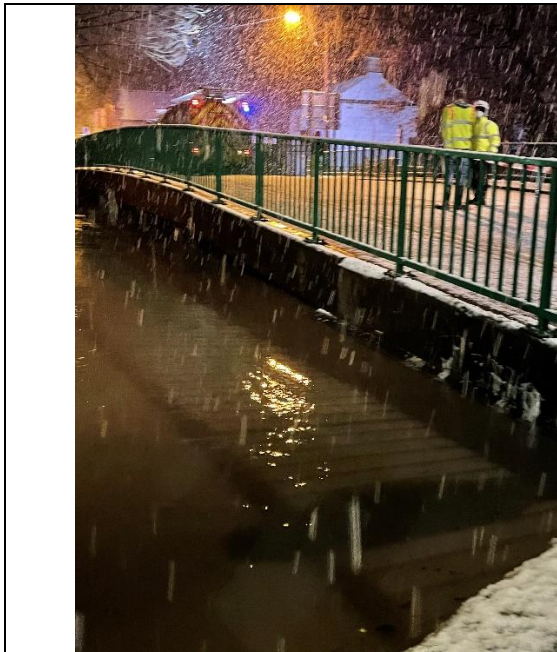


View showing available capacity within the bunded storage area



View of the fire station road crossing and bunded area.  
Note the difference in level (shown in red) between the top of bund and bridge threshold

**05 – Llanfwrog Watercourse**



View above outfall towards road bridge



Outfall view – BT garage to left, road bridge to right



Surcharging manhole adjacent to Park Place pub



Entrance to Maes Ffynnon cul-de-sac



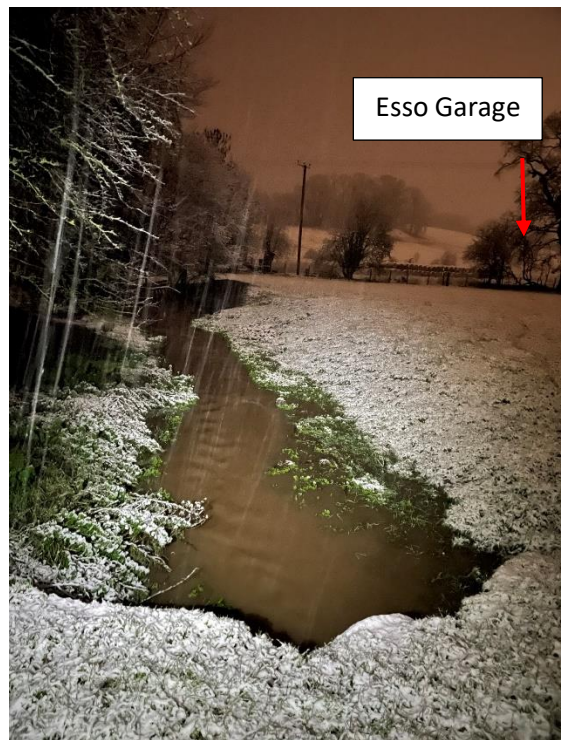
View into Maes Ffynnon cul-de-sac



Llanfwrog culvert inlet



Llanfwrog open channel water level



Open channel watercourse adjacent to Llanfwrog Church



#### 06 – Ruthin Bypass Channel – Esso Road Crossing

Due to low light, weather and access problems, we were unable to access take photographs of the Esso culvert inlet.



<b>PROJECT</b>	Addendum to Brookhouse Flood Investigation Report
<b>PURPOSE OF NOTE</b>	Additional investigation following flooding of property during Storm Christoph (20 <sup>th</sup> January 2021)
<b>WATERCOURSE</b>	Afon Ystrad
<b>FILE NOTE PRODUCED BY</b>	Neil Taunt
<b>DATE</b>	05/03/2021

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## 1 Introduction

NRW officers received reports of internal residential property flooding during storm Christoph on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Officers visited the area on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 to investigate the extent of flooding experienced in the area and gather evidence and information from residents. This addendum report summarises the findings of the investigation and provides comment to recommendations previously made, following investigations into Storm Ciara last year.

## 2 Hydrology / Summary of Rainfall

Storm Christoph was a prolonged rainfall event covering the period 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021. NRW does not have any river level or flow monitoring stations within the Ystrad catchment, therefore a summary of rainfall, in conjunction with other nearby relevant data, has been made to provide context and scale to the flooding experienced within the community.

Table 1 provides a summary of rainfall totals across the various days of storm Christoph and for the event in total for the closest relevant rain gauges. This identifies that both sites saw a significant portion of the long-term average (LTA) rainfall for January being observed during the storm event. Table 2 indicates the maximum return periods attributable to the rainfall event at the 2 stations. When considered in isolation these return periods do not appear remarkable and would indicate flooding has occurred for a relatively frequent rainfall event. Consideration needs to be given to antecedent conditions within the catchment prior to the arrival of storm Christoph. Table 3 details the % exceedance of long-term average rainfall totals for each of the preceding 4 months. This gives strong evidence to support heavily saturated conditions within the Ystrad catchment, this is considered a significant contributor as to why the relatively modest rainfall totals associated with Christoph resulted in notable flooding impacts to the residents of Brookhouse.

Pont y Cambwll gauging station is located downstream of the Ystrad confluence and Denbigh on the River Clwyd at SJ0698570963. The hydrograph in Figure 1 shows flow at that site from January 2020 to the end of Jan 2021. Storm Christoph peak is circled. Base flows were high at the start of the event from previous rainfall and whilst this isn't the Ystrad catchment it does give a representation of conditions in the wider Clwyd catchment.

