



Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport

ACTION POINTS/ MINUTES OF THE FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT GROUP (FWMG) MEETING 24/01/2024

10:00-13:00

Held as a Microsoft Teams videoconferencing software

Present

- Max Tant (MT), Adrien Baudrimont (ABau), Alice Bartholemew (ABar), Alys Bishop (ABi), Anne Chataigne, Becca Nicholas, Becky George, Ben Dunn-Birch, Ben Stagg (BS), Brian Richards, Doug Hill (DH), Dan Killer, Dave Stewart, Emma Burdett, Grace Chandler, Hilary Tanner, Innes Thomson (IT), Jagjit Mahal, James Latham (JL), Jessica Fox (JF), Joanne Matthews, Kylie Russell (KR), Laura Bigley (LB), Lee Sencier, Louise Bower, Lucy Shepherd, Lynnsey Pilmer (LP), Martin Hutchings (MH), Matthew Penny, Matthew Harrison, Matt Williams, Mohamed Admani, Neil Clarke, Neil Hoskins, Nelly Ngai (NN), Owen Grove, Paul Maddison, Richard Whelan (RW), Roger Nowell (RN), Rohit Singh, Sabina Kupczyk, Sarah Smith, Sue Humm, Tim Simpson, William Bartlett, William Harrington (WH)

Apologies

- Zara Scott – LB Camden, Kate Thompson – West Yorks, Simon Bowers – West Northants, Matthew Bell – Barnsley, Richard Ward – Derbyshire, Dermot Kehoe – FloodRe, Neal Thomas – Coventry, Nick Claxton – East Sussex, Victoria Coombes – Leicester, Will Barber - Leicester

Table with 3 columns: Item, Action, Action owners. Row 1: Welcome & introductions, Apologies as stated above. Row 2: Actions and Minutes from, Update on actions from previous meeting: a) Provide specific examples and evidence of areas where Water UK Ordinary Watercourse protocol is not being applied by the local water companies.

	<p>the previous meeting</p>	<p>Still no examples received, yet it continues to cause grievance. Request for the group to provide specific examples to build an evidence base before this can be taken up with the water companies.</p> <p>b) <i>Feedback to Angus on the timescale needed for Schedule 3 consultation responses to be done if you have not done so already. No further action.</i></p> <p>c) <i>Vicky Westall to contact Matt Harrison regarding riparian responsibilities working group. VW to carry this forward as an action. MH confirmed he was still waiting to hear from VW - no further progress made with the working group. Lincolnshire working group has been established - MH is happy to share any learnings from that. MH to take up with VW and feed back to this group.</i></p> <p>d) <i>Face to face meetings - see AOB</i></p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>MH/VW</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Joint meetings with Sustainability Board and Engineering Board follow up</p>	<p>MT - Engineering Board was a useful meeting - question whether this is reaching the right audience for addressing SuDS in the highway, especially with Schedule 3 coming forward.</p> <p>KR - Sustainability Board meeting focussed on surface water flooding. A follow up meeting has been arranged with the EA next Tuesday 30th January at 2pm, to look at surface water flood scheme delivery and ways to work together on increasing deliverability. Invitations have been sent out - KR will send to Becca for redistribution.</p> <p>DH - Sustainability Board gave a useful presentation on what is stopping LAs from delivering SW schemes, Tuesday's meeting is a follow up to that, looking at how to help rectify issues and enable LA delivery of schemes. Working groups will be set up as part of that meeting to deal with each of the issues.</p> <p>KR – Survey was done to identify key issues, and intention is for Tuesday's meeting to be productive in the sense of identifying possible solutions.</p> <p>LB – Reminder of the work that ASA, CIWEM, FCRM TAG did last year on producing a Surface Water Review Report. LB also asked about the email from Julie Foley (Becca has resent this) at the end of last year, regarding barriers to LAs delivering SW schemes. She asked if the EA could arrange for the email to be sent out again by all RFCCs to ensure a good cross-sectional analysis is done across all regions.</p> <p>ABi - Timescales for getting EA funding approved for a project can be lengthy and do not account for complexities faced by RMAs dealing with changing administrations, budget pressures etc.</p> <p>MT – Surface water schemes shouldn't be delivered in isolation on a project-by-project basis. Focussing on surface water flooding issues that meet the criteria for partnership funding, won't deal with the problem as a whole, surface water management needs to be dealt with as a system including the sewer network.</p> <p>MT – The Engineering Board focussed predominantly on SuDS and highway drainage. A couple of actions came from it, which seemed to be led by the Engineering Board. Is there more work that should be done between this group and the Board?</p> <p>KR – Still waiting for the notes from the meeting and the actions haven't yet been taken forward, but the Board are keen to work together on taking actions forward. There is a Water Quality meeting planned with the Sustainable Growth</p>	<p>KR</p>

