

### *Let flood conference be the turning point*

The Gloucestershire Flooding Conference, which focussed on future resilience, was jointly hosted by Gloucestershire First and Gloucestershire County Council.

Speakers during the morning were introduced by Gloucestershire First chairman Chas Fellows and included Peter Madden (Forum for the Future), Duncan Jordan from the County Council, Stan Jones of Gloucestershire First, Paul Tullett (Environment Agency) and Phil Gelder (Severn Trent).

Case studies were presented by Steve Glynn and Neil Carrington from Ecclesiastical Insurance and Ray Bell from Design Installation Services.

The afternoon debate was introduced by County Council leader Barry Dare, who launched the Local Government Flood Forum.

Speakers included Dr Andy Johnston (Local Government Information Unit), Mary Dhonau (National Flood Forum), Bill Wiggin MP, the shadow minister for agriculture and fisheries, Prof Carolyn Roberts, associate dean at the University of Gloucestershire, Ian Mean from Gloucestershire Media and Mark Hurrell of BBC Radio Gloucestershire.

Some 200 people attended the conference, which had been designed to summarise the economic impact of the floods, to show what practical and financial support had been provided and outline measures to protect business and infrastructure should the crisis be repeated.

After the conference, Stan Jones, the managing director of Gloucestershire First said: “While no-one can predict the future, we hope the conference will provide the turning point for the county.

“Virtually all business affected last July are now back in business as companies large and small showed huge resolve to keep going during the crisis or resume soon after.

“I would like to thank all partner organisations for pulling together at this time, for their financial support and the effort made subsequently to demonstrate this county is back in business and raring to go.”

Pictured: Cllr Chas Fellows, chairman of Gloucestershire First, with Cllr Barry Dare, leader, Gloucestershire County Council, at the flooding conference held in Gloucester.

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