

SETTING THE SCENE - PRESENTATION

Councillor Yvonne Davidson welcomed representatives from the Environment Agency Morgan Wray, Asset Systems Management Team Leader, and Andrew Disney, Development Control Team Leader. They had been invited to provide the Select Committee with a background to the issues involved in flooding, including the County Council's responsibilities and that of other organisations involved.

Mr Wray began by saying that the Environment Agency was the primary Government authority for flood defence and that it had been involved in investigating options to protect properties and people along the left bank of the River Trent by reviewing its defences through Nottingham. He said that part of their function was to undertake the management of flood risk by influence over planned developments within identified flood plains and by the development of capital schemes to reduce flood risk to existing communities.

Mr Wray referred to the widespread flooding in 1998 and 2000, in the Nottingham area, and said that although it was contained by the existing flood defences, it had highlighted concerns for the widespread damage that would result from a moderate rise in flood levels. Mr Wray explained that the Fluvial Trent Strategy was a high level review of the Trent Catchment which had highlighted sections that merited further attention since they either did not protect to an appropriate standard or were approaching the end of their design life. The strategy had taken into account planning over the next 50 years and included consideration of any possible affects of climate change. It found that over 22,000 properties in Nottingham were at risk from a 1 in 100 year flood event. The Nottingham Strategy had evolved from the Fluvial Trent Strategy to manage the flood risk, and recommended the construction of two flood defence schemes within Nottingham, the Nottingham Trent Left Bank Flood Alleviation Scheme and the West Bridgford Flood Alleviation Scheme. The schemes would be providing 30km of defences, protecting 22,000 homes, costing £64m and take four years to build.

Mr Wray went on to give a brief summary of the appraisals carried out for both schemes and the other options that had been taken into account.

Mr Disney, Development Control Team Leader gave the Select Committee a summary to the Select Committee of the Environment Agency role in Development and Control. In doing so, he said that they provided comments to planning applications. Flood risk assessment was now accepted as a major part of the planning process and controlled under planning guidance. Mr Disney explained how flood risk was considered under the guidance and touched on the stages involved in the planning and development process in order to reduce future damage to property and loss of life. In doing so, he highlighted the position in relation to the current and future planning guidance, the latter, he said, would place greater emphasis on development behind flood defences.

Councillor Saddington expressed her concern in relation to properties in particular areas of the County, having not flooded and not being able to get insurance cover. She urged that this be looked into carefully. Mr Wray said that the Environment Agency did offer their support to the public.

Councillor Davidson asked what the district and borough council's relationship with the Environment Agency was like in respect of planning matters. Mr Wray said that they had very good links with the councils and their planners.

Councillor Prebble commented on the difficulty in knowing if planning officers were giving consistent advice.

In response to a question from Councillor Pettengell, Mr Wray explained that the scheme life could be affected by the amount of funding received from Government and how it fit into the Environment Agency's other priorities.

Mr Wray invited the Select Committee to visit their offices in Lady Bay.

Following the presentation given by the Environment Agency's representatives the Select Committee adjourned to engage in a short tour along the River Trent to witness first hand some of the improved flood defence work already being carried out.

Following the tour the County Council's Head of Emergency Management and Registration, Rob Fisher gave a presentation to the Select Committee on the role of the Nottinghamshire County Council Emergency Planning Team in co-ordinating the County Councils response to flooding.

It was explained that the County Council had a duty of care role for all of its communities in Nottinghamshire and that its role was ultimately to support the community through all phases of an emergency from response through to recovery.

Mr Fisher said that the Multi-Agency Floods Response Plan had been written after the 2000 floods and had been further developed to the present day. The plan supplemented the Environment Agency Local Flood Warning plan which highlights those areas at risk from flooding and the flood warning arrangements.

Mr Fisher referred to the Local Flood Warning Plan that was chaired and facilitated by the Environment Agency and pointed out that its intention was to get together all of the appropriate agencies and to update them of any changes to flood warnings as well as organisational changes. He said that in the future flooding will become a capability issue which will mean the development of work that the current group does can be expanded into areas of planned development, training, exercising and awareness raising.

It was pointed out that the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 had placed new duties on Local Authorities, Government agencies, Emergency Services and most NHS organisations (Category 1 organisations) to share and co-ordinate information with each other. The new duties included the sharing of

information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and warning and informing the public. There was an overview of multi-agency work in place to deal with flooding.

