

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL**Environment Committee****9 November 2016****Flood Risk Management - Property Level Protection Pilot Scheme****Report by Director (Environment)**

The Council has promoted a pilot scheme within Perth and Kinross to help improve the resilience of individual properties against flooding through the use of flood protection products – known as Property Level Protection (PLP). This report provides an update on the final outcome of the pilot scheme.

1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1. On 3 September 2014, the Environment Committee approved a report recommending a pilot scheme for flood protection products within Perth and Kinross (Report No. 14/362 refers). The pilot scheme was intended to help supply these products – known as Property Level Protection (PLP) – to individual properties to help them become more resilient to the effects of flooding.
- 1.2. Although the primary responsibility to protect property from flooding lies with the owner, the Council still endeavours to assist during flood events by supplying traditional sandbags to affected properties, even though this is not a statutory responsibility. Sandbags are only provided if property is being flooded or is in imminent danger of being flooded. At the same time as endeavouring to supply sandbags, the Council may assist by attempting to divert the flow of water and by pumping flood water away from properties. However, the resources for these activities are limited and therefore assistance has to be prioritised.
- 1.3. Where residents have to be evacuated from their homes, the Council will coordinate the setting up of an emergency rest centre or arrange for temporary alternative accommodation.
- 1.4. Flood protection schemes have been implemented in a number of Council areas and more schemes are proposed. However, it is not possible to implement flood protection schemes in all areas of flood risk.
- 1.5. Under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 (the 2009 Act), the recently published Flood Risk Management (FRM) Strategies and Local FRM Plans identify a wide range of structural and non-structural actions to manage flood risk.

- 1.6. The 2009 Act requires the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and other responsible authorities to act with a view to raising public awareness of flood risk. Individuals, businesses and communities can play an important role in making themselves more resilient and helping to reduce the impact of flooding. This must be supported through improved awareness and access to information on flood risk and the actions individuals can take.
- 1.7. Flood protection products can play an important role in improving the resilience of individual properties against flooding, which was the purpose behind introducing the pilot.

Property Level Protection (PLP) Pilot Scheme Arrangements

- 1.8. The arrangements for the PLP pilot scheme were as set out below.
- 1.9. The PLP pilot scheme was carried out in conjunction with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) and the Scottish Flood Forum (SFF).
- 1.10. The initial pilot areas chosen included Potentially Vulnerable Areas 08/03 (Aberfeldy and Pitlochry) and 08/14 (Comrie and Crieff).
- 1.11. Following a period for planning, staff training and scheme design, the pilot commenced on 31 January 2015 for an initial period of 6 months.
- 1.12. Householders were encouraged to sign up to the pilot scheme. A leaflet and booklet were distributed to community councils and householders in the chosen pilot areas. Information was also made available on the Council's website and through the Council's Customer Service Centre. The SFRS also promoted the pilot scheme on doorsteps by combining it with their existing home fire safety visits.
- 1.13. The SFRS initially carried out a free flood risk survey of any properties that signed up to the Scheme and recommended suitable flood protection products. The householder was provided with a survey report confirming the recommended numbers and type of flood protection products.
- 1.14. Householders wishing to proceed to purchase products were required to sign a purchase order form and a disclaimer. The disclaimer confirmed that the Council and SFRS have no responsibility for the installation or operation of the flood products, as the primary responsibility for avoiding or managing flood risk lies with land and property owners.
- 1.15. The Council's main role in this pilot, once the flood risk survey had been completed, was to use its buying powers to procure the PLP flood products. Householders were to be asked to pay for the PLP products in advance, although at a reduced price, secured through bulk buying.

- 1.16. The Council was to arrange for a bulk purchase of the appropriate products on behalf of householders once significant orders had been received. This would be carried out via the Quick Quote online quotations facility within Public Contracts Scotland.
- 1.17. Following payment, householders were to arrange for collection of their products and to have them fitted. Once flood products had been installed, training and explanation was to be provided to householders on the use of the products. The SFF were available to advise residents on this process and provide a final report to ensure that residents could take advantage of any potential insurance benefits.
- 1.18. The Council's Housing and Community Care Service also agreed to install PLP in Council owned properties in the pilot areas in order to make Council housing stock more resilient to flooding, and set a good example to private householders.

