

RESPONSE TO PITT REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

Pitt Recommendation	Government Response Update June 09	Wiltshire Council Response/Status
<p>7: There should be a presumption against building in high flood risk areas, in accordance with PPS25, including giving consideration to all sources of flood risk, and ensuring that developers make a full contribution to the costs both of building and maintaining any necessary defences.</p>	<p>Planning Policy Statement 25 (PPS25), published in December 2006, sets out the national planning policy in respect of new development and flood risk.</p>	<p>Practice guidance to support PPS25 was published in June 2008.</p>
<p>8: The operation and effectiveness of PPS25 and the Environment Agency's (EA) powers to challenge development should be kept under review and strengthened if and when necessary.</p>	<p>The Government carried out an initial review and evaluation of the implementation of PPS25 to establish its efficacy in incorporating flood risk considerations into planning. The review found that where the EA had initially objected to planning applications on flood risk grounds, the final planning decision was in line with Agency advice in nearly 97% of cases in 2007/08. This is an improvement over the two preceding years. In 9 out of 10 cases where the Agency has sustained a flood risk objection, the final outcome was in line with Agency advice.</p>	<p>Local planning authorities, directed through the Chief Planning Officer, have been asked to continue to monitor PPS25 and offer feedback on how well PPS25 is working. They are also asked to note any significant barriers to the delivery of its policies.</p>
<p>9: Householders should no longer be able to lay impermeable surfaces as of right on front gardens and the Government should consult on extending this to back gardens and business premises.</p>	<p>Changes were made to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.</p>	<p>As from 1 October 2008, householders in England can lay permeable surfaces without planning permission. Impermeable surfaces, where the surface area exceeds five square metres, require specific approval from the local planning authority.</p>
<p>10: The automatic right to connect</p>	<p>Removal of the automatic right to connect</p>	

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surface water drainage of new developments to the sewerage system should be removed.	surface water drainage of new developments to the sewerage system is contained in the draft Flood and Water Management Bill.	
11: Building Regulations should be revised to ensure that all new or refurbished buildings in high flood-risk areas are flood-resistant or resilient.	Government is looking at how the Building Regulations might be amended so new or refurbished buildings in high flood risk areas are made more flood resistant or resilient. We continue to examine appropriate options for consultation this summer.	Changes to building regulations after consultation are expected in 2010 and 2011.
12: All local authorities should extend eligibility for home improvement grants and loans to include flood resistance and resilience products for properties in high flood-risk areas.	The first tranche of applications for home improvement grants and loans, which include flood resistance and resilience products, were assessed by the EA. An announcement was made in August 2009 of successful applications.	Further applications were made in December 2009. Details are given at Appendix 3 .
13: Local authorities, in discharging their responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to promote business continuity, should encourage the take-up of property flood resistance and resilience by businesses.	The National Risk Register (published in August 2008) also emphasised the risks posed by flooding.	Guidance is published on the Wiltshire Council website. Two attempts to hold seminars for local businesses resulted in a take up by 7 companies. A Flood Fair is planned and this item will be covered in the Emergency Planning Briefing. Highways have prepared further information on flooding to be put onto the council website.
14: Local authorities should lead on the management of local flood risk, with the support of the relevant organisations.	The draft Flood and Water Management Bill (published 21 April 09) sets out the roles and responsibilities for local authorities to recommendations 14 to 18. The Government proposes in its draft Bill to create a "Lead Local Flood Authority" which will be required to:	Flood Groups established in North and South Wiltshire. Links are in place with the EA community Flood Wardens. Flood warden scheme to be extended throughout the county.
15: Local authorities should positively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, maintain and apply a strategy 	Flood groups have been set up in the north of

