

North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 21 July 2023

Present

Adrian Lythgo (Chairman)
Councillor Stephen Clarke (Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership)
Councillor Jane Hugo (Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership)
Councillor Tricia Ayrton (Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Partnership)
Councillor Karen Shore (Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership)
Councillor Giles Archibald (Cumbria Partnership)
Councillor Philip Cusack (Greater Manchester Partnership)
Councillor Tony Brennan (Merseyside Partnership)
Chris Findley (EA Appointed Member – Development and Sustainable Investment)
David Shaw (EA Appointed Member – Planning and Design)
Carolyn Otley (EA Appointed Member – Working with Communities)
Suzana Ilic (EA Appointed Member – Coastal)
Carl Green, Chair of the North Wales and North West Coastal Group
Paul Barnes, RFCC member
Anthony Morley, Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Mike Clough, United Utilities (UU)

Environment Agency Officers Present

Nick Pearson, Area Flood Risk Manager (GMMC)
Mary-Rose Muncaster, Area FCRM Operations Manager (GMMC)
Pete Miles, EA Area Flood Risk Manager
Sally Whiting, Senior FCRM Adviser (GMMC)
Adam Walsh, FCRM Programming Manager (C&L)
Jennifer Bridgeland, EA Senior Advisor
Ian Counce, EA
Crystal Orton, RFCC Project Manager
Alex Brownhill, RFCC Secretariat Officer (GMMC)

Observers:

Andrew Harrison, Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Nick Rae, Westmorland and Furness Council
Marcus Leigh, Lancashire County Council
Clare Nolan-Barnes, Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Lorah Cheyne, Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
David Boyer, Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Katie Eckford, Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator / Coastal Group Secretariat
Sarah Wardle, Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Anthony Swarbrick, EA
Stuart Mault, EA
Mia Mullender, EA
Kerry Harmer, EA
Fran Clarkson, EA
Gary Hilton, EA
Sarah Fontana, Senior LA Capital Projects Adviser (GMMC)

23 (23) Welcome, Chairman's Introduction & Apologies for Absence

Adrian Lythgo opened the meeting, thanked Members for joining and welcomed the new members of the committee following the local elections.

Adrian briefly referred to apologies received from Ian Crewe and Carol Holt from the Environment Agency, Councillor Richard Silvester, Councillor Ian Moncur, Councillor Elizabeth Grey, Councillor Daniel Barrington, Councillor Laura Crane, Neville Elstone, David Harpley, Stewart Davies and Perry Hobbs.

Adrian welcomed: Mary-Rose Muncaster, EA Operations Manager, who is formally representing Ian Crewe for the meeting; Anthony Morley from Knowsley representing the Merseyside Partnership; Andrew Eden from the Environment Agency who will be remotely presenting the Resilience and Adaption item; Mike Clough from United Utilities who will be presenting the DWMP item; Crystal Orton, the new RFCC Project Manager working on the Paving over Front Gardens Project; Ian Counce from the Environment Agency presenting on the Preston Scheme; and Alex Brownhill, the Secretariat for today's meeting.

Adrian asked for agreement for the meeting to be recorded for minute taking purposes. There were no objections.

Adrian highlighted his quarterly Chair's update circulated on 27 June 2023, some items of which will be covered in the agenda. Adrian referred to the information papers circulated: the Coastal update; United Utilities' quarterly update which includes different catchment updates; and the Building Community Resilience ambition report; and the interim guidance note on Biodiversity Net Gain for capital projects.

Councillor Giles Archibald raised a question on whether all the documents mentioned are stored in one place. Sally Whiting responded that on the Flood Hub website we currently provide the minutes, the slide packs and full meeting packs and this is an open public website. We are in the process of creating an RFCC Sharepoint site for the core membership and this will be available in the coming months.

No Declarations of Interest have been received.

23 (24) Minutes of the RFCC Meeting held on 21 April 2023 and actions and matters arising

Adrian Lythgo reported on a couple of inaccuracies in the draft minutes raised by Carolyn Otley relating to community group work in Cumbria and scheme Local Levy allocations. These will be amended. The minutes were proposed by Councillor Tony Brennan and seconded by Councillor Suzana Ilic.

