

Comments & Points Raised at Meeting
Town Hall Meeting
Flooding Bill Consultation

Location: Grant Hall
46-48 New Street
Rothes
Aberlour
Banffshire
AB38 7BJ

Date/Time: 11 April 2008,
18:30 – 20:00

PANEL MEMBERS

Richard Lochhead	Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Environment
Cllr John Russell	Moray Council (Chair)
Dave Gowans	Moray Council
Jim Conlin	Scottish Water
Ian Burnett	Scottish Water
David Bale	Scottish Natural Heritage
Jen Heatley	Scottish Natural Heritage
Richard Brown	SEPA
Fiona Quinn	Scottish Government
Gordon Young	Scottish Government (Minutes)

SYNOPSIS OF COMMENTS RAISED

- With regards to sewerage flooding in October 2007, why is urban drainage not tied in to, and co-ordinated with the Council's Flood Risk Management. It is seen that Scottish Water, SEPA and the Council should have a more co-ordinated vision and approach, and that they should be able to work and respond together in a more efficient manner.
- We don't care if the flooding is "pluvial or whatever". It is flooding, and it affects us and something should be done about it.
- You are spending millions in Rothes in the summer on flooding defences. "What is the point if the drains aren't upgraded?"
- I would be happy to see Moray Council and Scottish Water working better together, and will be glad if this is a part of the new Bill.
- Why it is necessary for rainwater excess and sewerage to use the same pipes. This has led to problems with sewerage flooding in some areas.

- In the new Bill there should be a legal duty on all organisations to work together and co-operate.
- Is there some way that the financial streams can be changed in the short term until the Bill has been passed. This is in order to allow Moray Council to deal with existing schemes that it has planned.
- There is no mention in the Consultation about compensation for Land Owners if they are required to return agricultural land to wetland. Would this come from the Block Grant or the SRDP?
- I think that SEPA and Moray Council are not knowledgeable enough compared to the Environment Agency. They will need external consultants. Who will pay for this expertise?
- What will SEPA's role be? The consultation is unclear about this. Believe that SEPA or the competent authority should have "teeth"/powers/financing.
- Should consider increasing the powers of SEPA, or maybe consider giving all powers to the Local Authority.
- Would like to see the Local authority, SNH, SW & SEPA all represented in a group which acts as the competent authority. This would ensure a broad outlook with no vested interests or bias.
- We have experienced problems when working with SEPA. Due to a change of staff in SEPA, the "processes" that the Community Council were dealing with had to start again, because the new people in SEPA knew nothing about the previous discussions. Therefore SEPA needs to be better organised and some continuity needs to be in place.
- Under the planning process SEPA can object to every phase in the process. There should be a much more streamlined approach, with less need for stages of objection (although there is still a need for an opportunity for individuals/businesses to object). Agencies should work together.
- How are SUDS going to be introduced in existing developments? Is this not an insurmountable challenge?
- With regards to Flash Flooding/Pluvial Flooding, who has responsibility? SW and SEPA (Local Authorities?) both try to give responsibility to the other.
- My experience is that there is no lack of expertise in the Local Authorities.
- If SEPA is to identify and draw up FRMPs, who will get the funding? Will SEPA decide who gets the funding? How will they prioritise where the funding goes on a national, and a local level?

- Pleased that we are going from a reactive to a proactive response. Everything however, will be outcome based. If there are no plans, there will be no funding.
- How will shared costs across authorities be determined? Who will decide on the level of funding for a specific plan? Worried that the legislative process will not end up streamlined, and will end up quite the opposite.
- Think that Bill will end up with available resources spread more thinly.
- Last year there were 22 pluvial events. Will this mean a separate FRMP for each one?
- Existing skill base should be shared by all. Surely SEPA has knowledge that it can pass on to the Local Authorities.
- At present the work of Local Authority hydrologists must be checked by SEPA and SW.
- How can we bring the urban issues and the rural issues together? There is a need for “joined up “ thinking.
- How do we envisage persuading a farmer to give up his land “for the greater good?”
- Are we thinking of involving the Farming Community in FRMP process?
- NFUS are keen to help the process.
- We must take a “top-down” approach, and consider businesses. How do we deal with issues of funding?
- We have to make sure that SEPA does what it needs to with regards to CAR.
- We must consider insurance implications for businesses.
- It is important that there is transparency in the Bill process so that businesses can plan for the future.
- There are differing standards for Environmental Impact Assessments. Some aren't “worth the paper they are written on,” and there is a lack of consistency. Perhaps EIAs should be standardised. The new Legislation should be consistent with these views.