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tackle local problems of flooding by working with all relevant parties, establishing ownership and legal responsibility.	<p>for local flood risk management, which will include risks from surface runoff, groundwater and ordinary watercourses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfil the requirements of the EU Floods Directive in relation to these sources of flood risk, including a requirement to draw up management plans for those areas where risk is significant. 	the county in areas subject to recent flooding. The Groups involve Parish Councils, EA and others. Groups need to be set up in other areas of the county, especially those at most risk of flooding.
16: Local authorities should collate and map the main flood risk management and drainage assets (over and underground), including a record of their ownership and condition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate flooding incidents to understand the cause and ensure that appropriate bodies play their role in effective management of the flooding and recovery. 	<p>Surveying of highway drainage assets has been underway for some years. Information on flood risk areas and drainage assets has been collected in connection with the move to One Council. Only limited information is available on drainage assets, and surveying could take many years to complete.</p> <p>Awaiting further national guidance.</p>
17: All relevant organisations should have a duty to share information and cooperate with local authorities and the EA to facilitate the management of flood risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain a register of structures which may affect a flood risk with a record of information about each of the structures, including details of ownership and state of repair. 	The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 imposes a duty for all Category 1 and 2 Responders to share information. It is anticipated that the Flood & Water Bill will include this requirement. Government Office for the South West (GOSW) has been approached to consider regional action with Category 2 responders.
18: Local Surface Water Management Plans, as set out under PPS25 and coordinated by local authorities, should provide the basis for managing all local flood risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve and adopt sustainable drainage systems that meet national standards for new development. <p>In relation to recommendation 17 and 18 six local authorities were chosen to receive support in producing surface water management plans. Local authorities were testing draft surface water management plan guidance which was published in March 2009. The pilots also tested arrangements for co-operation and sharing information between partners to the plan. Funding for an additional 77 SWMPs was announced in August 2009.</p>	The Flood Risk Management Group to lead. Further clarification of roles and responsibilities for carrying out this work is expected in the Flood and Water Management Bill.
19: Local authorities should assess and, if appropriate, enhance their	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has been working	Concern on ability to resource. Awaiting further national guidance

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<p>technical capabilities to deliver a wide range of responsibilities in relation to local flood risk management.</p>	<p>with local authorities (LAs) to understand its current capacity and technical capability, including holding four workshops with local authorities earlier this year. DEFRA has launched a scoping study to look at broad options for improving LA capacity, and is considering what more can be done to enhance LA flood risk management skills. In addition, DEFRA announced on 8 June funding for 27 places for local authority participants in the existing Environment Agency Foundation Degree programme and other local flood risk management training. This will help ensure that local communities have the expertise they need to help protect themselves from flooding.</p>	<p>Funding issues associated with taking on the additional responsibilities outlined in the draft Bill. Council flood and drainage budgets are currently stretched and without significant additional revenue and capital funding the Council will find it difficult to undertake the full scope of what is proposed.</p>
<p>24: The Government should develop a scheme which allows and encourages local communities to invest in flood risk management measures.</p>	<p>Full proposals on Sustainable Drainage Systems, including unitary and county local authorities to take on ownership and maintenance for them are contained in the draft Flood and Water Management Bill, which was issued for consultation 21 April 2009.</p>	<p>The Flood Risk Management Group to consider this recommendation.</p> <p>Concern expressed about resource implications.</p>
<p>26: The Government should develop a single set of guidance for local authorities and the public on the use and usefulness of sandbags and other alternatives, rather than leaving the matter wholly to local discretion.</p>	<p>The EA has developed a single set of guidance on the use and usefulness of sandbags, which has been published on the EA website and will be distributed to Local Resilience Forums in July (this is swine flu dependent and outwith EA control). Additional guidance on self-help protection for householders, businesses and building contractors expected in the Autumn.</p>	<p>Sandbags are not considered the best option. 5000 Aqua sacs have been purchased and are held by the Highways Service. A policy decision on whether Wiltshire Council will issue sandbags to the public is required and will be an agenda item for the Flood Risk Management Group.</p>
<p>28: The forthcoming flooding legislation should be a single unifying Act that addresses all sources of</p>	<p>The Government published its draft Flood and Water Management Bill on 21 April 2009. This covers all sources of flooding,</p>	<p>The general principles of the bill are welcomed.</p> <p>Concern was expressed about the resource</p>