Mr Fisher further explained that the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Risk Assessment Working Group had been tasked with identifying risks and developing a process for informing local planning arrangements. The Forum had recently put together a Draft Generic Response to developers who wished to develop flood plain and come to the Emergency Services and Local Authority's emergency planning teams for comments on their proposals. This response was there to advise that any development should not be permitted in the Flood Plan unless it meets certain criteria highlighted in the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) generic response, attached at appendix 1 to the report.

In response to a question, Mr Fisher said that the Local Authorities took the lead of the recovery phase once a flood emergency had gone past the initial life saving and rescue phase, and that this responsibility was passed on from the Police.

Councillor Carter raised his concern regarding the planning response rate. Mr Disney said that in terms of the ones that they responded to there was a 90% response rate on a 10 day deadline. Councillor Davidson asked for details to be given to the Select Committee.

Councillor Davidson asked the Select Committee if they had any thoughts or comments to add following the presentations.

Councillor Pettengell felt that it would be useful to have an update from the Environment Agency early in the New Year.

Councillor Lally asked that District Planners and Planning Officers be invited to attend to give their perspective on flooding issues to the Select Committee.

Councillor Davison suggested that the Select Committee visit the Environment Agency offices on 13th November 2006.

FLOODING SCRUTINY REVIEW – PRESENTATION BY NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

The Chair welcomed from Nottingham City Council Councillor Emma Dewinton, Chair of the Regeneration, Infrastructure and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Barbara Cast, Head of Scrutiny. Ms Cast gave a presentation on the City Council's review of flooding issues carried out in 2004.

The review had gathered evidence from officers of the City Council, Environment Agency and other organisations, and made a range of recommendations. The Panel had received a progress report in February 2006, with a further report due in February 2007.

Councillor Wombwell asked whether the review had made any recommendations about stopping development on the flood plain. Ms Cast replied that this had not been a focus of the review, but speaking generally, there had to be strong grounds for refusing a planning application. Councillor Dewinton pointed out that there had been a concern that the new flood defences under construction did not address the consequences of climate change. However she understood that it would be possible to raise the height of the defences at some future point if necessary. She felt that residents should be more involved in the development of flood defence proposals, and there should be better communication with residents. She drew attention to the lack of legal powers to enforce sustainable urban drainage.

Councillor Wombwell drew attention to the increased risk of flash floods. Councillor Dewinton and Ms Cast stated that the City Council review had recognised this. They indicated that this was part of the remit of Severn Trent Water. Councillor Carter asked whether the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister had taken account of the review when preparing the December 2005 white paper. Ms Cast stated that they had sent their findings to Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), which had given a full response. In reply to Councillor Pettengell, Ms Cast stated that urgent clarification was needed about who was responsible for sewerage on new developments.

Councillor Saddington asked whether local authorities should have a coordinated policy on development in flood plains. Councillor Dewinton pointed out this was an aspect of the regional spatial strategy, which was currently under review. Otherwise, authorities were constrained by the planning regulations. Councillor Pettengell observed that the Environment Agency would provide individuals with a certificate saying that their property was unlikely to flood. Councillor Wombwell pointed out that any new building in the flood plain had to include flood defence measures. Councillor Carter referred to the Environment Agency's strong record of investment in this area.

Councillor Davidson thanked Councillor Dewinton and Ms Cast for their contribution.

BUILDING DEVELOPMENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Mike Hankin, Principal Planning Officer, Communities Department gave a presentation on the impact of flooding issues in the planning system. He drew attention to the relevant planning policy guidance, PPG 25, and its proposed revision, the roles of the various organisations involved, and how flood risk was taken into account when considering planning applications. The County Council's planning responsibilities included applications regarding minerals and waste, and inevitably proposals for gravel extraction were located in the flood plain.

In response to Councillor Carter, Mr Hankin explained that Section 106 agreements could be used to require developers to contribute to flood

defence measures. Councillor Pettengell referred to the high density of modern developments, the consequent increase in run-off, and to the inadequacy of old sewers. Mr Hankin pointed out that sustainable urban drainage systems were intended to address the first point. He added that Severn Trent Water was consulted on planning applications.

Councillor Davidson reported that Newark and Sherwood District Council had been invited to give evidence at this meeting. It was agreed that they be given the opportunity to attend a future meeting.

WORK PROGRAMME

It was agreed that the main item for the 13 November meeting be a visit to the Environment Agency's emergency control centre. A visit to the County Council's emergency centre at County Hall would take place after the meeting on 11 December.