Rain gauge	Daily rainfall totals (mm)				Total rainfall from 18 to 21 January 2021 (mm)	January LTA mm 81-10	% of January LTA
	18/01/21	19/01/21	20/01/21	21/01/21			
Denbigh STW	10.6	17.0	36.4	0.4	64.4	77.9	83%
Plas Pigot	11.6	26.4	34.6	1.8	74.4	120.9	62%

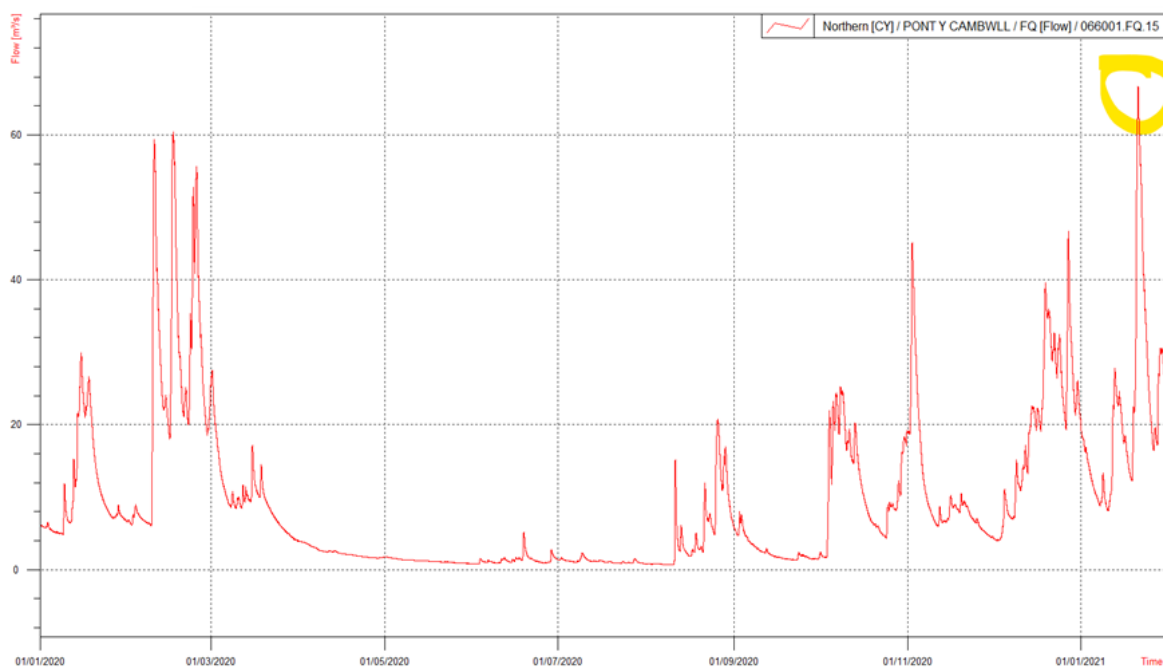
**Table 1.** Rainfall summary totals during Storm Christoph.

Rain gauge	Critical Rainfall (mm)	Duration (hours)	Start date and time of critical rainfall	Return Period (years)
Denbigh STW	54.0	54	18/01/2021 20:15	5
Plas Pigot	76.2	60	18/01/2021 21:45	4

**Table 2.** Maximum return periods recorded at Denbigh STW and Plas Pigot rain gauges during Storm Christoph.

Rain gauge	Oct 2020			Nov 2020			Dec 2020			Jan 2021 (up to 21 Jan)		
	Rainfall mm	LTA	% LTA	Rainfall mm	LTA	% LTA	Rainfall mm	LTA	% LTA	Rainfall mm	LTA (Jan)	% LTA
Denbigh STW	138	90.7	152	48	91.3	53	166	86.9	191	103.2	77.9	132
Plas Pigot	164.6	125.4	131	86.8	137.2	63	217.2	128.2	169	129.6	120.9	107

**Table 3.** Comparison of Long Term Averages in preceding months to Storm Christoph.



**Figure 1:** Pont y Cambwll gauging station hydrograph

### 3 Flood Incident Summary

Discussions with multiple residents of Brookhouse during the site visit of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb (summarised in Table 4), in conjunction with observations and evidence collected, confirmed that during Strom Christoph flooding occurred from the river side of the residential properties. Anecdotal and photographic evidence suggests the peak of flooding occurred at approximately 14:30 on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021. There was no direct evidence that surface waters either conveyed by or accumulated on the adjacent highway directly resulted in property flooding. Whilst inevitable runoff from adjacent land and the highway drainage networks would have been experienced, it is clear that the overriding source of flooding was fluvial due to elevated levels within the Afon Ystrad.

Elevated river levels immediately downstream of the disused railway embankment (directly upstream of Brookhouse) did result in very marginal overtopping of the raised flood defence asset on the left-hand bank of the Ystrad. This was marginal in nature and no evidence or reports of this causing any impacts have arisen during this investigation.

A notable area of scour was observed adjacent to the weir on the right bank of the watercourse, assumed to have been caused by out of bank flows returning to the channel downstream of the weir.

Adhoc walls on the left bank of the watercourse did not overtop during the event. Photographic evidence contained within Appendix A would suggest water levels were able to equalise across the wall located at the downstream extent of the residential properties. The homeowner of this property did suggest a hole had been installed in the wall to allow this to happen as on previous events surface water had accumulated behind the wall and resulted in internal property flooding as door threshold level had been exceeded by the impounded water

Discussions with residents consistently confirmed that flood waters entered residential properties from the rear. This is directly from the left bank of the Afon Ystrad. It is accepted that elevated water levels resulted in flood waters entering properties via several routes – upwelling through permeable floors, via piped drainage and sewerage and directly seeping through property walls.

A number of properties do benefit from IPP, and where installed this was not breached. Several properties surveyed do not have IPP installed. It is also apparent that those properties that did have IPP installed also flooded but not via the route protected by the IPP.