		<p>Board at end of February. MT to check that invitation for the meeting has been circulated to members of ADEPT.</p> <p>MT – There still seem to be barriers with Highway Teams around SuDS, particularly in relation to permeable paving in the adopted highway – it would be helpful to address this. There were also issues raised around water quality and runoff from the highway - it would be good to be involved in discussions around that. MT to find out whether Jo Bradley (Stormwater Shepherds) wants to join the meeting on Water Quality at end of February.</p>	<p>MT</p> <p>MT/KR</p>
4	<p>Hull permeable paving project – Jessica Fox/ Lynnsey Pilmer</p>	<p>Presentation from Jess Fox (Hull City Council) and Lynnsey Pilmer (Yorkshire Water) from the ‘Living with Water’ partnership in Hull & East Riding.</p> <p>MT – There is often resistance from Highway teams on approving permeable paving projects, often only approving type A ‘infiltration’ where there’s no carrier drains or similar - what response did this project receive from Highways, with managing and maintaining permeable paving having very different challenges to a normal road surface?</p> <p>LP – Highways became part of the core project team at 6-9 months, which ensured everything was designed to Highway standards and regulations. Highways are responsible for managing the road and kerbs, Yorkshire Water are responsible for managing the sewers, manholes and flow controls – meant the project was jointly owned. Engaging so early also meant they were involved with the design and were aware of every bit of detail coming through at each stage of Planning.</p> <p>MT – Was there any commuted sum involved for Highways to cover extra maintenance costs or are they just adopting it? LP to check and feedback. How are utilities managed? LP explained they were fortunate that there were no utilities within the carriageway, only in the pavement. Agree this would be a critical consideration in other locations. Where does the carrier drain discharge to? LP to respond later.</p> <p>DH – Great project – Maintenance cost is often a sticking point with Highways teams, and internal business case approval requires additional revenue for maintenance. There needs to be a way of convincing Highways to stop treating SuDS as a separate asset. Would be interesting to hear directly from Highways and how they have come to accept this approach in Hull.</p> <p>RW – Cambridgeshire have been involved in similar projects on a smaller scale – important to consider that moving services increases costs, sometimes doubling the project costs. Must be careful with foul sewerage (whether a foul or combined system) if there is a risk of surcharging, critical to ensure non return valves are fitted to avoid contamination of the sub-base. Did roof connections go straight into the sub-base? LP to respond separately. Also, worth getting them designated as Special Engineering Difficulty, as this prevents them getting filled up with ‘blacktop’. Important to keep monitoring during construction to ensure correct materials and methodology are used (particularly when there are changes in personnel) but also in future in relation to repairs.</p> <p>LP – Hull have a SuDS Clerk of Works dedicated to attending site and inspecting works.</p>	<p>LP</p> <p>LP</p> <p>LP</p>

		<p>LP/JF to pick up questions raised in the Teams chat and respond later.</p> <p>MT - What were the criteria for not implementing the option that scored highest on the Partnership Funding Calculator? JF – consultants completed the Business Case/PF calculator. Every other box was ticked, in terms of numbers of deprived homes etc. this option just scored less on the economic benefits. It was a lengthy process with the EA and took the RFCC’s involvement and support to get it signed off.</p>	LP/JF
5	DWMP Cycle 2 – Nellie Ngai	<p>Presentation by Alice Bartholemew (Defra) Ben Stagg (Defra) and Nellie Ngai (Defra) on Defra’s work on making DWMPs statutory from the next (2nd) cycle. Wanted today to explore how DWMPs can be improved.</p> <p>Questions for Local Authorities:</p> <p><i>What do you want from DWMPs, what would you like to see in them and what benefits can you see DWMPs can offer from a LA perspective? It is important that DWMPs meet flooding objectives, can DWMPs enable this?</i></p> <p>DH – current DWMPs tell us what the Water Companies want us to do, rather than setting out what we should be doing collectively and working in partnership by taking a collaborative approach at a catchment scale. Linking up with Catchment plans and Local Flood Risk Management Strategies is key going forward.</p> <p>MT – they are supposed to be produced collaboratively with other partners, but the guidance is set up for Water Companies alone. Problem is that most of the technical work in producing DWMPs is done in 18 months, and that isn’t sufficient time to co-create and develop joint projects. Approach should be, at the end of the last round, Water Companies spend time identifying a list of schemes to take forward in the next DWMP cycle and then the next phase is focussed on agreeing that plan with partners. Need to bear in mind disparity between LA and Water Company budgets and access to funding. It needs to be a more holistic and genuine partnership process.</p> <p>JL – there is a fear this will be another plan that doesn’t collaborate with partners – we want this to be a plan that identifies projects that actually will be delivered in partnership with others.</p> <p><i>Are there any other reflections from the 1st cycle DWMPs for this 2nd cycle? What could be improved?</i></p> <p>MT – difficult to join in the process due to limitations with our funding mechanisms, so it’s important to look beyond the DWMP and how others work. For example, funding of LA schemes is often on a project-by-project basis and that doesn’t fit well with the DWMP process. Need something similar to that proposed by NIC which is a joint plan with funding allocated to delivery of that plan, rather than funding allocated to each individual scheme. Also, treating drainage and surface water holistically, rather than as issues to be dealt with separately.</p> <p>DH – being so close to London, Thames Water’s DWMP seems to prioritise issues within London over the other areas.</p>	