There was one matter arising around provision of interim guidance on Biodiversity Net Gain which has been circulated and completes an action from the last meeting.

23 (25) Flood Incidents Update

Adrian Lythgo highlighted that it is one of the core roles of the RFCC to understand flood risk across the North West and we partly do this by reference to formal Section 19 flood reports and also by intelligence from each of the sub-regional partnerships on occurrences of flooding locally.

Adrian asked the sub-regional partnerships to summarise any flood impacts experienced in the last 3 months.

For **Lancashire**, Councillor Jane Hugo advised that there had been no incidents in Blackpool. In Blackburn with Darwen, on 19 June there was widespread flooding across the borough. There had been no thunderstorm warning prior to the event. 71 properties were flooded, 30 internally and another 41 externally. On highways, 67 locations flooded mainly caused by the drainage network reaching full capacity resulting in surcharge of sewers and the highways drainage network. There were two road closures. On 25 June similar events occurred - less intense but still significant.

Lancashire County Council (LCC) reported, on 11 June, 95 confirmed properties flooded of which 37 were internal, including eight commercial premises, and 50 externally flooded. Some of the properties flooded are managed by social housing landlords and some have incurred extensive and expensive damage. Some have been flooded on two or more occasions previously and the affected residents are very distressed. LCC knows of a further 88 properties notified as flooded where the impact is currently unclear. They have recently contacted 700 addresses to invite responses from any affected. All the roads flooded cleared naturally overnight on 12 June. Highways officers continue to work to investigate whether this has affected highways drainage. No major defects had been identified by 20 June. LCC were notified by Network Rail of one incident of the rail service being impacted by the flooding caused by an obstruction in a watercourse which was cleared. United Utilities (UU) reported that their monitors did not show any storm surges in their sewers meaning that the rainfall did not enter the sewers as quickly as it fell onto the ground. On 12 June, other Lancashire impacts included internal flooding of a commercial premises in Chorley, internal flooding to a home in Clitheroe (not repeat locations), and two homes with external floodings in Leyland and Warton nr Carnforth, both known to be repeat flooding locations.

On behalf of the **Greater Manchester** Strategic Partnership, Councillor Tricia Ayrton reported that on 12 June in Higher Folds, Wigan, 13 properties internally flooded due to surface water and sewer flooding and a known issue with a UU outfall. A Section 19 investigation will be undertaken. At Astley, Wigan, on 12 June, one property confirmed flooded internally, due to surface water and sewer flooding. UU are to carry out investigatory works. A total of 167 reports of flooding, many of which cover multiple properties as yet unconfirmed – 27 with internal flooding. At Radcliffe in Bury on 18 June, there were three confirmed internal properties flooded, one suspected internal flooded and five unconfirmed flat cellar floodings, all from surface water flooding. In Altrincham, Trafford, one residential and six non-residential properties flooded from sewer/surface water drains. There was also some flooding to garages in Bowden from the surcharged highway network. Having viewed the rainfall radar at various sites in the borough, the

rainfall was in excess of the drainage network capacity by as much as 42.95 mm falling in 30 minutes. The Committee was asked to note that these numbers may change and may not all be surface water flooding. Investigations are still being undertaken and information from residents and businesses are being collated. In Urmston, Trafford, ten residential properties flooded from sewer/surface water/private drains. In terms of infrastructure impacts, there is a possible structural issue with Longford Brook culvert at Woodhouse Primary School in Urmston. The Council is going to undertake a survey and inform the Environment Agency. In terms of environmental impacts, there was a lot of foul sewage flooding at various properties and businesses throughout the borough.

On behalf of the **Merseyside** Strategic Flood Risk Partnership, Anthony Morley advised that two large flood events had been experienced during this quarter, on 11 May and 12 June, both affecting Liverpool. These were short but high intensity events with associated internal flooding in basements and garages at three dwellings and highway flooding. A Section 19 investigation will now be undertaken.

