

North East Flood Appraisal Group

Minute of Meeting – 13 November 2002

Present

Cliff Buchan (CB) (Aberdeen City Council)
David Cameron (DC) (SEPA)
Andrew Carruthers (AC) (Aberdeenshire Council)
David Crichton (DCr) (Insurance Industry)
Iain Cunningham (Aberdeenshire Council)
Jim Lister (JL) (Scottish Water)
Hilary MacBean (HM) (Aberdeenshire Council)
David MacIntosh (DM) (Emergency Planning Unit)
Bill Murphy (BM) (Aberdeen City Council)
Claire Pritchett (CP) (SEPA)
Euan Stevenson (ES) (Aberdeenshire Council)
Malcolm Taberner (MT) (Aberdeenshire Council)
Amy Tavendale (AT) (Dundee University)

Chair:

Andrew Carruthers

Minute:

Iain Cunningham

1) Apologies

Apologies from Piers Blaxter and Emma Parkes (both Aberdeenshire Council)

2) Minute of Previous Meeting (21/08/2002)

There were no issues related to the minute of the previous meeting (21/08/2002)

3) Matters Arising

None

4) Presentation by David MacIntosh, Emergency Planner, Aberdeenshire Council – “Emergency Planning for Flood Events”

DM gave a presentation on the set up for emergency planning for flood events in the North East of Scotland. He outlined the composition of the Emergency Planning Unit and its funding arrangements with its parent organisations. He also provided the group with an overview of the emergency plan for the north east and the process for alerting key organisations and members of the public as to the risk of flooding.

This was followed by a question and answer session. A number of issues were discussed relating to links between the work of the EPU and the provision of counselling for those evacuated to rest centres during flood events, reporting mechanisms to discuss the response to flooding emergencies, the availability of sandbags and public information about flooding and how to protect themselves from it.

5) **Issues arising from extreme weather event (October 2002)**

The flood event during October 2002 raised a number of issues. The River Don reached its highest level since the 1970s; DC opined that the flood may have been a 1-in-100 year event; BM stated that the flooding Aberdeen was possibly a 1-in-200 year event.

DC offered to make rainfall information available by the next group meeting once he had checked on what information can be made available.

HM cited an example of a recent flood impact assessment that had failed to predict the flooding in October. The discussion focussed on how impacts of this scale could be predicted and measured in order to give a more accurate picture for planners and developers. AC suggested that a confidence level for calculating flood impacts could be included in the flooding policy.

6) **NESFAG GIS: progress and next steps (report enclosed)**

The report outlining the progress of work on the NESFAG GIS system will be presented to ISC on 28th November.

The first stage would be to produce a system specification for all NESFAG partners by March 2003. This would be funded by Aberdeenshire Council.

The next stage will be to join up all the database systems and identify any gaps in it. Best guess at present is that it will cost about £25,000. All partners would be asked for contributions in due course. JL stated that Scottish Water would not be in a position to contribute financially but would provide data, and work to fill gaps in the database once they are identified.

The third stage would be to “populate” the database.

ES stated that all three phases of project are/would progress well but there would be no outputs until the end of stage 3. Most of the difficult areas of work would follow after that.

AC stated that a tender for the project was about to be issued.

ACTION: AC tender for project to be issued

7) **Proposals for addressing issues related to the implementation of SUDS**

AC stated that Aberdeenshire Council’s “Guide to Drainage Impact Assessment” stopped short of setting out how SUDs would be implemented and that the paper was intended to fill this gap by setting out the process for implementation, the scope of implementation and who would be involved in the process.

CB added that Aberdeen City's report on SUDs implementation is to be presented to committee shortly. The City approach is based on the capitalised maintenance of SUDs for a period 20 years by reaching an agreement with developers. A copy of the report is to be sent to AC. General discussion over how these arrangements work then ensued.

ACTION: CB to forward copy of report to AC

HM suggested that Aberdeenshire Council should follow the City's approach. AC agreed that a meeting be arranged for key players to discuss the issue.

ACTION: AC to arrange meeting.

HM also informed the group the "Guide to Drainage Impact Assessment" has been nominated in the Scottish Excellence in Planning Awards. It had reached the second stage of the competition – a presentation to the judging panel. There are strong hopes that it goes through to the final stage in February 2003.

8) Proposals for NESFAG "Flooding issues in the North East" seminar

The national FAG seminar raised the issue of bringing the work of Scotland's FAGs closer to a wider audience. AC produced a provisional list of about 60 invitees who could attend a NESFAG seminar. Any suggestions for other invitees should be forwarded to Piers Blaxter.

The NESFAG seminar would include the aim of attracting high level people from across a range of different groups and organisations. It would be an annual event covering the flooding issues that have arisen during the previous year as well as those that may arise in future.

HM asked for clarification on who the invitees would be. AC replied that they would be from a large range of people including councillors, community groups, utilities companies, academia, infrastructure providers, council officers, anglers and environmental groups.

DCr stated that flood victims should be invited and proposed that the Chair of the National Flood Forum should be invited. DCr to e-mail him/her. MT also suggested local people should be invited to attend.

It was agreed that AC would circulate the list of potential invitees to group members.

ACTION: AC to circulate list of potential invitees.

9) Feedback from National FAG seminar, Paisley

AC reported that the seminar was the first of its kind to be held in Scotland and that there was general agreement that it should continue. Attendees were invited to identify what the next steps for the national level should be. Among the main issues raised at the seminar was the need to identify common areas of concern across all FAGS as well as the need to distribute information to a wider audience and links to Government e.g. the lack of mention of flooding in the new Water Framework Directive.

DCr, one of the speakers, stated that his paper on the comparison of flooding and insurance in Scotland and England would be available on the Internet shortly.

AC stated that a note of the seminar was being prepared and would be circulated.

10) Development plan update

Both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Local Plans are at similar stages in the plan preparation process. The City Local Plan had attracted about over 2,800 letters of objection. The Aberdeenshire Local Plan had attracted just under 1,000 letters of objection.

The key issues in the objections to the Aberdeenshire Local Plan related to flooding are:

- 1) There should be action plans for areas of flood risk
- 2) Lack of definition in what is meant by “functional flood plain”. Various suggestions were put forward to correct this
- 3) No mention of SEPA in the document
- 4) No mention of the Council’s responsibilities in relation to flooding
- 5) Encouragement for adopting 1 in 200 year events as the maximum to measure in flood impact assessments.
- 6) Producing a flood impact assessment register.

11) Major development proposals

Aberdeenshire

The Uryside development is to be subject to an appeal hearing early in 2003. HM reported that NESFAG had not been approached as a consultee.

Aberdeen City

The only scheme noted was the potential redevelopment of the Cornhill Hospital site and the Westburn deviation scheme to prevent flooding in the Berryden area.

12) Paying the representation from the insurance industry within NESFAG

AC noted that DCr's sponsorship from the Association of British Insurers had come to an end and proposed that the NESFAG partners pay his expenses for attending future meetings and events on a round robin basis. This was acceptable to all except SEPA who could not fund this. CB added he would have to check whether a report would have to be taken to committee to release the money from the City. He will report back to Piers Blaxter.

13) Any other competent business.

MT stated that there was funding available to print a re-run of the Guide to Drainage Impact Assessment. SEPA and Scottish Water will purchase some at cost price and the rest will be distributed to developers and agents.

AT provided the group with an overview of the work she undertook for her Masters project regarding the effectiveness of NPPG7.

14) Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 12th March 2003