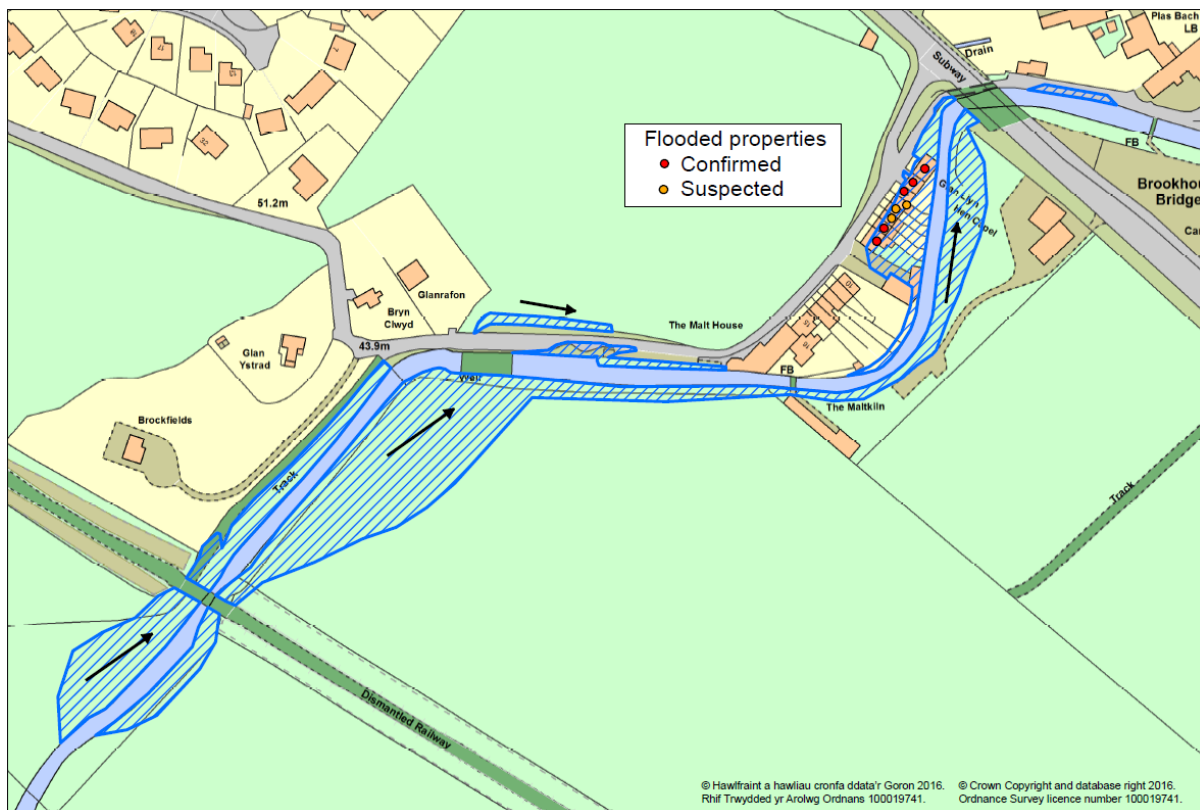
The area is covered by the Clwyd Catchment Flood Alert that was in force at the time of the flooding. Discussions with residents confirmed uptake of this service was variable and it was apparent that several properties had changed ownership recently with associated lack of awareness of this service.

Figure 2 summarises findings of the investigation, indicating affected properties, flood extent and indicative flow routes.

Property	Reported Impact
Glan Llyn	Approximately 5” (13cm) flood water internally. External water level did not breach IPP threshold level (IPP installed). Flood waters appeared to enter property via rear (riverside) external wall (homeowner did not believe waters rose through the floor). Did mention a hole had been made in the base of the garden wall (adjacent to d/s bridge) which allowed water level to equalise across the wall allowing water on the landward side of the wall to escape reducing levels.
Hen Capel	5-10cm on internal flooding. Flood waters came from the rear of the property (no IPP). Front door used to allow waters to pass through

No. 4	Approximately 3" (8cm) flood water internally. Flood water appeared to enter property via drainage connections to shower/bath and through floor.
No. 8	5-10cm on internal flooding. Flood waters came from the rear of the property (IPP fitted) through the floor (not via drains this time).
No. 9	5-10cm Flooding came in at the back of the property, which overlooks the Afon Ystrad, plus flooding came into business shed at rear of the property. No IPP.
Brookhouse Pottery & Malthouse Gallery	Small amount of flooding in rear garden. Across private bridge there was flooding to business studios on Right Bank

**Table 4:** Summary of Flood Investigation questionnaires



**Figure 2:** Storm Christoph flood extent, indicative flow routes and impacted properties.

## 4 Conclusions and Next Steps

Flooding during storm Christoph resulted in inundation of 8 residential properties (5 confirmed, 3 suspected) and one commercial premises. This is attributed to prolonged rainfall falling onto saturated catchments resulting in a significant fluvial response leading to out of bank flows and water permeating through adjacent ground, walls and drainage networks to give rise to internal property flooding. This internal residential property flooding incident is the 5<sup>th</sup> occurrence in recent times – following flooding in Oct. 2000, Dec 2007, Nov. 2012 and February 2020.

The Flood Investigation Report carried out following flooding on 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 2020 made several proposals. To date no progress has been made in considering/actioning these. This addendum report does not propose additional point to those made, but the following observations are made:

**09/02/2020 Proposal: “NRW to consider the viability of the implementation of a river level monitoring site on the Afon Ystrad to assist in earlier warning issued to residents.”**

- Consideration of the ability to provide improved warning and informing to residents, allowing additional time to prepare for flooding, could provide significant betterment at this location.

**09/02/2020 Proposal: “NRW to review the hydraulic modelling to take into account the findings of this 2020 flood investigation report.”**

- Whilst including up to date hydrological and topographical datasets will increase confidence in the understanding of risk to the community of Brookhouse, this will most likely confirm the existing understanding and mechanisms of flooding. Consideration of improved warning and informing services to the community may result in more timely provision of service improvements at this location.

## Appendix 1 – Photographic evidence



Image 1. Extract from local residents' video at the approximate peak river level.





Image 2. Extract from local residents' video showing water levels across the wall at the downstream end at the approximate peak river level.



Image 3. Area of scour on right bank adjacent to weir.

