

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE

FRIDAY 24 JANUARY 2025, 10:00AM – 11:30am

Virtual Meeting via MS Teams

AGENDA

<u>Time</u>	<u>Agenda Number</u>	<u>Item</u>	
10:00	1.	Welcome Welcome, Chairman's Introduction, and Apologies for Absence	For information
10:05	2.	Minutes of RFCC meeting 18 October 2024 and matters arising (Papers) To approve the minutes of the last RFCC meeting and to receive an update on any actions and matters arising	For approval
10:10	3.	Recent flooding incidents (Information Item A) To share reports on, and to discuss flood incidents across the North West in the last quarter.	For information
10:25	4.	Report from the RFCC Finance & Business Assurance Sub-group (Paper + Information Item B) To discuss and consider the recommendations from the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub-group. <i>Introduced by Neville Elstone, Chair of the RFCC Finance & Business Assurance Sub-Group, Adam Walsh, EA Area FCRM Programming Manager, Cumbria and Lancashire (C&L)</i>	For information and discussion and approval
10:40	5.	Property Flood Resilience (Paper) To provide an overview on Property Flood Resilience in the North West and to discuss potential RFCC support. <i>Presented by Shannon Gunning, EA FCRM Advisor (GMMC), Iwan Lawton, EA Senior FCRM Advisor (C&L), and Adam Costello, EA Area FCRM Advisor (C&L)</i>	For information and discussion
11:10	6.	Update and observations from the RFCC Conservation Member, including feedback from the national network of Conservation Members <i>Presented by Kate Morley, NW RFCC EA Appointed Member - Conservation</i>	For information and discussion
11:25	7.	Any Other Business	
11:30		CLOSE	

INFORMATION PAPERS

Info item A	Quarterly Flood Update Report	NW RFCC specific
Info item B	Paper from the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group Meeting	NW RFCC specific
Info item C	Update from the North West and North Wales Coastal Group	NW RFCC specific
Info item D	Quarterly Update from United Utilities	NW RFCC specific
Info item E	National FCRM Update Paper	National EA

Future RFCC meetings

14 February 2025 (Virtual Meeting)*
 14 March 2025 (Virtual Meeting)**
 25 April 2025 (Virtual Meeting)
 11 July 2025 (Face to Face meeting)
 24 October 2025 (Face to Face meeting)
 23 January 2026 (Virtual Meeting)

Future RFCC Finance & Business Assurance Sub-group meetings

11 April 2025 (Virtual Meeting)
 27 June 2025 (Virtual Meeting)
 10 October 2025 (Virtual Meeting)
 9 January 2026 (Virtual Meeting)

*Additional Meeting – indicative allocations and local choices consideration meeting

**Additional Meeting – To consent the 2025/26 programme

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE MEETING – 24 JANUARY 2025**North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee****Draft Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 18 October 2024**

Held at The Old Stables, The Whitaker Museum, Rawtenstall, Rossendale, Lancashire

Attendees:**Members**

Adrian Lythgo, Chairman
 Councillor James Shorrocks, Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
 Councillor Jane Hugo, Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
 Councillor Phillip Cusack, Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
 Councillor Elizabeth Grey, Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
 Councillor Mhairi Doyle, Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
 Councillor Laura Crane, Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
 Amy Cooper, EA Appointed Member – Water and Sewerage Industry
 Kate Morley, EA Appointed Member – Conservation
 Chris Findley, EA Appointed Member – Development and Sustainable Investment
 Carolyn Otley, EA Appointed Member – Communities
 Susannah Bleakley, EA Appointed Member – Coastal
 Neville Elstone, EA Appointed Member – General Business and Assurance
 Carl Green, Chair of the North West and North Wales Coastal Group

Environment Agency Officers Present

Ian Crewe, EA Area Director, Greater Manchester Merseyside and Cheshire (GMMC)
 Carol Holt, Area Director, Cumbria and Lancashire Area (C&L)
 Nick Pearson, Area Flood Risk Manager (GMMC)
 Anthony Swarbrick, Area Operations Manager (C&L)
 Adam Walsh, FCRM Programming Manager (C&L)
 Sally Whiting, Senior FCRM Advisor (GMMC)
 Andy Tester, FCRM Programming Manager (GMMC)
 Rachel Harmer, RFCC Secretariat (GMMC)

Local Authority Officers:

Alison Harker, Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
 Jason Harte, Westmorland and Furness Council
 Pieter Barnard, Cumberland Council
 John Davies, Lancashire County Council
 Rachel Crompton, Lancashire County Council
 Lorah Cheyne, Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
 Sarah Wardle, Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
 Francis Comyn, Rochdale Borough Council
 Jill Holden, Greater Manchester Combined Authority
 David Boyer, Warrington Borough Council
 Matt Winnard, Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
 Guy Metcalf, Cheshire East Council
 Paul Wisse, Sefton Council

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Christina Worsley, Newground
Francine Killey, Fernco
Andy Collier, Environment Agency

Presenters:

Tom Doyle, Arup
John Greenway, EA Catchment Engineer (GMMC)
Fiona Stewart, EA Area Incident Team Leader (C&L)

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

Adrian Lythgo opened the meeting, welcomed and thanked guests and Members for travelling to Rawtenstall to see the fantastic RFCC 'Unpave the Way' garden, which has been made possible with the funding the Committee has made available.

Adrian advised apologies for the meeting had been received from Councillor Denise Rollo and Councillor Giles Archibald (Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership); Councillor Stephen Clarke (Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership); Councillor Tony Brennan (Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership); Councillor Alan Quinn and Councillor Ged Cooney (Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Partnership); Councillor Karen Shore (Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership); Paul Barnes (EA Appointed Member – Agriculture); Clare Nolan-Barnes (Blackpool Council); Katie Eckford (Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator / Coastal Group Secretariat); Stewart Davies (EA Board Member); Richard Knight (EA Area Flood Risk Manager, Cumbria (C&L)); Fiona Duke (EA Area Flood Risk Manager, Lancashire (C&L)); Ollie Hope (EA Area Flood Risk Manager (GMMC) and Crystal Orton, EA FCRM Project Manager.

Adrian welcomed observers Francine Killey from Fernco and Andy Collier from the Environment Agency, and speakers Tom Doyle, John Greenway and Fiona Stewart.

Adrian referred to his quarterly Chair's Update paper, shared on 8 October, highlighting moves from the new Government on the existing policy agenda and some new organisational arrangements including the Flood Resilience Taskforce and Rural Flood Resilience Partnership.

He reported that, since the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub group meeting, we have been asked to not share specific numbers relating to the national flood investment programme beyond 31 March 2025 in advance of the Autumn Budget statement on 30 October. Discussion around the investment programme will therefore today be slightly constrained but there is a recommendation for the Committee to reconvene to have a specific conversation about our local choices for the forward programme after the national budget event on the 30 October, which will be held virtually.

Adrian remarked about the significant amounts of rain in the North West in the last couple of

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days and also noted the news reports of major flooding in France, including the city of Lyon, this coming on the back of other international and national flood events over the summer. He reinforced the impact of flooding on people which drives the work of the Committee.

Adrian referred Members to the information papers including the Coastal Update report which covers the Our Future Coast project; the Quarterly Update report from United Utilities which covers how their new county-based approach is progressing, providing for good conversations locally; and finally the North West RFCC response to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) consultation brought together by Chris Findley and Crystal Orton, where they were able to make reference to submissions from individual Local Authorities (LAs), where they were available. Adrian remarked that when pulling RFCC consultation responses together, the RFCC always sticks to the big picture and highlights points of consensus between Sub Regional partnerships to reinforce those responses.

Adrian highlighted the importance of the Local Levy vote for the 2024/25 year to take place during this meeting, and confirmed that we have the right representation around the table. He advised there are a number of correctly nominated substitutions from LLFA Elected Members and asked Members to agree the substitutions:

Members received and approved six correctly nominated substitutions for Members:

- Dave Boyer in place of Councillor Karen Shore (Cheshire Mid Mersey Partnership)
- Jason Harte in place of Councillor Denise Rollo (Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership)
- Councillor James Shorrocks in place of Councillor Stephen Clarke (Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership)
- Fran Comyn in place of Councillor Ged Cooney (Combined Authorities of Greater Manchester)
- Jill Holden in place of Councillor Alan Quinn (Combined Authorities of Greater Manchester)
- Councillor Elizabeth Grey in place of Councillor Tony Brennan (Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership)

No Declarations of Interest have been received.

24 (35) Minutes of the RFCC Meeting held on 19 July and actions and matters arising

Members noted a correction required to the date in the heading (from 18 July to 19 July) and, with this correction, the minutes were proposed by Carolyn Otley and seconded by Susannah Bleakley.

The minutes of 19 July 2024 RFCC meeting were approved by the Committee.

Adrian advised there are no specific matters arising that we do not have elsewhere on the agenda and there were no further comments or questions.

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Adrian referred Members to the information report, which details a small number of properties that have been internally flooded over the last three months, particularly in Merseyside and a couple in Lancashire. He also reflected there has been some very wet weather in the last couple of days which may well contribute to this picture, but data collection is still underway.

Adrian asked if there were any further comments or updates, noting that yesterday he had heard of some quite serious flooding in the Chester area and in Bootle, but further information on these was yet to be determined.

Dave Boyer advised he was not aware of the flooding in Chester. For Warrington, he updated there were no homes flooded, but it had been a near miss. Some Warrington roads had to be closed for 24 hours due to surface water flooding and some gardens had been flooded. He also commented on the Sankey Brook Scheme where some recent interventions had definitely prevented properties from flooding.

For Cheshire East, Councillor Laura Crane advised she had been unable to get a full flooding update, but was aware of two internally flooded properties and there had been 22 callouts.

Amy Cooper advised that United Utilities (UU) have been very involved in the Bootle flooding incidents, where there have been some 30 internally flooded properties due to prolonged and heavy rainfall. UU are continuing to monitor the situation and Amy thanked Sefton Council and the Sefton Community Centre who were able to help. Members were advised the immediate repairs have been done.

Councillor Mhairi Doyle advised the activity that went into helping during the incident was excellent and highlighted some families had to move out of their homes, with their pets. Members noted many of the residents in the Bootle area are on benefits and she raised her concern about how their relocation would affect their Universal Credit arrangements and the added challenge of then keeping in contact with those affected.

Nick Pearson advised there have been two recent flood events in the Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire (GMMC) area, one on 30 September, and then on 16 October where there were 7 Flood Warnings issued and the Flood Advisory Service was used to advise potential flooding impacts to partners. So far 10 properties have been reported as flooded and there are Community Information Officers out on the ground today to gather more accurate information.

Adrian Lythgo remarked that we are in the middle of October, where we are talking about getting ready for winter, and already the impacts are with us before the traditional winter period has hit. He highlighted operational staff across the organisations have already been stood up to prepare for wet weather for some time.

Carol Holt highlighted that this is the wettest year on record and noted this week is also Flood Action Week so anything that can be done to promote the messages will really help. Adrian referred Members to the National Flood Update which has information on this and highlighted a video on social media that covers a Sussex area surface water flooding example.

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Nick Pearson briefly presented a rainfall 'heat map' slide, displaying areas of significant intense heavy rainfall across the North West.

Adrian noted September 2024 has also been the wettest September on record, which sets the context for the rest of the meeting.

There were no further comments or questions.

24 (37) Report from the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group

Nick Pearson highlighted the challenge of providing Members with an update on the final two years of the programme, following on from the briefing provided by Ollie Hope at the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub-Group Meeting earlier in October where more specific information was discussed. He advised that since the Sub Group meeting, the Local Choices process has been paused nationally. In the North West we are intending to hold another Sub Group meeting in November, when further information should be available following the 30 October Budget announcement.

He also reported on the significant challenge relating to over-programming in 2024/25, where we have been directed to reduce our over-programme from the 10% target at the start of the year. In July, a national assessment identified a 20% over-programme, which resulted in Areas being asked to assess their programmes in terms of priority to see if this over-programme could be reduced closer to 5%. Nick noted that the allocation for 2024/25 remains unchanged through this process.

Neville Elstone advised there is currently no further information on the Frequently Flooded Allowance (FFA) and the Affordability Allowance (AA) funding streams, both Grant-in-Aid (GiA) funding pots, which should become available following the 30 October Budget announcement.

