

## **FLOODING ISSUES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2005, Conference Room 2, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh.**

**Present:** Philip Wright (Scottish Executive, (SE) Environment Group, Air, Climate and Engineering Division – chair),

Scottish Executive: Tom Harvie-Clark (SEERAD, Analytical Services Division) Nick Evans (Development Department, Planning Division), Chris Birt (SEERAD, Air, Climate and Engineering Division – minutes), Debi Garft (SEERAD, Air, Climate and Engineering Division), Judith Tracey (SEERAD, Air, Climate and Engineering Division), Hazel Gallagher (SEERAD, Air, Climate and Engineering Division), John Hood (SEERAD, Agri-Environment Branch), John Henderson (Assistant Chief Agricultural Officer), Victoria Elliott (SEERAD, Water Division)

David Howell (Scottish Natural Heritage), Mike Donaghy (Environment LINK), Alvin Barber (City of Edinburgh Council), Dr. John Riddell (Independent Consultant), Jim Hutchison (DEFRA), Tim Jolley (SEPA), Steven Tingle (Renfrewshire Council), June Graham (SEPA), Prof. Charles Ainger (MWH), Jonathan Chapman, (attending on behalf of David Rooke) (Environment Agency, (EA), Jim Conlin (Scottish Water), Ronnie Falconer (Jacobs Babbie), Andrew Smith (Homes for Scotland), Dinah Keal (National Flood Forum), Dr Sebastian Catovsky (ABI), John Smith (Royal Town Planning Institute in Scotland), Iain Mathieson (NFU Scotland), Fiona Mactaggart (Scottish and Northern Irish Forum for Environmental Research, SNIFFER)

**Apologies:** Prof. Alan Werritty (University of Dundee), David Rooke (EA)

#### **Agenda Item 2: Welcome from Chair and introduction**

1. The chair welcomed everyone to the Flooding Issues Advisory Committee (FIAC) and invited Members to introduce themselves.

#### **Agenda Item 3: Background to the Committee**

2. The Chair set out the background to the Committee, explaining that FIAC would build on the work of the National Technical Advisory Group on Flooding Issues (NTAG) but that it had a wider remit than NTAG. He highlighted the wide range of stakeholders represented on the Committee, adding that no one sector can address flood risk on its own. He encouraged Members to ask for clarification where necessary on more technical aspects.

#### **Agenda Item 4: Membership of Flooding Issues Advisory Committee – paper FIAC2005(1) for information**

3. Members noted the membership paper. It was pointed out than a version of this paper without personal contact details was available online.

**Agenda Item 5: FIAC Role, Remit and Working Arrangements - paper FIAC2005(2) for discussion.**

4. The following was discussed:

- Papers would all be made available to the public on the internet. However papers were issued to members in confidence prior to meetings and should not be circulated widely before publication.
- The Chairman made it clear that members should not seek to use their membership of the Committee to gain any advantages for their parent organisations.
- That Annex 1 to the paper, i.e. the Executive's *Statement of Commitments* to reducing the risk and impacts of flooding, was merely a base for action, and was not meant to be prescriptive.
- Members agreed that future meetings will be longer, with a lunch break and continuing in the afternoon.
- Members agreed paper FIAC2005(2).

**Agenda Item 6: FIAC Work plan including sub-committee arrangements - paper FIAC2005(3) for discussion.**

5. The Committee agreed that the majority of the substantive work should be done in sub-committees and the following was discussed:

- That Sub-Committees work should be structured around the four As, i.e. Awareness, Assistance, Avoidance and Alleviation, if possible. Members agreed that there should be three Sub-Committees: Awareness and Assistance; Avoidance; and Alleviation. However there are a number of miscellaneous topics that will need to be included and might be considered by a fourth sub-committee.
- That a single person could act as a 'link' on sustainable flood management and ideally would be a Member of each of the sub-committees. The idea of 'sub-sub-committees' was not practicable due to Secretariat limitations. However the suggestion that we might nominate 'champions' to take forward discrete pieces of Sub-Committee work was accepted.
- Members agreed that it was important that there is an overlap in sub-committee membership to ensure that each sub-committee is aware of what is going on in the others.

**Action point 1: Members to let Secretariat know which sub-committees they would like to sit on. Secretariat to finalise sub-committee membership.**

6. Members discussed the workplan details.

- Prioritisation of flood prevention schemes was discussed and the Chair confirmed that it was for local authorities to bring forward flood prevention schemes. He explained that the Executive is aware that future resources might not match demand, and that it would be looking to take account of this in the Spending Review 2006.
- The Committee discussed whether there would be potential for the funding of work which would not meet the requirements for flood prevention grant aid, but which might be required for the full implementation of sustainable flood management.

