

NATIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON FLOODING ISSUES

WORK PLAN

Purpose

1. This paper outlines the proposed work plan for the National Technical Advisory Group on Flooding Issues (“the Group”) until September 2004.

Background

2. First and foremost the Group has been set up to advise the Scottish Executive on the provision of technical advice on flood risk management. The range of technical guidance (outlined below) that the Group will be required to focus on is likely to be wide ranging. We therefore anticipate that most of the detailed work will be done through sub-groups set up by the Group. The Group will meet until September 2004 and report outcomes by November 2004. In view of the time constraints on the Group, we recognise that, exceptionally, some of the work may best be carried out on a consultancy basis.

Technical Guidance

3. The Group will offer expert advice to the Executive to help produce technical guidance for local authorities and interested parties on managing flood risk in Scotland from Environment Group’s interest. At the first meeting the Group will be asked to consider the relevance to Scotland of the existing Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) guidance (Flood and coastal defence Project appraisal guidance: procedural guidance for operating authorities). Paper NTAG2003(5) gives brief details of the DEFRA guidance, which can be found at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environ/fcd/pubs/pagn/default.htm>. Members will also be asked to consider the need for technical guidance in areas not covered by DEFRA guidance, for example, in connection with the process and procedures to be followed when promoting a flood alleviation scheme. Issues to be covered could include the statutory process and funding.

4. After considering the relevance of the DEFRA guidance, members will be asked to consider the following options for Scottish guidance:

- (a) adopt DEFRA guidance as it stands (and accept that institutional aspects may not apply in Scotland);
- (b) adopt the substance of DEFRA guidance but amend it to reflect Scottish institutional/statutory arrangements;
- (c) option (b) with additional guidance on e.g. sustainable flood management; or
- (d) develop separate and different guidance.

5. To initiate discussion at the first meeting, we propose that option (c) should be the starting point as there is a need for Scotland-specific guidance, some of which could be based on existing DEFRA guidance. The Executive guidance should take the form of 7 volumes set out as follows:

- **Chapter one:** Overview and statutory process
- **Chapter two:** Design standards (incorporating climate change developments)
- **Chapter three:** Sewer flooding
- **Chapter four:** Economic appraisal (incorporating risk assessment)
- **Chapter five:** Finance
- **Chapter six:** Environment/ Sustainable flood management
- **Chapter seven:** Post project evaluation

In coming to a decision about the final content of technical guidance the Group will be asked to consider the relevance of the following areas in relation to flood risk management.

Second Generation/ Indicative flood risk Maps

6. The Group will discuss the role of second generation maps in helping to communicate flood risk to a wide audience including council departments, developers and the public. It will offer advice on how the maps might be used to help prevent inappropriate development in flood risk areas.

Scottish Planning Policy 7 – planning and flooding (“SPP7”)

7. The new SPP7 will further strengthen advice to planning authorities about avoiding inappropriate development in flood risk areas. The Executive will give the Group progress reports on the production of the revised SPP7 and related Planning Advice Note. This will ensure that the technical guidance reflects the latest planning advice.

Prioritisation of flood prevention schemes

8. Traditionally councils have adopted a reactive approach to addressing flood risk management. The Group gives an opportunity for the discussions/methodology of a prioritisation system for a more proactive approach to take account of financial constraints. The Group will be asked to consider how guidance might offer a more strategic approach to flood risk management with regard to scheme prioritisation.

Flood warning systems and dissemination

9. Allan Wilson, the Deputy Minister for the Environment and Rural Development, announced in October 2003 that £1.8m would be made available to SEPA to provide new formal flood warning schemes for the Clyde, Kelvin and Irvine valleys. The new schemes will cover a further 16,000 properties on flood plains bringing the total number of properties to benefit from this service to 47,000 - 60% of the total properties at risk of flooding from rivers. The Group will be invited to consider the role of flood warning systems, any further extension to the system and identify the best ways to disseminate flood warning information to the public at risk. It will also discuss how to address the needs of the remaining 40% of households.

Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act

10. Part 1 of the Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 (“the 2003 Act”) transposes the European Water Framework Directive, and in doing so introduces a new framework for the management and protection of Scotland's water environment. The Executive will provide feedback to the Group on progress being made taking forward the water framework directive through the 2003 Act.

River basin management

11. Chapter 2 of the 2003 Act promotes river basin management in particular it calls for river basin districts to be established. The designation of river basin districts will be completed by 22 December. The guidance on flood risk management will need to establish clear links with river basin management planning.

Sustainable flood management

12. At the first meeting, members will consider a paper (NTAG2003(4)) on the background to the duty in Part 2 of the 2003 Act for the relevant authorities to promote sustainable flood management. The Group will offer advice to the Executive to help define sustainable flood management and prepare guidance to local authorities.

Sustainable (urban) drainage systems (SuDS)

13. National guidance on flood risk management must recognise the importance of SuDS. The Group will take into account the role of SuDS within flood risk management when considering the scope of the guidance.

Research

14. The Executive will produce a summary of on-going (and proposed) research studies for the second meeting. This will include details of research to be carried out to set up a national archive of existing flood alleviation schemes, which will also show assets currently at risk of flooding. The Group will be asked to propose and discuss ideas for future research.

15. The Office of Science and Technology Foresight programme is currently carrying out a futures project to produce a challenging and long-term vision for the future of flood and coastal defence. The project takes account of the many uncertainties, is robust, and can be used as a basis to inform policy and its delivery. The Group will be given an opportunity to discuss the findings of the project as they become available.

16. The Group will be kept up to date on the flood-risk related activities of the Scotland and Northern Ireland Forum for Environmental Research (SNIFFER).

Building standards

17. The Group will consider the contribution that building standards can make to the management of flood risk.

Temporary/demountable defences

18. The Group will be asked to advise on the role of demountable defences in flood alleviation schemes, in particular consideration as capital works.

Awareness raising

19. Members will consider how the work of the Group might feed into the annual SEPA Flood Awareness Campaign in autumn 2004, which is an integral part of the Executive's flooding framework.

Final report of the CoSLA Flooding Task Group

20. The Group will reflect on and discuss the recommendations made by the CoSLA report and how the findings might inform national technical guidance. This will be on the agenda for the second meeting.

“Learning to Live With Rivers” report

21. A copy of the conclusions and recommendations of this report, prepared by the Institution of Civil Engineers at the request of the UK Government, will be made available to members and the Group will be asked to consider the relevance of the report and its findings for Scotland. This will be tabled for discussion at the second meeting.

Institutional/legislative changes

22. The Group will consider the workings of the Flood Prevention (Scotland) Act 1961 (“the 1961 Act”), 40 years on, and identify any areas which are now considered to be causing difficulties to managing flood risk.

Local authority biennial reports on flooding

23. Section 6A of the 1961 Act (as amended by section 3 of the Flood Prevention and Land Drainage (Scotland) Act 1997) places a duty on each local authority to prepare and publish a report every two years detailing the measures it considers necessary to prevent or mitigate flooding in its area. The Group will be invited to consider how best to present and draw on a national summary of this information provided by local authorities. In particular it will consider whether a biennial national conference would be appropriate to discuss the national position (as aggregated from local authority reports and other sources) and other flood risk matters.

Future of the Group

24. The Group will review its performance and make recommendations on whether there is a continuing need for members to meet regularly to discuss flooding issues for the Executive to take to Ministers by November 2004.

Conclusions

25. Members are invited to:

- **discuss and agree a final work plan for the Group,**
- **agree that the following areas of the work plan should be carried out by sub-groups:**
 - a. **considering the relevance of the DEFRA guidance to Scotland;**
 - b. **discussing how the new guidance might link with provisions in the 2003 Act, including offering advice to the Executive on a definition of sustainable flood management, and**
 - c. **considering the recommendations of the report of the CoSLA Flooding Task Force;**
- **consider the aims, working arrangements and membership of each sub-group and**
- **decide which areas of the work plan might best be carried out on a consultancy basis.**

**NTAG Secretariat
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