There were no questions or comments.

Capital programme 2024/25

Andy Tester provided an overview of the current year's (2024/25) programme so far.

Nationally we are on track to deliver the properties better protected from flooding target. The North West are forecasting to better protect 3,234 properties against a target of 2,840. This is made up of 1,892 in Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire and 948 in Cumbria and Lancashire. To date, we have better protected 366 properties (221 from the Penketh and Whittle Flood Risk Management Scheme completed in August) and expect to better protect a further 576 properties in the next quarter.

In terms of funding, the North West total is £109.991 Million, which includes £99.579 Million GiA, £7.66 Million Local Levy, and £2.67 Million of Partnership Funding contributions.

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The mid-August forecast indicated we are expecting to draw down £121.743 Million, which is circa £12 Million more than allocated, providing a level of over-programming but which is likely to need to be reduced.

The North West actual spend to end of August 2024 was £15.4 Million (up from £8.477 Million at the end of May 2023). This means there is £94.5 Million of the forecast remaining to spend/claim.

The total value of accepted efficiency claims in Quarter 1 was £1.3 Million, which is a relatively low number compared to the number of live projects. However, several claims have already been submitted for Quarter 2. Members noted the schemes that have reported efficiencies to date and the annual target of £9.862 Million.

Andy provided an overview of the EA Resource programme for 2024/25 which includes EA asset maintenance, staff costs and resource projects. This has a total budget of £21 Million, against which the two Areas are forecasting an overspend of £7 Million.

Members received an overview of the growing challenges and pressures around asset maintenance due to EA resource budget and headcount reductions. Members were presented with figures of how the asset maintenance allocation had reduced over the last three years from £6.81 Million in 2022/23 to £6.2 Million in 2024/25.

Specific pressures in Cumbria and Lancashire area (C&L) arising from electricity costs and flood basin compensation payments to landowners, associated with the operation of EA pumping stations and flood storage areas, were noted. Members were advised that approval has been given to overspend against the budget for these costs this year and that the shortfall will be met, but that is for this financial year only. If the budget doesn't increase and the shortfall is not covered, additional budget from the asset maintenance funding will have to be diverted to cover the costs of electricity and compensation payments. Andy advised that asset maintenance is continuing to increase in costs and the same scale of maintenance will not be sustainable going forwards.

Andy explained how the EA is having to refocus maintenance priorities which will prioritise:

- Those assets that are covered by legal compliance measures, so ensuring that flood storage basins and reservoir sites comply with the Reservoirs Act and that we comply with eel passage and environmental legislation.
- Maintenance obligations, where the EA may be riparian landowners or have legal agreements in place.
- High risk assets, which are EA owned, maintained and operated (i.e. flood basins, debris screens, pumping stations, tidal outfalls, embankments and flood walls).
- Watercourse maintenance in high flood risk areas.
- Assets under notice in land drainage areas.

Members noted the risks to the asset maintenance programme including:

- The EA resource maintenance programme must spend to budget.
- Due to resource maintenance budget pressures, inspections of low-risk watercourses and third party owned culverts have been stopped and that Local Authorities and

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private landowners will now need to consider options to fund these activities within their own budgets.

Andy highlighted the 10 named storms between September 2023 and January 2024, which caused slippages to the programme, and advised we have again seen the same sort of weather disruption during the last couple of weeks. This could impact our delivery over the coming winter months.

Adrian Lythgo remarked that the picture of pressure on the resource maintenance programme is exactly the same in Local Authorities and also, probably to a lesser extent, in United Utilities (UU). He commented that from a public point of view that all maintenance of flood assets is under pressure at a time and against a backdrop of the climate and weather we have already referred to. Whilst the Committee has to specifically consider the position of the EA, we also need to take account of the wider pressure in the system too. Neville Elstone highlighted the need to ensure we all work together and look for gaps where we can help each other.

Councillor Laura Crane enquired about low-risk water courses and asked if there will be a process for informing LAs. Susannah Bleakley highlighted this will be an issue for other landowners too and asked how we will communicate that there is now a role for landowners to consider options for themselves.

Anthony Swarbrick advised we will need to await the outcome of the October Autumn Statement to see beyond this year. We will need to talk to affected communities and see where the gaps are between work done previously and the work the EA is able to carry out going forwards.

Adrian Lythgo advised that following a discussion at the recent RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub group meeting there was agreement that discussions on this will be held at the Strategic Partnership Group meetings, and tactical and operational meetings, about the exact impacts on particular places as soon as they are known.

Adrian Lythgo advised Councillor Laura Crane there is a commitment to advise Members of the process, but for now there is not a specific answer on how this will happen.

Carolyn Otley advised it would be helpful to have a better understanding of what makes an asset "low risk", so it can be explained to the public. For example, is it low risk because there's only a small likelihood of it failing, low risk because the consequences of it failing are relatively minor, or a combination of these and other factors.

Adrian Lythgo suggested this be brought back to the January 2025 RFCC meeting when we have clearer information and can see what this means for the whole system, not just for particular pressure points.

Local Levy Programme Update

Andy Tester provided an overview of the North West Local Levy programme and reported a total resource at the start of 2024/25 of £16.646 Million, made up of £4.544 Million income, a

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balance of £10.581 Million carried forward from 2023/24, and £0.521 Million of interest earned on balances. The latest spend forecast for 2024/25 is £8.535 Million which would result in a remaining balance of £7.11 Million at the end of the financial year. This would be a reduction in the balance of £3.471 Million over the year.

Andy presented the graph which indicates how the balance is expected to change over the coming years and advised we are in a strong position and there may be some flexibility for additional use of our Local Levy moving forwards.

There were no further questions or comments.

RFCC Business Plan Update

Sally Whiting provided Members with a brief overview of progress on the Business Plan referring to the additional detail contained within the report. Progress overall on the 21 live projects is good, with 3 completed previously and a further 2 to be completed this quarter, 13 are progressing well and are on track, 2 are slightly behind schedule and 1 project is currently under review.

Sally highlighted the allocation for 2024/25 of £1.337 Million and the current forecast is for £1.441 Million to be claimed, which includes some unclaimed allocations carried over from 2023/24.

Sally highlighted the indicative investment need for 2025/26 is just over £1 Million and shared a graph which shows the even share of benefits from Business Plan investment across the Strategic Partnerships.

Members noted the Sub Group's recommendation to formally recognise the completion of two Business Plan projects.

- Project ID8 – Flood Poverty Project
- Project ID21 - Highways SuDS Design Guide

The Committee noted that the Highways SuDS Design Guide would be finalised shortly.

Sally introduced one new project proposal for the Business Plan, which is an extension to the Unpave the Way project, addressing the paving over of front gardens with impermeable surfaces. She noted that the reason for our meeting being held at Whitaker park today is because it is now home to the Unpave the Way garden, following its time at the RHS Tatton Flower Show in July.

Members noted the details of the presentation provided to the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub group on 4 October, where Members were advised of the significant amount of work still required to engage with a wide range of influencing sectors, and were presented with the proposal to extend the project by a further three years with further funding of £200k.

There were no further questions or comments.

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

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Capital and Resource Maintenance Programmes:

- Noted the progress on delivering the 2024/25 capital and resource programmes.
- Noted the risks not the North West programme in 2024/25.

Local Levy:

- Noted the current position and latest spend forecast of 2024/25.

Business Plan:

- Recognised the completion of
 - ID8 Flood Poverty Project
 - ID21 Highways SuDS Design Guide
- Supported and approved the continuation of the Unpave the Way (ID12) project for a further three years with an additional Local Levy funding contribution of £200k.

RFCC Business Plan Refresh

As the final update from the Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group meeting, Sally Whiting presented the proposed approach to refreshing the RFCC Business Plan going forwards. Members noted the current NW RFCC Business Plan runs to March 2025. Sally highlighted the Business Plan's five key ambitions, established with a direct line of sight to the ambitions within the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy, advising that these foundations are still very much fit for purpose and continue to cover the full scope of our flood risk management work.

Business Plan implementation is well embedded and the Plan does not need a substantial refresh. Some of the strategic aims under the ambitions would benefit from a light-touch consideration by the lead partnerships, but overall the structure of the plan is still appropriate and fit for purpose. Actions to respond to the strategic aims will continue to be developed and proposed for inclusion.

Members were presented with two options for extending the timeframe of the Business Plan, by one year, and by two years. Sally set out the pros and cons for each. Sally highlighted how option B (two-year extension) has more advantages including fitting better with the end of the current RFCC Chair's term of office. It also fits with the end of the current six-year investment programme.

Adrian Lythgo highlighted to Members that he has recently accepted a two-year extension to his current NW RFCC Chairmanship, which will finish at the end of August 2026.

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

- Supported Option B – to extend the time frame of the RFCC Business Plan by two years to March 2027 with light-touch consideration of aims and actions by lead partnerships.

There were no further comments or questions.

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE MEETING – 24 JANUARY 2025**24 (38) Local Levy for 2025/26**

Adrian Lythgo reminded Members this is the annual formal Local Levy vote where LLFA RFCC Members are asked to consider and vote on the rate of Local Levy funding for the following year (2025/26). This vote takes place in October every year, to provide Local Authority Finance Directors time to feed this into budget preparations for the 2025/26 financial year.

Adrian reminded Members of the wide uses that the Levy is put to and summarised its key uses including contributions to capital schemes as part of partnership funding, the funding of revenue resources to allow important work to be done, including Business Plan projects, and it provides our programme of work with flexibility and momentum, which we would not have otherwise.

He advised that he and the Committee are very aware of the pressure on Local Authorities in terms of their broader funding and noted that the levy counts towards their Council tax cap as Local Authority expenditure and is not a precept. As there is an opportunity cost to the levy the extent to which Authorities choose to raise the Levy reflects the importance that Authorities place on flooding. He highlighted there have been active conversations within sub regional partnerships about what level of Local Levy increase they would like to see and the outcome of these discussions has been that all of the partnerships support a level of Levy increase, which can be considered today.

Adrian asked if there were any comments or general points Members wished to make ahead of the formal vote.

Councillor Laura Crane said that she was pleased to see that pressures within LAs are recognised and stated that any increased demand on budgets is a struggle. She asked whether there could be a possible conversation about changing the funding model for Local Levy, advising that Cheshire East Council are one of the highest contributors to the Local Levy but receive little in return. She suggested that the Levy could be raised more in line with degree of flood risk within an area rather than numbers of properties.

Adrian Lythgo advised Members that the mechanism by which Local Levy is raised is part of national legislation. Should there be a groundswell of authorities that agreed they wanted to see a change, that could be discussed to see if there was a shared starting point. He remarked that from his personal perspective there is a discussion to be had as there has to be a local mechanism to raise resources for flooding, but that any change would need to be agreed by politicians both locally and nationally. He advised that if there was a consensus around the table that wanted to see change then this Committee could then go on to have that conversation with national government. He noted that he did not believe there to be a consensus for change, but that it doesn't mean that we shouldn't check.

Adrian asked if there were any comments from other Councillors, of which there were none.

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Adrian then shared his understanding that all partnerships were supporting an increase of 3%. He asked if anyone would like to propose a 3% increase.

Councillor Philip Cusack formally proposed a 3% increase in the Local Levy, which was seconded by Councillor Jane Hugo and Councillor Mhairi Doyle.

The Committee voted that the Local Levy for 2025/26 should be increased by 3%.

Adrian remarked that this agreement is a really strong message to all local communities on how seriously flooding is taken.

On behalf of the Committee Adrian thanked the LLFAs for this support as he is very aware of the revenue pressure on LAs more generally and the other calls LAs have on this funding.

Resolved: The Committee:

- Agreed a 3% increase to the Local Levy for 2025/26
- In accordance with section 23(3) of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 it was agreed that the sum of £4.681 million be met from the levy in 2025/26 and that the Environment Agency issue a levy under section 17 of that Act on those County and Unitary Councils shown below, whose areas are situated in whole or in part in the area of the Environment Agency's North West Flood and Coastal Risk Management Region for the financial year 2025/26 The levies made on those councils shall be paid by them in four equal payments on 1 May 2025, 1 July 2025, 1 October 2025 and 1 January 2026.

County Councils:

Derbyshire, Lancashire, Northumberland, North Yorkshire, Shropshire and Staffordshire.

