

**North East Scotland Flood Liaison and Advice Group
Held –Room J, Woodhill House
2pm, Friday 1st December 2006**

Meeting Note

Present

Andrew Carruthers (Aberdeenshire Council)	AEC (Chair)
Alison Hogge (Aberdeenshire Council)	AH
Douglas Gray (Aberdeenshire Council)	DG
Judith Cox (Aberdeenshire Council)	JC
Jim Lister (SWA)	JL
Malcolm Taberner (Aberdeenshire Transport & Infrastructure)	MT
Graeme Craig (Aberdeenshire Transport & Infrastructure)	GC
Daniel Lewis (Aberdeen City Development)	DL
Tamsin Morris (River Basin Management Plan, SEPA)	TM

1. Apologies

Richard Hoggins (Aberdeen City)
Bill Murphy (Aberdeen Property & Technical)
Martin Bashoff (SEPA)
Piers Blaxter (Aberdeenshire Council)
David Crichton (Insurance Representative)

2. Minutes

The minutes were deemed correct.

3. Matters Arising

Under the previous minutes "Matters arising" on Development Plans David Crichton (DC) said that the insurance industry and WWF are concerned that SEPA appear to be ignoring the Area Advisory Groups (AAGs) (was previously described in the last minutes as "River Basin Management Groups", but they do not exist). Clarification is still required from DC on this issue (DC was absent from the meeting).

Action: AEC to contact DC to clarify statement regarding SEPA RBMP.

Under section 5 (FLAGGIS Project), PB has still to contact Bill Murphy for GIS overlays.

Action: Piers Blaxter to contact BM who will contact Aberdeen City's ICT team to forward Piers various GIS overlays within the City.

Under AOCB on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the next structure plan, JL said that he would find out who will be able to provide baseline data for the SEA.

Action: Jim Lister

3A. River Basin Management Plan Tamsin Morris (SEPA).

TM gave a presentation to the group on the RBMP process, setting the context (i.e. the Water Framework Directive) and the coverage of the RBMP – from inland areas to the coast. Actions for the RBMP will be set for 6 years.

The North East will be covered under the Scotland River Basin District (SRBD). The Solway Tweed will be the only other river basin district within Scotland.

Area Advisory Groups (AAG) were set up in 2006, and are led by SEPA. Their purpose is to write a chapter for the RBMP for their region, as it would be impossible for one central group to write the entire plan. Each AAG will use their local knowledge to write their chapter that refers to their area. The AAG for this area is called North East Scotland. A National Advisory Group also exists to ensure consistency and the implementation of the AAGs.

Each AAG will focus on their key industries. In the North East, some industries involved include agriculture, distillers and the Harbour Board.

WFD requires public participation throughout the RBMP process, and a forum will run annually where major consultations are to be discussed.

TM said she was unsure how the RBMP would be written, but she is tasked with co-ordinating the NE & Orkney AAGs.

TM highlighted that flooding is one of the main objectives in the Water Framework Directive, but that flooding has not been flagged up at the Scottish level. Focus has been on water quality and how to improve it, as 50% of water courses are expected to fail due to changes in the testing of water quality, which looks at physical quality (e.g. artificially straightened rivers) and abstraction levels, not just the chemistry of the water. The River Ythan for example is very straight in places. Significant water management issues are to be investigated by May/June 2007.

Linda Matheson is Aberdeenshire Council's representative on the AAG. JC reported that LM is going to set up a council working group on water issues.

Action: TM to be invited to a future NESFLAG meeting to provide an update on the RBMP.

Action: Encourage LM to form a working group.

3B. River Dee Catchment Management Plan (RDCMP) – MT

MT informed the group that the RDCMP is out for consultation until 15/12/06. The RDCMP sets out a series of actions that have been derived from over 30 objectives, and he would welcome comments on anything the group thought was missing.

AH highlighted the main land use planning implications:

- the need to increase the use of SuDS in new development, especially where the water drains into the Loch of Skene & Elrick Burn, in order to improve water quality;
- for Loch of Skene the need to identify flood sensitive areas in local plans; and
- the need to review current local plan policies in light of the RDCMP.

It was stated that there are unlikely to be other catchment management plans in the future. The River Dee was selected as it is designated as a Special Area of Conservation.