Adrian gave the update for **Cheshire Mid Mersey** as Cllr Karen Shore had been delayed and would arrive later in the meeting. There was internal flooding to four properties in Wheelock and Wistaston (near Crewe) and external flooding to a property in Macclesfield with surcharge from drainage systems in Elworth and Castle Green.

For **Cumbria** there were no properties flooded despite bad weather and significant rainfall.

Adrian remarked that all of the flooding reported had been from surface water flooding caused by intense rainfall and run off, and sewer discharge. Increasingly this is the pattern with inundations leading to flooding anywhere, making it harder to predict and plan for. This demonstrates the impact of climate change.

Members were thanked for their contributions and there were no further comments.

23 (26) Resilience and Adaption

Adrian Lythgo gave a brief introduction about the presentation to be given by Andrew Eden of the Environment Agency who joined the meeting remotely to talk about the work on resilience and adaptation being co-ordinated by the Environment Agency at the national level. Adrian highlighting the important focus on adaptation in the national FCERM Strategy adopted by parliament.

Andrew presented a talk on Adaption Pathways and was keen to get a better understanding of the need in our area.

Andrew Eden provided an overview of what is adaptation, adaptation pathways – what they are and why should we care, the adaptation pathways programme, the four adaptation pathway pilots, and planned improvements. Key messages included:

- Adaptation is the process of adjusting to current or expected effects of climate change.
- The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy

provides a clear vision for a national resilience to flooding and coastal erosion today, tomorrow and to the year 2100.

- Climate change is inherently uncertain and there is a need to be flexible.
- The current approach tackles current and future risk, is precautionary, economically inefficient, and inflexible with limited capacity to adapt. An adaptive approach manages uncertainty, is agile to climate impacts making effective investment at the right time.
- The FCERM Strategy has adaptation to climate change as its basis – we are moving to a more adaptive model.
- Detail: the approach allows for better decision-making under uncertainty – more scenarios.
- Long term, cost effectiveness: adaptive approaches can help us make more effective, less costly, investment decisions, by avoiding too little/too much investment at the wrong time.
- External: more partners are pursuing adaptive approaches and climate risk assessment (Local Authorities, Water and Sewerage Companies, businesses).
- New Tools and guidance - Adaptation pathways programme and process, and system enhancements. Collaboration and sharing across FCERM Directorate and Operational teams.
- We will drive innovation. We are investing £200 million to test and develop new ways to create a nation resilient to flooding and coastal change.
- £150m Flood & Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme – 25 local authorities delivering resilience actions.
- £36m Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme.
- £8m Adaptation Pathways Programme (2021-2027) – four EA teams developing adaptation pathway plans with local partners. Investment strategies for managing flooding and coastal risk in a changing climate to 2100 and beyond.
- Programme communication - links to these are:
[Adaptation Pathways – Welcome to the Knowledge Hub \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
[Flood and Coastal Resilience Fund/Engage Environment Agency \(engagementhq.com\)](#)
- Thames Estuary 2100 – launched 2012. Monitors sea level rise, 300 km of river bank, fixed assets, defence raising, barriers and storage.
- Humber Strategy 2100+ - Understanding tidal flood risk now and in the future. Agreeing a range of strategic approaches, Implementation.
- South Yorkshire & West Yorkshire – South Yorkshire using adaptive pathways to determine optimum timing and type of investment. West Yorkshire are using adaptive pathways to reduce flood risk to Garforth.
- River Severn Partnership – Largest river with 600,000 people living along the length of the river. Dovetails with Severn Valley Water Management Scheme.
- Snapshot of highlights and learning – Adaptive Pathways Benefits Toolkit, Adaptive economic analysis, Collaborative decision making tools (Humber, Yorks); Using AP to align flood and coastal investment with other partners; Costed and optimized investment strategies and/or plans informing future capital programme pipeline.
- Opportunities for mainstreaming: (Under EA control) FCERM Strategies guidance, living draft of Adaptation Pathways Guidance, AP EngagementHQ site, Research and alternative methods to ‘value’ adaptation; (In EA influence) shaping of future Strategic Flood Risk Planning replacement, defining role of EA in place-shaping and local strategic plans; (outside of EA influence) Timing of future Strategic Flood Risk planning replacement.