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flooding, clarifies responsibilities and facilitates flood risk management.	clarifies responsibilities and facilitates flood risk management. As currently drafted the Bill would not lead to a “single unifying Act” but the intention is that the resulting legislation that is introduced to Parliament will build on this – including taking account of the responses to consultation on the draft Bill and other issues – to lead to a “single unifying Act”.	implications for the Council. The Flood and Water Management Bill went before Parliament on 19 November 2009. Due to constraints on parliamentary time the Bill will only address the most pressing unifying legislation as recommended in the Pitt Review.
38: Local authorities should establish mutual aid agreements in accordance with the guidance currently being prepared by the Local Government Association and the Cabinet Office.	To encourage Local Authorities to establish mutual aid agreements, a working group comprising Local Government Association, Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and Cabinet Office developed guidance, ‘Mutual Aid – A short guide for local authorities’, which was published in December 2008.	Existing arrangements require more formal approach. Service level agreements or Memorandum of Understanding are required.
41: Upper tier local authorities should be the lead responders in relation to multi-agency planning for severe weather emergencies at the local level and for triggering multi-agency arrangements in response to severe weather warnings and local impact assessments.	Ongoing local implementation supported by the revision of the “Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance” which states that county and unitary local authorities should be lead responders for multi-agency severe weather emergency planning. Consultation on the revised guidance closed in April 2009, with final updates planned for this summer.	Emergency Planning is currently leading on the development of the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) multi-agency flood plan, however, the Joint LRF Incident Procedures Guide stipulates that any organisation can trigger multi-agency arrangements in response to any emergency and the Flood Group proposes this should remain the approach taken.
42: Where a Gold Command is established for severe weather events, the police, unless agreed otherwise locally, should convene and lead the multi-agency response.		Standard response as covered in the Joint Incident Procedures Guide.
43: Gold Commands should be established at an early stage on a precautionary basis where there is a risk of serious flooding.	The amended “Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance” will make it clear that Gold Commands should be established at an early stage on a precautionary basis where there is a risk of serious flooding.	There are currently no clear triggers for early formation of gold. The LRF Flood Plan includes trigger levels for each agency to convene a Silver level teleconference. A decision whether a Gold command meeting

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	(Evidence from recent events showed that responders have done this).	should be called is likely to be made at that time.
44: Category 1 and 2 responders should assess the effectiveness of their emergency response facilities, including flexible accommodation, IT and communications systems, and undertake any necessary improvement works.	Ongoing local implementation, supported by Government guidance. The Government issued Parts 1 and 2 of Expectation and Indicators of Good Practice Set for Category 1 and 2 Responders in December 2008. Part 3 was issued in summer 2009. A Civil Protection Self Assessment Tool for responders was issued September 2009 and a peer review tool for Local Resilience Forums was piloted in late 2009. The "Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance" will be updated to include these issues.	A Business Continuity Programme rolled out through the council was completed in January 2010. Implications for the council in respect of information collected through service Business Impact Assessments is reported separately to the Corporate Leadership Team. Items for discussion will include requirements for property, IT and communications in the event of a disruption to any Wiltshire Council facility.
49: A national flooding exercise should take place at the earliest opportunity in order to test the new arrangements which central government departments are putting into place to deal with flooding and infrastructure emergencies.	The national flooding exercise, Exercise Watermark, is planned for March 2011. This exercise will test new national arrangements from central government departments to deal with flooding and infrastructure emergencies. Good progress is being made on developing the strategic objectives and scope of the exercise.	A Wiltshire and Swindon LRF exercise is scheduled for 13 May 2010. This exercise is to validate the LRF Flood plan. It is envisaged that Wiltshire and Swindon LRF will participate in the national exercise in 2011.
63: Flood risk should be made part of the mandatory search requirements when people buy property, and should form part of Home Information Packs.	Flood risk has become part of the new property information questionnaire from 6 April 2009.	
64: Local Resilience Forums should continue to develop plans for door-knocking, coordinated by local authorities, to enhance flood warnings before flooding and to provide	Ongoing local implementation, which is supported by existing emergency preparedness guidance that includes door-knocking as one of the methods of warning people. Responders will need to assess the	The LRF Warning and Informing and Educating sub groups are reviewing protocols. Warning and Informing protocols are already in place. Door knocking is not always appropriate but alternative means of alerting the public are in