- It was discussed that there was no such thing as a ‘sustainable’ option per se; just different levels of sustainability which would be measured by the proposed sustainable flood management indicators.
- Although FIAC would not be involved in the drafting of the near finalised Controlled Activities Regulations (CAR), the sustainable flood management work of FIAC would have to be consistent with implementation of the Water Environment & Water Services Act and vice versa.
- Sebastian Catovsky explained that the ABI supports prioritisation in principle but it is important that the outcomes are understood. He asked that FIAC consider the merits of a grant scheme for homeowners of isolated properties that would never meet the economic criteria for an Executive funded capital scheme. A grant scheme of this type is being piloted in Wales.
- It was suggested that the Executive also needs to consider how it can better align different funding streams.
- It was also suggested that there should be more discussion about the other duties in the Flood Prevention (Scotland) Act 1961 i.e. the duties of maintenance (added by the Flood Prevention and Land Drainage (Scotland) Act 1997). FIAC should also be considering how it might interface with Flood Liaison and Advice Groups (FLAGs).
- That there should be discussions around who is responsible for measures taken to relieve flooding.

**Action point 2: Secretariat to contact the Welsh Assembly to find out more about Welsh pilot grant scheme.**

**Agenda Item 7: Progress reports on:**

- **producing the second generation flood risk map**
- **preparing technical guidance for local authorities taking forward flood prevention schemes**
- **defining sustainable flood management.**

7. Tim Jolley (SEPA) gave a progress report on the Second Generation Flood Risk Map being produced by SEPA. The presentation outlined the process of creating the map and what it would look like when finished. He sought to dampen expectations as to what the map would show but confirmed that the map was “fit for purpose”, which was to identify areas at risk of fluvial and coastal flooding in Scotland. But, the map’s limitations needed to be recognised. It did not take into account existing flood defences, it will show risk to land not property, and it does not cover pluvial or sewer flood risk. He also pointed out that once the map has been published there will be a constant programme of updating and improvement. He added that the project was 4 weeks behind schedule at the moment.

8. It was agreed that the map would be an important tool in the planning process and therefore guidance on how to use it would be important. Members were reminded that the map is intended to drive development plans and only serve as a first indicator in control development.

9. Judith Tracey explained that the first two chapters of the guidance were finished and would be published formally [in ring binder format], possibly to coincide with the SEPA

Flood Awareness Fortnight in the autumn. It was explained that these 2 chapters were based on DEFRA guidance but had been significantly altered to reflect the Scottish context.

10. Comments were then invited on the sustainable flood management paper and draft pilot outline specification. The following was discussed:

- The Chair explained that the pilot would look at, at least, one completed scheme that had received grant under the 1961 Act and consider what the sustainable solution might be today. The pilot would be stretched as far as possible to test the sustainable flood management outputs, ideally at a catchment level. It was hoped that the project would include a scheme which contained some element of storage.
- It was commented that the pilot was vital to help judge whether sustainable flood management is feasible, particularly in relation to maintaining levels of protection. It will also help in understanding the benefits of adopting this approach. The results from the study might lead to amending the paper on sustainable flood management before it goes out to consultation.
- Members recognised that the work on sustainable flood management should take account of European best practice. Conversely the Executive's outputs should feed into the process at a European level.
- Sustainable flood management has 'integration' at its core, so issues such as Strategic Environmental Assessments should be considered during the process.
- Collecting data for the pilot would be part of the contract but it would also be expected that contractors would agree with a local authority first when considering a bid for the pilot.
- Stephen Tingle intimated that Renfrewshire Council might be able to offer up a catchment in its area for study.

**Action Point 3 – Members should send comments on the pilot outline specification to Secretariat for the 27<sup>th</sup> April 2005.**

**Agenda Item 8 - Presentation from Fiona Mactaggart on the work of SNIFFER (Scotland and Northern Ireland Forum for Environmental Research).**

11. Fiona Mactaggart (SNIFFER) gave a presentation on the flood risk management activities of the Scotland and Northern Ireland Forum for Environmental Research (SNIFFER), (available on the FIAC website). She was congratulated on the new RISE website and agreed to liaise with Ronnie Falconer on web links to relevant European sites, such as the European Water Association's European Fluvial Flood Risk Network (EFFRiN).

**Agenda Item 8 – Any Other Business**

12. The Chair announced the publication of a report into *Natural Flood Storage and Extreme Flood Events*, and members were each given a copy.

13. Jim Hutchison (DEFRA) explained that DEFRA had just published its first response to the *Making space for water* consultation. He explained that his role on FIAC was to help tie in the DEFRA work with that of the Executive.

**Action Point 4 – Jim Hutchison to send copies of DEFRA’s first response to the consultation on *Making space for water* to Secretariat for onward distribution to Group members.**

**Next meeting**

14. The next meeting is scheduled for 5 October 2005 in Victoria Quay. Secretariat agreed to note local holidays when considering further meetings.

15. The Chair closed the meeting and thanked Members for their input.

**FIAC Secretariat**

**June 2005**