Adrian Lythgo invited comments and questions, for Andrew Eden to respond to together. Suzana Ilic asked about triggers, the setting of triggers and approaches, and what adaptation pathways means for the risk authorities and their resources?

Cllr Giles Archibald commented on the speed of the ice melt of the polar icecaps, and the rising sea levels, and asked how much do we tell our residents about these dangers, as people are still building in areas less than 10ft above sea level and buying properties that could be washed away with rising levels?

Chris Findley asked about the uncertainty around modelling, and how that affects long term planning/investment. When do you invest in an enhanced Thames barrier?

On triggers, Andrew Eden commented that we have to monitor what has changed. There are a range of 10 indicators of change within the Thames Estuary and a 10 year major review recently completed has shown climate change is worse than thought. We now have to bring forward decisions on plans for the Thames barrier and are ensuring the right governance is in place.

On how much we tell residents, it is about openness generally, and openness with the data, mindful of the risk. We may need to increase restrictions on development in potential flooding areas.

The Thames Barrier underlines the importance of the adaptation pathway approach. We must keep investment decisions under constant review.

Adrian thanked Andrew for his presentation and Members for their contributions.

23 (27) Report from the RFCC Finance & Business Assurance Sub Group

Adrian Lythgo reminded Members that the papers and draft minutes of the Sub Group meeting were in the papers distributed.

Adam Walsh presented the North West investment programme update.

Reporting on outcomes from the 2023-24 programme, Members heard the North West target is forecasting (at mid-May) to better protect 4,839 properties from flooding, against our unofficial target of 3,598. The actual to date so far is 38.

Total capital funding available for the North West is £108.5 million. This includes £95 million of FCRM Grant-in-Aid (FCRMGiA), £8.15 Million of Local Levy, and £12.56 Million of Partnership Funding contributions. Forecasts at mid-May 2023 show the North West is expecting to draw down £112.495 Million this year. This is £3.953 million more than allocated but at this time of year we normally like to see an over programme in the region of £15-20 million. The over programme is about ensuring we spend the allocated funding. As of the end of May we have spent £8.5 million.

On the Local Levy, Adam advised the current allocation for 2023/24 is £9.557 million. This is up from the £7.55 million approved by the RFCC in January 2023 as it now includes the £1.56 million re-profiled from 2022/23 into this year and a Local Levy contribution of £1 million to the Penketh and Whittle scheme approved by the RFCC at its April 2023 meeting.

Adam presented the graphs illustrating the Local Levy income and expenditure scenario. Since the last meeting a review of the programme has identified some scheme allocations that can be re-profiled or released.

The RFCC has had a sizeable reserve of Local Levy funding for several years - £11.1 million at the start of this financial year. The size of the programme last year, this year and next year significantly exceeds the annual income meaning the amount of the reserve funding is expected to reduce rapidly - something that the RFCC were keen to see. Based on allocations, the reserve is expected to drop to just under £6 million this year to under £1 million at the end of 2024/25. Once the reserve is essentially drawn down, this will constrain the programme to the annual income raised, currently £4.4 million, with a minimum reserve of 5-10% of annual income (ie £220K - 441K) to meet the RFCC's Local Level Strategy commitment. As it currently stands, the indicative programme from 2025/26 is not affordable and requires review.

Sally Whiting gave a briefing on the Local Levy Strategy to familiarise the new members of the committee. The Local Levy Strategy was published in September 2020 and sets out key principles for how the committee will use the fund. Since 2020 we have had the National Flood Risk Strategy published, we have refreshed our own committee business plan in line with this Strategy. With the expected reducing Local Levy reserve as well, it is time to refresh the Local Levy Strategy. Sally reported that most of the principles still feel right. The Strategy will be re-circulated and we will be looking for comments and feedback in the coming months.

Adrian Lythgo added that there was a clear request from the Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group for engagement with councillors, specifically in this process.

