

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

Location: Morton Hall
Main Street
Newmilns
East Ayrshire

Date/Time: 18 April 2008,
17:00 – 18:30

PANEL MEMBERS

Michael Russell	Minister for Environment (Chair)
Elizabeth Morton	Deputy Chief Executive, East Ayrshire Council
John McRobert	East Ayrshire Council
Stan Irvine	Scottish Government
David Faichney	SEPA

MINUTES

Gordon Young Scottish Government

SYNOPSIS OF COMMENTS RAISED

- We should learn more from other countries, and study how they deal with flooding issues.
- The bill should include an obligation to inform for all relevant parties, ensuring Open Government.
- The competent Authority should not be SEPA but should be discussed more. Perhaps the competent authority should be a part of the Government.
- The Bill should make sure there are clearer lines to define who has responsibility (eg for river banks)
- Who or where to go to for help should be clearer to the General Public.
- There should be a presumption against building on flood plains.
- The use of porous materials for eg parking spaces should be made more compulsory.

- Why don't we use the American system of levees to protect our settlements?
- We should judge existing buildings for flood resistance, and not just new developments.
- Pavements and Roads should be permeable especially in areas of high flooding risk.
- There should be controls on building hard surfaces.
- Although it is more expensive to be "green" market forces will generally level this out as "green" practices become more the "norm"
- One of the key issues in flood alleviation and flood risk management is the one of prioritisation. Who gets what first?
- Water courses should not be allowed to overflow into the sewerage system. This is a major health hazard.
- How is the Bill going to manage the Public's expectations? It should be clearer.
- What resources and what finances are going to be applied to the new Bill?
- Flood alleviation schemes don't get built fast enough. Often it's too late.
- SPP7 should be extended. However, is it sustainable?
- Building on flood plains should be subject to FRMPs.
- Why can't we continue to build on flood plains, build proper flood defences, like in Holland? More housing equals more people equals economic stability.
- The Bill should step up inspection times.
- When culverts are silted up, the Bill should define who is responsible for clearing them, and specify time scales and penalties, or allow the right to sue.
- We never know what the Council are doing about this. There should be a legal requirement to inform and be open about actions and plans. This would create more trust.
- Is it not possible to alleviate flooding by measures upstream instead of defences at point of flooding? Surely old settlements would have been abandoned if they always flooded, so we have caused these floodings in other ways.

- Are we getting better at knowing when flooding will occur? If so, we need to make this information available to LAs and general public much quicker and more openly.
- The legal process is time-consuming. Would schemes be helped if they were overseen by a more efficient overseeing authority?
- How do other countries deal with it? There must be something better than fire brigades and sandbags.
- The Bill must include the obligation to inform.
- There should be compulsory flood risk assessments by developers.
- How are we going to decide when we can create a neutral flood risk at one point but that creates a flood risk elsewhere?
- We need porous surfaces for roads and parking areas such as superstores.
- How are we going to upgrade our Victorian sewerage and drainage systems?
- There must be a legal requirement for delineation and agreement between LAs and Scottish Water.
- Scottish Water must work closer with LAs.
- We must have a consistent approach over the whole of Scotland as regards a competent authority.
- Design parameters for plans should have climate change factored in.
- There must be more legal responsibility for the Council to “do something about it.” We have been to the Council many times, and they do nothing about it.
- Must be legislation for all building to be flood resilient and have a neutral flood impact.
- Other countries build more on flood plains. What can't we?
- Disagree – should be a presumption against building on historic flood plains. Only exacerbates the situation.
- We shouldn't drain rainwater into the sewerage systems. These should only be for sewerage.
- There must be clearly defined approach to who has authority and ownership of river. Or at least who controls what needs to be done with it, such as where defences are built, where it should be dredged etc.

- Who is responsible when erosion or sedimentation changes characteristics of river? Should be legal requirement to do something if this causes flooding elsewhere.
- We should be restoring wetlands, forests and woodland. Man has changed all these areas where nature soaked up water.
- Public should be more reliably informed about the arguments over climate change. Is it happening? Who do we believe?
- Don't think we should have a single co-ordinated authority to oversee flood risk management.