

FLOODING ISSUES ADVISORY COMMITTEE SUSTAINABLE FLOOD MANAGEMENT PILOT STUDY OUTLINE

Purpose

1. This paper outlines the aim and objectives of a pilot study to test and evaluate the work on sustainable flood management in a flood prevention setting and in the setting of flood risk management more generally.

Background

2. Under section 2 of the Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 (“the 2003 Act”), Scottish Ministers, SEPA and the “responsible authorities” have a duty to carry out their functions in compliance with the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive. They also have a duty, so far as is consistent with relevant enactments or the designated functions in question, and having regard to social and economic impacts:

“to promote sustainable flood management, and act in the way best calculated to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.”

3. In practice, for example, this means that a local authority – who we expect to be designated as a responsible authority under the 2003 Act – would need to take account of the requirement to promote sustainable flood management when carrying out its flood prevention functions under the Flood Prevention (Scotland) Act 1961 (“the 1961 Act”). However no definition of “sustainable flood management” is offered. To ensure that this provision in the 2003 Act is implemented effectively and consistently, it is essential that a pragmatic, measurable, universally accepted and clearly understood definition is developed.

The National Technical Advisory Group on Flooding Issues

4. The National Technical Advisory Group on Flooding Issues (NTAG) was set up in November 2003 in response to recommendations made by an *Ad Hoc* Committee of Ministers on flooding issues. It was set up to provide technical guidance to local authorities to take forward flood prevention schemes under the 1961 Act and to define sustainable flood management in practical terms.

5. NTAG set up a Sustainable Flood Management Sub-Group to consider how to interpret sustainable flood management within the meaning of section 2 of the 2003 Act. NTAG produced a draft definition, objectives and principles of sustainable flood management – covering all types of flooding. It also proposed a series of indicators to allow progress to be measured effectively: these indicators can also be used to assess solutions to flood risk management to determine how sustainable each is. FIAC paper FIAC2005(4) gives details of this work.

Aims

6. The overall aim of the pilot study is to test and evaluate the approach developed by NTAG on sustainable flood management and provide a practical dimension to a consultation paper on the meaning of sustainable flood management to be issued by the Executive later in 2005.

Objectives

7. The specific objectives of the pilot study are to first:

- consider the relevance of the draft definition, objectives and principles in a flood prevention context;
- identify suitable flood prevention scheme(s)/project(s) to test the work against;
- identify which indicators are of practical use, and which are aspirational within this context;
- consider how different weightings might be applied to different indicators in the context of a flood prevention scheme;
- identify any gaps in indicators or better measurements of sustainability;
- consider the role of indicators in prioritising options (in a local and national context) and compare with conventional approach,

and then:

- evaluate each scheme/project against the sustainable flood management indicators and weightings and
- highlight the lessons learned.

Beyond the above specific objectives, the objective of the study is also to

- assess the application of sustainable flood management indicators to all types of flooding - fluvial, coastal, pluvial (overland flow) and sewer flooding;
- assess role of sustainable flood management indicators in demonstrating to SEPA - as competent authority for the implementation of the 2003 Act - that duty to further sustainable flood management has been met; and
- assess application and utility of sustainable flood management indicators at national level i.e. in reflecting the trend towards a more sustainable approach to flood risk management.

Scope and design

8. The study will test and evaluate the NTAG outputs on sustainable flood management and comment on how appropriate the indicators are in a flood prevention scheme/project context and in a national context. Tenderers should explain which flood prevention scheme(s)/project(s) they will evaluate and why these will best meet the overall aim of the study. They should explain in detail what data they would need for their analysis and their approach to collecting and analysing this data. The tender should also provide details of who will be interviewed and how long this process will take.

9. The Executive is also interested to know – through this study – the pros and cons of using sustainable flood management indicator to prioritise flood prevention schemes - due account being taken of the primary objective of protecting life and property. A particular question the tenderer is asked to consider is whether the primary objective of a scheme – the protection of life and property - is still adequately reflected in the prioritising of schemes?

Timetable and costs

10. The contract for this project will be placed by 1 June 2005 and the work should be completed and a satisfactory final report delivered to the Department by 30 September 2005. (The contractor may be required to present initial findings at the SEPA Flood Awareness conference at the end of September 2005.)

11. There is a guide price of £40k for this project (inclusive of overheads and exclusive of VAT).

Conclusions

12. Members are invited to consider and discuss the draft outline specification above.

**FIAC Secretariat
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