

**North East Scotland Flood Liaison and Advice Group
Room G, Woodhill House
1.30pm, Thursday 30 October 2009**

Present:

Andrew Carruthers (Aberdeenshire Council)	AEC (Chairman)
Alison Hogge (Aberdeenshire Council)	AH
Eleanor Munro (Aberdeenshire Council)	EM
William Murdoch (Aberdeenshire Council)	WM
Douglas Gray (Aberdeenshire Council)	DG
Stephen McFarland (Aberdeenshire Council)	SM
Richard Hoggins (Aberdeen City)	RH
Zoë Griffin (SEPA)	ZG
Clare Wheeler (SEPA)	CW

1. Apologies

Linda Matheson (Aberdeenshire Council)	LM
Alan Robertson (Aberdeen City)	AR
Jim Lister (Scottish Water)	JL
Scott Leith (Scottish Water)	SL
Daniel Lewis (Aberdeen City)	DL
David Crichton (Insurance Industry Representative)	DC

Clare Wheeler was welcomed to the group. Clare is based in Dingwall and is the hydrologist for the SEPA north region.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

Item 11 delete "10 dwellings if" and replace with "or where".

Action: AH to circulate emails from DG and RH

3. Matters Arising

AH to check if training has been given to Scottish Water by Anne Buchan and if Anne has contacted Alan Robertson.

Actions: AH to contact Anne Buchan

4. Open space Strategy – Implications on flooding and maintenance

AEC reported on the progress of the Open Space strategy (OSS). Any area of open space greater than 200m² was recorded in an Open Space Audit. The adopted approach in the OSS is for multiple uses of open space, such as SuDS (e.g. if it serves an environmental purpose and is attached to a park it would be regarded as open space). If the SuDS are fenced off it would not be counted as open space. This is to encourage the use of soft SuDS.

40% of the proposed development area greater than 50 dwellings or 2 hectares would have to contribute to open space. Anything less would have to provide what is needed on or off site.

The OSS will include supplementary guidance on open space as part of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan. It will be published for consultation at the same time the Proposed Plan is published and other supplementary guidance in 2010.

ZG reported that SEPA have been asked to comment on the OSS. ZG will contact the OSS co-ordinator.

SM asked where does water flow during a flood and the role open space can play, described as 'flood routing'. This will be investigated.

Action: AH to contact the OSS co-ordinator, Irina Birnie to find out about 'flood routes'.

5. SuDS update.

WM's leaflet on SuDS entitled 'Information Leaflet for Domestic Property Owner – Soakaways for Surface Water' received comments from SEPA who were satisfied with their details being on it providing it went through Plain English. This was undertaken and both SEPA's and Aberdeen City Council's contact details will be added to the leaflet.

The SuDS for roads leaflet was published in the summer by Scottish Water.

It was reported that Scottish Water are currently seeking Section 7 Agreements from local authorities on road SuDS.

Chris Jenkins has received funding to train council and Scottish Water staff for free on the use of SuDS for roads and the maintenance. SM will liaise with him. Training for Aberdeen City Council was suggested.

6. FLAGGIS

AEC has not received an opinion from Law and Admin regarding the need for a disclaimer/caveat similar to SEPA's on their flooding webpage.

With regards to adding wetland dataset onto FLAGGIS Judith Cox said that RSPB and Local Biodiversity Action Plan did an assessment of wetlands as part of an LBAP wetlands project. JC will contact Ian Francis of RSPB who holds the data and see whether the council can get access to the original data for FLAGGIS.

Action: JC to contact Ian Francis to ascertain the wetlands dataset for FLAGGIS

Photos of historic floods have been unavailable since the files were moved in Gordon House on the River Ugie and Uryside. SM reported that they have many aerial photos, but there is an issue of staff resources to select suitable photos – likely a student. SEPA also have photos that are available, but there is an issue of how they can be transferred to FLAGGIS.

It was reported that a new dataset format will be required in light of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009. Hazard mapping has to be completed by 2011 and SEPA is seeking information from all local authorities. SEPA are still formatting photos from different areas and reports. SEPA is required to have this data available and centralised under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009. Therefore could wait until SEPA's hazard mapping is complete before determining the need for FLAGGIS. All SuDS have to be identified and mapped as well.

Action: AH to contact to Anne Buchan to email password to SEPA (CW)

Action: CW to provide AH with a contact to forward photos to Anne Buchan so they can be uploaded onto FLAGGIS, if it can be easily done

Current maintenance fee (£7,500) to host the FLAGGIS site expires in November 2009. SM suggested that as external groups have not contributed to the annual maintenance fee, FLAGGIS could be retained for internal use only. The group was reminded that historically a legal agreement was written for all users to sign, but it remains with SEPA. However, as many organisations are keeping a watching brief on SEPA's flood risk management dataset Mark McLaughlin, SEPA's Floodmaps Manager could be contacted regarding the possibility of SEPA's dataset replacing FLAGGIS.

Action: AEC to get an opinion from Law and Admin (Gordon Davidson) on our liability if there is an omission in the datasets (SEPA or LA).

Action: AEC to compose a letter to ascertain if external members use FLAGGIS

Action: CW to contact MM on the probability of a new flooding dataset

ZG provided AH and AEC with the two legal contacts in SEPA to discuss the legality of using SEPA's flooding data in FLAGGIS.