Unitary Authorities:

Blackburn-with-Darwen, Blackpool, Bolton, Bury, Cheshire West and Chester, Cumberland, Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Sefton, Stockport, St Helens, Tameside, Trafford, Warrington, Wigan, Wirral, and Westmorland and Furness.

24 (39) Asset and Data Mapping Project

Jill Holden and Sarah Wardle provided an introduction to this Business Plan project, which was originally identified as two separate but similar projects, under two different ambitions, and with different leading partnerships, but which were brought together and combined in a joint project venture between the Greater Manchester and Merseyside Partnerships.

As well as being logical, this change also benefitted from sharing workloads, pooling resources and ideas, and commissioning one consultant instead of two.

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Tom Doyle from Arup provided Members with an overview of the work done so far, advising the project is about developing collaborative approaches to local flood risk management by:

- Improving the way data about local flood risk assets is collected, recorded and shared
- Facilitating collaboration between RMAs to address issues around complex asset ownership
- Working with public and third-party asset owners to identify opportunities for collaborative asset management and maintenance that make efficient use of available budgets.

Members received some brief detail on the project's three phases:

- Phase 1 – to look at how asset registers are being used, what data is being captured, what systems are being used and what challenges currently exist.
- Phase 2 – to see what the common challenges are, who the stakeholders involved are, what data practices are like, what data platforms are being used and what does 'good' look like.
- Phase 3 – to see why we should collaborate, when we should collaborate, ways which collaboration can be done, guidance on resolution and enforcement and collaboration next steps.

Adrian Lythgo connected the messages in the presentation to the prior conversation about assets and systems and Susannah Bleakley's question regarding third party landowners. He advised this project is going to provide specific solutions to partnerships where it was a particular priority and it will also provide guidance for the other Partnerships.

Jason Harte asked if any work is taking place with the Land Registry around identification of land owners, which Tom confirmed. Jason remarked that it would be good to see the outputs from this.

Jill advised some of the areas identified for case studies are areas with multiple landowners and some of the challenges are in identifying asset owners.

Carl Green supported the project and advised it has lots of synergies with the work going on in relation to coastal infrastructure. He asked about criticality and data sharing and if there has been any success with this. Jill advised more work is taking place with asset registers as they wish to do a gold standard template which all the districts can align to. She also reflected variability in the quality of asset register data and work regarding how information is collected and what systems can be used is still underway. Members heard this collaboration work will look to bring out a model to be used, which could bring about different ways to make best use of funding for maintenance. It was also recognised that we need to look at how we can get private landowners engaged with the process so that we don't have to go down the enforcement route.

Kate Morley highlighted how we engage with landowners will be a really positive output.

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Adrian Lythgo thanked Jill, Sarah and Tom for their presentation noting even though the project is only part way through its delivery, there is clearly a lot of value for what is due to come out of a number of case studies.

There were no further comments or questions.

24 (40) Highways SuDS Design Guide

Jill Holden provided an overview of the purpose of the Greater Manchester (GM) Highways SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) Design Guide. Jill emphasised that although the guide has a GM stamp on it, it is completely transferable to all other partnerships.

The purpose of this technical guide is to support the delivery of more SuDS in complex urban environments that are buildable, adoptable, maintainable and value for money:

- Providing greater resilience of the highway network
- Providing an agreed approach to designing and delivering SuDS across GM promoting consistency, quality and supporting delivery
- By becoming a platform for engagement with developers
- By increasing officers' knowledge, skills and confidence to promote and deliver SuDS.

Members were provided with an overview of the development of the guide, its content, the audience it is intended for, the scoping work that took place and stakeholders who provided funding for its development.

The SuDS guide future scenario will:

- Inform development of integrated water management principles and standards as outlined in the GM Integrated Water Management Plan.
- Provide stronger buy-in by LAs in the absence of Schedule 3 bringing in SuDS approval bodies.
- Help leverage capital investment into GM.
- Support transition to delivering SuDS as business as usual, maximising delivery of nature-based solutions as retrofit in existing urban spaces and inclusion in new developments.
- Enable developers to deliver SuDS that LLFAs/LHAs have influence over design and finish and know what has been installed to manage the asset effectively.

Members were advised it is hoped the guide will be adopted and published by the end of October 2024, which will then bring about post adoption activities including member briefings as part of wider GM Streets for All engagement, officer training, public communication and engagement, and the continuing of conversations about the guide on its use within the planning framework.

Adrian Lythgo advised this is a good example of how if one of the partnerships wants to do a piece of work and needs some funding to get it going, the RFCC can play its part through its support. Also, if early engagement with other partnerships takes place this can also help guide the project.

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Councillor Elizabeth Grey asked how this is being aligned with the Unpave the Way work as the benefits of SuDS retrofit projects could be reduced if householders continue to pave over their front gardens and increase surface run-off. Jill advised the Unpave the Way work is still evolving and the two initiatives will be complementary and work in parallel. There is a key difference in target audience as the SuDS guide is more internally focussed on LAs/highways engineers where the Unpave the Way work is outward facing, appealing to homeowners. Adrian made the link to the upcoming presentation on the Unpave the Way project which includes interesting data on dropped kerb applications for example.

Lorah Cheyne suggested it would be worth bringing this presentation to the Strategic Flood Risk Partnership Groups and Jill advised the guide is just awaiting sign off and engagement activities will then be clarified.

Chris Findley advised this is a really good piece of work. Carol Holt advised that she is aware of Susdrain and asked how the Committee can help to ensure this all feeds in in an appropriate way. Jill advised the guide does not replicate the details within Susdrain, this guide is a two-way process and all about signposting.

Adrian Lythgo thanked Jill for her presentation and there were no further comments or questions.

24 (41) Unpave the Way Project

Sally Whiting, Rachel Crompton and Lorah Cheyne provided an overview of the Unpave the Way project for Members, following the relocation of the garden after the RHS Show at Tatton Park to Whitaker Park.

Rachel Crompton reinforced how happy the Friends of Whitaker Park are to have become the garden's custodians and will take over the responsibility of the garden. There was a small opening ceremony on 5th October which was an opportunity to help to communicate what sustainable gardening is and that it's the right thing to do.

Members noted Lloyds Banking Group are currently preparing a case study on the Unpave the Way Garden.

The Committee were advised of the future plans for the project, which will focus on different target sectors as well as including plenty of further research. One element will be exploring data on dropped kerb applications received by LAs to see how many have been approved and the correlation between these approved applications and new driveway creation.

Members noted currently 6 out of 24 Local Highways Authorities in the North West require proof of planning permission for a new driveway during the dropped kerb application process, which highlights opportunities to strengthen the process to ensure householders do gain planning permission for impermeable driveways exceeding five square metres.

The presentation also covered research findings on key barriers to sustainable front garden design, including lack of knowledge of SuDS amongst the public and not understanding the

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bigger picture about flood risk, financial constraints, challenges of finding contractors with suitable skills and experience, lack of knowledge about what permeable products are available, and about soil and how to manage clay soil situations.

The presentation highlighted the RHS shows survey result (186 respondents) that 70% of respondents were not aware of the requirement for planning permission requirement for impermeable surfacing exceeding five square metres.

Lorah Cheyne provided an overview of the project's next steps, including a Householder SuDS Guide, which once finalised will be available to be downloaded from the Flood Hub; and community engagement, prioritising engagement with those areas that are frequently flooded. The project will also be working with Local Authorities on strengthening things through the planning process and via website information to residents. It will also be raising awareness with the contractor sector. Members were provided with an overview of the measures of effectiveness that will be reflected upon.

Adrian Lythgo highlighted the Committee have already approved the next stage of the project and noted the ambitious scope of activity for the project's next phase. He commented that each person that leaves the meeting today is a champion of the work that has been shared today and encouraged all to share it further within our networks.

Ian Crewe advised this is an excellent project and asked if there are any plans to engage with MPs and particularly those in more greener areas, and also with schools. Sally Whiting advised the project is seeing schools as very much a part of this network and will build on educational material already available on The Flood Hub.

Councillor Philip Cusack advised he is pleased to see the planning element, noting there are a few enforcements underway for people paving over their front gardens. He advised the 2009 Planning Guidance is out of date and asked if we can look at the guidance for people installing artificial turf and asked for this to be included in the project also.

Councillor Jane Hugo enquired about community engagement and being able to access champions and local Councillors who can add value to this project and can share the information through libraries and friends of local parks.

Chris Findley advised that cumulatively this project will create a big impact and highlighted lots of people are unaware of planning conditions and of the need for greener front gardens. He asked if LAs are asking new home builders to install permeable driveways and should we be in a position where the requirement should be that the area is permeable unless there is good reason why it shouldn't be.

Adrian Lythgo advised with regard to Councillor Hugo's point, this could be facilitated by this group. Rachel Crompton advised that we can encourage permeable driveways on new homes as a preference.

Councillor Elizabeth Grey asked if we are able to identify which LAs are requiring proof of planning permission within dropped kerb applications. Sally responded that this data would be made available through the partnerships.

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Sally Whiting advised that UU have been a key player in this project and advised they also have a wide reach for community engagement and a suggestion was made for them to signpost people to best practice, which Amy Cooper supported.

Fran Comyn advised it is important to ensure that rain gardens are designed to be easily maintained and are properly maintained, as there are examples of rain gardens not being cared for and therefore drying out.

Adrian Lythgo advised in the last three presentations we have had feedback on three very different projects, each of them trying to spread the flood resilience message and do very practical things that will impact on flooding and more broadly impact people's lives.

There were no further comments or questions.

24 (42) RFCC Sharepoint Site

Sally Whiting provided a very brief tour of the new North West RFCC Sharepoint site shortly to be launched to RFCC Members and support officers.

The site has been constructed in a way that is easily accessible to all.

Although slightly delayed due to capacity issues, a soft launch of the site will be done in mid-November to key users in order to review and confirm its content. Following this the site will then be rolled out to all RFCC Members and support officers. The Committee noted this is not a public website, but an internal site for the North West RFCC and partnership groups to enable us to share information more easily.

There were no further comments or questions.

24 (43) Winter Readiness

Nick Pearson advised Members he is keen to show what the EA are doing in terms of winter readiness across the North West as we move into the winter season.

For the GMMC Area, John Greenway conveyed the key message that officers are trained, resilient and ready for the winter ahead. He provided an overview of the recent Exercise Hayhurst for EA Duty Officers on the Northwich Flood Alleviation Scheme.

The Committee were advised regular catchment tours have been conducted for field incident support officers, so they are trained and ready for the winter period. Duty rotas are fully resourced. Multi-agency training has recently been carried out near Toddbrook Reservoir, and training has also taken place with EA Framework Contractors. Operational procedures are in place and we are currently ahead of asset inspections and maintenance targets.

On behalf of Cumbria & Lancashire Anthony Swarbrick advised that testing and training exercises have recently been conducted at Durrhill Pumping Station in Carlisle, the Tesco

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sliding flood gate in Carlisle, Cockermouth Self Closing Barrier, and the Garstang Flood Basin Control Gate, to name a few.

Fiona Stewart provided an overview of staff in the incident rooms and the work to ensure they are trained and ready for events. Members noted both the GMMC and C&L incident rooms have been audited and following the Covid-19 pandemic, people are returning back to work from the office. Training is taking place for new duty teams on reservoir awareness and flood exercises are being worked through, alongside exercises for environmental incidents.

Fiona then reminded all Members of preparations for looking after ourselves during the winter, which include; making sure phones are charged and charging cables are packed, checking weather prior to travelling and packing extra items in your car such as warm clothing, torch, food and drink and a warning triangle.

Members received an overview of winter readiness procedures from a Lancashire County Council Highways perspective covering gritting operations and equipment, sand and salt stocks, training of drivers and supervisors, and trial of a new 'Where's my Gritter' app.

Adrian Lythgo thanked the presenters and thanked Lancashire County Council for bringing this together for us as an example.

Carol Holt advised there are other ideas for winter readiness that we can take on board that are already taking place in other parts of the country.

Amy Cooper advised UU are carrying out lots of activities in advance of the winter period including carrying out infiltration reduction plans across Cumbria, inspecting storm overflows prior to November, being involved in the multi-agency response training exercise at Northwich FAS, and conducting a Winter Wise campaign for all customers

24 (44) Any Other Business

Adrian Lythgo formally introduced Amy Cooper to Members, recently recruited as the new EA-appointed Water and Sewerage Industry representative on the RFCC.

