

FLOODING ISSUES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2005, Conference Room 2, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh.

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

Scottish Executive: Ramsay Dow (SE, Air, Climate and Engineering Division – minutes), Nick Evans (SE, Planning Division), Katrine Feldinger (SE, Water Division), Debi Garft (SE, Air, Climate and Engineering Division), John Henderson (SE, Assistant Chief Agricultural Officer), Judith Tracey (SE, Air, Climate and Engineering Division).

David Howell (Scottish Natural Heritage), Andrea Johnstonova (Environment LINK, attending on behalf of Mike Donaghy), Alvin Barber (City of Edinburgh Council), Dr. John Riddell (Independent Consultant), Jim Hutchison (DEFRA), Dr. Tim Jolley (SEPA), Steven Tingle (Renfrewshire Council), Dr. Roy Richardson (SEPA), Prof. Charles Ainger (MWH), David Rooke (Environment Agency, (EA), Jim Conlin (Scottish Water), Ronnie Falconer (Jacobs Babbie), Andrew Smith (Homes for Scotland), Dinah Keal (National Flood Forum), Iain Mathieson (NFU Scotland), Helen McKay (Forestry Commission), Jo Ellis (Forestry Commission), Adrian Johnson (MWH), Dr Richard Johnson (Mountain Environments).

Apologies: Prof. Alan Werritty (University of Dundee), Tom Harvie-Clark (SE), John Hood (SE), John Smith (Royal Town Planning Institute), Sebastian Catovsky (Association of British Insurers), Mike Donaghy (Scottish Environment LINK), John Smith (Royal Town Planning Institute in Scotland).

Agenda Item 2: Welcome from Chair and introduction

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

Agenda Item 3: Minutes and action points from the first FIAC meeting on 21 April 2005.

2. Members discussed the minutes and action points from the previous meeting on 21 April 2005 and it was agreed that the minutes were accurate and that the action points had been addressed.

3. The Chair invited Professor Charles Ainger (CA) to give his observations on FIAC as a link between the 3 Sub-Committees and the main Committee. CA said that he has concerns about the number of items on each Sub-Committees' work plan and that the workplans might overlap. CA recommended that 'champions' or small expert groups are identified within the Sub-Committees to address specific issues. He also recommended that FIAC should set priorities for the Sub-Committees and be clearer about what each is expected to deliver. (See next Item)

Agenda Item 4: FIAC work plan priorities

4. Judith Tracey (JT) explained that the Sub-Committees Chairs met with PW on 3 October to discuss the Sub-Committee workplans following concerns that they were becoming too wide-ranging with the risk that this could impede the delivery of time limited targets for FIAC.

5. JT distributed paper “*FIAC – The Way Forward?*” to help start the process of identifying priorities for FIAC. JT highlighted the importance of good links between the Sub-Committees in areas of shared interest and that the Sub-Committees worked together.

6. The discussion paper included a first draft of a flooding matrix showing aims, outcomes and other issues. JT invited Members to review and update the matrix with their (organisation’s) priorities.

7. Members agreed that it was important to identify barriers as well as gaps. David Rooke (DR) suggested that the ‘gaps’ column should be separated into sections relating to specific areas of interest (i.e. science, skills, legislation etc.) this would allow a gap analysis to be conducted and provide a better indication of the target for FIAC.

8. PW said that the priorities for FIAC should deliver a road map to where FIAC wants to be in 5 years time and include short term outputs. He also suggested that obstacles/barriers could be included within the flooding Matrix.

9. Jim Conlin (JC) said that it was important that the matrix did not become too large. He suggested that only key issues for FIAC and the main barriers are highlighted to reduce the size of the Matrix and make it more easily understood.

10. Members agreed that a matrix was a good idea and that a small group should be set up to review the Matrix and to produce priorities for FIAC and the Sub-Committees.