		<p>RW – engagement with Anglian Water has been good and given opportunities to compare priorities etc. Took some time to understand and compare priorities, but now have a couple of schemes being delivered in collaboration as a result. Some priority areas were different between the LA and Anglian Water, but that doesn't mean if it isn't a priority for the LA they won't want to be involved and it's important to emphasise that. MT suggested that Water Companies should also do the same and get involved even where something isn't necessarily a high priority for them.</p> <p>RN – important that engagement between partners happens early enough in the process to ensure that plans don't just lead to more grey infrastructure and that 'green' nature based opportunities are identified early on. BS confirmed that this is already being considered.</p> <p><i>Could engagement with water companies be improved, and how?</i></p> <p>MT – involved with 2 water companies and both took a different approach – Thames had a better method of engagement, though doesn't necessarily mean the outcome was better. Goes back to previous point that Water Companies need to do more engagement earlier in the DWMP process so that partners have agreed which schemes can be delivered well in advance of the next DWMP, but also ongoing engagement rather than just at the time of a new DWMP.</p> <p>Requirements for Combined sewer overflow reductions in the Environment Plan and work coming out of the WINEP has taken over and overshadowed the DWMP process and seems to be driving a lot of water company investment. Been working with Water Companies on retrofitting SuDS to help manage CSOs and that isn't identified in the DWMP. Raises the question about whether DWMPs are asking the right questions.</p> <p>MH – sent a lot of maps/information to review with an unrealistic timeframe (2 weeks) – too much to do within that time. It felt one-way with Devon providing a lot of information and not getting much back. Also seem to get so far with partnership projects with the Water Companies and then things seem to go quiet and communication on progress is lacking.</p> <p>Next steps – Government are committed to making DWMPs statutory for Stage 2 and Water Companies have asked for new Guidance, which will be made available at the end of 2024 once necessary legislative steps and regulations have been finalised.</p> <p>NN confirmed that Local Authorities will be given the opportunity to have input towards development of the Guidance.</p> <p>Please get in touch with any questions or comments DWMP@defra.gov.uk</p>	
6	<p>Defra update – Will Harrington</p>	<p>Recent Flood Recovery Work – UK are already on the 10th named storm for 2023/24 – there were only 2 in 2022/23, which illustrates the scale of what is being dealt with. Government launched the Recovery Framework for Storms Babet and Henk. There has been a lot of questions raised regarding the Framework regarding criteria, allocation, eligibility etc. WH/ MT to set up separate meeting to discuss these questions with Defra Recovery Team, DLUHC as they are responsible for the overall Framework, and Department for Business – dates to be circulated after this meeting.</p> <p>MT – clarified there are 2 aspects to the questions raised – 1. Why people/areas haven't met the criteria to qualify for the funding, and 2. For those people/areas</p>	<p>WH/MT</p>