The following witnesses and business were identified for 11 December and 15 January:

- National Flood Forum
- Severn Trent plc
- Regional spatial strategy, and the County Council's response
- Newark and Sherwood District Council (or Broxtowe Borough Council)
- Linda Bayliss, Adult Social Care and Health Department, and her role in emergencies

The Chair welcomed Mr Richard Ling, Planning Manager, Communities Department who gave a presentation to the Select Committee on the Regional Spatial Strategy.

It was explained that the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) was the top tier of the new statutory planning system and replaced the former Regional Planning Guidance approved by the Secretary of State and the County Structure Plan approved by the City and County Councils in Nottinghamshire. The strategy is prepared by the East Midlands Regional Assembly with assistance from the County and City Councils and others with final approval from the Secretary of State. Representatives included all local authorities in the region which accounted for 70% of its membership, with 30% being made up from public bodies, business community and interest groups.

Mr Ling also said that the Regional Spatial Strategy consisted of two parts, Part 1 setting out regional wide policies and Part 2 setting out sub-regional strategies that cover the whole of the geographic county. The draft strategy was currently out for formal representations of support or objection to be made by 20 December 2006 and would be presented to Cabinet on 6 December 2006. Final approval by the Secretary of State was expected to take place early in 2009.

The strategy is supported by a number of documents which include a flood risk assessment being undertaken by consultants on behalf of the Assembly and the Environment Agency. The Regional Spatial Strategy and local development documents, when approved would provide the framework for all development control decisions in accordance with the strategy. Priority areas for assessment included the built up areas of Nottingham and Newark.

Mr Ling also drew the Select Committee's attention to the fact that the new lower tier of the statutory planning system included Local Development plans being prepared by the Local Planning Authorities. He pointed out that these strategic plans would be informed by strategic flood risk assessments in order to evaluate actual flood risk.

In terms of development, Mr Ling pointed out that the annualised figures for development were higher in the region than the trend figures. Proposed housing for the period 2001-2006 stood at 96,875 with 20,000 proposed developments on Greenfield sites.

Mr Ling agreed to let members have a copy of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Councillor Davidson referred to drainage and said that this was an area to bear in mind since no one had responsibility for this.

The Select Committee wondered how many planning applications were approved against Environment Agency opinion and how many went to appeal.

Councillor Cole was concerned that flood plain area might be used when there were no alternative areas for development. Mr Ling explained that this would depend on a number of factors and that plans would be subjected to a number of tests.

In response to a question by Councillor Davidson, Mr Ling said that a strategy on Derby/Nottingham flood risk cover was currently being prepared. Councillor Davidson asked for a copy of the strategy once it was complete.

Councillor Wombwell expressed concern with regard to the stress being put on existing water supply and sewers due to new and proposed developments. Mr Ling said that sustainable Urban Drainage Studies (SUDS) would be undertaken because of the increase in density. The studies covered all aspects including transport and shops.

Councillor Davidson thanked Mr Ling for his presentation.

VISIT TO THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

The Select Committee visited the Environment Agency's offices at Lady Bay. They were invited into the incident room where they learnt about flood incident management, how various data was collated for use in forecasting flood risk, the flood warning process and how warnings were issued.

In response to a question in relation to the different levels of flood warning given, it was explained that if more than 100 properties were at risk from flooding then a severe warning would be issued and the incident room would be opened to monitor the situation closely and deal with incoming calls from the public and other organisations affected. It was also the Environment Agency's responsibility to make decisions to close sluice gates and make sure that defences and controls were in place to minimise flooding.

PRESENTATION FROM SEVERN TRENT PLC

Derek Lord, Chartered Civic and Drainage Engineer from Severn Trent Plc gave a presentation on Severn Trent's role in relation to planning and development control. A handout of his presentation was circulated to Members. The Select Committee learned:-

- the aim and application of the planning process,
- The basic rules that local authority planners follow
- Flood risk and sewerage as material considerations
- The respective roles of the Environment Agency and Severn Trent for flood protection and mitigation
- Severn Trent policy on planning consultations
- Use of Severn Trent Development Control planning condition requests to comment upon a planning application
- Flood Risk Assessment Reports and
- Severn Trent's operations role during flooding incidents.

Mr Lord drew particular attention to flood risk and sewerage provision and said that these were material considerations in the planning process. Failure to take account of these was likely to cause economic loss due to flood damage, future inability to obtain house and contents insurance and misery to families flooded out of their homes. He said that the Planning Policy Guidance 25 sought to ensure that greater weight was put on flooding and sewerage issues by local authority planners.