Sally provided an overview update on the RFCC Business Plan Overview. We have now started implementing a reporting tool for monitoring progress and spend which needs more embedding and refinement but has provided outputs for the first time, so she is happy to receive feedback. There are 22 projects currently supported by the RFCC, though not all requiring Local Levy investment - sometimes the RFCC is playing a supporting or sponsoring role. Of the 22 projects, 14 are on schedule (green), six are behind schedule (amber) and two are not progressing (red).

With regards to the spend forecast, the committee approved just under £1.4 million investment in the business plan for this financial year. The current forecast is just under £1.3 million and an underspend of £115K. We are identifying the indicative need for the next two financial years which is in greater detail in the papers provided.

Sally went through three proposed changes to the RFCC Business Plan programme, providing brief details on each, along with the Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group's recommendations to approve these.

- The Sub Group approved within delegated powers from the RFCC, an increased Local Levy contribution for the 'Building Community Resilience' ambition, from £230 thousand per year to £249.55 thousand per year.
- The formal closedown of Action ID11 – 'Evidence gathering – Effectiveness of Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) advice on planning applications'. The RFCC approved this change.
- The inclusion of support for a Highways SuDS Design Guide requiring a Local Levy contribution of £20 thousand in 2023/24. The RFCC approved this change.

In relation to Local Levy contributions to capital schemes, Nick Pearson, EA Flood Risk Manager for Greater Manchester, gave a brief overview of the Sub Group's recommendation to reapportion the Local Levy contribution for the Rochdale and Littleborough Flood Risk Scheme, to the Littleborough element only. Previously the committee had agreed to £5 million Local Levy contribution to a joint scheme for Rochdale and Littleborough. In order to allow continuation of the work now, the project review group are looking to approve a reapportionment of the £5 million to the Littleborough element of the scheme. This is the largest scheme in the GMMC area and will protect 1000 residential properties, 200 commercial properties and benefits of £500 million.

Adrian Lythgo asked if there were any further questions and ask if the Committee were happy to approve the reapportionment, reiterating that it is not an increase in Levy contribution.

Adam Walsh went on to brief on the EA Maintenance Programme for 2023/24. In terms of resource funding across the NW we currently have £21,604 million allocation which covers maintenance, staff costs and revenue projects. Both EA areas are currently forecasting an overspend on maintenance activities in the region of £100-300K. This will be formally reflected in the data in the coming weeks.

Some of the top risks affecting the North West programme are:

- Framework changes
- Resources
- Inflation
- Cost of materials
- Biodiversity Net Gain legislation
- Internal resource due to churn

Adrian added that there was a request from the Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group to collate a more formal update on resource pressures from both the EA and across the partnerships, which we have undertaken to do and will feed back to the Sub Group.

Adrian summarised the recommendations from the Sub Group, which were approved by the RFCC, as below.

Resolved:

Following the recommendations from the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group, the Committee:

- Noted the current/future position of the Local Levy Programme and latest spend forecast.
- Endorsed the ongoing refresh of the scheme-specific allocations in the future years of the Local Levy Programme.
- Supported the subsequent initiation of a refresh of the Local Level Strategy.
- Noted the Sub Group's approval of an increased Local Levy contribution for the 'Building Community Resilience' ambition, within delegated powers from the RFCC.
- Approved the formal closedown of action ID11 – Evidence gathering – Effectiveness of Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) advice on planning applications.
- Approved the inclusion of support for a Highways SuDS Design Guide requiring a Local Levy contribution of £20 thousand in 2023-24.
- Approved the reapportionment of Local Levy contribution to the Littleborough element of the Rochdale and Littleborough FRM Scheme.
- Noted the progress on delivering the 2023-24 capital and resource programme.
- Noted the risks to the North West Programme in 2023-24.

There were no further comments or questions.

23 (28) Strategic Flood Risk in the North West

Adrian introduced the item as having two parts, the first led by Jennifer Bridgeland of the Environment Agency on the Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs). Jennifer is a Senior Flood Risk Adviser in Greater Manchester and part of the virtual Flood Risk Management Plan team for the NW.