Amy introduced herself to Members, advising she is the Wastewater Quantity Strategy and Planning Manager at UU, based within the Regional Planning Team.

Adrian highlighted this has been Flood Action Week, which is always a great opportunity to take the national campaign and localise it and cascade the information as far as possible.

Adrian thanked Members for their attendance and contributions and advised following lunch there is an opportunity to visit the Unpave the Way garden within Whitaker Park.

The next RFCC meeting will be held via MS teams on Friday 24 January 2025.

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NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE

Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group

Draft minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2025

Strategic Partnership Group Representation	
Cumbria	Y
Lancashire	Y
Merseyside	Y
Greater Manchester	Y
Cheshire Mid Mersey	Y

Attendees:

Neville Elstone	RFCC Member – General Business and Assurance, and Chair of the FBA Sub-group
Adrian Lythgo	RFCC Chair
Andrew Harrison	Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Cllr Stephen Clarke	RFCC Member – Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Cllr James Shorrocks	RFCC Member - Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Cllr Alan Quinn	RFCC Member – Gtr Manchester Strategic Flood Risk P’ship
Cllr Philip Cusack	RFCC Member – Gtr Manchester Strategic Flood Risk P’ship
Cllr Tony Brennan	RFCC Member - Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Cllr Karen Shore	RFCC Member – Cheshire Mid Mersey Strat. Flood Risk P’ship
Andrew Harrison	Officer - Cumberland Council (representing the Cumbria P’ship)
Kate Morley	RFCC Member - Conservation
Susannah Bleakley	RFCC Member – Coastal Issues
Amy Cooper	RFCC Member – Water and Sewerage Industry
Carl Green	Chair of the North West and North Wales Coastal Group
Carol Holt	Officer – EA Area Director, Cumbria and Lancashire Area (C&L)
Nick Pearson	Officer - EA Area FR Manager, Greater Manchester Merseyside and Cheshire Area (GMMC)
Marina Powell-Currie	Officer – EA FCRM PSO Team Leader, C&L
Adam Walsh	Officer - EA FCRM Programming Manager, C&L
Andy Tester	Officer - EA FCRM Programming Manager, GMMC
Sally Whiting	Officer – EA Senior RFCC Advisor
Rachel Harmer	RFCC Secretariat, EA FCRM Programming Team, GMMC

Support Officers/Observers:

Rachael Broadhurst	Officer, EA FCRM Advisor, GMMC
Debra Glover	Officer, EA FCRM Advisor, GMMC
Ayush Sheth	Officer, EA FCRM Advisor, GMMC
Gary Hilton	Officer, EA FCRM Advisor, GMMC
Jason Harte	Officer – Westmorland and Furness Council
Graeme Innes	Officer – Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Nick Rae	Officer - Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Alison Harker	Officer - Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
John Davies	Officer – Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Lorah Cheyne	Officer – Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Rachel Crompton	Officer – Lancashire County Council
Sarah Wardle	Officer – Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Clare Nolan-Barnes	Officer – Blackpool Council
Fran Comyn	Officer - Rochdale Council
Jill Holden	Officer - Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Matthew Winnard	Officer – Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Jonathan Parry	Officer – Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Guy Metcalf	Officer – Cheshire East Council
Louise Fortune	Officer – Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership

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Katie Eckford

Officer – North West SMP Co-ordinator

Presenters:

Jim Turton

Officer – Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership

Ellie Rigby

Officer – Cheshire East Council

Paul Bowden

EA Senior FCRM Advisor, C&L

Sarah Fontana

Officer, EA FCRM Senior Advisor, GMMC

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Neville Elstone opened the meeting and welcomed all those in attendance.

Rachel Harmer reported apologies had been received from Councillor Laura Crane (Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership); Councillor Jane Hugo (Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership) Councillor Denise Rollo (Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership), Councillor Mhairi Doyle (Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership), Dave Boyer (Cheshire Mid Mersey SFRP), Ian Crewe (EA Area Director, GMMC); Fiona Duke (EA Area Flood Risk Manager (C&L)); Richard Knight (EA Area Flood Risk Manager, C&L); and Mary-Rose Muncaster (EA Area Flood Risk Manager, GMMC).

Before he began the business of the meeting, Neville asked all to pause, think and reflect on what has been a very hard couple of weeks for both communities and staff locally and nationally and thanked the teams who have been responding to the severe flooding in addition to their day jobs.

2. Feedback from the RFCC Meeting on 18 October 2024 and actions since

Adrian Lythgo remarked that it seems a long time since the October RFCC meeting, even though we have spoken a couple of times since about the timetable for seeing and discussing the capital programme. He also remarked that we have effectively now got one year of this capital programme left.

Following confirmation from Adam Walsh that the indicative GiA allocation has now been received, Adrian highlighted the revised meeting timetable for the RFCC to receive the capital allocation and revenue allocation will now allow us to do the business we need to do. He also highlighted that we may still need to consider whether to support capital allocations with Local Levy funding to keep those schemes that are on site, or about to go on site, progressing.

We heard there are two Local Levy requests on today's agenda for capital schemes. Adrian proposed that we consider the requests today, for this sub-committee to make such recommendations as it wants to, for us to then take forward those recommendations for consideration in the additional RFCC Local Choices meeting on 14 February. This is necessary to enable us to look across the piece at all potential uses of the Local Levy funding for next year and thus making sure we are considering these asks in the round. He asked that if this scheduling causes a problem for either of the Local Levy requests today then presenters should make it known so this can be part of today's conversation.

There were no questions or comments raised.

3. Investment Programme Update 2024/25

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Capital programme 2024/25

Adam Walsh first provided an overview of the national programme. Nationally we are on track to achieve the properties better protected from flooding target. For the North West we are now forecasting to better protect 1,788 properties from flooding this year, of which 384 properties are already better protected.

Adam reported that both the properties target and forecast have reduced since last quarter, the target reducing as a result of a national review to better align targets with forecasts. The forecast has reduced by 1446 properties, mainly due to the Radcliffe and Redvales Scheme (1460 properties) deferring claiming outcomes to 2025/26, due to unforeseen challenges with utilities and the need to review specific aspects of work.

We noted that following these reductions, we are forecasting to exceed the properties target of 1,365 mainly due to new modelling for the Preston and South Ribble Scheme which has identified additional properties benefitting.

In terms of funding for this year, the North West total is £113.44 Million, which includes £103.1 Million GiA, £7.6 Million Local Levy and £2.67 Million of Partnership Funding contributions.

The mid-November forecast indicates we are expecting to draw down £115.33 Million, which is circa £6 Million less than forecasts reported at the last meeting, which is due to several projects being deferred including Millom and Haverigg Flood Alleviation and Shap Beck Flood Alleviation Scheme, supporting the national instruction to all Areas to reduce their GiA over-programme to below 5%. . The November forecast is circa £2 Million more than allocated which represents a 4.7% over-programme.

The North West actual spend to end of October 2024 is 42% of the full year forecast. EA schemes have spent 45% of their forecast with £50.78 Million left to spend. Local Authorities have claimed 29% of their forecast with £16.23 Million still to be claimed in 2024/25.

We noted the total value of North West accepted efficiency claims in Quarters 1 and 2 was £1.7 Million, which represents 48% of our Q2 target. Further claims are still to be submitted through quarters 3 and 4.

Adam provided us with an overview of the risks associated with the final months of the 2024/25 programme which include potential project delays due to adverse weather conditions, and resource pressures. He also highlighted an increasing pressure on GiA funding in 2024/25, advising that the national programme continues to see high levels of over-programme forecast and Areas have now been instructed to work to zero over-programme. This puts significant pressure on in-year delivery to land within the allocation.

He also highlighted that we are now seeing an increase in emergency works and staff costs as a result of the recent flood events. The operation of pumping stations has also increased electricity costs. We noted significant challenges based on where we are now with schemes in contract, plus the additional costs of recent events.

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Resource Asset Maintenance Programme 2024/25

Adam provided an overview of the EA Resource Programme reporting that funding for the North West for 2024/25 currently totals £21.067 Million, which includes staff costs, maintenance and resource projects.

We noted both GMMC and C&L Areas are currently showing a forecast which is £7.36 Million above budget, the major overspend coming from GiA revenue projects (£6.3 Million) and the resource maintenance programmes (£0.8 Million).

To provide additional and important understanding of these figures, Adam provided us with an expanded table of information. He advised that the forecast of £7.36 Million over budget is being skewed in part by resource reclassification with the forecast, which is currently just over £4 Million (£2.275 Million for C&L and £1.786 Million for GMMC).

On this reclassification Adam explained that each project that receives a capital allocation will have activities and work undertaken that are considered resource rather than capital. The value of this resource element is not known until the project progresses. Things like modelling and mapping and salaries are resource. Whilst the total budget for the project will remain the same, below this will sit the capital element and the resource element, once reclassified. It is this element, with reclassification still pending, that is being merged with the overall resource programme and skewing the figures that we've reported on previously.

The total forecast for all projects (which includes capital and resource) is included in the capital element and Adam explained the element of double counting between the capital and resource programmes in terms of identifying our current position. The intention is to remove resource reclassification from the resource programme updates and future reporting because these are already part of the reporting on the capital delivery covered earlier.

Adam then went on to report that for C&L Area specifically, the Area team has been given approval to spend an additional £2.4 Million over budget and this is shown in the table. This includes £0.2 Million on urgent repairs to assets prior to December, an additional £1.5 Million on electricity mainly for the operation of pumping stations and associated energy price increases, and circa £0.6 Million for compensation payments to land-owners or tenants for flood storage basin operation.

We noted the budget plus approved overspend for the C&L maintenance programme is currently £8.824 Million. With the additional £2.4 Million approved, this equates to a total NW budget plus approval of £23.467 Million, shown at the bottom of the table.

For C&L the forecast at November was £241K above the budget plus approved overspend for the maintenance programme, and £403K above budget for staff costs.

GMMC are still working to budget as shown in the table and currently forecasting £174k under budget for the maintenance programme and £433K above budget for staff costs. The forecast for staff costs exceeding budget is in part due to the response to incidents, so staff overtime etc.

Adam summarised that for the North West are forecasting circa £900K above the budget plus the approved overspend amount on the resource programme overall.

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We noted there were further incidents over the Christmas/New Year period, so increased staff costs for incident response, additional pumping station operation and associated costs will see the EA forecasts increase. There will be discussions with the National team with regard to how this can be managed.

Adrian Lythgo commented there is significant in-year resource pressure this year and advised when we come to consenting the programme for next year, we need to bear this in mind. He remarked that we will be starting next year with significant resource pressures too.

With regard to EA maintenance activities, Paul Bowden then provided us with an overview of the work which has been taking place during the last quarter in the North West. We noted:

- Both areas have been training new Framework suppliers so they can help support the EA during incidents, further developing ties with professional partners
- The C&L maintenance programme is progressing with spend in line with forecasts.
- GMMC are also forecasting to deliver the maintenance programme this year, but possibly over budget. The recent flooding has hit GMMC Area hard and this will affect delivery of maintenance activities as a result of saturated embankments and poor ground conditions.

Paul reported on the recent New Year event advising that GMMC Area are dealing with circa 240 incident reports, which have been received from partners, members of the public and other sources, have been received, along with reinspecting assets (of which there are over 1400). In order to start to work through this as quickly as possible external support has been brought in.

We noted the river Mersey has been badly affected where a number of assets are badly damaged with breaches and big wash outs and a programme of emergency works is being pulled together, where delivery will start next week. This includes the use of a helicopter lift on the river Mersey in Didsbury to bring in bulk bags to fill a breach.

Councillor Quinn enquired about the amount of rainfall in the recent New Year events remarking that he'd never seen rainfall like that as persistent as heavy. He also asked if the Government will be approached for funding for emergency works. He also commented on the damaged assets and that some of these need upgrading to account for climate change. He noted the Government funding announcement of £5.2 billion but he understands this to be for new flood defences rather than upgrading existing ones.

Nick Pearson reported unverified rainfall figures for Denton and Sale (mid Mersey) of 81mm and 66mm respectively and advised there are gauging stations at various locations where data is being collected.