Evaluation of Pilot Scheme

- 1.19. It was initially proposed that the success of the pilot scheme would be evaluated following a period of six months. If successful within the chosen locations, then a recommendation would be made to the Council to extend the arrangements throughout the Perth and Kinross area. If there was insufficient take up of the scheme, then the Council would need to review its position.
- 1.20. The completion of the pilot scheme was delayed by a number of factors:-
- (i) The SFRS were unable to keep up with the demand for surveys and required further time to complete them.
 - (ii) A period of intense rainfall on 17 July 2015 caused significant flooding in Alyth and also affected the Bankfoot area. The PLP pilot was extended to include these communities.
 - (iii) Adverse weather conditions over the winter period, particularly during December 2015 and January 2016, caused a further delay in the pilot scheme.
 - (iv) The SFRS were unable to complete all of the surveys due to limited staff resources; thereafter the SFF carried out and completed the surveys in the latter stages of the pilot project.
- 1.21. The data from the scheme has been collated and analysed to determine whether it has been successful.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1. The PLP pilot scheme has now reached a conclusion and has been evaluated based on the level of uptake of flood products.

- 2.2. A total of 894 letters were sent out to householders inviting them to sign up to the pilot scheme. As a result, a total of 119 householders signed up. The initial response to the pilot scheme is as shown in Table 1 below.

Pilot Area	No of Properties	Signed Up	% Sign Up
Aberfeldy	121	7	5.8
Pitlochry	121	4	3.3
Comrie	363	39	10.7
Crieff	19	4	21.1
Alyth	93	61	65.6
Bankfoot	177	4	2.3
Total	894	119	13.3

Table 1 – Initial Interest

- 2.3. Householders who contacted the Council during the scheme who had properties outwith the PLP Pilot Areas were informed that, although they couldn't be included in the Pilot Scheme, there was relevant information on PLP products available on the Council website and advice on said products was given.
- 2.4. The overall level of sign up was 13.3% which was considered to be low. However, as this represented 119 properties, it was deemed possible to make a bulk purchase, assuming the majority of those householders were to purchase products. The largest uptake was in Alyth and Comrie, which have both recently been affected by severe flooding. 116 properties were surveyed by the SFRS and the SFF, and provided with a survey report recommending the type and numbers of products.
- 2.5. 116 purchase order forms were sent to those householders but only 14 were returned to the Council as shown in Table 2 below.

Pilot Area	Purchase Orders Issued	Orders Received	% Orders
Aberfeldy	4*	0	0
Pitlochry	4	0	0
Comrie	39	11	28.2
Crieff	4	0	0
Alyth	61	3	4.9
Bankfoot	4	0	0.0
Total	116	14	12.1

Table 2 – Purchase Orders (*3 Aberfeldy properties are Council owned.)

- 2.6. Only 12.1% of householders were willing to purchase products through the pilot scheme. This only equates to 1.6% of the original 894 properties contacted. The general response from the product suppliers was that a minimum order of 10 products (of the same type) would be required before any form of discount could be offered.
- 2.7. The orders for flood barriers, non-return valves and toilet bungs did not reach the minimum order criteria of 10 units. There were also no requests in the other categories that could secure any form of discount.
- 2.8. The orders for airbrick covers did exceed the minimum requirement meaning that a discount could potentially be secured and passed on to householders. However airbrick covers can be purchased in various colours, shapes and types and so it is difficult for the pilot scheme to accommodate the many variants that may be required by householders. In addition, as they generally have a lower unit cost to begin with, the overall potential discount was not significant and therefore not attractive enough for householders.
- 2.9. In July 2016, further letters were issued to all householders who originally signed up to the pilot scheme to encourage them to place orders for products.
- 2.10. Despite this, the uptake of flood products has proved to be minimal and the Council is, therefore, not in a position to make a bulk purchase and secure any kind of discount for the participating communities.
- 2.11. The Council's Housing & Community Care Service have fitted PLP products to 18 Council owned properties in Alyth. They have also given a further commitment to fit products to Council owned properties in Comrie, Aberfeldy and Bankfoot. This installation process is on-going.
- 2.12. The SFRS and the Council no longer have the staff resources available that would be required to continue with the scheme. The SFF will continue with their normal recovery and resilience services that they provide across Scotland.
- 2.13. It is therefore proposed that the scheme is discontinued for the time being and not extended to the rest of Perth and Kinross.
- 2.14. The Council will continue to promote the use of PLP by private householders and businesses, and advise them on its use. The pilot scheme information will remain on the Council's website and will also be made available at future community events. This information will be updated, whenever possible, on new products as they become available.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. This report presents the arrangements that were put in place for the Council's PLP pilot scheme.