	<p>who have qualified, concerns about the burden it places on them, the timeframe for delivering the work and the amount of money available. Suggest the meeting is split accordingly. Please could any comments be circulated ahead of the meeting to ensure all the necessary points are raised and addressed.</p> <p>National Audit Office published 2 reports in 2023:</p> <p>1. 'Resilience to Flooding' (November 2023) – Defra and EA attended a PAC hearing to give evidence and PAC published a report reiterating the findings of the NAO and making 12 recommendations around resilience, investment programme for properties better protected, changes to the Capital scheme to get smaller projects approved, update on the Frequently Flooded Allowance, Schedule 3, guidance and training for LAs and EA on surface water flooding, FloodRe and the Government's plan for when it closes. Defra are currently considering that Report and recommendations and will respond in due course.</p> <p>2. 'Government Resilience to Extreme Weather' (December 2023) – PAC hearing on 21st February 2024 – Cabinet Office (led on the Report) will give evidence. PAC report and recommendations will follow, and Government will respond to that.</p> <p>Special Interest Group set up by the LGA on IDB Special Levy regarding the level of IDB special levy they pay each year and the impact on budgets. Meeting with Defra Special Adviser to discuss their proposals for mitigating the impact.</p> <p>Section 19 Guidance – work with JBA Consultants is ongoing, won't be ready before the end of March. Engagement with LLFAs is imminent but has been delayed due to the pressure a lot are facing with the recent flooding. If there is a strong view from LLFAs to see it sooner, please feedback.</p> <p>Defra reshuffle – New Secretary of State is Steve Barclay and new Flood & Water Minister is Robbie Moore.</p> <p>MH – regarding Flood Resilience – Lincolnshire were hit by Babet and Henk and have qualified for the grant with 820 internally flooded properties. Dealing with this number of applications will put a huge strain on resources. Neighbouring Authorities are dealing with similar numbers and greater. Biggest challenge – ability of PFR industry to deliver in the available timeframe for the Framework. The grant is welcomed by property owners and LLFAs but there needs to be recognition that the scale of impact from storms like Babet and Henk doesn't make it practical to deliver in the timescales given by the Framework.</p> <p>Tactical & Strategic meetings during recent flood events – Defra representatives have only taken figures from the EA for internally flooded properties – LLFAs hold much more accurate figures. E.g. in one instance, EA had 30 properties listed compared to 111 recorded by the LLFA, which wouldn't have met the threshold to qualify for the grants.</p> <p>MT – similar issue with Defra only using EA figures when the Frequently Flooded Properties Policy was developed.</p> <p>DH – Schedule 3 – any news of a date for the consultation? Leader asking for official line on whether it is happening or not? WH to make enquiries and provide an update after the meeting.</p> <p>MT – Section 19 Review - Working Group plans to send out questionnaire to LLFAs, however this has been delayed in light of the recent flood events. Are</p>	<p>All</p> <p>WH</p>
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		LLFAs happy to receive the questionnaire and able to respond now? The group agreed it is topical and therefore a good time to approach LLFAs. MT to feed back.	
7	EA update – Sarah Smith	<p>Sarah Smith gave a presentation (refer to Slides)</p> <p>Role and strategic leadership that the EA could take with surface water – recognising there is a gap - particularly relating to the convening and enabling role the EA could play.</p> <p>Coastal areas – Shoreline Management Plan Explorer launches 30th January 2024 – this will make information in the plans more accessible.</p> <p>Statutory Instruments for Biodiversity Net Gain – additional guidance has been developed for capital projects, to help project teams embed biodiversity net gain requirements within FCERM capital projects – available on SharePoint.</p> <p>Property Flood Resilience Framework – has been launched – open to Local Authorities as well as EA. More information available on SharePoint.</p> <p>New Training offer – 17 eLearning modules to be made available to RMAs via the FCERM Skills Academy on the SharePoint site from March 2024.</p> <p>Survey on asset management and data – request for ADEPT members to please complete this 5 minute survey to help better understand existing practice and produce good practice guidance on improving asset record keeping, inspections, data sharing. This will feed into a guidance document being prepared by EA.</p>	All
8	ADA update – Innes Thompson	<p>Innes Thomson gave an update from ADA – see attached for detail.</p> <p>AB – is that updating the process for how the rates are raised? It is an update to a very old software system; it is not about examining the system for rating.</p>	
9	Update from Chair	<p>Section 19 workshops – working group met for 2nd time last week – this is being led by JBA who are looking at guidance and reporting of S19s. MT explained there is still a long way to go. Guidance isn't likely to be released in time for the current round of S19s.</p> <p>AB – S19 policy is referenced in the adopted Local Flood Risk Management Strategies – important to note that LLFAs do not want to have to change their LFRMS based on the new guidance and the new guidance does not create any new burdens on LLFAs. MT explained this is a Defra led project and is only guidance, no change to the Legislation, so future LFRMS revisions may want to take it into account.</p> <p>Future meetings – should these be face to face – requires a commitment from all members of ADEPT to ensure a good turnout. Agreed a face to face meeting would be good, and hybrid meeting is difficult to deliver effectively. Poll to be circulated to gauge interest for a summer face to face meeting in London (2nd July) without a virtual option on that occasion.</p>	
10	AOB	<p>DH – Coming out of the last RFCC meeting was disquiet amongst LLFAs about the EA stepping back from a lot and expecting LLFAs to deliver without any consideration of how that will be done. Would ADEPT members consider writing collectively to the EA regarding this. MT suggested a broader consideration is needed and discussion around this at the next meeting.</p>	MT

		<p>ABau – update from Ciria – SuDS Webinar organised by Homes England on Friday 26th January is fully subscribed but recording will be available online. Launch of SuDS Awards on 8th February, if anyone has a good SuDS project to nominate, CIRIA are keen to recognise good SuDS work. Biodiversity Awards launch on 28th February for the Construction Industry – spaces available for local authorities if interested. Ciria will be doing an update at the next meeting.</p> <p>LB on maternity leave from end of March.</p>	All
11	Confirm Date of Next Meeting	17 th April 2024	