11. CA suggested how FIAC might prioritise its work. and demonstrated how the sustainable flood management principles and processes fit together to achieve objectives. The Committee agreed that this approach should be considered when reviewing the Matrix.

Action Point 1: Members to review matrix and forward their comments on priorities for FIAC to Secretariat before 16 November 2005.

Action point 2: Secretariat to set up small group to discuss FIAC priorities matrix.

Agenda Item 5: Work plan approval and progress report from Sub-Committee Chairs

12. PW invited each of the Sub-Committee Chairs to give a report on progress. The progress reports are presented below in relation to their relevant sub-committee

Awareness and Assistance

13. Tim Jolley (TJ) reported for the Awareness and Assistance Sub-Committee and explained that Members discussed the following:

- the role and work plan of the Sub-Committee;
- difficulties accessing flood information;
- a strategy for raising awareness and how to measure a successful campaign;
- the importance of taking advantage of community-based knowledge;
- how to identify what stakeholders need;
- transparency issues, in particular how flooding impacts on insurance and planning; and
- FIAC as an excellent opportunity to get stakeholders together to take a strategic view of flood risk management.

14. TJ explained that he had revised the work plan after the first meeting and he had identified specific areas for action:

- how to assess and choose the direction of awareness raising campaigns;
- advice on an overall strategy for flood mapping and data collection;
- community engagement;
- flood warning scheme prioritisation and how to issue warnings to communities;
- importance of having access to reliable data; and
- crosscutting issues.

15. TJ gave an update on the second generation flood map and the review of the current hydrometric network. He explained that both these issues were in hand and that the flood maps were on target to be released in the first quarter of 2006 and that they were currently being tested in conjunction with 7 local authorities. TJ confirmed that at this time SEPA were planning to consult local authorities on a one-to-one basis from November 2005 onwards.

16. TJ explained that SEPA was looking to improve the quality of data from the hydrometric network over the next 2 years and produce a set of harmonised standards for hydrology by March 2006. SEPA also planned to move from using 5 separate data archives to one single source to ease access problems.

17. PW asked about the public having access to sewer flood risk information in the future. JC explained that the poor recording of past flood events means that historic data is of little use to the public. However Scottish Water is reviewing how flood events are recorded and this will provide higher quality data in the future.

Alleviation

18. JT gave a progress report from the Alleviation Sub-Committee. She explained that the Sub-Committee agreed the work plan and then gave a brief update on how the work of the Sub-Committee would be taken forward highlighting the importance of identifying legislative change and the technical guidance to local authorities. TJ said that members had agreed to work in small groups on specific topics where possible.

19. Members were provided with a copy of the new guidance for local authorities binder with chapters 5 and 6 included. JT explained that the timetable for completing the rest of the guidance had slipped a little but the contract would be awarded shortly. The Alleviation Sub-Committee would act as a steering group for the project.

20. Prioritisation of flood prevention schemes had been discussed, by the sub-committee, in detail and Members would consider a discussion paper at the next meeting. JT gave some background on a presentation given by Peter Jones from the Welsh Assembly Government on its scheme to provide support in connection with individual properties at risk from flooding. Executive solicitors will consider if a similar scheme is possible under current Scottish legislation. JT will report outcomes from these issues at FIAC at a later date.

21. PW explained that the next spending review would now be 2007 and this will give FIAC more time to consider prioritisation issues.

Avoidance

22. JC gave a progress report from the Avoidance Sub-Committee. He explained that the Sub-Committee discussed the workplan at length and agreed that items needed to be prioritised. Members agreed to take a strategic approach to items such as river basin management planning, planning and building standards. They would also link with the SuDS National Working Party and make sure that it was aware of FIAC's work.

23. At the next meeting of the sub-committee Members will discuss papers on the designation of responsible authorities and land use issues.

24. Members discussed the flexibilities in allowances for climate change. JR suggested that all stakeholders should adopt the standards set by the Executive in SPP7 this way there would be consensus. Members agreed that FIAC should watch for new planning guidelines from DEFRA, which are currently being developed.