In terms of land drainage, Mr Lord pointed out that the Environment Agency was responsible for protecting the land drainage system and that the Agency had no direct interest in sewers other than the fact that surface water sewers discharge into watercourses and can affect peak flow rate and flooding risk.

It was acknowledged that local planning authorities were under pressure to meet targets for the provision of housing when there was a shortage of land available.

There was an intention to have a 3 month cooling off period in proposed new guidance to allow discussion if a local planning authority is minded to approve an application against advice of the Environment Agency.

Mr Lord explained that Severn Trent's role as sewerage undertaker was to provide a level of service against flooding so that property was not put at unacceptable risk. They had no direct interest in or responsibility for land drainage flooding although this could cause sewer flooding by overland flow, drowning out of sewer outfalls and floodwater entering sewers.

Following Mr Lord's presentation, the Select Committee was invited to ask questions.

In response to comments made by Councillor Saddington, Mr Lord explained that homeowners did have a responsibility for the repair or maintenance of drainage pipe work. Private drainage and sewers was a major problem to Severn Trent since they were not funded to deal with these. He said that a change to this was anticipated around 2010 with the intention that once a pipe within someone's property leaves their boundary this will become a public obligation. This would also mean an increase in the cost for sewerage to the homeowner.

Mr Lord also pointed out that in terms of development it was the decision of the local planning authority at the end of the day and that Severn Trent Water as sewerage undertaker was consulted on and would seek to comment to ensure that a development was dealt with in the best way possible in terms of drainage. The Environment Agency or Severn Trent can make the local planning authority refuse an application in which proposed development could be put at unacceptable risk of flooding.

It was felt that developers should not be allowed to build anywhere in floodplain.

The Select Committee referred to some of the problems in their areas and the anxieties caused to residents from previous flooding and felt that there was not enough being done. Councillor Pettengell commented on manhole covers being lifted during flooding and the danger involved. Mr Smith also from Severn Trent said that they wouldn't expect the public to touch manholes and that he would take his comment on board for inclusion in its advice leaflet in the future.

In response to a question from Councillor Carter, Mr Lord explained that Severn Trent did not develop land. They disposed of land to developers and applied the same rules to all them. Mr Lord referred to the flood risk constrain maps provided by the Environment Agency to identify areas that could be at risk of flooding and said that no development should take place in flood zone 3 (defined as a high risk area).

Each development was looked at on its own merits.

He added that the Environment Agency had issued guidance to local planning authorities on applications that they would like to see. Its aim was to catch applications that were significant.

In terms of Severn Trent's input on planning application consultations it was explained that applications were provided by the local planning authority. Those that did not involve new building construction works were discounted and the remaining applications were then checked against the floods register and system capacity. Comments were required from Severn Trent where there was a public sewer located within or immediately adjacent to the site. Severn Trent provided comments on capacity issues and on impact on the sewerage system through means of check list criteria. Different criteria were applied to residential development than industrial/commercial. If an area was subject to flooding then Severn Trent would get involved and attach a planning condition to ensure that the development was provided with a satisfactory means of drainage as well as reduce the risk of a flooding problem and minimise the risk of pollution.

Councillor Carter wondered how the systems were coping with consumption on the rise owing to an increase in developments, Mr Lord explained the basis upon which Severn Trent collated its data and future plans that included a submission of a detailed report to OFWAT (the economic regulator for the water and sewerage industry in England and Wales) in 2009.

Mr Lord acknowledged the problem with sewerage flooding in the Kelham Road area of Newark and said that some properties had been dealt with and that they were bidding for money to deal with the rest of the area.

WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair referred to DEFRA's decision to cut £14.9m from the Environment Agency's flood risk management budget. It was suggested that it would be beneficial to include an extra meeting to speak with representatives of the Environment Agency about the proposed cuts. This would also mean seeking an extension from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Select Committee agreed to invite representatives from the Environment Agency to its meeting on 12 March 2007 to talk about the proposed cuts to its flood risk management budget.

It was agreed that an extension be sought from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to extend the work programme for one month to April 2007.

VISIT TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRE

The Select Committee visited the County Council's Emergency Response Centre which is located in the County Hall basement. They learnt of the facilities used by the team and of recent investments to the centre. The centre was also used for other things such as business continuity.

The Select Committee also heard first hand from Linda Bayliss, Service Director, Adult Social Services and Health of how a service department often had to work closely with the Emergency Planning team, in event of an incident.

Mr Fisher referred to the refurbishment of the City Council's emergency planning offices that were due to be completed early in the new year and suggested to the Select Committee that they might wish to go on a visit.