- 3.2. The results of the pilot scheme are presented along with an evaluation of its effectiveness.
- 3.3. Unfortunately, the response to the PLP pilot scheme was poor and very few householders sought to purchase products, even at a discounted price. This has meant that the Council has been unable to issue a bulk order or to secure any kind of discount that could be passed on to householders.
- 3.4. Although the PLP Scheme has not resulted in the Council being able to pass on cash savings on flood protection products through its access to bulk buying discounts, the PLP Pilot Scheme can be considered to have been successful in raising awareness of this subject. Individual property owners can use the information gained to progress the purchase and installation of appropriate PLP products themselves.
- 3.5. It is recommended that the Committee:
 - (i) Notes that, while Local Authorities and other public agencies have responsibilities to manage flooding, the primary responsibility for avoiding or managing flood risk still remains with the land and property owners, including the purchase and fitting of appropriate PLP.
 - (ii) Notes the outcome of the Council's PLP pilot scheme in Aberfeldy, Pitlochry, Comrie, Crieff, Alyth and Bankfoot.
 - (iii) Notes the progress made on fitting PLP products to Council owned properties in the above pilot areas.
 - (iv) Agrees that the PLP pilot scheme should be discontinued for the time being and not be extended to all of Perth and Kinross.
 - (v) Agrees that the Council will continue to promote the use of PLP by private householders and businesses and will advise them on its use.
 - (vi) Agrees that the PLP pilot scheme information will remain on the Council's website and will also be made available at future community events, updated to reflect new products when possible.
 - (vii) Notes the success of the PLP Pilot Scheme in raising awareness of the necessity to fit appropriate flood protection products in areas of flood risk.

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	Yes
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan/ Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1. The proposals relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement in terms of the following priorities:
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
 - (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

Corporate Plan

- 1.2. The proposals relate to the achievement of the council's Corporate Plan Priorities:
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
 - (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1. There are no financial implications in delivering the proposals put forward in this paper.

Workforce

- 2.2. There is no workforce related implications in delivering the proposals put forward in this paper.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3. There is no land, property or IT implications in delivering the proposals put forward in this paper.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.
- 3.2. The Equality Impact Assessment undertaken in relation to this report can be viewed clicking [here](#).
- 3.3. Following an assessment using the Integrated Appraisal Toolkit, it has been determined that the proposal is **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.4. The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.
- 3.5. The proposals have been considered under the Act and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

- 3.6. Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, the Council also has a duty relating to climate change and, in exercising its functions must act:

- in the way best calculated to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets;
- in the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaptation programmes; and
- in a way that it considers most sustainable.

3.7 Following an assessment using the Integrated Appraisal Toolkit, it has been determined that the proposal highlights no significant implications for sustainability.

Legal and Governance

3.8 There are no legal and/or governance implications in delivering the proposals put forward in this paper.

Risk

3.9 There are no risk implications in delivering the proposals put forward in this paper.

4. Consultation

4.1 Internal

Legal Services
Health, Safety & Wellbeing Manager
Local Elected Members

4.2 External

The Scottish Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS)
The Scottish Flood Forum (SFF)

5. Communication

5.1 The communities within the pilot scheme areas were engaged through letter drops, the Council website, community councils, and direct contact from all agencies involved in delivering this PLP pilot scheme.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

2.1 PKC – Environment Committee – 3 September 2014, Flood Risk Management – Property Level Protection Pilot Scheme (Report No. 14/362)

3. APPENDICES

3.1 None.