

FLOODING ISSUES ADVISORY COMMITTEE FIAC – THE WAY FORWARD?

Purpose

1. This paper presents the work priorities for the Flooding Issues Advisory Committee (FIAC) and its 3 Sub-Committees.

Background

2. From the moment that the workplan for FIAC was agreed, it was apparent that FIAC would cover a wide and varied programme in its two year lifespan. Now that we are six months down the road, and all three Sub-Committees have had their first meeting, the breadth of the flooding agenda that FIAC covers has become much clearer. Following discussions between the FIAC Chairman, the Chairs of the three sub-committees and some FIAC Members on 1 November a list of the main priorities for the next 18 months has been drawn up. It was also acknowledged that the wider range of issues, which have been proposed by members of the various committees, will not be overlooked. (A copy of the note from the meeting held to discuss work priorities is attached at Annex A and a diagram showing the relationships between the priorities can be found in Annex B.)

Awareness and Assistance Sub-Committee

3. The main priorities of the Awareness and Assistance Sub-Committee are:

- I. ***The Introduction of Flood Warning Systems and Dissemination.*** The Sub-Committee should feed into the large scale programme being developed by SEPA for a national flood warning system for Scotland. Members will consider how future flood warning schemes might be prioritised, how flood warnings can best be disseminated to vulnerable people, and what the resource implications might be. In particular, the sub-committee could advise the SEPA project team on the role of the individual and how to ensure the public sign up for the system.
- II. ***Flood Maps as a tool for raising awareness.*** The Sub-Committee will offer advice on an overall strategy for flood mapping and access to information on flood risk that looks beyond the development of the map and considers how the various demands for information on flood risk can be met. The strategy might consider the expectations of potential users, the information that is available, the treatment of different flood types, the treatment of climate change, the management of expectations, the management of any risks associated with publishing maps and the framework for producing maps and making them available.
- III. ***Assessing how resilience is raised through awareness campaigns and flood warning schemes.*** The Sub-Committee will consider how we might assess the benefits to the community of less engineered solutions such as awareness campaigns and flood warning systems. The sub-committee will also consider existing models for community engagement and suggest how these might be applied in a Scottish context.

4. In addition an overall aim of the sub-committee will be to consider how the information from all of the various tools (flood maps, flood warning and dissemination systems etc) could feed into a Knowledge Centre/integrated flood risk data base that could be a central source of information on all things “flooding”.

Avoidance Sub-Committee

5. The main priorities of the Avoidance Sub-Committee are:

- I. ***Sustainable flood management.*** The Sub-Committee will continue to offer advice on how to define and measure sustainable flood management. It will offer advice on how to consult on the sustainable flood management work completed to date. The Sub-Committee will also consider how to promote sustainable flood management and how practitioners might be given guidance and training on putting it into practice. It will consider the inter-relationships that exist between different sources of flooding and offer advice on developing an integrated portfolio of responses – in line with the approach proposed in the Foresight report. This does not mean that the sub-committee should replicate work going on in other areas, but should ensure that it has linkages with relevant groups such as the SUDS Working Party so that the important role SUDS plays in sustainable flood management is taken into account.
- II. ***Identify best practice on sustainable flood management.*** The Sub-Committee will consider how to gather and promote sustainable flood management best practice solutions. It will also consider how these solutions might fit along side the technical guidance being written.
- III. ***Catchment flood management planning.*** The Sub-Committee will consider how to develop the River Basin Management Planning process to establish clear links with catchment flood management planning.

Alleviation Sub-Committee

6. The main priorities of the Alleviation Sub-Committee are:

- I. ***Technical Guidance:*** The Sub-Committee will continue to offer expert advice to the Consultant drafting the Executive’s technical guidance for local authorities and interested parties making flood prevention decisions.
- II. ***Prioritisation:*** The Sub-Committee will help develop the proposals for different options for prioritisation of flood prevention schemes, and provide a sounding board for how a prioritisation system might be developed to take account of future financial constraints.
- III. ***Legislative Change:*** Ultimately, the work of all 3 sub-committees will feed into the need for legislative change to support the new approaches to flood risk management. The Alleviation Sub-Committee will address:

- the legislative implications of options for funding mechanisms that would result from prioritisation of flood prevention schemes;
- the definition of ‘schemes’ within the meaning of the 1961 Act and how it might be widened to include an incremental approach to providing protection;
- how less engineered solutions which are below ‘scheme’ level, might be encouraged and funded and the identification of any necessary legislative changes which may be needed; and
- the role that flood warning systems play.

7. Most of the priority areas have links across all 3 Sub-Committees, and we will need to ensure that everyone is aware of developments in other Sub-Committees that could impact on any of the cross-cutting issues.