The meeting closed at 12.25pm.

Morgan Wray from the Environment Agency had been invited to the meeting to talk to the Select Committee on the effects of the Defra cuts and provide an update on progress made on the Nottingham Trent flood alleviation schemes. In terms of the left bank this was programmed to start spring 2008 and finish autumn 2011. The scheme which will protect a distance of 27km had been delayed by one year due to internal budget reprioritisation. In terms of planning applications, Mr Wray said that these were due to be submitted in February for those works requiring it. They anticipated possible problems with the Attenborough section due to residents being opposed to the route of the proposed defences.

In terms of the West Bridgford area, Mr Wray said that the Wilford Lane embankment work was 2 to 3 weeks behind programme due to recent bad weather. Trentside was progressing well.

With regard to the Defra cuts, he said that although there had been no reduction in their capital programme for this year, work had had to be reprioritised. This meant postponing plans for detailed floodplain modelling and mapping on 3 rivers and concentrating on improvements to model misalignments on the flood map. The amount of money given to the Environment Agency by the government next year would remain the same as the reduced level for this year.

Councillor Saddington wondered if any money left over from the Rushcliffe schemes might be diverted to look at villages further north. Mr Wray said that they would be looking at the local levy and that this was not affected by the cuts. The Environment Agency was to look at an alleviation scheme for Barton-in-Fabis and Burton Joyce and individual house protection in Gunthorpe.

In response to a question from Councillor Dobson, it was explained that Collingham and Girton areas were not affected by the scheme.

Councillor Pettengell wondered what effect Attenborough would have on the left bank scheme if it didn't go through due to public objection. **The Environment Agency was hopeful that the scheme would go through as planned but if it was delayed considerably at the planning stage, then**

there was a risk that the monies earmarked for the scheme could be reallocated to another scheme.

PRESENTATION FROM THE NATIONAL FLOOD DEFENCE FORUM

Mary Dhanau from the National Flood Forum gave a presentation to the Select Committee on the work of the Forum. They heard how the Forum had evolved and about its aim to give communities and individuals who have been flooded or at risk the support, knowledge and help they need to organise themselves, to manage the effects of flooding, to promote self help and to campaign for flood alleviation. A key area of support was in providing advice and information on where to source flood protection products, specialist help and advice on insurance issues. It had worked hard to create a rapport at a high level with those and other organisations, such as the Association of British Insurers and Government to be able to represent the views of those in a flood risk area.

In response to a question from Councillor Brandon-Bravo, Ms Dhanau explained that their annual budget was £55,000. The start up grant from the Environment Agency was being significantly cut back to £30,000 in April and would cease in 2008. They urgently needed to find alternative sources of funding to enable their work to continue.

In response to a question from Councillor Davidson, Ms Dhanau explained that in terms of development control, the introduction of PPS25 (planning policy guidance) had sought to ensure that greater weight was put on flooding and sewerage issues by local authority planners and for them to provide an assessment of flood risk.

Mike Evans, Head of Planning Services at Newark & Sherwood District Council gave a presentation to the Select Committee on Development and Flood Risk.

Mr Evans explained that decisions on planning applications were mainly a district council function in consultation with others. In doing so, he said that they had to have particular regard to the policies in the Planning Policy Statement (PPS) and, as relevant, in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) in their region, as material considerations which may supersede the policies in existing development plans, when considering planning applications for developments in flood risk areas.

In terms of the Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk, he said that this was an important document to be taken into account. One of its aims was to ensure that flood risk was taken into account at all stages in the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding. He added that where new development was, necessary in such areas the policy aimed to make it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

In Newark & Sherwood, on average 2000 planning applications are received annually, with 14% of all planning applications being referred to the Environment Agency (EA).

Mr Evans explained to Members that a flood risk assessment should be carried out to assess the risks of all forms of flooding to and from development. In areas at risk of river or sea flooding, preference should be given to locating new development in flood zone 1 (areas of lowest probability of flooding). Flood zone 2 was defined as medium to low risk and zone 3 was defined as high risk area. Central to the policy was the sequential risk based approach used in determining the suitability of land for development in flood risk areas, and which should also be applied when regional planning bodies develop Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS). Flood zones were the starting point for the sequential approach which was applied to flood risk assessments. In terms of zone 3b, the functional flood plain, Mr Evans explained that it was important that this land was protected since it was land where water had to flow, or be stored, in times of flood. It was therefore important to be aware of other districts along the Trent catchment. The flood risk assessment must demonstrate that a development will be safe, without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Where it is not possible for the development to be located in zones of a lower probability of flooding, following the application of the sequential test, the Exception Test would be applied. This test provided a method of managing flood risk while still allowing necessary development to occur.

