

SLOWING THE FLOW AT PICKERING PROGRAMME BOARD MEETING – 13 JULY 2009

Paper 09/04 - Engaging the Local Community

1 Introduction

Pickering has had a long and painful history of flood events. This is not something we may want to remind ourselves of but a quick refresher of the recent history is important in order to learn the lessons.

2 Background to Pickering's Flood History and FAS Scheme

Pickering flooded in 1999 and 2000. These flood events led to the development of a formal Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS) being developed in 2001, along with Malton and Stamford Bridge. The original proposed scheme for the construction of flood walls through the town was not accepted by the community and rejected. The reasons for this will not be universally agreed but are likely to be a contribution of a hastily developed scheme, inadequate engagement with the community and high expectations about what could be afforded. More involved consultation was carried out and a revised scheme submitted but as cost estimates increased, the Scheme had to be withdrawn due to the low cost benefit ratio.

As we know, since then there have been further flood events in the town.

3 Ryedale Flood Research Group (RFRG)

The RFRG was formed as part of an independently funded research project. The Group comprised academics from Oxford, Durham and East Anglia Universities as well as members from the local community. The Group sought to explore new ways of conducting scientific research into local flood risk management involving local people in the process. The Group completed a report entitled "Making Space for People" in October 2008 and recommended an investigation into the construction of low level bunds upstream of Pickering. A link to the website is provided below for those seeking more information:

<http://knowledge-controversies.ouce.ox.ac.uk/ryedaleexhibition/>

The relevance of this is that this idea came from the community and, therefore, they ought to be involved in its implementation.

4 Principles for Communications

Taking in account the two points made above there will be a need to gain acceptance by the community of the value of the project and its outputs. Remembering that the catalyst for this project were the ideas developed from the community by way of the Ryedale Flood Research Group a number of key principles have been proposed for agreement at the outset by the Programme Board. Key principles are suggested as follows:

- A partnership approach of key organisations working together to find solutions.
- Involvement of the community in the implementation of those solutions.

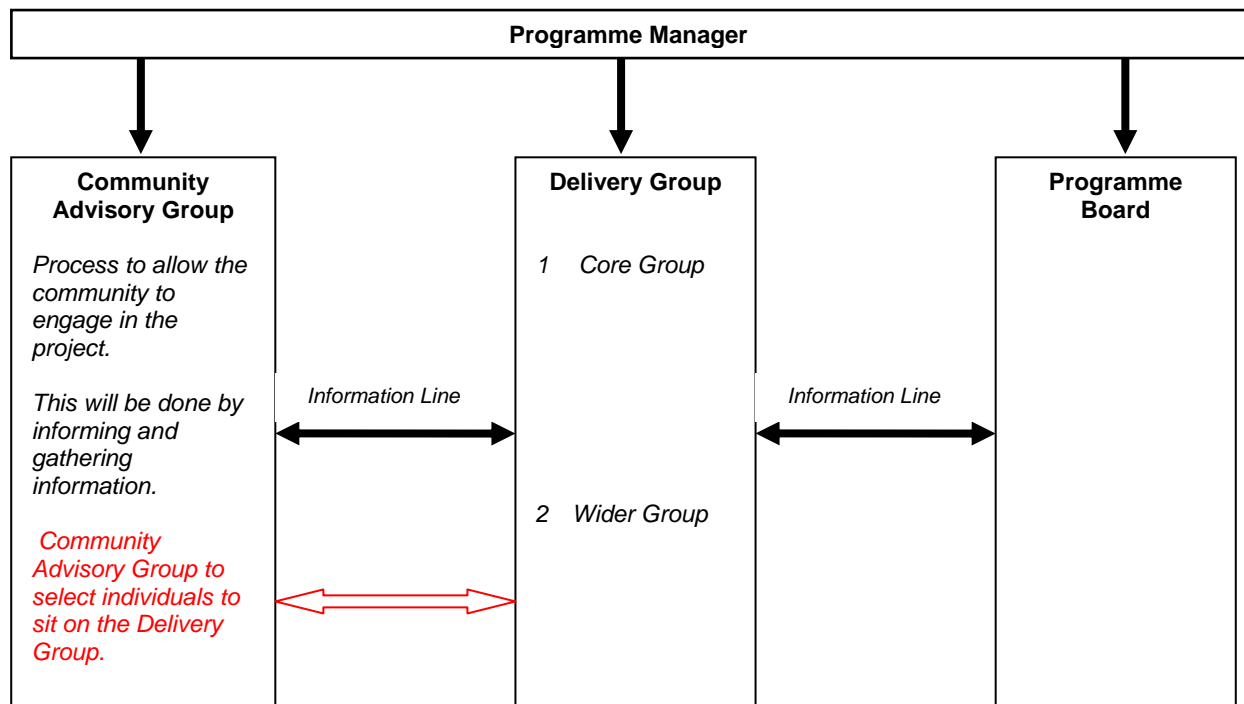
5 “Working with Others” Approach

The Environment Agency is adopting a new approach to working with communities and will promote the application of this approach for this project. An attachment will accompany papers prior to the meeting. The proposal will be to use this approach for the project. The first steps in this will be to train the programme manager in the techniques, get the delivery group involved and involve the community. It has been recommended that an external facilitator run the first workshop with the general public.

6 Proposals for Engagement

We have taken the view that the Land Management Project is an umbrella under which a number of on the ground projects take place, hence the description of a programme. The bunded storage option, moorland restoration and woodland planting are all individual projects doing stuff on the ground and need input from others. The proposal is that the Programme Manager, Simon, will act as the public face of the project and that engagement with stakeholders will follow the format of the Project Governance described under Item 4.

Diagram to show information flow for the Project



7 Means of Communication

The proposal would be to use a fairly standard set of communications tools run through the Programme Manager. Production of written up-dates and newsletters, public meetings and use of a website (new or existing partners' websites).

8 Actions

Members are asked to note the content of the report. Agree principles of communication and the use of the "working with others approach".

JEFF PACEY
Environment Agency