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information and assess welfare needs once flooding has receded.	situation taking into account health and safety and resource implications.	place.
66: Local authority contact centres should take the lead in dealing with general enquiries from the public during and after major flooding, redirecting calls to other organisations when appropriate.	Ongoing local implementation, supported by the revisions to “Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance” which will make it clear that local authority contact centres should take the lead in dealing with general enquiries during and after major flooding. Evidence from recent events has indicated that local authorities have taken forward this recommendation. The Government does not consider there is a need for further specific guidance on this issue.	Floodline already deal with enquiries from the public. The Emergencies page on the Wiltshire Council website directs people to the EA site. Customer Care operators have taken part in the most recent incident room exercise and it is planned to develop their role in the future. The EA is consulting on proposals to extend the Floodline service.
68: Council leaders and chief executives should play a prominent role in public reassurance and advice through the local media during a flooding emergency, as part of a coordinated effort overseen by Gold Commands.	Ongoing local implementation. Many council leaders and chief executives are now well versed in providing public reassurance and advice, working with both local and national media. To strengthen local implementation, the Government will include guidance on this as part of the update of “Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance”.	This is already covered as part of the Strategic LRF response structure in the Warning and Informing Strategy. The importance of producing early press releases must be bedded in to the strategic response.
69: The public should make up a flood kit – including personal documents, insurance policy, emergency contact numbers (including local council, emergency services and Floodline), torch, battery or wind-up radio, mobile phone, rubber gloves, wet wipes or antibacterial hand gel, first aid kit and blankets.	Key Government departments and agencies will meet this summer to agree methods for encouraging the public to take action to make up a flood kit – including personal documents, insurance policy, emergency contact numbers.	A Householders Guide was prepared in 2003 and a significant number have been distributed since. Some of the suggestions are included. The EA also has an extensive range of advice available on its website and in leaflet/booklet format. There are links on the council website to EA and National Flood Forum sites.
70: The Government should establish a programme to support and encourage individuals and	To establish a baseline on community and individual self-reliance during flood emergencies, three national workshops	These proposals could be taken forward through Area Boards.

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communities to be better prepared and more self-reliant during emergencies, allowing the authorities to focus on those areas and people in greatest need.	were held in winter 2008/09. The Government's proposals on its contribution to community resilience will be published this autumn.	Further information on flooding is being placed on the Council website. A programme of publicity events is planned starting with a Flood Fair.
72: Local response and recovery coordinating groups should ensure that health and wellbeing support is readily available to those affected by flooding based on the advice developed by the Department of Health.	Government has drafted psycho-social advice to guide local work supporting health and wellbeing. Website links to provide access will be developed as part of Recommendation 71. All parties will be made aware of the guidance and the links to it on the Health Protection Agency (HPA) website.	Recovery plan under development.
74: The monitoring of the impact of flooding on the health and wellbeing of people, and actions to mitigate and manage the effects, should form a systematic part of the work of Recovery Co-ordinating Groups.	The Government is on schedule to issue its guidance on psycho-social need of those affected by disasters and major incidents such as flooding on 30 June and we are on track to liaise with Recovery Co-ordinating Groups so that they can embed improved health and well-being arrangements in their procedures.	Recovery plan under development.
76: Local authorities should coordinate a systematic programme of community engagement in their area during the recovery phase.	The National Recovery Guidance (published by Government in October 2007) provides information for local authorities to use when considering how to engage communities in recovery. In addition, the Compact between the third sector and the Government is currently being reviewed. As part of this, the Government will work with the Commission for the Compact to ensure that the revised Compact forms a sound basis for implementing this recommendation, by putting in place provision for third sector engagement, cost recovery and volunteer involvement.	Councillors and local parish and town councillors have a key role. Area Boards and Community Emergency Volunteers could work to fulfil this role.