Mr Evans referred to the problems also associated with flash flooding which occurred during periods of intense rainfall, in particular, with regard to some older drainage systems being unable to cope. The management of surface water was an essential element in reducing flood risk and a requirement of the FRA. Without these measures in place the volume of water that runs off the site and the peak run-off flow rate was likely to increase. He pointed out that Newark & Sherwood District Council were very interested in the use of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) in the management of run-off, which allow water through at a much slower pace. He suggested that, since other authorities were reluctant to adopt this system, perhaps Regional Planning bodies and Local Authorities should promote the use of SUDS in the management of run-off. The effective disposal of surface water from development was a material consideration in determining proposals for the development and use of land.

The guidance now places a duty on planning authorities to consult with the EA on all applications for development in areas of flood risk or where critical drainage problems exist.

Mr Evans said that under previous guidance some inappropriate development in flood risk areas had been granted planning permission by Local Planning Authorities against EA advice and that a new Direction The Town and Country Planning (Flooding) (England) 2007 had come into force on 1 January 2007, which introduced a new arrangement to act as a safeguard in such cases.

The EA had produced a Standing Advice development and Flood Risk – which was an initial planning response matrix – so that planners knew where they stood. This meant that Departments could not approve a planning application where the EA objected, without further discussion. Where no agreement is reached the matter would be referred on to the Secretary of State via GOEM. The Direction also gave the potential for a call-in of applications where DC's weren't seen to be listening.

Following the presentation the Select Committee were invited to ask questions.

Councillor Saddington was pleased to note the use of flood risk assessments by Newark & Sherwood DC and wondered, if the area assessed was found to be outside a 1 in 100 annual probability of flooding, then would the Insurance Companies honour this. Mr Evans explained that they would carry out SFRAs, and that the EA would be committed to work with whoever was appointed to do this. In terms of Insurance cover he pointed out that the Association of British Insurers nationally had agreed to work with the EA to try and find a common base. He felt that insurers were becoming more reasonable because of this.

Councillor Carter wondered if Zone 1 areas were objected to because areas in Zones 2 and 3 were seen as being more desirable, and whether Planning Authorities along the River Trent worked together. He referred in particular to the possibility for Nottinghamshire standing to lose the money earmarked for the left bank scheme should Broxtowe Planning Authority refusal to approve the Attenborough section of the scheme. In reply, Mr Evans said that, under PPS25, consensus would not be given where flood risk assessment was not provided. He explained that they tended to work as districts and that the EA tended to invite DC's to meetings in the hope that the RRS did the same. He said that the EA did talk to them about the knock on effects along the Trent catchment.

In terms of funding of the schemes, Mr Evans referred to the recent cut to the EA budget and reported that in some areas of the country the local authorities had received contributions from developers towards minimising flood risk. Mr Evans cited Shrewsbury as an example of where this had happened. The EA were pushing DEFRA to come on board but at the present time they were opposed to this.

Councillor Pettengell stressed the point about the 300ml as the difference between being able to get insurance.

Councillor Lally expressed his concern about the cumulative effect of smaller developments and said he felt that these should be included in the LD strategies. Mr Evans said that you might need evidence to demonstrate the risk attached to these smaller types of development. Councillor Carter felt that the matter should be raised at regional level.

Mr Evans added that the crossing across over the river Trent was an issue in that the emergency services could be in a position where they were unable to cross the Trent.

Councillor Lally said that the Select Committee had been led to believe that Mr Evans was the lead officer on the on meetings with other district council planning officers. Also high on their agenda were attributories and housing growth points.

The chair asked about responsibilities for drainage in areas of new development and felt that it was necessary to learn more about this. She suggested that a representative from the County's highways department come and talk about sustainable development.

In response, Mr Evans said that developers put in the minimum and that it was very difficult to get adoption agencies on board. Severn Trent had been approached to come on board. There were a lot of unadopted sewers about.

The select committee felt that it was important for the District planning officers to have meetings throughout County on development.

The chair thanked Mr Evans for his presentation and invited him to come to the next meeting at which it was hoped that Highways and 7 Trent be present.

The chair wondered if other authorities had a policy for developers to put in more drainage. Mr Evans said that they were trying to get Severn Trent to adopt. It was suggested that Severn Trent be invited to the next meeting to ascertain what their brief was in this area.