Jen's presentation included these key messages:

- 1st cycle of FRMPs were completed 2021 - this is 2nd cycle of FRMPs (2021-2027).
- FRMP2's were published in December 2022 and are now available to view via [Flood risk management plans 2021 to 2027 – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/flood-risk-management-plans-2021-to-2027)
- Workshops were held in Autumn 2022 and identified a list of theme and measure leads.
- Since April the FRMPs team have finalised a user-friendly delivery plan which will support delivery of FRMP measures and which is being rolled out to relevant staff.
- Process rolled out for reporting on FRMPs to River Basin District Theme and Measure Leads.
- Drop-in sessions hosted to provide tips and guidance.
- Data submitted to EA National team via [Flood Plan Explorer](#) (FPE) mapping tool.
- Liaison with RMAs on their relevant measures.
- Reporting overview: FRMP team are reporting on two types of measures: River Basin District (RBD) and Flood Risk Area (FRA).
- We are reporting on FRMPs for three River Basin Districts (North West, English Dee, and Solway Tweed).
- First reporting nationally on FRMP2 was end of April 2023 – FRA measures were not reporting on this occasion.
- National reporting will be biannual (April & October) and will be uploaded to Flood Plan Explorer (FPE) which is accessible to the public.
- Status of measures will be updated biannually by area FRMPs teams and LLFAs

(FRA measures)

- Initial reporting April 2023 – represents a benchmark at the start of the FRMP2 implementation. More measures have already started and in October 2023 we expect statistics to show many more will be ongoing.
- The 15 specific Flood Risk Area leads are at various stages of reviewing and implementing their FRAs. LLFAs will be granted access to FPE this summer and will be able to update the status of their measures. National will roll out recorded training events for LLFAs to help. LLFAs will be encouraged to update measure status in October so that the reporting is as up to date as possible. We have asked our FCRM colleagues for ideas on how we can support LLFAs after the national roll-out.
- At the June FRMP Board we updated the Chair on progress, agreed our updated Terms of Reference and structure, and discussed our risk register. The Board agreed to support the delivery plan roll-out, reporting structure and continuation of resource.
- Next steps – reiteration of training, virtual Theme and Measure Lead quarterly meetings, 6 monthly reporting to RFCC.
- Next national FRMP report - October 2023. Annual report to Defra - March 2024.

Adrian introduced the second part of the item on the Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) presented by Mike Clough, United Utilities Drainage and Wastewater Manager. Perry Hobbs was due to co-present the item but had to send his apologies.

Through his presentation, Mike Clough explained that the DWMP is a long-term strategic plan that sets out how United Utilities intends to maintain a robust and resilient drainage and wastewater system in the North West over the next 25 years and will be reviewed every 5 years. This iteration (Cycle 1) is non-statutory, the next iteration (Cycle 2) will become statutory under the Environment Act 2021. The DWMP framework will have four items set out by the regulators, improving long term planning approaches to address unprecedented future challenges. These will be in alignment with one another and provide consistency across the industry. They will also provide greater transparency and line of sight to customers and stakeholders, driving industry wide improvement.

Mike provided an overview of the DWMP development process which covered:

Understanding Risk:

- Strategic Context - Where do we want to be?
- Risk Based Catchment Screening - What is our current risk?
- Baseline Risk & Vulnerability Assessment - What is our future risk?
- Problem Characterisation - How difficult will it be to reduce the risk?

Developing the Plan:

- Options Development - How could we reduce risk?
- Programme Optimisation - What's the best way to reduce risk across the region?
- Plan Production - Final Plan published 30 May 2023

The key considerations of the DWMP are: Population growth, Climate change, Technological change, Cultural change, Commercial change, Legislative change, Regulator expectations, and Customer expectations.

The planning objectives are to: provide excellent wastewater services, reducing their impact on the environment; protect, restore and improve the natural environment of the NW through their actions; and sustainably reduce the risk of sewer flooding in the NW.

The final DWMP adaptive planning estimate is £21.8 billion (2025-2050), broken down as:

- £16.5 bn storm overflows
- £3.9 bn wastewater treatment
- £1.4 bn optimized plan

Adrian invited questions for Jen or Mike on their presentations.

