

**North East Scotland Flood Liaison and Advice Group
Held – Room J, Woodhill House
2pm, Friday 2nd March 2007**

Present:

Andrew Carruthers (Aberdeenshire Council)	AEC (Chair)
Maurice Stack (Aberdeenshire Council)	MS
Daniel Lewis (Aberdeen City Development)	DL
Nicola Abrams (SEPA)	NA
Graeme Craig (Aberdeenshire Transport & Infrastructure)	GC
William Murdoch	WM
David Crichton (Insurance Representative)	DC

1. Apologies

Richard Hoggins
Jim Lister
Douglas Gray
Martin Boshoff

Action : Check who delegate should be from city as Bill Murphy is retiring imminently.

2. Minutes

The minutes were deemed correct.

3. Matters Arising

Group agreed to ignore the action suggested by the previous “matters arising” minutes as nobody was sure what was meant by comment.

DC brought some reading material to the attention of the group:

- Flood Planner – a manual for the natural management of river floods (www.wwf.org.uk/scotland)
- Slowing the Flow – a natural solution to flooding.
- ‘Scotsman’ article from 27/02/07 page 6 entitled ‘Let nature take its course.’

Significantly, DC drew attention to the proposed new European directive on the assessment and management of flood, which may result in UK legislation this year. The net effect is that current SEPA Flood Maps wouldn’t meet new requirements being proposed by the new directive. The timetable of this new directive is the same as the Water Frame Directive.

Action : We encourage continuing dialogue between flood management side and River Basin Management.

4. SUDS

DC said that under the latest draft of Scottish Water policy the '30 metre rule' has been reduced – this rule refers to the distance separating the SUDS basin from the development as required under SUDS. NA concurred that in this draft a fence would be an acceptable alternative which would reduce this '30 metre rule' restriction from being applied to smaller sites. In addition DC said that under the Scottish Water policy there would have to be a (service) roadway between housing and the SUDS pond. NA added that there will be provision for suitable alternatives. Consultation on this issue takes place in mid march.

Meeting of SUDS working party takes place next week.

GC stated that Scottish Water wants every house to have a pond. On this point DC noted that Scottish Water held responsibility for any resulting flooding of SUDS ponds and could be liable in the event of a flood scenario for keeping water on land artificially.

Action: NA will convey our concerns regarding who is ultimately responsible for impact of SUDS in event of a flood.

5. GIS

AEC said that Aberdeenshire Council is paying license fee for GIS package and asked group if everybody else has a SEPA license.

DC noted that the Scottish Executive spent £3M on GIS flood map modelling. AEC asked could ICT put on data for those who have SEPA license.

Action : NA will contact SEPA (Licenses Manager) and will put AEC in contact with them.

Action : GC will call Dave Bassett at JBA Consulting (third party specialists in flood management) next week.

6. Development of Coastal Management Policy.

GC Update: Waiting for info from Wallingford. They are helping us to put together brief to go out to tender. Will probably take a year.

AEC: First draft of potential policies (to be done by MS) to cover

- completely acceptable areas for development
- areas at risk of serious flooding within near future
- areas somewhere in between above two

Need to take account of a series of possibilities. Risk of flooding calculated as it stands at present or taking into account forecast climate and possible changes from 50 years hence. Policy will inform where the boundaries should be.

7. National Planning Framework Issue

Aberdeenshire had registered the potential of coastal flooding as an issue for the National Planning Framework (NPF).

AC drew attention to a New Scientist article (issue 14th December 2006) which suggested that a forthcoming report from the IPCC will emphasise the probable increased rate of melting from the Greenland and west Antarctic ice caps, each of which could contribute 6-7m of sea level rise.

8. Development Plan Updates.

Consultation about to take off on Strategic Options in the next structure plan – 8 general patterns being suggested.

DC passed around booklet :” Practical Guidance on Applying the Precautionary Principle” (see www.sniffer.org.uk)

AEC mentioned how capacity studies such as Stonehaven and Ellon considered the implications of a doubling in size of the settlements and include information on how we work out capacity including elimination of flood risk areas etc.

NA : It is encouraging that flood risk is being considered at beginning of Strategic Plan.

Action: Send Aberdeenshire Council website link of our two capacity studies (Ellon and Stonehaven) to Graeme.

9. Major Development

DL: Donside Mill Application – potential flooding issues. There are no flooding issues downstream from Davidson Mills site – setback from river.

No major SUDS issues at A90 Portlethen.

10. Conferences and Publications

DC reported on Sniffer Conference (Scotland and Northern Ireland Forum for Environmental Research)

There are 4 major pieces of research

- Report due in April
- University of Dundee exploring social impact of flooding.
- Flood asset database
- New research assessing benefit of Flood warning

Sewers for Scotland 2 - see Ciria website

DL said there is a free seminar at the Aberdeen Arts Centre 18th April from 12.30 to 1.30 pm discussing technical handbook for Scotland. He suggested that this seminar is more relevant for Flood Management and Building Control people.

11. Any Other Competent Business

Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) – looked at 430 applications across 6 areas of Aberdeenshire, comparing likely risk from different areas (Marr and Kincardine and Mearns had highest risk of flooding based on samples) AEC stated that it would be useful to have a 'blob' on GIS map to tell you when Flood Risk Assessment is being carried out. As it is SEPA keeps a log of FRAs requested.

NA: SEPA is not screening every planning application – it presumes Planning Authority is doing this.

GC noted that there are probably a lot of applications that don't need to come to us.

NA: It was Scottish Natural Heritage who flagged it with SEPA due to risk of flood risks going through unassessed. She added that it is up to the receiving authority to consult SEPA.

GC: We sometimes deal with developers. He feels that everything should go through planning. This is why Register was to be kept by planning.

Email

DC: mentioned that e-mails to Aberdeenshire Council bounce back to him. AC explained that this was probably due to a problem on the Aberdeenshire side - due to a 'distributed denial of service attack' which caused Aberdeenshire mail addresses to be regarded as SPAM addresses.

Action: Douglas Gray and GC and NA get together to discuss best practice re register of Flood Risk Assessments

Emergency Flood Group

AEC had received an invitation to the resurrected Emergency Flood Group.

Action: AEC to report back to the next meeting

NESFLAG contacts

DC said circulation should be extended to Moray and Angus FLAG possibly to Peter Haslam (Senior engineer Flood Prevention at Moray Council and to SNH).

Action: MS to look for contact.

12. Topics and Date for Next Meeting

AC asked whether Tamsin Morris (River Basin Management Plan, SEPA) would be attending.

NA said she would ask her if she has anything to update group – if she needs to attend.

The date of the next meeting will be Friday 1st June 2007 in Conference Room D Woodhill House, Aberdeen at 2pm.