7. Development of Coastal Management policy (update)

A criterion based approach is preferred to mapping out areas at risk from flooding in the supplementary guidance entitled *Coastal and Fluvial Flooding*. SM said that mapping out areas at risk from flooding would require a lot of work to be defensible and new calculations on extreme water levels are being reviewed by SEPA. The new criteria in the supplementary guidance will not support development below the 5m ordnance datum mark and require the need for a Flood risk Assessment for developed proposed between the 5m and 10m ordnance datum mark. Further criteria was suggested on erosion, requiring the applicant to demonstrate the site is not at risk from erosion. SM offered to provide wording.

Action: AEC and AH to determine which supplementary guidance the criterion on erosion should be included in the flooding guidance

Action: SM to provide appropriate wording for the criteria on erosion

8. Joint statement of flood insurance

David Crichton was not at the meeting to provide further information on this, but everyone on the mailing list was sent a copy of the ABI statement on 22 January 2009. The statement highlights that in 5 years time, buildings identified at risk from flooding may not be liable for insurance cover.

9. Development Plan update

Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan – the team is in discussion on water abstraction rates with Scottish Water and SEPA as part of the Action Programme. It is unknown how much water is being extracted by Scottish Water.

Over 3,000 letters of representation on the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan (Main Issues Report) were received. There is a slippage in the timetable as it is taking longer to summarise the 20,000+ individual comments received. Responses to the comments will be undertaken in November and December. The proposed policies and supplementary guidance will be presented to the six Area committees in January and February 2010. The proposed allocations will be presented to the Area committees in March 2010.

Aberdeen City Local Development Plan (Main Issues Report) has been published inviting comments until 11 December 2009.

AEC explained to the group the new style of development planning: the Local Development Plan will have a few core policies with all the detailed criteria in supplementary guidance. As a result, only the policies will be subject to a local plan inquiry/examination. It is proposed to publish as many of the supplementary guidance at the same time as the Proposed Plan is published.

Action: AEC and AH to liaise to check which external organisations have seen the policies and supplementary guidance

10. Major proposals

Inverurie retail development (phase 2) has a major flooding issue as it is within the River Don floodplain and a huge area of land raising would be required.

11. Conference and publications

Flood risk Management workshop on 15 November 2009

12. AOCB

The Strategic Development Plan Team is seeking a contact on the different types of water efficient technologies.

Action: ZG to provide AL with a SEPA contact on water efficient technologies and abstraction

The recent flooding has mostly been down to blocked grilles and drains. A handful of dwellings were affected by flood water, but many near misses. It

was reported that the SuDS in Inverbervie was over topping. WM is organising a meeting on the Council's response to the emergency warning system in light of SEPA's new system.

The new Flood Plans may result in a change to FLAGs after 2010, as a result of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act.

13. Topics and Date of next meeting

Monday 15 March 2010, **10.30am**, in Room E2, Woodhill house, first floor

Topic suggested for the next meeting – Flood Risk Management and buffer strips

**River Basin Management Plan (RBMP)
Room G, Woodhill House
3.30pm, Thursday 30 October 2009**

Present:

Andrew Carruthers (Aberdeenshire Council)	AEC (Chairman)
Alison Hogge (Aberdeenshire Council)	AH
Eleanor Munro (Aberdeenshire Council)	EM
William Murdoch (Aberdeenshire Council)	WM
Stephen McFarland (Aberdeenshire Council)	SM

1. Apologies

Dave Cooper and David Robertson from Environmental Health
Linda Matheson (Aberdeenshire Council)

2. Matters arising

None

3. SEPA Consultation – Draft River Basin Management Plan for Scotland’s River Basin

EM circulated to the group an update produced by LM on the development of the district plans from the RBMP Advisory Group. The classification results have been updated with new data and the proposed targets have been amended, which can be found at: www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Water/WFD/RBMPFramework/GuidanceNote. This work includes a review of the objectives for all planning cycles.

The summary of the plan has been condensed to 15 pages with chapters on the value and current condition of the water environment, and targets for water protection and improvement. There will also be chapters on the delivery of the plan, protected areas and artificial and heavily modified water bodies. A draft of the summary of the plans is available on the SEPA website.

SEPA’s online GIS mapping tool is being improved (speed and performance) as well as the information available.

There are two new advisory groups for River Basin Management Planning: the Diffuse Pollution Management Advisory Group and a Fish and Fisheries Advisory Group (FFAG). FFAG was formed by SEPA to address issues relating to impacts on fish and fisheries and is intended to replace the Fisheries (Electricity) Committee.

Concern was raised that the RBMP is more technically focused on projects than on policy. However, information on policy may come out of the plan when it is published.

An update on restoration funding was provided, which reported relatively low numbers of applications including restoration of the River Dee Floodplain Upstream – phase 1. It was also reported that SEPA have started to direct resources toward addressing strategic objectives.

Action: LM to clarify if any work on delivering major river restoration work within priority catchments is to be undertaken in Aberdeenshire.

4. AOCB

None

5. Date of next meeting

Monday 15 March 2010, **9.30am**, in Room E2, Woodhill House