Cllr Giles Archibald raised the question that United Utilities had been asked for data on flooding events that have caused pollution at Windermere. Data was not available, and asked for this to be looked into.

Cllr Giles Archibald then went on to ask about how the Shoreline Management Plans align and integrate with the Flood Risk Management Plans? Jen answered to say that one of the themes in the FRMPs are the coastal measures and they have worked in conjunction with the Coastal Group who maintain the Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs). Carl Green added that they are refreshing the SMPs and reviewing all the climate change scenarios. The SMP is a policy for the management of the coastline for the next 100 years and is a long-term plan. However it is a non-statutory plan, unlike the FRMP which is a statutory plan.

Cllr Stephen Clarke raise a query to United Utilities about the issue with storm outlets on the Flyde coast. The Fleetwood outfall is currently not working and the beaches can't be used due to pollution being caused. The whole of the Fylde coast has been polluted and the storm outlets are putting sewage into the sea. Mike Clough said the issue had been due a burst outfall pipe from an untreated effluent works which took the sewage out to sea. He believed that the beaches were now open again after significant emergency works. It was caused by a mechanical failure in the system rather than a design fault with very serious consequences.

Paul Barnes expressed that he is alarmed that the Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans have been positively accepted by Ofwat and don't take into account the vast majority of customers approach to what has happened with their environment. It has been raised that rainwater is not being able to access the sewage system. Rainwater should not be going into the sewage system; it is the neglect of Ofwat and EA for not holding the water companies to account for years. He stated that we pay for rainwater to go down the drain to be treated and it's on the watch of Ofwat and the EA and not the entire blame of United Utilities. Adrian added that the regulatory position is both complex and part of the solution going forward.

Susana Ilic commented on what has come out from the FRMP and the Delivery plans about collaboration and co-ordination of the two plans. Jennifer Bridgeland replied that the FRMPs were written in collaboration with risk management authorities and United Utilities.

There were joint workshops, the plans were written together and sent out for consultation to all risk management authorities and signed off. There is also collaboration within the Delivery Plans process, where Jennifer, Mike Clough and Pete Miles (lead EA Area Flood Risk Manager) sit on strategic and tactical liaison groups between the EA and UU and where delivery of these measures are jointly discussed.

Adrian added that as a Committee we have a responsibility to look at all the different plans and try to make sense of them, focussing on flood risk and where we should be putting our money, and at a North West level, look at the processes and make sure they are aligned.

Carolyn Otley raised a query about the Ambleside FRA within the Delivery Plan. Jennifer replied to say that she would need to speak to Cumbria and Lancs colleagues and follow up on this.

23 (29) Presentation on the Preston Flood Risk Management Scheme

Adrian Lythgo introduced Ian Counce, EA FCRM Adviser, providing the presentation on the Preston Flood Risk Management Scheme which would be informative for Members including those who are unable to attend the walk around the scheme after the meeting.

Ian Counce explained that he has been covering the scheme for the last few months. The EA looked at starting to build the scheme back in 2010 at Broadgate and Riverside and the scheme was then expanded. Key messages included:

- Scheme planned to cover 5 areas with estimated £54.7m budget (funding gap of £10-15m to finish the scheme).
- Area 1: Broadgate and Riverside, Area 2 Lower Penwortham, Area 3 Frenchwood and Fishwick Bottoms, Area 3 & 4 Walton-le-Dale, Area 5 Higher Walton.
- New defences will reduce the flood risk for c.5000 homes and businesses.
- The scheme will have pre-cast walls appropriate for the existing buildings and landscapes, glass panels to maintain views, raised embankments, including use of Redi-rock; and will include four flood gates.
- Some of the social and community benefits include: inclusive design with opportunities for the public to access open green spaces; 0.35 ha wetland habitat at Ribble Sidings; three new community sports pitches at Archbishop Temple High School; enhancements to Broadgate Gardens with fruit trees, ornamental shrubs, amenity grassland, seating area and riverside viewing platform; and improved entrance to Avenham and Miller Parks.
- Scheme construction and sustainability – scheme target 75% (“excellent”) against overall EA sustainability target of 60% (“very good”). To date Areas 1 & 2 have achieved 78% for the design stage assessment.
- Sustainability example: Root wads – sustainable method to reuse trees, trunks and root plates driven into the bank to enhance habitat niches/refuges for fish.
- Key Facts summary: 5 km of defenses will be constructed, c16k trees to be planted, 120+ people working on the scheme, c25 educational sessions to be delivered in local schools.