Adrian Lythgo advised with regard to the point raised by Councillor Quinn about the balance of investment in existing assets and new ones, the Government is consulting on the development of new partnership funding and wider policy issues. He advised that within the existing money that we may have for next year, there may be more flexibility to use some funding on existing assets as well as building new assets. There will be more detail on this that will come through the consenting process. He advised he is not aware of anyone applying for Belwin Funding as a result of rain over the Christmas and New Year period – he suspects it does not fit the criteria.

Councillor Quinn advised he had met with the leader of Manchester City Council recently and they discussed their concerns about the amount of flooding in the Stockport area and his concerns about the level of flood warnings. He recognised that there would be further discussions taking place. He

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also recalled his memory from Close Park in Bury on Boxing Day 2015 when water levels rose significantly within an hour.

Adam Walsh advised in terms of asking the Government for more funding for emergency works that we are providing information to the national teams in terms of what our requirements are and are waiting to hear back from them. He noted that we are in the same position as other areas of the country.

Nick Pearson acknowledged the point raised by Councillor Quinn with regard to the flood warnings over New Year. He advised there will be an internal debrief, along with a multi-agency debrief taking place on 27 January. He advised the flood guidance statement was yellow from 30 December, when it was predicting a very low likelihood of significant impacts. He confirmed that there were some conversations with LRF partners in advance of New Years Eve. The likelihood of impacts had increased by New Years Eve and Flood Advisory Service telecoms started to take place between the EA and Local Resilience Forum (LRF) partners. He recognised there are some things to work through in terms of exactly how we move from Flood Advisory Service telecoms through to Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) and Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG) meetings, which we'll pick up through the debriefs.

We considered and recommend that the RFCC:

- Notes the progress on delivering the 2024/25 Capital and Resource Programmes
- Notes the risks to the North West programme in 2024/25

Votes in favour: Councillor Brennan, Councillor Clarke, Andrew Harrison, Councillor Cusack, Councillor Quinn, Councillor Shore, Councillor Shorrocks, Amy Cooper, Kate Morley and Susannah Bleakley.

There were no further comments or questions.

4. Local Levy Programme Update 2024/25

Adam Walsh provided an overview of the North West Local Levy programme and reported a total resource at the start of 2024/25 of £15.757 Million, made up of £4.544 Million income, a balance of £10.692 Million carried forward from 2023/24, and £0.521 Million of interest earned on balances. The latest spend forecast for 2024/25 is £6.756 Million which would result in a remaining balance of £9.001 Million at the end of the financial year, a reduction in £1.691 Million from last year.

We heard there is also an increase in balance of £111k following a review and audit of final accounts from 2023/24.

Adam talked us through the two Local Levy graphs summarising the current and future indicative allocation and how that is split in large schemes, smaller schemes, Quick Wins, and the Business Plan. We noted that the graph has been updated to take account of Local Levy contributions approved at previous meetings.

We also received details of three key changes to the in-year Local Levy forecasts, which include:

- Low Crosby Pumping Station Project – £450K Local Levy no longer required as the available GiA and contributions were sufficient to fund the project.
- Appleby Scheme - £1.5 Million has been reprofiled into a future year to take advantage of the GiA this year.

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- River Roch Rochdale and Littleborough FRM Scheme has been reprofiled to leave a reduced £1 Million allocated in 2024/25.

With regard to the £100k of Quick Wins allocated to each of the Strategic Partnerships we noted there is a high level of confidence that all of this funding will be utilised this year.

Neville Elstone thanked Adam for his report.

Requests for Local Levy funding

Liverpool Road, Warrington Scheme: £499K Local Levy requirement for 2025/26

Jim Turton from Warrington Borough Council provided an overview of the Liverpool Road Scheme in Great Sankey, Warrington, where the area is considered a high risk of surface water flooding having had significant flooding on numerous occasions with records of major flood events dating back to July 2007.

We heard water has been accumulating at a low point on the carriageway and many nearby homes have flooded on multiple occasions. Various solutions have been considered and Jim provided a summary of the proposed works which looks to provide a permanent solution to the problem, reducing the risk of flooding to 62 properties. The proposed option is estimated to move 37 properties at significant risk and 25 properties at very significant risk to intermediate risk. We received an overview of other benefits of the scheme which include providing water supply to the Sankey Canal which has been impacted following the closure of Fiddlers Ferry power station in recent years. We heard the Liverpool Road Scheme is outside the scope of the EA's Sankey Scheme which is not expected to be complete until 2031.

Jim reported that the scheme is eligible for full GiA funding but due to pressures on the availability of GiA funding currently, they were approaching the RFCC for Local Levy support due to the need to provide a resolution for the residents. He advised if the scheme is successful in securing GiA funding the Local Levy funding will no longer be required.

Finally he reported on a recent community drop-in session where residents were able to share their flood anxiety and support for a solution.

Andrew Harrison enquired about whether an application for GiA had been made and whether uncertainty over the availability of GiA funding was the reason for asking for Levy. Jim advised that they did see GiA as appropriate and had submitted an application for GiA, but given the uncertainty around its availability currently, had been advised by EA colleagues to request Levy funding. He again reiterated that if they were successful in securing GiA, the Local Levy allocation would be returned.

Neville Elstone asked EA colleagues to clarify where this request sits in relation to the principles and guidelines set out in the Local Levy Strategy. In the meantime, he moved to take a question from Cllr Quinn.

Councillor Quinn asked if the proposed scheme is actually big enough in moving homes from significant risk to intermediate risk and if there is a need to increase the dimensions of the scheme to alleviate potentially worse flood events in the future. Jim advised this has already been considered and that the scheme is being designed on the top side of what is required and caters for growth. If the funding application is successful, there will be a further study on the north side of the project, which may adapt the design.

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In response to Neville's previous question, Adrian Lythgo highlighted the rules of the RFCC's Local Levy Strategy advising that once a scheme's cost goes above £0.5K then Local Levy funding can't fund more than 15% of the total cost. He remarked that the £499K being requested is right up against this. He asked if Local Levy funding for the scheme was to be approved, is Warrington Borough Council in a position to complete the scheme if the cost was to increase beyond £0.5 million. He made it clear that Warrington wouldn't be able to come back to the RFCC for more funding. Jim provided reassurance that the estimates are realistic, based on appropriate calculations and they are confident in their proposal. But if they do hit anything unforeseen as is not unusual in civil engineering, then they will deal with that.

There were no further comments or questions.

Ryles Pool Ordinary Watercourse, Culvert Upgrade, Cheshire East - £159.5K Additional Local Levy requirement for 2024/25

Ellie Rigby from Cheshire East Council provided an overview of the scheme, which previously received Local Levy funding of £120K, approved in April 2024. We noted Phase 1 of the scheme was completed in Autumn 2024 however, as a result of what they found during Phase 1, a second phase of works is now proposed.

Following a previous presentation we understand:

- the area has a history of sinkholes opening up and the culverts and ageing structure is under the ownership of multiple riparian owners
- in 2020 a house was demolished on advice from its insurance company

Ellie provided an update on the Phase 1 work carried out in Autumn 2024 to upgrade a section of culvert and to install a new access chamber. During the work a serious blockage was found, unable to be cleared with jetting because of multiple bends or dog legs. This has required removal of bricks individually which has been extremely time consuming and has resulted in the proposal for a second phase of the project to create a new access chamber off Park Lane, which will connect directly into the culvert and providing a more straight line to avoid bends in the culvert to allow better access, and to remove the blockage under 19 Ryles Street.

We noted the total cost of the scheme to be £502K, benefitting 31 properties at flood risk. They have secured contributions including £142K of FDGiA in 2024/5, £120K of Local Levy and £80k from Cheshire East Council, but there is a funding gap of £156K.

We heard the project would be eligible for G1A funding (£161K) but it is unlikely given the pressure and uncertainty around GiA funding and the urgency of completing these works. There is a further £70K contribution from Cheshire East Council for the second phase of the project. Cheshire East Council also provided a £150K contribution to emergency works here before 2024.

The project team feel they are unable to wait for GiA to become available in 2025/26 as there is an urgent health and safety risk due to the blockage being under several residential properties and there is an ongoing risk of sinkholes.

Neville Elstone thanked Ellie for her report. He highlighted that, like the Warrington request, this funding request does not fit with the guidelines in the Local Levy Strategy which we need to keep in mind. The total Local Levy contribution for both phases of this scheme would be 56% of the total project cost.

NW RFCC MEETING – 24 JANUARY 2025 – AGENDA ITEM 4

Andrew Harrison asked if there could be the potential to retrospectively apply for GiA in the current climate. Ellie advised the project team are working with the EA and have updated the Partnership Funding calculator, which shows that a funding gap of £159K would be eligible for GiA, but the funding isn't available for an in-year bid.

Adam Walsh acknowledged the challenges in obtaining funding. He advised that for emergency works there are occasions where there is a need to just crack on with the work, but noted the need for the Project Team to have conversations with EA GMMC colleagues.

Adrian Lythgo reiterated his proposal for any approvals for these schemes to be taken to the RFCC Local Choices Meeting where any available GiA could be part of those Local Choices. He advised that the chances of either of these schemes getting GiA during 2025/26, either retrospectively or in year isn't high, hence allowing the projects to be presented for Local Levy. He noted the difficulty in both cases where there are communities at immediate risk of flooding.

Guy Metcalf (Cheshire East) advised for the Ryles Pool Project there is a supply chain on board to mobilise next week and they will continue with the work for now, using the funding contribution of £70K from Cheshire East Highways.

Adrian Lythgo suggested that even though this request will be taken forward to the RFCC Meeting agenda on 14 February for a decision, it is worth testing the appetite for both of today's Local Levy requests today.

We considered and recommend the NW RFCC considers the Local Levy funding request for the Liverpool Road, Great Sankey, Warrington Scheme at the 14 February 2025 RFCC Local Choices Meeting.

Votes in favour: Councillor Brennan, Councillor Clarke, Andrew Harrison, Councillor Cusack, Councillor Quinn, Councillor Shore, Councillor Shorrocks, Amy Cooper, Kate Morley and Susannah Bleakley.

We considered and recommend the NW RFCC considers the Local Levy funding request for the Ryles Pool Ordinary Watercourse Culvert Works at the 14 February 2025 RFCC Local Choices Meeting.

Votes in favour: Councillor Brennan, Councillor Clarke, Andrew Harrison, Councillor Cusack, Councillor Quinn, Councillor Shore, Councillor Shorrocks, Amy Cooper, Kate Morley and Susannah Bleakley.

We considered and recommend the NW RFCC:

- Notes the current position and latest spend forecast of 2024/25 Local Levy programme.
- Notes the changes to the Local Levy programme.

There were no further questions or comments.

5. RFCC Business Plan Update

Sally Whiting provided a brief overview of progress on the 2022 – 2025 programme of 21 live projects. We heard that 5 projects are complete, 13 are progressing well and 3 are behind schedule or resolving issues.

NW RFCC MEETING – 24 JANUARY 2025 – AGENDA ITEM 4

Sally provided additional brief details on the 3 amber-rated projects which are behind schedule:

- ID22 – NFM Pipeline, Cumbria – currently being paused to review the scope and the approach to this work. Learning from other areas of the country is being gathered in terms of how you can better express the economics of NFM with a view to being able to access available funding more easily.
- ID10 – Evidence Gathering, Planning and Development – David Shaw, our Committee Member who left in the summer was conducting some evidence gathering for us with the use of his Planning students from Liverpool University. As David has now left the Committee we have lost access to this student resource. The 2023/24 project reports still need to be summarised and conclusions reached on how we take the learning forwards and any further intentions for this action.
- ID17 – Coastal Centre of Excellence Business Case Development – currently behind schedule, partly caused by the change of Committee membership. This project is ongoing and will be reported on in due course.

Sally highlighted the RFCC Sharepoint Site (ID18) is now live, which all RFCC Members and support officers should have access to. If anyone is having any difficulties in accessing the site they were urged to let her know as soon as possible.

We received an overview of Local Levy investment in Business Plan projects highlighting the allocation for 2024/25 of £1.337 Million and the current forecast of £1.363 Million. This includes some unclaimed allocations that carried over from 2023/24.

Sally highlighted the indicative investment need for each of 2025/26 and 2026/27 is circa £1.2 Million.