<b>Report to</b>	<b>Communities Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>21<sup>st</sup> October 2021</b>
<b>Lead Member / Officer</b>	<b>Cllr Brian Jones: Lead Member for Waste, Transport and the Environment / Tony Ward: Head of Highways &amp; Environmental Services</b>
<b>Report author</b>	<b>Wayne Hope</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Flood Risk Management Responsibilities in relation to the Rhyl Cut and Prestatyn Gutter</b>

## **1. What is the report about?**

- 1.1. Rhyl Cut and Prestatyn Gutter drain large parts of Rhyl and Prestatyn and play an essential role in protecting thousands of homes and businesses from flooding. As part of a collaborative project, Natural Resources Wales (NRW), with support from Denbighshire County Council (DCC) and Welsh Water (WW), has carried out a flood modelling study, produced a catchment management report and developed a detailed maintenance plan for both watercourses.

## **2. What is the reason for making this report?**

- 2.1. To present the conclusions of the joint study, led by NRW, into whether improvements could be made to the management of the Rhyl Cut and Prestatyn Gutter, adjacent drains and sewers, and to outline each organisation's responsibilities in relation to flood management and flood mitigation.

## **3. What are the Recommendations?**

- 3.1. That members of the Committee provide comments and feedback regarding the contents of this report and the included appendices.

## 4. Report details

- 4.1. Following the flooding that affected parts of Rhyl and Prestatyn in July 2017, NRW commenced a review of the hydrology, management and maintenance of Rhyl Cut and Prestatyn Gutter, which are classed as “main river” watercourses. DCC and WW agreed to support NRW with the project, which will also hopefully provide a better understanding of how each organisation’s assets interact, particularly during times of heavy rainfall.
- 4.2. The project was carried out in three phases.
  - i. Phase 1 involved a flood risk modelling study, to give NRW a better understanding of the hydrology of the river catchments.
  - ii. Phase 2 resulted in a catchment management report, which took a broad overview of the management of Rhyl Cut and Prestatyn Gutter and the areas surrounding the two watercourses.
  - iii. Phase 3 has built on the recommendations within the Phase 2 management report and involved discussions within NRW’s operational maintenance teams to consider the impacts of maintenance within different sub-reaches of the watercourses. However, there is still some work to carry out in terms of producing a comprehensive maintenance and management plan and this will require a process of public and stakeholder consultation.
- 4.3. NRW has produced a briefing note and overview report of the project, which will be presented to the Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2021.
- 4.4. The Member of Parliament for the Vale of Clwyd, Dr James Davies MP, presented a petition to Parliament on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021, calling for a full public sector maintenance programme to be introduced to manage Rhyl Cut and Prestatyn Gutter (<https://www.jamesdavies.org.uk/news/rhyl-cut-and-prestatyn-gutter-petition-presented-parliament>).

## 5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

- 5.1. One of the Council’s corporate priorities for 2017 to 2022 is to provide an attractive and protected environment, supporting wellbeing and economic prosperity. One of the measures identified in the Corporate Plan to enable this is

to reduce the number of properties at risk of flooding in Denbighshire. The Council's support to the project, and work carried out in collaboration with NRW and WW in developing a better understanding of the flood risk management and maintenance of Rhyl Cut and Prestatyn Gutter has helped to achieve this measure.

## **6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

6.1. The project is unlikely to result in any significant changes to the Council's current activities, so any resultant costs are likely to be minimal. Other services won't be affected. However, any additional maintenance activities, such as those suggested by the recent petition to Parliament (see section 4.4 of this report), would have significant budget implications for the Council and might set a precedent for other watercourses in the county.

## **7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?**

7.1. This report refers mainly to matters outside the Council's jurisdiction, so a Well-being Impact Assessment hasn't been carried out.

## **8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

8.1. As part of the project, NRW has consulted with members of the public, town and community councillors, local Members, the local MP and MS (current and previous), relevant stakeholders and professional partners.

## **9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

9.1 As noted in Section 6 the project is unlikely to result in any significant changes to the Council's current activities, so any resultant costs are likely to be minimal and should be maintained within existing revenue budgets. Any additional works will be subject to normal Council approval procedures if required.

## **10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

10.1. There are no significant risks to the Council as a consequence of the project.

## **11. Power to make the decision**

11.1. The Council has powers in relation of flood risk and drainage matters under the Flood and Water Management Act (2010) and the Land Drainage Act (1991).

11.2. The Committee's powers in relation to policy development and review and scrutinising the Council and other public bodies' performance are outlined in Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and Section 7.4 of the Council's Constitution.

<b>Report to</b>	<b>Communities Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>21 October 2021</b>
<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Rhian Evans, Scrutiny Co-ordinator</b>
<b>Report author</b>	<b>Rhian Evans, Scrutiny Co-ordinator</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Scrutiny Work Programme</b>

## **1. What is the report about?**

The report seeks Communities Scrutiny Committee to review its draft forward work programme. In doing so the Committee is asked to reflect on the implications of the focus on business critical operations during the emergency phase of the COVID -19 pandemic and the programmes of work underway or being planned under the recovery phase, whilst also having regard to items of business already on its forward work programme prior to the pandemic.

## **2. What is the reason for making this report?**

To seek the Committee to review and agree on its programme of future work, and to update members on relevant issues.

## **3. What are the Recommendations?**

That the Committee

- 3.1 considers the information provided and approves, revises or amends its forward work programme as it deems appropriate; and
- 3.2 determines whether any key messages or themes from the current meeting should be publicised via the press and/or social media.

