

Report from Inland Flood Risk Management Group

Background

1. The LGA's new Inland Flood Risk Management Group met on 24 May for the first time since the Board confirmed the Terms of Reference in March.
2. The Group is chaired by Cllr Mike Haines and will comprise:
 - 4 Board members (Cllr Haines; Cllr Bateman; Cllr Turner; Cllr Gravells)
 - 2 members from each of the English regions and Wales.
 - Chair of LGA Coastal Issues SIG (Cllr Roger Thomas)
3. Most of the regional representatives have now been appointed. The Group will be supported by an Officer Network, currently being set up. Information about the Group, agendas and minutes will be posted on the Community of Practice on Flood Risk: <http://www.communities.idea.gov.uk/c/2050378/home.do>

4. Issues and Concerns

At the May meeting, the Group raised the following local authority concerns:

- Need for all areas to offer a consistent level of service on flood risk and a consistent approach (e.g. on flood wardens)
- LAs need a timetable for commencement of Floods Act to support progress
- Flood risk management may slip down the political agenda given current financial situation and where there has been no recent flooding
- Financial situation is now very difficult - concern about future budget cuts
- High expectations on LAs - how to prioritise funding?
- How to help areas that don't qualify for flood defence schemes
- Smaller schemes can deliver significant impacts for modest investment
- Lack of capacity, very few engineers and training courses
- Scrapping of Regional Spatial Strategies may undermine recent progress

5. **Lobbying priorities**

- Ensure better guidance for LAs from Defra
- Promote good partnerships with EA /Defra as well as between LAs / regions
- Secure better dialogue with water companies at CEX level
- Ensure better dissemination of good practice and learning from recent studies on e.g. soil compaction and farming practices /land use
- Ensure Defra are including professional bodies in addressing capacity issues
- How to implement Pitt/Act when authorities lack expert staff?
- Secure guidance on where LAs need to prioritise resources and effort
- Support joint working with EA, consultancies, Water Cos, across regions
- Clarify liability of members in delivering local flood risk management

6. **Work programme for the year ahead**

- Officer Network to develop work on:
 - A framework for developing the local strategy
 - Promoting a consistent level of service
 - Collaboration and joint working to address capacity issues
 - Clarifying the liability of members
- LGA policy staff to:
 - invite water industry to next Group meeting (18 October 10.30-12.30)

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LGA Inland Flood Risk Management Group members

LGA Environment Board

Chair: Cllr Mike Haines, Teignbridge DC
Cllr Derek Bateman, Cheshire West and Chester
Cllr Bernie Turner, Liverpool CC
Cllr Andrew Gravells, Gloucestershire CC

LGA Coastal Issues Special Interest Group

Cllr Roger Thomas, East Sussex CC

East Midlands:

Cllr Doreen Stephenson, Leader, East Lindsey District Council
Cllr Eddy Poll, Lincolnshire County Council

East of England:

Cllr Tricia Turner, Central Bedfordshire
Cllr Tracey Chapman, Essex County Council

North East:

Cllr Terry Laing, Stockton BC
Cllr Martin Gannon, Gateshead MBC

Wales:

Cllr Keith Evans, Leader, Ceredigion Council
Awaiting confirmation of 2nd representative

Yorkshire and Humber:

Cllr Arthur Barker, Hambleton DC
Awaiting confirmation of 2nd representative (end June)

West Midlands:

Cllr Phillip Grove, Malvern Hills DC
Cllr Anna Mackison, Wychavon DC

South East:

Cllr Peter Gardiner, Lewes DC
Cllr Geoffrey Woodger, Runnymede BC

South West:

Cllr Peter Bowden, Devon CC
Cllr Gordon Hook, Devon CC

North West: Awaiting confirmation of members (June/July)

London: Awaiting confirmation of members (June/July)

Officers:

Richard Wills, Lincolnshire will chair an Officer Network of around 20 advisers. An annual event will be open to all officers and members.