4. SuDS letter regarding Scottish Water SuDS guidance

A copy of the letter to be sent to COSLA was circulated to the group for comment. AEC wrote a similar letter to the SuDS working party, on behalf of NESFLAG to highlight the group's concerns on Scottish Water's proposed SuDS document, as well as other FLAG groups.

The group discussed the issue of limiting the type of SUDS that would be adopted by Scottish Water. JL said that Scottish Water (SW) are looking at future maintenance and what they think are reasonable. The main issue that increases costs is the silting of SuDS, as they require more frequent maintenance. The group expressed its concern that developers are going backwards – moving back to attenuation tanks built underground, and excluding the use SuDS altogether

It was highlighted that the fallback position would be for local authorities to handle SuDS if SW will not adopt them, in order to ensure that SuDS are used. This would require Infrastructure Services Committee approval in Aberdeenshire. It was suggested that a private management group would maintain the SuDS adopted by the council.

In the meantime, as SW have not produced their draft document, the group will continue to lobby SW, the SuDS Working Group, Scottish Executive Planning department.

Action: AEC will write to the Scottish Executive and COSLA

Action: MT to provide a name to AEC for COSLA contact.

The group was informed that the letter to insurance industry, as mentioned in the last meeting note, has not been written yet as SW are not adopting SuDS at present.

Action: AEC to contact David Crichton on good flooding practice

JC has produced the supplementary planning guidance (SPG) on 'soft' SuDS, but it has not been published as she is waiting until SW publishes their draft SuDS guidance. It was stated that if the SPG does not include maintenance and adoption, then the council is covered (i.e. it should not matter at this moment what SW produce in their SuDS guidance). The group agreed that the SPG should be published and put out for public consultation.

Action: *Planning Policy to publish the SPG, which would need committee approval first (JC)*

The City will be sent a copy of the SPG for them to use.

5 FLAGGIS

PB was not present, so no update could be provided.

Action: *MT still to provide the dataset for Ellon.*

6 Coastal Maintenance Policy – Graeme Craig

GC provided an update on the Shoreline Management Plan. The plan focuses on flooding and coastal protection, and will be produced by a consultant. A draft should be published in March 2007

GC circulated a map that showed which areas are at risk, as a result of climate change (i.e. below the 5 and 10m AOD line). Most properties that were at risk were Stonehaven and Newburgh. The City has been excluded from the map, and any plan produced will overlap with the City's coastal cells

There is an issue for future development plans in terms of settlement expansion, the development of flood defensive schemes, and relocating people in at risk areas.

The sewerage network will also be affected by the rise in sea level, especially overflow pipes, as this will reduce the capacity of sewage works (i.e. the number of homes that can be connected to sewage works).

7 Development Plan Update

The Aberdeenshire Local Plan is now adopted, and AEC is now looking at future policies.

The local plan inquiry for the Aberdeen City Local Plan finishes on second week of December 2006.

Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire councils are currently preparing the next structure plan (SP), which will be in the form of a strategic development plan, although this cannot be fully undertaken until secondary legislation is approved. The first series of documents to be produced for the next SP are the publication of the issues report and strategic options in the New Year (February 2007). Consultation with community council forums on the strategic options will be undertaken in the Spring of 2007.

8 Major Development

- Trump golf course development in amongst the sand dunes, and on agricultural land. Possible opportunity for SuDS
- Portlethen development: Issue if the land is sold to different developers in phases, as SuDS may not be used altogether or as efficiently as it could be.
- Uryside – framework has been agreed. Flooding issues have been taken into account, and flood affected areas will be turned into wetlands and riparian woodlands.

9 AOCB

MT reported that although he receives drawings at the planning application stage for schemes with drainage/flooding issues, where proposals are approved and subsequent changes are later made, his department do not see these revised plans, and they are passed without their knowledge.

Action: DG to raise this issue at his next management meeting

The 3 Dee Vision Project Report has now been published, and copies were circulated to those present, as were copies of the Rainfall Questionnaire for Farmers.

MT announced he will no longer be attending future NESFLAG meetings, but will be attending if he can make it. The group thanked MT for his input and advice in the past.

SEPA's 200 year flood risk map, as published in November 2006 can be bought by local authorities at a cheaper cost.

Action: AH to ask PB if he has purchased the SEPA map covering the FLAGGIS areas, and if it can be published on the FLAGGIS website.

10. Date for next meeting

The date of the next meeting will be on Friday 2 March 2007 in Room J, Woodhill House, Aberdeen at 2pm.