

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

KENT FLOOD RISK AND WATER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent Flood Risk and Water Management Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 2 July 2025.

PRESENT: Mr J Baker, Mr W Chapman (Chair), Ms S Emberson, Mr J Finch, Mr M Paul, Mr M J Sole and Mr S Heaven

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M A J Hood, Cllr C Gale (Dartford Borough Council), Cllr Summersgill (Maidstone Borough Council), Charles Mackonochie (KALC), Cllr D Kent (Tonbridge Wells Borough Council), Cllr T Hills (Folkestone & Hythe Borough Council) Ms G Brown (KALC)

IN ATTENDANCE: Andy Jeffrey (Head of Resilience and Emergency Planning)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Election of Chair
(Item 2)

Mr Paul proposed, and Mr Finch seconded that Mr Chapman be elected Chair of the Flood Risk and Water Management Committee. No further nominations were received.

RESOLVED that Mr W Chapman be elected Chair of the Committee.

2. Apologies and Substitutes
(Item 3)

Apologies were received from Mr Yates (Thanet BC), Mr Boughton (Tonbridge & Malling BC) and Mr Cornell (Canterbury CC)

3. Declarations of Interest by Members in Items on the Agenda
(Item 4)

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of the meeting on 05/02/2025
(Item 5)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2025 were an accurate record and that they be signed by the Chair

5. Environment Agency and Met Office Alerts and Warnings and KCC severe weather response activity
(Item 6)

Andy Jeffery, Head of Resilience and Emergency Planning, was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Jeffery outlined the report.
2. In response to comments and questions from guests and Members the discussion covered the following:
 - a) Members queried the remit of the committee, noting the absence of a formal introduction to the committee for both new and returning Members. There was also a discussion about the committee's powers and its intended role going forward.
 - b) Members were encouraged to bring forward relevant items for discussion at future meetings. It was also agreed that a concise overview of the committee's powers and responsibilities be added to a future agenda setting as a matter of priority.
 - c) Mr Hood requested that representatives from Southeast Water be invited to attend the next Committee meeting in October 2025 in light of the recent disruptions to Kent's water supply.
 - d) The attending officer noted the request from Members that the Environment Agency be present at future meetings to answer questions on their respective data submissions held within the presented report.
 - e) Mr Hills highlighted inconsistencies in the report, specifically on pages 15 and 16, where information regarding flood zones 2 and 3 and related flood defences appeared unclear and contradictory. Mr Hills requested that the highlighted sections be made more transparent for readers of the report. The officer noted the feedback and would look to amend accordingly.
 - f) The Chair confirmed that the relevant agencies would be approached to attend the next Committee meeting. Mr Hood responded that as the committee was of a scrutiny nature there was an expectation that professional bodies attend when requested.
 - g) Mr Hills addressed a number of Members points regarding partner agencies and urged that adequate time be given to allow the collation and production of reports to future committees.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- note the warnings received since the last meeting of the Committee; contribute to further planning and comply with response policy and practice through oversight and debate.
 - Agree invite the Environment Agency and the Met Office to present at future meetings.
 - Agree that the Resilience & Emergency Planning Service focusses on presenting data relating to KCC's response and KCC preparedness for severe weather, flooding, and water supply incidents.