

## NATIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON FLOODING ISSUES

### Possible items for NTAG to consider should it continue beyond 2004

#### Purpose

1. This paper asks Members to consider the future role of the National Technical Advisory Group on Flooding Issues (NTAG).

#### Background

2. NTAG was set up in November 2003 primarily to offer advice to the Scottish Executive to help in the preparation of technical guidance for local authorities to take forward flood prevention schemes under the Flood Prevention (Scotland) Act 1961. It was agreed that the main Group would meet 6 times between December 2003 and September 2004 and a work plan was drawn up for the life time of the Group.

3. Since its first meeting on 17 December 2003, Members have considered a wide range of topics. Three Sub-Groups were set up to take forward specific items of work with a view to offering advice on the preparation of technical guidance. However during the meetings a number of items have been raised for discussion by Members but either because of time constraints, or because they were considered outwith NTAG's remit, have not been discussed in detail.

#### Discussion

4. The Executive will report NTAG's conclusions to Ministers by the end of 2004 and will also make a recommendation on whether NTAG should continue in some form beyond 2004. To make a case for NTAG to continue it is important that we identify topics, which NTAG might consider. In no particular order, NTAG (and its Sub-Groups) has highlighted the following as items which it might reflect and offer advice to the Executive on should it continue beyond autumn 2004.

- 1) **Learning to Live with Rivers** report should be considered by NTAG, with a view to identifying and drafting Scottish add-ons.
- 2) **Legislative changes** including consideration of the recommendations made in Part B of COSLA report on flooding.
- 3) European Water Directors, Strategic Coordination Group is looking at **European sustainable flood risk management policy** as underpinning the Water Framework Directive objective to 'contribute to mitigating the effects of flooding'.
- 4) **What are the real costs of flooding?** A follow up on the presentation from Sebastian Catovsky at 1 April NTAG meeting which highlighted work about to be/being undertaken by Dundee University and earlier work by the Middlesex Flood Hazard Research Centre.

5) **Project prioritisation?** As the cost and number of schemes promoted by local authorities starts to exceed available capital funds how the content of future flood prevention capital programmes be should determined ie the schemes to be supported?

6) Next steps for **sustainable flood management (SFM)**:

- public consultation on the draft definition, objectives and principles;
- advising the Executive on writing technical guidance for taking forward flood prevention schemes;
- promoting SFM and the guidance, and
- training practitioners on the technical guidance.

Also should NTAG be involved in writing guidance on sustainable flood management beyond flood prevention schemes? (e.g. for maintenance, overland flow, sewer flooding.)

7) **Risk to life.** Follow up on John Riddell's paper [(NTAG2004(16))]. How can NTAG raise awareness? How can this be presented in technical guidance?

8) **Technical guidance** to continue. There is a longer term need for the Guidance Sub-Group to advise the Executive here.

9) Next steps for 2nd generation **indicative flood map**. How can it be improved? Is there a need for a 3rd generation map?

5. Other issues on which NTAG might usefully provide advice to the Executive include:-

1) Outcome of **Defra** consultation on its new **Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management** and whether a corresponding policy response is required by the Executive.

2) **The EC Communication: Flood risk management – Flood Prevention, Protection and Mitigation** and the additional steps Scotland needs to take to meet Action Programme measures.

3) Content and programme for **biennial national flooding report** and conference respectively.

4) **Future research** studies.

6. Members should also note that CoSLA, in its report on flooding, recommended the establishment of a national Flooding Forum to consider the effects of flooding and climate change in Scotland and to offer advice to councils and other parties on flooding and flood-related issues. One of the commitments of Scottish Ministers arising from the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee of Ministers on Flooding Issues was to encourage joint working between local authorities, SEPA and Scottish Water. This is an ongoing matter and NTAG could make a valuable contribution in this area.

*Terms of reference*

7. Members are asked to review NTAG terms of reference in relation to the following:
- **Membership:** Does NTAG have the right mix of members to address the issues listed above? Does its membership need to be extended eg to include National Flood Forum; Rural land owners; property developers?;
  - **Pattern of working:** How often should NTAG meet? Do we need for all 3 sub-groups to continue and membership of each to be revised? Are the Sub-Groups too large?
  - **Remit:** This needs to be revised, perhaps widened?
  - **Work plan:** Do we need a new work plan - for the first 12 months initially?

**Conclusions**

8. **Members are invited to consider the above and:**
- **discuss whether NTAG has a role to play in taking forward the above items;**
  - **offer further items which NTAG might consider;**
  - **agree that NTAG should continue in some form beyond autumn 2004, and**
  - **discuss possible terms of reference for NTAG as detailed in paragraph 7.**

**NTAG Secretariat  
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