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<p>77: National and local Recovery Co-ordinating Groups should be established from the outset of major emergencies and in due course there should be formal handover from the crisis machinery.</p>	<p>The National Recovery Guidance reinforces the principle of local Recovery Co-ordinating Groups and their role in agreeing aims and objectives at the outset, for which there is ongoing local implementation. At a national level, the same concepts are captured in the revised 'Central Government Arrangements for Responding to an Emergency – Concept of Operation' (this is due to be published later in the year, but a working document is already in operation). The principles will also be captured in the updated "Emergency Response and Recovery" guidance due for publication this summer.</p>	<p>The Recovery Group established during an incident will carry out this action. The recovery plan when completed should outline this procedure.</p>
<p>78: Aims and objectives for the recovery phase should be agreed at the outset by Recovery Coordinating Groups to provide focus and enable orderly transition into mainstream programmes when multi-agency coordination of recovery is no longer required.</p>	<p>The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability (CIPFA) has issued revised guidance on Local Authority Accounting Panel (LAAP) Bulletin 77 – Local Authority Reserves and Balances which highlights the need to consider financial risk management in the budgeting process, including assessing internal and external risks (specifically including flooding), and reflects the fact that local authorities should continue to make arrangements to bear the cost of recovery for all but the most exceptional emergencies. This was published on the CIPFA website on 19 November 2008 and distributed to all local government bodies in the United Kingdom.</p>	<p>Recovery plan when completed will cover this requirement.</p>
<p>83: Local authorities should continue to make arrangements to bear the cost of recovery for all but the most exceptional emergencies, and should revisit their reserves and insurance arrangements in light of last summer's floods.</p>	<p>The Government has already updated the National Recovery Guidance. This supports local Recovery Co-ordination</p>	<p>Without significant additional revenue and capital funding the Council will find it difficult to undertake the full scope of what is proposed.</p>
<p>85: Local Recovery Co-ordination Groups should make early recommendations to elected local</p>	<p>The Government has already updated the National Recovery Guidance. This supports local Recovery Co-ordination</p>	<p>Recovery plan under development.</p>

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authority members about longer-term regeneration and economic development opportunities.	Groups in making early recommendations to elected local authority members about longer-term regeneration and economic development opportunities.	
90: All upper tier local authorities should establish Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review work by public sector bodies and essential service providers in order to manage flood risk, underpinned by a legal requirement to cooperate and share information.	The Government is consulting (alongside the draft Flood and Water Management Bill) on issues relating to Overview and Scrutiny of local authority flood risk management activity which might be included in the resulting legislation.	The Flood Risk Management Group will report to the Environment Select Committee. It is suggested that an annual report be prepared in June.
91: Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee should prepare an annual summary of actions taken locally to manage flood risk and implement this review, and these reports should be public and reviewed by Government Offices and the EA.		
92: Local Resilience Forums should evaluate and share lessons from both the response and recovery phases to inform their planning for future emergencies.	Ongoing local implementation. The National Recovery Guidance already encourages Local Resilience Forums to evaluate and share lessons from the recovery phase of emergencies, and includes over 70 case studies covering a wide range of emergencies, including flooding. The revised "Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance" will also make it clear	Standard response covered in the Joint Incident Procedures Guide.

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	that local responders should evaluate and share lessons from both the response and recovery phases to inform their future planning. Evidence from recent events show that local responders are already doing this.	