## 4. Report details

- 4.1 Section 7 of Denbighshire County Council's Constitution sets out each Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference, functions and membership, as well as the rules of procedure and debate.
- 4.2 The Constitution stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must set, and regularly review, a programme for their future work. By reviewing and prioritising issues, members are able to ensure that the work programme delivers a member-led agenda.
- 4.3 For a number of years it has been an adopted practice in Denbighshire for scrutiny committees to limit the number of reports considered at any one meeting to a maximum of four plus the Committee's own work programme report. The aim of this approach is to facilitate detailed and effective debate on each topic.
- 4.4 In recent years the Welsh Government (WG) and Audit Wales (AW) have highlighted the need to strengthen scrutiny's role across local government and public services in Wales, including utilising scrutiny as a means of engaging with residents and service-users. From now on scrutiny will be expected to engage better and more frequently with the public with a view to securing better decisions which ultimately lead to better outcomes for citizens. AW will measure scrutiny's effectiveness in fulfilling these expectations.
- 4.5 Having regard to the national vision for scrutiny whilst at the same time focussing on local priorities, the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) recommended that the Council's scrutiny committees should, when deciding on their work programmes, focus on the following key areas:
- budget savings;
  - achievement of the Corporate Plan objectives (with particular emphasis on their deliverability during a period of financial austerity);
  - any other items agreed by the Scrutiny Committee (or the SCVCG) as high priority (based on the PAPER test criteria – see reverse side of the 'Member Proposal Form' at Appendix 2);



- Urgent, unforeseen or high priority issues; and
- Supporting the Council's recovery work in relation to the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on Council services, the local economy and the county's communities

#### 4.6 Scrutiny Proposal Forms

As mentioned in paragraph 4.2 above the Council's Constitution requires scrutiny committees to prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work. To assist the process of prioritising reports, if officers are of the view that a subject merits time for discussion on the Committee's business agenda they have to formally request the Committee to consider receiving a report on that topic. This is done via the submission of a 'proposal form' which clarifies the purpose, importance and potential outcomes of suggested subjects. No officer proposal forms have been received for consideration at the current meeting.

- 4.7 With a view to making better use of scrutiny's time by focussing committees' resources on detailed examination of subjects, adding value through the decision-making process and securing better outcomes for residents, the SCVCG decided that members, as well as officers, should complete 'scrutiny proposal forms' outlining the reasons why they think a particular subject would benefit from scrutiny's input. A copy of the 'member's proposal form' can be seen at Appendix 2. The reverse side of this form contains a flowchart listing questions which members should consider when proposing an item for scrutiny, and which committees should ask when determining a topic's suitability for inclusion on a scrutiny forward work programme. If, having followed this process, a topic is not deemed suitable for formal examination by a scrutiny committee, alternative channels for sharing the information or examining the matter can be considered e.g. the provision of an 'information report', or if the matter is of a very local nature examination by the relevant Member Area Group (MAG). No items should be included on a forward work programme without a 'scrutiny proposal form' being completed and accepted for inclusion by the Committee or the SCVCG. Assistance with their completion is available from the Scrutiny Co-ordinator.

### Cabinet Forward Work Programme

- 4.8 When determining their programme of future work it is useful for scrutiny committees to have regard to Cabinet's scheduled programme of work. For this purpose, a copy of the Cabinet's forward work programme is attached at Appendix 3.

### Progress on Committee Resolutions

- 4.9 A table summarising recent Committee resolutions and advising members on progress with their implementation is attached at Appendix 4 to this report.

## **5. Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group**

Under the Council's scrutiny arrangements, the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) performs the role of a coordinating committee. The Group met on 9 September 2021. The following topics were referred from the Group to this Committee for consideration:

- Prestatyn Flood Defence Scheme (scheduled for presentation in December 2021)
- Central Rhyl Flood Defence Scheme (scheduled for presentation in December 2021)
- Highways Maintenance Policy for Unclassified Roads (scheduled for presentation in January 2022)
- Mistreatment of Dogs (scheduled for presentation in March 2022)
- Second Homes and Short-Term Holiday Lets (scheduled for presentation in March 2022)

At the last meeting the Committee instructed the Scrutiny Co-ordinator to reschedule items as necessary in order to accommodate any potential new topics that required the Committee's attention. The Committee's revised forward work programme is attached at Appendix 1 to this report for the Committee's consideration.

The Group's scheduled to hold its next meeting on the 25 November 2021.

## **6. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

Effective scrutiny will assist the Council to deliver its corporate priorities in line with community needs and residents' wishes. Continual development and review of a coordinated work programme will assist the Council to deliver its corporate priorities, improve outcomes for residents whilst also managing austere budget and resource pressures.

## **7. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

Services may need to allocate officer time to assist the Committee with the activities identified in the forward work programme, and with any actions that may result following consideration of those items.

## **8. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?**

A Well-being Impact Assessment has not been undertaken in relation to the purpose or contents of this report. However, Scrutiny through its work in examining service delivery, policies, procedures and proposals will consider their impact or potential impact on the sustainable development principle and the well-being goals stipulated in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

## **9. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

None required for this report. However, the report itself and the consideration of the forward work programme represent a consultation process with the Committee with respect to its programme of future work.

## **10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

No risks have been identified with respect to the consideration of the Committee's forward work programme. However, by regularly reviewing its forward work programme the Committee can ensure that areas of risk are considered and examined as and when they are identified, and recommendations are made with a view to addressing those risks.

## **11. Power to make the decision**

11.1 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

11.2 Section 7.11 of the Council's Constitution stipulates that scrutiny committees and/or the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group will be responsible for setting their own work programmes, taking into account the wishes of Members of the Committee who are not members of the largest political group on the Council.

### **Contact Officer:**

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## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Note: Items entered in italics have not been approved for submission by the Committee. Such reports are listed here for information, pending formal approval.