Adrian Lythgo thanked Ian for his presentation and said he would be happy to take any questions during lunch. Adrian informed the Committee that had seen the scheme early in its development.

23 (30) Any Other Business

This agenda item was provided as part of Any Other Business but for timely management of the meeting agenda, was brought forward to earlier in the agenda.

Crystal Orton introduced herself and explained that she is the new Project Manager recruited to help deliver the RFCC's Business Plan, specifically working on the Paving over Front Gardens project.

For today's meeting, Crystal presented some slides to summarise the key messages from Day 3 of the Flood and Coast Conference in June which focussed on SuDS.

Key messages included:

- Defra will carry out a regulatory impact assessment on the implementation of Schedule 3 later this year and consult on this.
- Implementation of Schedule 3 will remove the automatic right to connect to a public sewer.
- Schedule 3 will not include retrofit of SuDS.
- Building control legislation is out of date and will need to be updated.
- Greater focus on retrofitting SuDS in urban environments to improve 'liveability' and climate resilience.
- Greater focus on rainwater harvesting.
- A need to see SuDS as living systems that need to be connected and not cut off by developments and create wildlife corridors so biodiversity can thrive.
- There needs to be less artificial lighting near SuDS schemes, as they disrupt breeding and feeding patterns in wildlife.
- SuDS need to provide access to surface water for wildlife to prevent dehydration.
- We need to start SuDS implementation now and show brave leadership, small scale retrofit projects need to be captured and shared across all risk management authorities and added into mapping and modelling.
- Development of travel plans will create more 'spongification' of town and cities.
- Focus on water quantity, amenity and biodiversity.
- Highlight on groundwater flooding as this is the least monitored, least forecast, least funded and largely silent risk. A lot of the maps are outdated and poor quality. We need more organisation cross-collaboration.

There is a recently released report from Wales on their experience of Schedule 3 there which was implemented in 2019.

Other SuDS projects were referenced during the session as shown in the slides. The full slide pack was distributed to everybody in the pack.

Adrian Lythgo thanked Crystal for her contribution and for doing her presentation earlier than planned. Adrian advised that the RFCC expected to have a substantive session on Schedule 3 at the next meeting in October. As relevant RFCC Sponsors, Adrian invited

Members David Shaw or Chris Findley to add any remarks. David Shaw highlighted a lack of joined-up thinking from government specifically referencing how Biodiversity Net Gain fits with SuDS. Chris Findley added that the introduction of these changes is going to be a complex issue for planning authorities.

Cllr Clarke raised a question around the Schedule 3 right to connect and what the future management is going to be and who will be responsible for SuDS maintenance? Adrian replied that in the North West, United Utilities will take them on if SuDS are designed to their standards. What it looks like after full implementation of Schedule 3 we will have to see and return to. Paul Barnes commented that retrofitting of SuDS needs to take a priority over fitting of SuDS to new developments and that cost needs to be passed to the planners of developments. Cllr Archibald queried the 25% of ground water overflow, asked if this is a national figure, and if there is a number for this area? Crystal replied to say that she would double check the figures as she believed the data was based on the south, but she would come back with an answer.

As a further point of AOB, Adrian Lythgo advised of an opportunity being created for female Members, as following some recent changes in RFCC Chairs, all the 13 sitting Chairs are male. As a group Chairs understand the need for diversity, and would welcome female RFCC members to join the RFCC Chairs for the next four meetings until recruitment can make permanent appointments. Adrian asked any interested female Members to speak to him for more information.

The next RFCC meeting will be held on 20 October and will be a face-to-face meeting. The following two meetings will be virtual meetings.

Adrian thanked Members for attending and closed the meeting.