

COUNCIL MEETING

10 July 2007

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 5.6

The following question has been asked pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 5.6 by Mr Geoff Rowe:

“After the floods of 2000/01 a number of Aylesford residents were promised by TMBC that effective measures would be undertaken to protect their properties against potential future flood risks. Some temporary measures were undertaken. One of the long term solutions, they were promised, was the construction of a water collection and control point in a field north west of the village confines. This project would be undertaken alongside RMC who had wished to create a new access point to Aylesford Sand Quarry off Rochester Road.

The new owners of the Sand Quarry (Cemex) have reported that they are no longer planning to provide a new access point. Would the appropriate Cabinet Member please give me an assurance that TMBC still intends to progress flood amelioration measures for Aylesford village.”

Response by Councillor Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member for Planning and Transportation

“As the questioner rightly says, the Borough Council has been active in seeking protection from flooding for the neighbourhood around Rochester Road and Bush Row in Aylesford. This project is unrelated to any work intended to be carried out by RMC on a new access road nor is it affected in any way by a decision of the new owner not to proceed.

The Rochester Road stream is classed as a 'critical ordinary watercourse' and responsibility for it, in land drainage terms, transferred to the Environment Agency in April 2006. Since the time of the transfer, the Borough Council has continued to advocate a flood alleviation scheme and has been working in partnership with the Environment Agency to that end, reflecting the successful approach used to achieve a similar project at East Peckham.

The current focus of the work involves completing the hydrographic model, testing potential solutions for flood storage and mitigation and working out the priority rating of the proposed scheme. Officers have been closely involved and assisted in this work and progress has been regularly reported to the Council's Planning and Transportation Advisory Board in the context of the engineering capital plan. If the priority is achieved I am hopeful that the Environment Agency will be able to programme and build the project in the next financial year, 2008/09 when it will be important for the local community to be involved during the detailed planning and implementation.”