We were asked to consider a request for an increase in Local Levy funding of £153.2K for the project ID16 – Additional Capacity. This recognises the cost increases associated with several roles funded from Local Levy where funding shortfalls have now emerged. We noted this follows a precedent already set with the Partnership Co-ordinator roles, reviewed in April 2024. This new request applies the same rationale to the Local Authority Capital Project Advisor (five posts) and Capital Programme Co-ordinator roles which are hosted by the EA, and the Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator role, which is hosted by Sefton Council.

We noted across all seven posts this request equates to a total increase of Local Levy spending of £153.2K spread across 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27.

We considered and recommend that the NW RFCC:

Supports the Local Levy request of £153.2k for the RFCC Business Plan project ID16 – Additional Capacity.

Votes in favour:

Councillor Brennan, Councillor Clarke, Councillor Quinn, Councillor Cusack, Councillor Shore, Amy Cooper, Carolyn Otley, Susannah Bleakley and Andrew Harrison.

There were no further questions or comments.

6. Capital Programme Co-ordinator Update

Sarah Fontana provided an update on the work of the five North West Local Authority Capital Project

NW RFCC MEETING – 24 JANUARY 2025 – AGENDA ITEM 4

Advisers (LACPAs) during the last quarter, including the following highlights:

Building skills and knowledge within the team including an MS Excel training course, in person quarterly meetings to share good practice, site visits with UU on SuDS, and training session on the EA supplier framework which can be used by LAs.

She highlighted recent successes in supporting RMAs and building skills and knowledge including a training session on the Rapid Appraisal Tool for economics, in conjunction with another RFCC and national colleagues, ongoing support on project development and local assurance process, attendance at partnership meetings (tactical and strategic), supporting rollout of the new Power Portal and relaunched Supporting Flood and Coast Sharepoint site, and sharing the recently produced Partnership Funding directory to the partnerships. Sarah continues to be key member of North West Partnership Funding Community of Practice group and attends the national CoP calls. The review of the Partnership Funding mechanism is ongoing.

Finally she highlighted work coming up including working closely with RMAs through the Local Choices process, ongoing support to LAs to submit any outstanding business cases/ studies and claim all outstanding grant prior to finance year end deadlines to enable maximum investment in flood risk in the NW, continuing to work closely with other areas and National colleagues to bring relevant training and development to NW area and continue to build the training offer on the national Sharepoint site, and developing and delivering specific North West training (including on business case development). There is also an intention to review Quick Wins after year end to confirm its uses and to consider if it is set at the right level for the future.

Adrian Lythgo commented that all sub regional partnerships will support a review of the Quick Wins funding stream and he thanked Sarah for advising this will be carried out.

There were no further questions or comments and Neville thanked Sarah for the update and for her work and the work of the team.

7. Minutes and matters arising from the last meeting of the FBA Sub-Group on 4 October 2024

The draft minutes of the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub-group meeting held on 4 October 2024 were approved and taken as a true record of the meeting.

Votes in favour: Councillor Brennan, Councillor Cusack, Councillor Quinn, Councillor Shorrocks, Kate Morley, Susannah Bleakley, Amy Cooper, Andrew Harrison.

There were no further comments or matters arising.

8. Any Other Business

There were no further items of business.

9. Date of the next meeting

The date of the next RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub-Group meeting is 11 April 2025.

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE

24 JANUARY 2025

PROPERTY FLOOD RESILIENCE

RECOMMENDATION: The RFCC is asked to discuss PFR measures and consider:

- Whether PFR is another approach to addressing flood risk and resilience that the RFCC could support with Local Levy Funding.
- Given the limited other funding available, and the fact that Local Levy may therefore be required to fund more than half of the costs, whether the RFCC would accept PFR as being a different category of work requiring different strategic guidelines around funding contributions, or whether there would still be an expectation of other funding contributions.

1. Background

1.1. Property flood resilience (PFR) measures are among a wider group of resilience measures that are being considered alongside traditional capital schemes.

1.2. Capital schemes are becoming increasingly difficult to deliver due to technically complex projects, increasing costs and challenges in securing partnership funding.

1.3. We will continue to deliver capital schemes where possible, but wider resilience measures including PFR, natural flood management, improved flood warnings, and flood plans are needed to increase the resilience of communities. This is emphasised in the FCERM Strategy (2020).



Flood barrier / Lakeside Flood Solutions

1.4. The focus of this agenda item and briefing paper is on PFR.

2. What is PFR and why is it important?

2.1. We can never eliminate the risk of flooding entirely, but we can reduce the risk of water getting into homes or businesses and reduce its impact if it does get in. PFR measures can help to reduce the flood damages experienced by property owners, occupiers and businesses and enable faster recovery in local communities.

2.2. Improving a property's resilience to flooding can take many forms. Interventions are most easily divided up into two categories: Resistance and Recoverability.

2.3. **Resistance** measures are those which can help prevent water from entering a property. These measures can be passive or active. Common resistance measures include the installation of specially-designed flood doors or barriers at door or window apertures, automatic air bricks, and non-return valves.

2.4. **Recoverability** measures describe interventions which help reduce the impact of floodwater once it enters a property, enabling residents to recover more quickly.

Common recoverability measures include replacing ground floor carpets with hard flooring, as well as raising the height of electric sockets and installing waterproof wall membranes.

2.5. PFR is particularly useful in higher frequency, lower flood depth events. PFR is most suited to properties that flood to depths of up to 600mm.

2.6. PFR projects are being successfully implemented by the Environment Agency, local authorities and water companies in communities across England, particularly when traditional capital schemes are not viable. This may be due to technical difficulties, cost or the flooding mechanism.

3. Overview of PFR Framework

3.1. There is a national PFR Framework that was launched in January 2024. This framework is open to the Environment Agency and other risk management authorities to implement PFR schemes. The aim of the framework is to provide a streamlined approach to installing PFR measures, with the responsibilities of each Lot provider aligned with the CIRIA Code of Practice on PFR.

3.2. There are two Lots included on the framework:

Lot 1

- Carry out initial property surveys
- Confirm the eligibility and suitability of PFR
- Complete outline design and optioneering
- Provide assurance of the final solution post-installation including handover

Lot 2

- Complete detailed design and construction
- Confirm the preferred resistance measures with all parties, where possible maintaining a passive design
- Carry out post installation testing to ensure effectiveness
- Assist in handover process and empower end user to operate and maintain their PFR measures effectively.

3.3. The North West has a primary and reserve supplier for each Lot. They are:

- Lot 1: Flood Protection Solutions (Primary), JBA Consulting (Reserve)
- Lot 2: Watertight International (Primary), Apex Flood Solutions (Reserve)

4. Funding Challenges

4.1. There are currently three primary options for funding PFR projects. These are set out below. Each option comes with its own limitations.

- Defra Repair Grants
- Flood Re 'Build Back Better' payments
- Grant in Aid (GIA) schemes.

4.2. **Defra PFR Repair Grants** - These grants can be activated by Government immediately after major flood events to specific areas suffering the greatest impact. As such they are not guaranteed and do not allow for strategic planning. The programme assigns a fixed amount of money (currently £5K) to each eligible property to pay for PFR measures. It has been used in the past with mixed results. They also

come with very restrictive eligibility criteria and put pressure on the local authority to administer.

4.3. **Flood Re - Build Back Better**- Residents can qualify for up to £10k to pay for the cost of installing PFR measures from their insurance provider following a flood event. However, not all insurance providers are signed up to this and data shows that only around 1 in 3 residents offered Built Back Better have taken it up. Homeowners may be reluctant to utilise this option in the belief that it will increase the cost of annual insurance cover.

4.4. **Grant in Aid** - GiA money can be used to fund PFR schemes but this can only be used for properties at Very Significant risk and for resistance measures, not recoverability. Under the simplified PFR funding 'look-up table' (derived from the Partnership Funding Calculator), which factors in property type, level of deprivation and flooding scenario, the maximum amount of GiA provided will not fully fund a PFR scheme, thereby requiring additional partnership funding contributions. There is a low likelihood of obtaining the additional funding from the homeowner as it is likely to be several thousands of pounds, and there are no other obvious beneficiaries.

5. Comparison with other RFCCs and areas

5.1. All other RFCCs across the country are proactively supporting the delivery of PFR through Local Levy contributions to varying extents. Understanding the North West RFCC may not have been approached to discuss formal contributions to standalone PFR schemes before, the North West RFCC is the only RFCC nationally to not have used Local Levy funding to support standalone PFR schemes as a formal contribution. PFR measures have been supported through a small number of Quick Win projects in the North West and through Local Levy contributions to capital schemes.

6. Considerations for the RFCC

6.1. The North West RFCC are invited to discuss PFR measures at the upcoming meeting.

6.2. A couple of key questions of principle the RFCC may wish to consider are:

- Whether PFR is another approach to addressing flood risk and resilience that the RFCC could support with Local Levy Funding.
- Given the limited other funding available, and the fact that Local Levy may therefore be required to fund more than half of the costs, whether the RFCC would accept PFR as being a different category of work requiring different strategic guidelines around funding contributions, or whether there would still be an expectation of other funding contributions.

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE
24 JANUARY 2025
QUARTERLY FLOOD INCIDENTS REPORT

RECOMMENDATION: The RFCC is asked to note the content of this report.

This report is intended to summarise the numbers of properties reported as flooded during the last quarter covering the period 1 October to 31 December 2024. There was a significant flood event on 31 December into 1 Jan, which is only partly covered by this quarterly report and for which data is still being gathered. In general, details on this event have not been provided in this report due to be incomplete. More details on the New Year will be provided in the April report.

New Year flooding event (31 December 2024 – 1 January 2025)

This event was focussed particularly over the Greater Manchester area but also affected areas of Cheshire and Merseyside. Over the two days these areas experienced persistent and heavy rain. In GMMC area, 11 Flood Alerts and 70 Flood Warnings were issued. Many of the EA's flood risk assets (including storage basins) were operated, stretching operational resources. The River Mersey reached record levels - 7.66 meters at Didsbury River, breaking the previous record of 7.23 meters set in February 2022.

Major incidents for flooding were declared in Greater Manchester and Cheshire and large numbers of evacuations took place. There was significant highway flooding resulting in damage to vehicles.

A considerable number of United Utilities wastewater treatment plants were impacted, experiencing flooding directly and/or indirectly through flooding and related power outages. Pollution was reported at a small number of sites. Affected sites/assets were returned to full working order either under normal operations or supported by temporary equipment within a few days.

Authorities are still out in communities confirming impacts but to date we have confirmed that at least 270 properties across the North West were flooded internally. The main areas impacted include Didsbury, Stockport, Wigan, Warrington and St Helens.

There was also some significant damage caused to flood risk assets (including key flood storage basins). Urgent repairs are being planned and carried out where required in order to return or retain operational status of these assets.

Key to data tables

The tables distinguish properties reported as flooded internally from those reported as flooded externally.

The data provided by EA and LAs covers the period 1 October to 31 December 2024. The data provided by United Utilities relating to incidents of sewer flooding covers the period 22 September 2024 to 7 January 2025. This is unverified data at this time, and so the numbers are likely to fluctuate until the regulatory data is signed-off for UU's full year regulatory reporting for Ofwat.

Int – Internally flooded properties Ext – External only flooding to properties	Res – Residential Comm – Commercial
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Cumbria Strategic Partnership

Overview

Very localised, intense, heavy downpours seem to be becoming more common and can cause impacts which are hard to forecast and predict. We received reports of flooded properties this quarter during three separate events. Wider flooding and coastal erosion impacts were also experienced. This included c1-2m coastal erosion as a consequence of Storm Ashley combined with high tides exposing the contents of an historic landfill, and significant disruption to the railway network from flooding following Storm Bert.

Severe weather event – 28 October 2024

Intense rainfall caused similar issues in Ulverston towards the end of October as were seen at Stockdalewath earlier in 2024. In this instance 4 Flood Warnings were issued in Ulverston that were not forecasted, and impacts were locally disruptive for a short overnight period leading to several commercial properties and one residential property being affected by internal flooding from water rising from culverted watercourses.