National Flooding Strategy

8. The Executive is looking to adopt a more proactive approach to addressing flood risk management. All of the outputs from the three Sub-Committees will help us develop further a national flooding strategy for Scotland, based around the National Flooding Framework but with more detail, and measurable outcome-based targets. This will also enable us to establish a legislative base to take forward our sustainable flood management agenda.

Conclusions

9. **Members are invited to consider and agree the work priorities as set out above.**

**FIAC Secretariat
November 2005**

FLOODING ISSUES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PRIORITIES MEETING

Note of the meeting held on 1 November 2005, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh.

Present: Philip Wright (Scottish Executive, (SE) Environment Group, Air, Climate and Engineering Division – chair).

Ramsay Dow (SE, Air, Climate and Engineering Division – minutes), Debi Garft (SE, Air, Climate and Engineering Division); Judith Tracey (SE, Air, Climate and Engineering Division); Prof. Charles Ainger (MWH); Jim Conlin (Scottish Water); Dr. John Riddell (Consultant); John Smith (Royal Town Planning Institute); Steven Tingle (Renfrewshire Council).

Apologies: Dr. Tim Jolley (SEPA).

1. Philip Wright thanked everyone for attending. Judith Tracey went through the process to-date, explaining the new matrix and how it had developed with comments from FIAC Members. From the new matrix the group is tasked with setting the main priorities for each of the three FIAC Sub-Committees. The group identified a number of key issues that FIAC should address.

2. Sharing best practice was discussed in detail and it was agreed that this should be added to the matrix. On best practice it was noted that:

- It is important that practitioners are aware of best practice solutions identified.
- Flood risk practitioners are not implementing emerging best practice as it is unsupported by the current legislation.
- Best practice should be established before any review of the current legislation.
- Best practice solutions should be flexible to address different types of flooding and different locations.
- Best practice should encourage stakeholders to take responsibility for decisions and provide an outcome orientated problem solving approach to flooding.

3. The Executive is considering how guidance on sustainable land use management techniques can sit along side the technical guidance for local authorities.

4. The Executive should consider how more proactive consultation on sustainable flood management can be carried out with planners and the insurance industry.

5. Implementation of the planning process needs to be tightened up. Even with SPP7 and PAN 69, some local plans still do not address flood risk.

6. It is important that local authorities consider flood risk at the beginning of a project not once the plans are drawn up. It was suggested that it would be easier to address flood risk

earlier in the planning process if local authorities had access to reliable flood risk data to better develop local plans.

7. It is important that local authorities take a more strategic overview on flooding; but they need a reliable flood risk data base. The Executive will look at funding options for developing this further.

8. The priorities matrix does not address flooding from land drainage. This 'clean' water is now contributing to the sewer drainage problems when it could go direct to a watercourse or the sea. The group suggested that land drainage issues are not always being addressed in new developments.

9. The group agreed that with competing financial demands, flooding is often a low priority for local authorities. The flood maps would provide a good starting point to highlight flood risk but it was agreed that any approach to development on flood plains needs to be flexible.

10. The public knowledge of SEPA's flood awareness raising activities is poor and needs to be strengthened. The group agreed that it is very difficult to motivate the general public.

11. It was suggested that all local authorities should be required to identify all properties at risk of flooding. The group recognised that this would be a massive modelling exercise but with the proper funding in place it would be very worthwhile. Local authorities should then be required to inform people that their property is at risk of flooding and what it plans to do about it.

12. The group discussed their concern that SPP7 is not being implemented correctly by all local authorities and that there is a very real need for involvement of planning practitioners in the flood resilience process.

13. There is a definite need for the development of a knowledge base that would inform and guide practitioners in regard to planning issues. It was suggested that we should investigate whether money set aside by the Executive for the training and development of town planners could be used for training on implementing new practices, such as SPP7.

14. It was suggested that 'blue belts' are established to help prevent new development in flood risk areas. However the group recognised this would raise issues for the insurance industry and planning policy.

Action point 1: Secretariat to approach Nick Evans to give his views on the planning issues raised.

Priorities for FIAC

15. The group agreed the following priorities for FIAC:

- Best practice: FIAC will explore the issues surrounding best practice in regard to flood risk and offer expert advice on this subject.

- Prioritisation: FIAC will help the Executive develop different options for prioritisation of flood prevention schemes and provide a sounding board for how a prioritisation system might be developed to take account of future financial constraints.
- Guidance: FIAC will help the Executive prepare technical guidance for practitioners involved in flood risk management. It will serve as a steering group and offer expert advice to the Consultant who will be drafting the Executive's technical guidance for local authorities and interested parties making flood prevention decisions.
- Legislative change: FIAC will consider proposals from the Sub-Committees for legislative change to support a sustainable flood management approach to flood risk.