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
9 December	<b>Cllr. Brian Jones</b>	1. New Waste & Recycling Model: Pilot Projects Update	To detail the results and outcomes of the pilot projects undertaken in the West Rhyl and Bron y Crest, Denbigh areas as forerunners for the new model	Identification of any problems or issues raised during the pilots and solutions to address them ahead of the final design of the new Service model prior to its rollout countywide in order to support the delivery of the Council's Environment corporate priority whilst meeting statutory recycling targets	Tony Ward/Tara Dumas	May 2021
	<b>Leader &amp; Cllr. Mark Young</b>	2. Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) process	Pre-decision scrutiny of the process undertaken to develop the draft GTAA under the auspices of the Task and Finish Group prior to its submission to Cabinet for approval	Assurances that elected members and representatives of the Gypsy and Traveller community have been engaged and involved with the development of the draft GTAA prior to its submission to Cabinet for approval	Emlyn Jones/Angela Loftus/Kim Waller	May 2021
	<b>Cllr. Brian Jones</b>	3. Central Rhyl Flood Defence Scheme – Denbighshire County Council's Governance	To examine the scope and findings of the stakeholder and public consultation on the scheme	Pre-decision scrutiny of the scope of the consultation exercise undertaken in relation to the scheme along with its findings with a view to providing assurances that they are robust and that appropriate governance arrangements are in place prior to	Matthew Hazelwood/Wayne Hope	By SCVCG September 2021

## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
			and Community Consultation Report		submitting the Scheme to Cabinet and Council for approval	
	<b>Cllr. Brian Jones</b>	4.	Prestatyn Flood Defence Scheme – Denbighshire County Council’s Governance and Community Consultation Report	To examine the scope and findings of the stakeholder and public consultation on the scheme	Pre-decision scrutiny of the scope of the consultation exercise undertaken in relation to the scheme along with its findings with a view to providing assurances that they are robust and that appropriate governance arrangements are in place prior to submitting the Scheme to Cabinet and Council for approval	Matthew Hazelwood/Wayne Hope By SCVCG September 2021
20 January 2022	<b>Cllr. Mark Young</b>	1.	<i>Planning Compliance Charter  (may be presented earlier if other items are not available (tbc))</i>	<i>To examine the effectiveness of the Planning Compliance Charter with the county’s city, town and community councils in addressing planning contraventions, non-compliance and enforcement issues across the county</i>	<i>An evaluation of the Charter’s effectiveness in order to determine whether recommendations are required to strengthen the Charter or increase resources available for planning enforcement across the county</i>	<i>Emlyn Jones/Adam Turner  By SCVCG October 2020 (rescheduled by Committee January 2021 due to COVID-19)</i>
	<b>Leader</b>	2.	<i>Rhyl Regeneration Programme</i>	<i>To examine the effectiveness of the Programme Board’s work in</i>	<i>Identification of any barriers or slippages and the formulation of recommendations to try and address them and sustain the delivery of the</i>	<i>Graham Boase/Nicola Caie  January 2021</i>

## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
				<i>delivering the regeneration programme</i>	<i>programme to secure the regeneration of Rhyl to benefit the economy and the lives of the town's residents and the county in general</i>		
	<b>Cllr. Brian Jones</b>	3.	<i>Highways Maintenance Policies for Unclassified Roads</i>	<i>To examine the Council's policy for maintaining unclassified roads along with the criteria and formula that will be applied for allocating and spending the additional funding allocated towards highways maintenance in the county</i>	<i>To ensure that the county's unclassified roads receive their fair share of the funding allocated towards highways maintenance as the majority of the county's roads are unclassified. These roads they are key to delivering the Council's connected communities corporate priority and support resilience within the communities.</i>	<i>Tony Ward/Tim Towers</i>	<i>By SCVCG September 2021</i>
	<b>Cllr. Huw Hilditch-Roberts</b>	4.	<i>Safeguarding Welsh place names in Denbighshire (tbc)</i>	<i>To detail the Council's powers in relation to safeguarding Welsh and historical place names in the county</i>	<i>A detailed examination of whether the Council is fully utilising all its powers in relation to safeguarding Welsh and historical names in both the natural and built environment to ensure that Welsh names are not replaced or displaced by English names</i>	<i>Manon Celyn/Liz Grieve/Alan Smith/Emlyn Jones/Paul Mead/Gary Williams/Lisa Jones/Tim Dillon</i>	<i>By SCVCG July 2021</i>
10 March	<b>Leader</b>	1.	<i>Draft Tourism Signage Strategy for Denbighshire (tbc)</i>	<i>To examine the draft Tourism Signage Strategy for the county developed by the</i>	<i>The development of a tourism signage strategy that complements trunk road signage and technological innovations in the field of tourism, takes into account the aims of 'The</i>	<i>Mike Jones/Peter McDermott</i>	<i>March 2020 (rescheduled due to COVID-19 (Sept &amp; Dec</i>

## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
				<i>Working Group including potential funding sources and the anticipated timescale for the Strategy's delivery</i>	<i>Wales Way' project, attracts visitors and increases the value of tourism spend in the county in line with the corporate priority relating to the Environment, and in-keeping with the outcomes of Denbighshire's Tourism Strategy</i>		<i>20 &amp; Sept 2021))</i>
	<b>Cllr. Mark Young</b>	2.	<i>Mistreatment of Dogs</i>	<i>To examine the extent of legal and illegal dog sales within Denbighshire (particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic) – including the number of complaints received, investigated and substantiated and how various agencies work together to tackle any problems are reported</i>	<i>Determination of whether working relationships need to be strengthened or improved in order to deal with any problems or deter future problems in relation to this matter with a view to supporting the viability of properly licensed traders to operate thus reducing the suffering of the animals</i>	<i>Emlyn Jones/Gareth Roberts/Glesni Owen</i>	<i>By SCVCG September 2021</i>
	<b>Cllr. Mark Young</b>	3.	<i>Second Homes and Short-Term Holiday Lets</i>	<i>To examine the planning requirements in relation to these types of properties/dwelling</i>	<i>Determination on whether the requirements of Planning legislation in relation to these types of properties are sufficiently robust and are effectively applied to ensure that local residents are not deprived of the availability of affordable properties to</i>	<i>Emlyn Jones/Paul Mead/Angela Loftus</i>	<i>By SCVCG September 2021</i>



## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
					<i>buy or rent in Denbighshire. This will support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Priority relating to Housing</i>		
30 July							
8 September	<b>Cllr. Tony Thomas</b>	1.	<i>Wildflower Meadow Project</i>	To: (i) evaluate the effectiveness of the steps taken to improve engagement and increase publicity with all stakeholders in relation of the project; (ii) consider the progress made to date in delivering its expected benefits; and (iii) seek members' support for the Project	(i) To secure the delivery of the expected outcomes which will support the realisation of the Council's corporate priority relating to the Environment as well as contributing towards the delivery of its Ecological and Climate Change Strategy; and (ii) Re-inforce elected members' support for the project and its aims and objectives to enable them to explain to residents the rationale behind the project and how it contributes towards the wider national environmental, health and well-being objectives	<i>Tony Ward/Emlyn Jones/Joel Walley</i>	<i>September 2021</i>
20 October							
8 December							

## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
June/July 2023	<b>Cllr. Brian Jones</b>	1. <i>Llangollen Car Park Tariff Pilot Scheme</i>	<i>To outline the effectiveness of the pilot scheme for varying car park tariffs in Llangollen</i>	<i>Identification of lessons learnt from the pilot scheme's implementation and operation in readiness for the introduction of similar schemes in other areas in future</i>	<i>Emlyn Jones/Mike Jones/Peter Lea</i>	<i>January 2021</i>

## Future Issues

Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
Flood Risk Management and Riparian Land Ownership  (late 2021 tbc)	To present the findings and conclusions of the Task and Finish Group established to examine methods of strengthening interaction and working relationships between public flood risk management authorities and riparian landowners across the county	To identify methods and make recommendations in relation to the provision of clear communication channels, building levels of mutual trust, and strengthening working relationships between public flood risk management authorities, riparian landowners and their representatives to ensure effective management of watercourses with a view to reducing the risk of flooding in future	Tony Ward/Wayne Hope	December 2020

## For future years

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## Communities Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

**Information/Consultation Reports**

<b>Information / Consultation</b>	<b>Item (description / title)</b>	<b>Purpose of report</b>	<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Date Entered</b>
<b>INFORMATION</b> (for circulation autumn 2021 <i>tbc once COVID-19 restrictions permit the work to take place</i> )	Community Impact Assessment on the communities of Rhewl and Llanynys	To present the findings of the community impact assessment undertaken following the closure of Ysgol Rhewl as agreed as part of the modernising education programme	Geraint Davies/James Curran	December 2020

**Note for officers – Committee Report Deadlines**

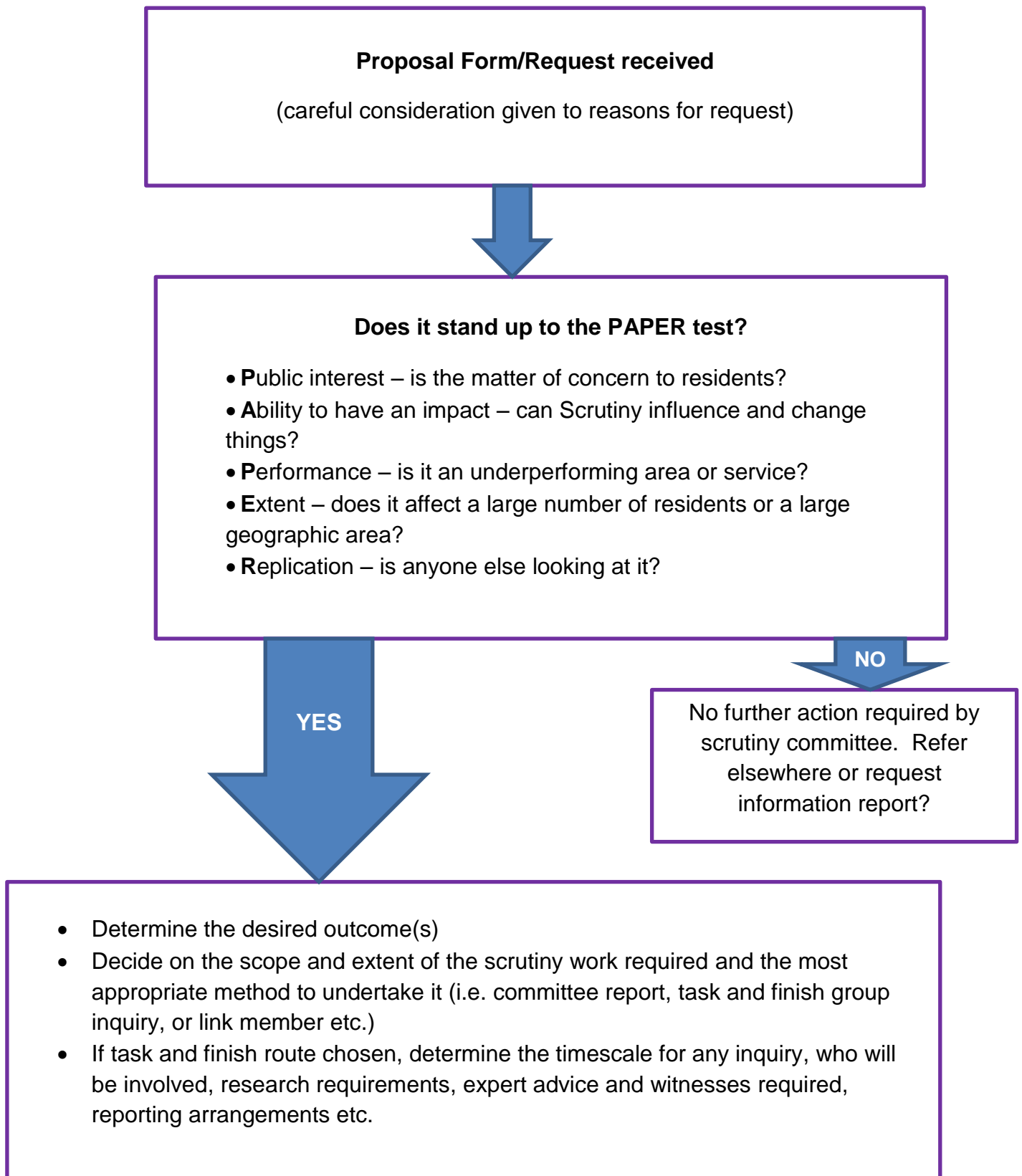
Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
9 December	<b>25 November</b>	20 January 2022	<b>6 January 2022</b>	10 March	<b>24 February</b>