Storm Bert – 22-25 November 2024

Storm Bert swept across the region towards the end of November and was named due to the expected impacts from high winds and heavy rain. Impacts from flooding were more severe further south, but the EA issued 16 Flood Alerts and 8 Flood Warnings and the EA's Field Operations teams were busy operating flood defences. One residential property reported internal flooding.

Severe weather event – 31 December 2024

A fairly short but intense period of widespread rainfall affected our area from New Years Eve into New Years Day. 20 Flood Alerts and 31 Flood Warnings were issued across both counties with Lancashire reporting the more severe impacts. EA Field Ops teams worked overnight operating flood defences, mobilising pumps and clearing debris screens. Internal flooding to one property has been reported, but this occurred on 1 January 2025 and will be recorded in the flood incident report for Jan-Mar 2025.

INFORMATION ITEM A

Local Authority area	Event date	Community impacted	Number of properties reported as flooded						Wider impacts (e.g. on transport and other infrastructure, on the environment)
			Sea	River	Ordinary Water-course	Surface water	Sewer Hydraulic* (UU data)	Combination of sources or source not yet established	
Westmorland and Furness Council	28 October	Ulverston					2 Int 9 Ext	EA - 9 Int LLFA - 1 Int	Flood water rose up from culverted water courses and affected the town centre area for a number of hours.
Westmorland and Furness Council	23 November	Windermere			1 Int				
Cumberland Council	5 December	Parton						1 Int	Combined source. Mine water from a culvert that is seeping through the walls of the below ground section of the property
TOTALS					1 Int		2 Int 9 Ext	11 Int	

* United Utilities data (as yet unverified) covering period 22/9/24 to 07/01/25

Merseyside Strategic Partnership

Local Authority area	Event date	Community	Number of properties reported as flooded						Wider impacts (e.g. on transport and other infrastructure, on the environment)
			Sea	River	Ordinary Water-course	Surface water	Sewer Hydraulic (UU data)*	Combination of sources or source not yet established	
Details not available		Details not available						15 Int 62 Ext	
TOTALS								15 Int 62 Ext	

* United Utilities data (as yet unverified) covering period 22/9/24 to 07/01/25

Narrative

At the end of 2024 and into the New Year period, Merseyside experienced heavy rainfall events that led to flooding across the region.

The region was subject to a yellow weather warning for rain and road closures and flood warnings were in place.

Flooding occurred in some areas of Merseyside, for which the data is still being collated.

Lancashire Strategic Partnership

Local Authority area	Event date	Community	Number of properties reported as flooded						Wider impacts (e.g. on transport and other infrastructure, on the environment)
			Sea	River	Ordinary Water-course	Surface water	Sewer Hydraulic (UU data)*	Combination of sources or source not yet established	
Lancashire County	15/16 October	Not reported / Various					33 Int 157 Ext	10 Int (9 res, 1 comm) 31 Ext	
Lancashire County	22-25 November (Storm Bert)	Not reported / Various						29 Int (23 res, 6 comm) 92 Ext	
Lancashire County	5 December (Storm Darragh)	Not reported / Various						48 Int (24 res, 24 comm) 61 Ext	
Lancashire County Council	31 December	Not reported / Various						30 Int (29 res, 1 comm) 35 Ext	
Blackburn with Darwen	22-25 November	Not reported / Various						12 Int (res) 30 Ext	Significant highway flooding
Blackburn with Darwen	5 December	Not reported / Various						2 Int (res) 8 Ext	
Blackburn with Darwen	31 December	Not reported / Various						9 Int (8 res, 1 comm) 13 Ext	
TOTALS							33 Int 157 Ext	140 Int 270 Ext	

* United Utilities data (as yet unverified) covering period 22/9/24 to 07/01/25

Numbers are still under review and are expected to increase.

INFORMATION ITEM A

Because of the number and scale of these events, compounded by another significant flood event on Sunday 5 January 2025, we are still data-processing and not yet in a position to offer a commentary on the events. However, we can provide the following headlines:

1. Storm Bert's surface water/rainfall impacts were exacerbated by fast snowmelt in East Lancashire (particularly in Rossendale) which hadn't been anticipated in the weather warnings and flood warnings;
2. The emergency response on the night of 31 December was impeded by the conventionally low Bank Holiday staffing ratios across all services & authorities.
3. There was significant highway flooding across the Blackburn with Darwen council area.

Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Partnership

Local Authority area	Event date	Community	Number of properties reported as flooded					Wider impacts (e.g. on transport and other infrastructure, on the environment)	
			Sea	River	Ordinary Water-course	Surface water	Sewer Hydraulic* (UU data)		Combination of sources or source not yet established
Warrington	31 September / 1 October	Chapelford					1 Int 11 Ext	Combination – high river levels, localised surface water flooding	No property level flooding, but localised surface water flooding in low lying areas.
Halton	16 October	Widnes						Not yet established	S19 triggered, gathering information from RMA partners for full investigations.
St Helens	Sept/Oct	Borough-wide						Not yet established	Gathering data collation from partners to understand full impacts.
TOTALS							1 Int 11 Ext	Yet to be established	

Narrative

On the 31st September 2024, the rain gauge at Chapelford, Warrington, recorded 57.1mm of rainfall. For context, the worst day of Storm Christoph saw 46.2mm of rainfall. This led to very high river levels and localised surface water flooding in low lying areas at multiple locations across the town. There was no property level flooding recorded at any of the recently completed flood risk scheme locations including but not limited to Grant Close and Densham Avenue.

Incidents in both Halton and St Helen’s are still being fully investigated to understand the full causes and extent of flooding. The incident in Widnes has triggered an S19 report.

Greater Manchester Strategic Partnership

Local Authority area	Event date	Community	Number of properties reported as flooded						Wider impacts (e.g. on transport and other infrastructure, on the environment)
			Sea	River	Ordinary Water-course	Surface water	Sewer Hydraulic* (UU data)	Combination of sources or source not yet established	
Bury	23 November (Storm Bert)	Ramsbottom					82 Int 90 Ext	7 Int (4 res, 3 comm) (SW/Sewer)**	
TOTALS							82 Int 90 Ext	7 Int	

* United Utilities data (as yet unverified) covering period 22/9/24 to 07/01/25

** Note that this could include some double counting with the UU data.

Also see overview on the New Year event

United Utilities summary

While this data has been incorporated into the partnership tables above, below is the summary of the number of properties impacted by sewer flooding between 22 September 2024 and 7 January 2025, identifying incidents relating to ‘severe weather’. This is unverified data at this time, and so the numbers are likely to fluctuate until the regulatory data is signed-off for UU’s full year regulatory reporting for Ofwat.

‘Severe weather’ refers to incidents where properties flood due to a storm in excess of a 1-in-20 return period.

Strategic Partnership	Internal Hydraulic (not Severe Weather)	External Hydraulic (not Severe weather)	Internal Hydraulic Severe Weather	External Hydraulic Severe Weather
Cheshire	1	9	0	2
Merseyside	8	52	7	10
Greater Manchester	35	48	47	42
Lancashire	32	135	1	22
Cumbria	2	9	0	0

North West Investment Programme 2024-25

Report to the North West RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group

10th January 2025




1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report to the Finance & Business Assurance Sub Group (FBASG) provides progress on delivering the in-year (2024-25) capital, resource and local levy investment programmes.
- 1.2 There will be another meeting in February to discuss local choices.

The FBASG are asked to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the progress delivering the 2024-25 capital and resource programmes • To note the current position and latest spend forecast of the Local Levy Programme • To note the changes in the Local levy programme • Consider requests for local levy support • Consider, and recommend to the RFCC for approval, increases in the Local Levy contributions to seven existing Local Levy funded posts


2. Capital investment programme 2021/22 to 2026/27

2.1. Overview

			
	Properties to be better protected	Partnership funding	Efficiency savings
National Overview	We are investing £5.2 billion over six years to better protect of two hundred thousand properties from flooding.	We have secured approximately £1.5 billion of partnership funding contributions	There has been £41.6 million Flood Defence Grant-in-Aid efficiency savings accepted in Q1 & Q2 of FY 2024-25
North West Overview	The North West is forecasting to better protect 1,788 properties in 2024-25	Approximately 10% of the North West Programme is made up of partnership funding	£1.7 million Flood Defence Grant-in-Aid efficiency savings accepted in Q1 & Q2 of 2024 (further details in 2.2.7)

2.2 2024-25 Capital Programme

What outcomes are we delivering?

	2024-25	2024-25	2024-25
	* Target	Forecast	Actual
	1,365	1,788	384

**No official RFCC target. Targets are split by Area.*

2.2.1 Forecast figures at mid-November 2024 indicate the North West will better protect 1,788 properties from flooding this year, of which 384 properties are now better protected. The forecast reported at the last Finance and Business Assurance Sub-Group was 3,234. This is therefore a decrease of 1,446 properties.

In Q2, properties targets were reviewed nationally and reprofiled to align with forecasts. We have seen both our North West target and forecast reduce.

The properties target of 1,365 is currently being exceeded, mainly due to new modelling for the Preston & South Ribble Scheme.

The Radcliffe and Redvales Flood Alleviation scheme has deferred claiming 1,460 properties better protected into 2025/26. This is due to unforeseen challenges with utilities and the need to review specific aspects of work.

Please refer to Appendix A for more detail.

Are we spending the funding we have secured?

	Capital funding available	Capital forecast
	£113.44 million	£115.339 million

2.2.2 The total capital funding available to the North West RFCC 2024-25 programme is £113.44 million. This includes £103.1 million of central Government FCRM GiA (Grant in Aid), £7.6 million of Local Levy, and £2.67 million of Partnership Funding Contributions.

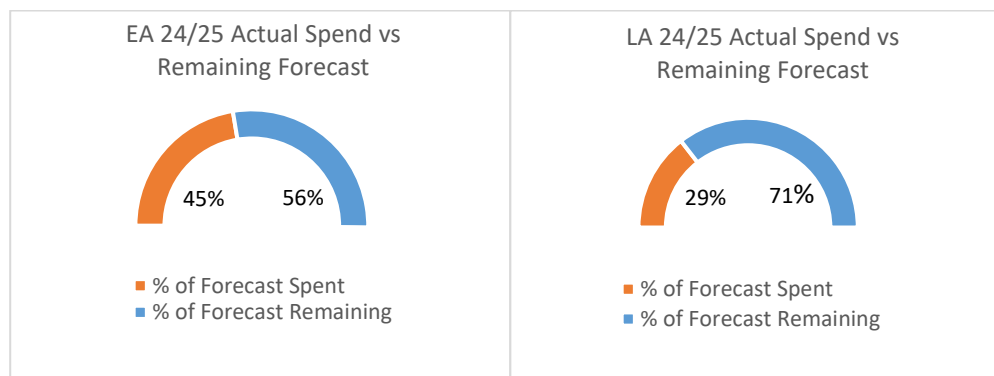
2.2.3 Forecasts at mid-November 2024 show that we are expecting to draw down £115.33 million this year. This is ~ £6 million less than forecasts reported at the last meeting but ~ £2 million more than allocated. This is due to several projects being deferred including :

- Millom and Haverigg Flood Alleviation (~£2m)
- Shap Beck Flood Alleviation Scheme (£2.8m)

These delays support a National instruction to reduce the GiA over-programme to below 5%. At this stage our North West over-programme is 4.7%.

2.2.4 At the end of October, actual spend is 42% of the full year forecast. EA schemes have spent 45% of their forecast – with £50.78 million left to spend. LA schemes have claimed 29% of their forecast, with £16.23 million still to be claimed in 2024-25.

See Appendix B for more detail on spend to date by partnership.



What are the current biggest risks to the programme?

2.2.5 2024-25 (this financial year)

In addition to the risks highlighted at previous meetings (potential project delays due to adverse weather, resource pressures....), the national programme continues to see high levels of over-programme forecast on the FCRM Investment Programme. At the October RFCC meeting, we reported a steer to reduce Area over-programmes to 5%. As we approach Q4, Areas have now been instructed to work to zero their over-programme. This puts significant pressure on in-year delivery to land within allocation.

2.2.6 2025-26 (next financial year)

The annual capital programme refresh cycle for 2025/26 has been delayed. Local Choices is usually shared at the October RFCC meeting to review and endorse delivery of the capital programme for 2025/26 delivery. Due to HMT’s Autumn Budget, this process was paused whilst the Environment Agency and Defra work closely to confirm budget allocation for flood risk management.