Alleviation Sub-Committee

16. The priorities for the Alleviation Sub-Committee are:

- Technical guidance: (see under FIAC).
- Prioritisation: (see under FIAC).
- Legislative change: (see under FIAC).

Avoidance Sub-Committee

17. The priorities for the Avoidance Sub-Committee are:

- Sustainable flood management: The Sub-Committee will offer advice on how sustainable flood management might be promoted and how practitioners might be given guidance and training on putting it into practice.
- Best practice: (see under FIAC).
- Catchment flood management planning. The Sub-Committee will consider links between River Basin Management Planning and catchment flood management planning.

Awareness and Assistance Sub-Committee

18. The priorities for the Awareness and Assistance Sub-Committee are:

- Flood warning systems: The Sub-Committee should feed into the large scale programme being developed by SEPA for a national flood warning system for Scotland.

- Flood Maps: The Sub-Committee will offer advice on an overall strategy for flood mapping and access to information on flood risk that looks beyond the development of the map and considers how the various demands for information on flood risk can be met.
- Assessing how resilience is raised through awareness campaigns and flood warning schemes. The Sub-Committee will consider how we might assess the benefits to the community of less engineered solutions such as awareness campaigns and flood warning systems

Action point 2: Secretariat to circulate a copy of this note of meeting to all FIAC members.

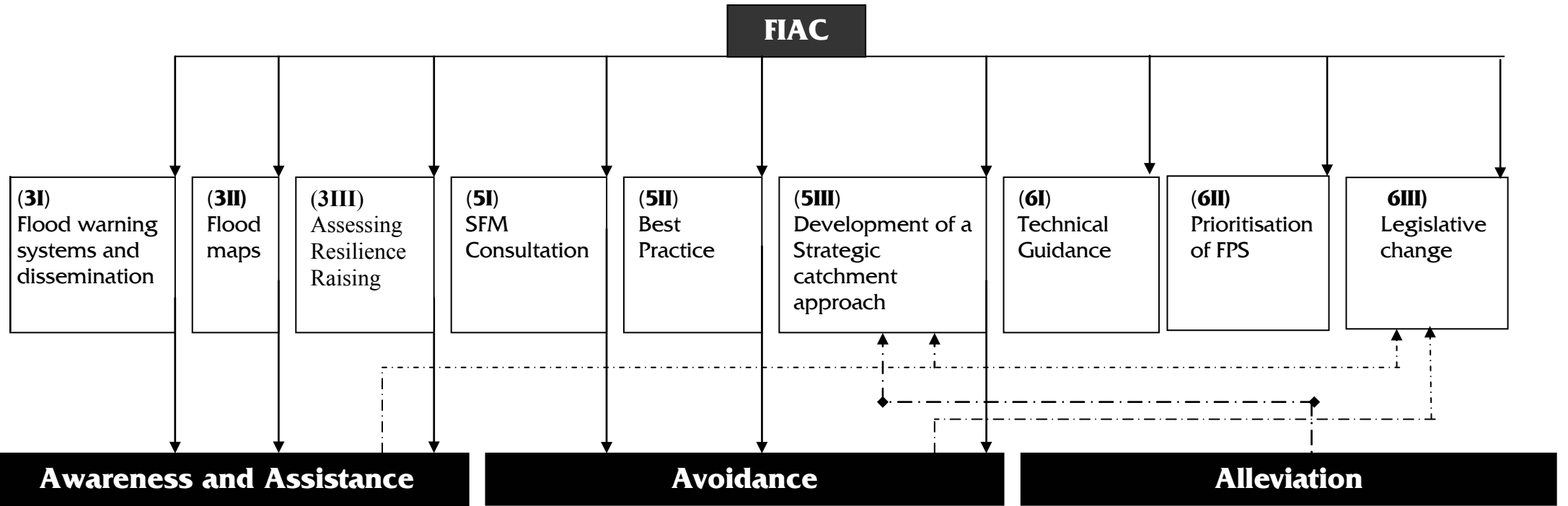
19. The group also discussed the balance of responsibilities between SEPA and local authorities. They agreed that while it is important for local authorities to continue to be responsible for flood risk management they must be encouraged to use the information available and take into account climate change and other emergent issues. When FIAC is looking at good practice issues it will need to highlight the importance of local authorities working with SEPA on flood risk.

20. FIAC should also advise that good practice should also include local authorities collaborating to solve cross-border flooding problems.

**FIAC Secretariat
November 2005**

FLOODING ISSUES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PRIORITIES



Key

■ Committee

→ Priority

...→ Feeds into

Detailed descriptions of the Priority Issues can be found in the FIAC2005(11) paper

FIAC2005(11)