06/10/2021 RhE

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<b>Member Proposal Form for Scrutiny Forward Work Programme</b>	
<b>NAME OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>TIMESCALE FOR CONSIDERATION</b>	
<b>TOPIC</b>	
<b>What needs to be scrutinised (and why)?</b>	
<b>Is the matter one of concern to residents/local businesses?</b>	<b>YES/NO</b>
<b>Can Scrutiny influence and change things?</b> (if 'yes' please state how you think scrutiny can influence or change things)	<b>YES/NO</b>
<b>Does the matter relate to an underperforming service or area?</b>	<b>YES/NO</b>
<b>Does the matter affect a large number of residents or a large geographical area of the County</b> (if 'yes' please give an indication of the size of the affected group or area)	<b>YES/NO</b>
<b>Is the matter linked to the Council's Corporate priorities</b> (if 'yes' please state which priority/priorities)	<b>YES/NO</b>
<b>To your knowledge is anyone else looking at this matter?</b> (If 'yes', please say who is looking at it)	<b>YES/NO</b>
<b>If the topic is accepted for scrutiny who would you want to invite to attend e.g. Lead Member, officers, external experts, service-users?</b>	
<b>Name of Councillor/Co-opted Member</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

## Consideration of a topic's suitability for scrutiny



## Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
<b>19 Oct</b>	1	Graphic Design and Print Framework	To seek approval for the tender award to suppliers	Yes	Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts / Sian Owen / Cheryl Evans
	2	Award of the Concession Contract for the operation of Household Recycling Centres (Conwy and Denbighshire)	To seek approval of the contract award [by Conwy County Borough Council]	Yes	Councillor Brian Jones / Tony Ward / Tara Dumas / Alan L Roberts
	3	Proposed approach to tendering for phase 2 contract for DCC Waste Transfer Station, Colomendy Industrial Estate, Denbigh	To seek Cabinet approval for the tender process	Yes	Councillor Brian Jones / Tony Ward / Peter Clayton
	4	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	5	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>23 Nov</b>	1	Corporate Plan Update: July to September 2021	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2017 – 2022	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Iolo McGregor
	2	Levelling Up – Vale of Clwyd and Clwyd West bid approval	Bid Approval	Yes	Councillor Hugh Evans / Emlyn Jones / Gareth

## Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
					Roberts
	3	Contract Award – Redevelopment of the former library in Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn	To award the construction contract for council housing development	Yes	Councillors Tony Thomas & Julian Thompson-Hill / Mark Dixon
	4	Future of Meifod	To consider the future operation of services at Meifod following the recent engagement exercise with citizens who attend and their families	Yes	Councillor Bobby Feeley / Phil Gilroy
	5	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	6	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>14 Dec</b>	1	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan	To approve the new Welsh in Education Strategic Plan before submission to Welsh Government.	Tbc	Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts/ Carwyn Edwards
	2	Queens Market Phase 1 – award construction contract	To seek approval to award a contract for the delivery of Phase 1 of the Queens	Yes	Councillor Hugh Evans / Russell Vaughan



## Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
			Building Rhyl		
	3	Proposed Minimum Standard for Denbighshire County Council New Build and Major Extension/Refurbishment Construction Projects	A decision is required on the adoption and implementation of the proposed minimum standard which would impose a duty on all Council services to ensure all new build and major extensions/refurbishment construction projects are built to meet in use and embodied carbon targets	Yes	Councillor Brian Jones / David Lorey
	4	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	5	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
<b>18 Jan</b>	1	Central Rhyl Flood Defence Scheme	To recommend that Council agree the funding for the schemes and permit the service to proceed to the construction phase	Tbc	Councillor Brian Jones / Tony Ward / Wayne Hope / Matthew Hazlewood / Helen Johnson
	2	Prestatyn Flood Defence	To recommend that Council	Tbc	Councillor Brian Jones / Tony

## Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
		Scheme	agree the funding for the schemes and permit the service to proceed to the construction phase		Ward / Wayne Hope / Matthew Hazlewood / Helen Johnson
	3	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	4	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator

Note for officers – Cabinet Report Deadlines

<i>Meeting</i>	<b><i>Deadline</i></b>	<i>Meeting</i>	<b><i>Deadline</i></b>	<i>Meeting</i>	<b><i>Deadline</i></b>
<i>October</i>	<b><i>5 October</i></b>	<i>November</i>	<b><i>9 November</i></b>	<i>December</i>	<b><i>30 November</i></b>

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Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc

## Progress with Committee Resolutions

Date of Meeting	Item number and title	Resolution	Progress
9 September 2021	5. Wildflower Meadow Project	<p><b>RESOLVED</b>, subject to the above observations –</p> <p>(a) to confirm its support for the principle that residential/urban areas can be appropriate locations for wildflower meadows;</p> <p>(b) to require officers to improve engagement and publicity with local members, city, town and community councils, and communities themselves in relation to the project in their areas and its development going forward;</p> <p>(c) that ‘injurious and noxious weed’ species, such as ragwort, docks and thistles are controlled more effectively within the Wildflower Meadow sites;</p> <p>(d) request that officers liaise and work with colleagues from the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB) and the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency (NMWTRA) with a view to ensuring that they all</p>	<p>Lead Member and relevant officers informed of the Committee’s recommendations.</p> <p>A further progress report has been scheduled into the Committee’s forward work programme for presentation at its September 2022 meeting (see Appendix 1)</p>

		<p><i>manage their grass verge and wildflower meadow areas in a similar way with a view to complementing each other's approach and supporting the biodiversity and ecological health of the area whilst safeguarding the health and safety of road users;</i></p> <p><i>(e) to request that an update report on the progress made with the delivery and development of the Wildflower Meadow Project be presented to the Committee in 12 months' time, and</i></p> <p><i>(f) to confirm that as part of its consideration it had read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment, attached as Appendix 1 to the report.</i></p>	
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