

Follow-up report on Sustainable Drainage (SUDS) for TEC Select Committee

Background

The report to ETL Select Committee on 17th March 2015 outlined the situation at that time on SUDS was that DEFRA and CLG was proposing that Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFA) will be a statutory consultee for the drainage part of the planning application for major developments of 10 properties or more. This has now been confirmed following a letter from Eric Pickles on this matter.

Current situation

Sustainable drainage will now be considered under the planning regulations with the LLFA as a statutory consultee and the Local Planning Authority (LPA) ie District Councils, will then consider the comments made on the drainage part of the planning application alongside all other comments when making their decision on these major developments. The Environment Agency will also still be a statutory consultee on those developments at risk from fluvial flood risk. These responsibilities came into force on 16th April 2015

The LPA will be responsible for any subsequent approval/inspection of the works and any enforcement required. BCC will be expecting to see a maintenance/management plan for the SUDS as part of the planning/drainage application. Developers will be expected to put in place a management company or suitable arrangements for the maintenance/management of the SUDS.

Buckinghamshire County Council response

In response to the decision from Central Government on SUDS BCC commissioned Jacobs to help with the workload around responding to drainage aspects of planning applications and pre-application discussions with developers. Existing staff in flood management have been working closely with the LPAs to implement good practice to ensure a smooth process for these new responsibilities. Training has been offered to the LPAs and some has been delivered. To date there have been 23 applications (full and outlines) and 3 pre-applications received and BCC have responded to these within the deadline of 21 days.

BCC advertised for a senior officer and officer for Sustainable Drainage and has offered two positions. Two new members of staff will start at the beginning of July to cover and take forward this area of work.

A charging policy has been drafted for pre-application discussions and this is with Senior Management team for discussion before being passed through the process for approval.

Further initial discussions on how to take forward issues of inspection, enforcement, adoption and maintenance have been held with the Cabinet Member and this will be taken forward further when the new officers are in place.