25. PW thanked the Sub-Committee Chairs for their reports.

Action point 3: Secretariat to issue a progress report paper for each Sub-Committee prior to future FIAC meetings.

Agenda Item 6: Sustainable Flood Management pilot study - presentation from MWH/Jacobs Babbie

26. Adrian Johnson (AJ) and Ronnie Falconer (RF) presented the final report from the Sustainable Flood Management (SFM) Pilot Study. AJ explained the stages of the study and went through the recommendations for changes to the principles and objectives. He confirmed that no amendments are proposed to the overall definition of sustainable flood management.

27. AJ estimated that accepting all the report's recommendations might simplify the process by about 20%. Members agreed that the work needs to be simplified as much as possible to make it more readily understandable for practitioners.

28. The group discussed the schemes used in the pilot study and how it had not been possible to measure each against the principles and objectives indicators. Jim Hutchison (JH) cautioned against the end process being a system to demonstrate compliance rather than actually assessing different flood prevention options.

29. Although this study was tasked with looking at flood prevention schemes it was agreed that the process would have to be flexible and be able to be applied at a more strategic catchment level. It should also be able to take account of less engineered solutions or an incremental approach to flood risk management.

30. PW explained that the next step would be to consider how we use the report and its findings to review the original sustainable flood management discussion paper and then feed this into a public consultation planned for spring 2006.

31. PW thanked AJ for his presentation and MWH/Jacobs Babbie for the work undertaken.

Action Point 4: Members should pass their comments on the final report and its recommendations to AJ and Secretariat by 17 October 2005.

Agenda Item 8 - Presentation on the Devon River project - Dr Richard Johnson, Mountain Environments Ltd

32. Dr Richard Johnson (RJ) delivered a presentation on the HSBC/WWF sponsored project to consider the impacts of land use on flooding on the River Devon catchment. In particular it looks at controlling the flow in the upstream areas of the burns that feed into the River Devon to help reduce the risk of flooding. The project involves a range of solutions which vary from site to site.

33. RJ confirmed that the project will attempt to quantify the effectiveness of the measures at demonstration sites. However some of the measures will only show results over the longer term. He explained that the aim is to scale up the project to a catchment level at the next stage of development. Longer term it was hoped that the River Devon might become a demonstration catchment and run workshops in land management techniques.

34. Members discussed the importance of working with land managers to agree these techniques. It was considered likely that there would be a need for some incentive to be involved. RJ suggested that current agriculture and forestry payment schemes could support flood management work and this should be explored further. Members discussed a possible grant scheme for this type of work and with it the need for a responsible body to audit the payments. Helen McKay explained that the Forestry Commission already conducted external audits of woodland management and that this practice could be employed for flood management measures. RJ suggested that in the longer term the techniques he had described would almost be self-maintaining.

35. Members agreed that for these measures to be adopted land managers would need evidence that the measures did help to reduce the flood risk for a given area.

36. The chair thanked RJ for his presentation.

Action point 5: Secretariat to make all presentations available on the FIAC website.

Agenda Item 9 – Liaison with SCOTS

37. Stephen Tingle (ST) said it would be useful to draw upon experience of the SCOTS flooding group. It would also be very useful for FIAC to liaise with the group so as not to duplicate work. Members agreed that links to SCOTS flooding group would be beneficial to both groups and that the work of each could inform and help the other. Members agreed that it would be helpful to contact Alasdair Smith, the Secretary for the SCOTS flooding group, and to keep him informed of all new developments within FIAC.

Action Point 4: Secretariat to contact Alasdair Smith to establish links with the SCOTS flooding group.

Agenda Item 10 – Any Other Business

Members had no other business.

Next meeting

38. The next meeting was arranged for 23 February 2006 at Victoria Quay, Edinburgh.

**FIAC Secretariat
November 2005**