At this point, Areas don't have their indicative allocation for 2025/26. Therefore, the RFCC are not able to endorse or consent the programme in January. A revised timetable is being developed for later in Q4, which will be shared with Committee members once confirmed.

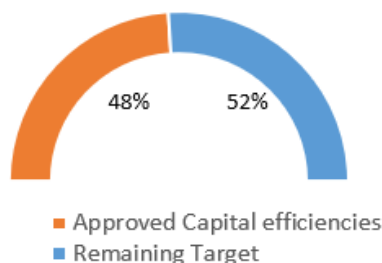
We are expecting to receive our indicative allocations in January 2025. This creates uncertainty in the capital programme, as we don't know which schemes will receive an allocation for delivery in 2025/26.

What level of efficiency are we demonstrating?

2.2.7 The total value of accepted efficiency claims in Q1 and Q2 for the North West was £1.7 million. This represents 48% of our Q2 target with further claims still to be submitted through Q3 and Q4.

2.2.8 Capital efficiency targets are based on 10% of GiA spend. These targets are updated quarterly following confirmation of GiA spent. The table below shows the 10% target in the North West of £3.53 million, based on an actual GiA spend of £35.31 million across all EA and other RMA projects.

NW 24/25 Capital Efficiency Countdown



Efficiencies		
£ £ £		
	Q2 Target	Q2 Actual
CLA	1,837,080	733,868
GMMC	1,694,013	974,156
North West	3,531,093	1,708,024

2.2.9 The table above shows the efficiencies target based on 10% of actual GiA spend to the end of Q2 and the actual claims accepted.

2.2.10 The table below shows which schemes have delivered efficiencies in Q1 and Q2 of 2024/25.

Scheme	Area	RMA	Efficiency value (FCRMGiA)
River Mersey (South Manchester Catchments) Strategy Project	GMMC	EA	£285,611
Lower Risk Debris Screens GMMC Assessments	GMMC	EA	£360,701
Kendal FRMS	CLA	EA	£595,087
National Coastal Monitoring Programme (Northwest NCMP)	GMMC	LA	£148,208
Skirting & Whangs Beck FRMS	CLA	EA	£94,807
River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough Flood Risk Management Scheme	GMMC	EA	£179,635
Recovery and Reconditioning	CLA	EA	£26,000
Preston & South Ribble FRMS	CLA	EA	£17,974
Total			£1,708,024

2.3 2024/25 EA Resource Programme

- 2.3.1 Environment Agency Resource funding for the North West in 2024/25 currently totals £21.067 million. This includes staff costs, maintenance, and resource projects.
- 2.3.2 Both Areas are currently showing a forecast above budget. The major overspend is coming from GiA revenue projects (£6.3m) and the resource maintenance programmes by (£0.8m).

EA Resource Programme financial summary 2024-25 (November position)

Resource Programme, inc. Maintenance, Staff Costs and Resource Projects	Budget (£k)	Forecast (£k)	Forecast Variance to Budget (£k)
Cumbria & Lancashire	11,141	16,459	-5,318
Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	9,926	11,972	-2,046
EA Total FCRM GiA Resource	21,067	28,431	-7,364

The FBASG are asked to:

- Note the progress in delivering the 2024-25 capital and resource programmes.

3. NW RFCC Local Levy programme for 2024-25

3.1 Current position

3.1.1 The total available Local Levy resource at the start of 2024-25 was £15.757 million. This was made up of the 2024/25 income of £4.544 million, a balance of £10.692 million carried forward from 2023-24, and £0.521 million of interest earned on the balance.

3.1.2 The latest spend forecast for 2024-25 is £6.756 million.

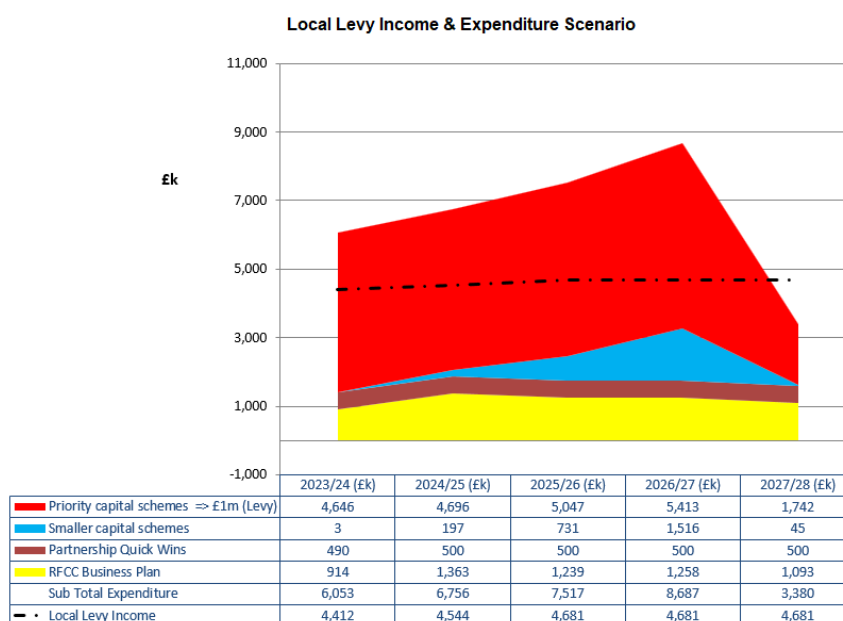
3.1.3 This would leave an expected remaining balance of £9.001 million at the end of the financial year, a reduction of £1.691 million from last year.

3.1.4 Details of changes to the in-year forecasts are shown in section 3.3 below. Details of the programme allocation and forecasts for 2024/25 are shown in Appendix C.

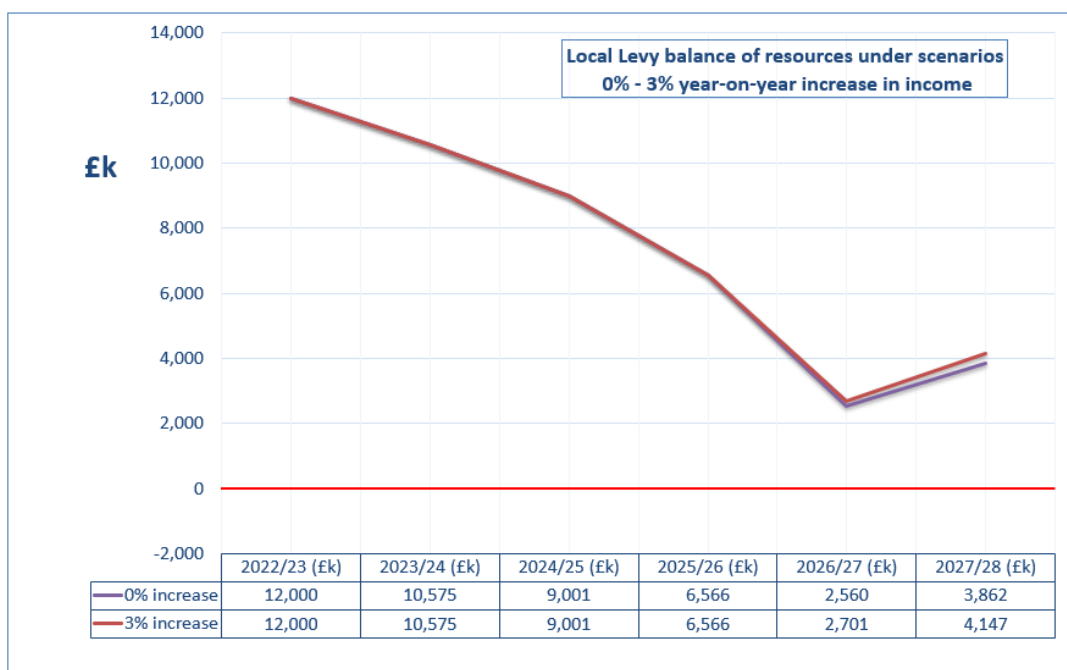
Summary of Local Levy income and spend

2024-25	
Local Levy income and allocation summary (£ million)	
Cash balance at start of year	10.692
Expected interest from 2023/24	0.521
Local Levy income	4.544
Total available balance	15.757
Latest forecast	6.756
Expected remaining cash balance at year end	9.001

3.1.5 The below graphs show the updated income and expenditure scenario which includes the changes and updates listed in section 3.3 below.



The chart above shows the level of Local Levy forecasts by activity classification per year.



The graph above shows the expected Local Levy balance at the end of each year, based on the latest forecasts, including the changes listed below in section 3.3 only.

3.2 Quick Wins Update

3.2.1 Quick Win funding is allocations of £100K of Local Levy made to each of the five sub-regional Partnerships each year, to use for small-scale interventions.

3.2.2 The table below provides an update on the spend to date and forecasts, and shows a high level of confidence that Partnerships are expecting to fully utilise their Quick Win funding allocations.

	Forecast (£K)	Actual Spend to Date (October)	Confidence in forecast
Cumbria	100	50,000	High
Lancashire	100	15,000	High
Cheshire/Mid-Mersey	100	40,000	High
Greater Manchester	100	32,817	High
Merseyside	100	0	High

3.3 Changes to 2024/25 Local Levy forecasts

3.3.1 Summary

Low Crosby pumping station	£450k no longer required and returned to balances
Appleby Flood Risk Management Scheme	£1.5m deferred from 2024/25 to 2025/26

River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough FRM Scheme	Forecasts updated to reflect additional £500k in future years
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3.3.2 Low Crosby pumping station

This project had an approved Local Levy allocation of £450k. In quarter 1 of this financial year, the project team confirmed they no longer need this funding as GiA available was sufficient for the delivery of the scheme. The £450k has been added back to balances.

3.3.3 Appleby Flood Risk Management Scheme

The Appleby scheme had an approved local levy allocation of £1.5 million for this financial year however, there was still a funding gap identified. In October, the National team confirmed an allocation of £1.5 million of additional GiA for the scheme and this was added to the 2024/25 budget. To ensure best use of available funding we have pushed back the Local Levy funding to next financial year to use the available GiA instead in 2024/25.

3.3.4 River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough FRM Scheme

This project's future Levy funding has been updated to reflect the values approved during the July 2023 Committee meeting. River Roch, Rochdale and Littleborough FRM scheme has £1 million allocated in 2024/25, £1.5million allocated in 2025/26 and £500k in 2026/27. These changes reflect the £500k increase approved in the July 2023 Committee meeting and the reprofile of funds.

3.3.5 All the changes above are included in the latest Local Levy scenarios presented above and in Appendix C.

3.4 Requests for Local Levy support for FCRM schemes

3.4.1 Appendix D provides a briefing note for a Local Levy request for the Liverpool Road, Warrington scheme (Cheshire Mid-Mersey Partnership), for £499K in 2025/26.

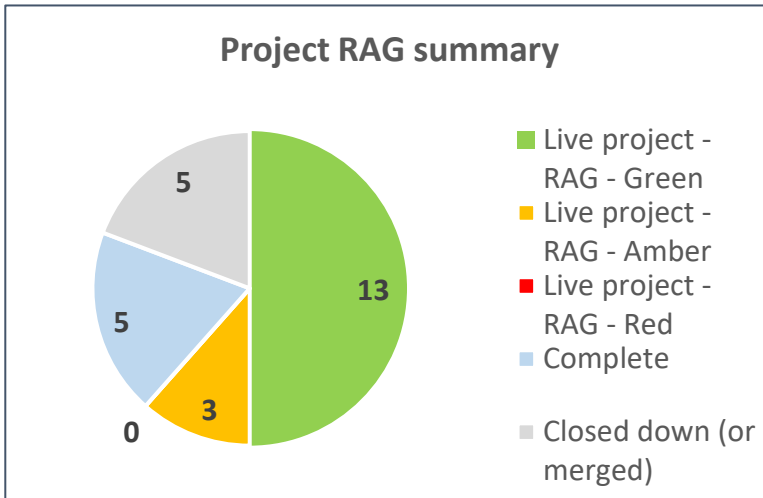
3.4.2 Appendix E provides a briefing note for an increased Local Levy contribution for the Ryles Pool scheme (Cheshire Mid-Mersey Partnership), of £159,478K in 2024/25.

The FBASG are asked to:

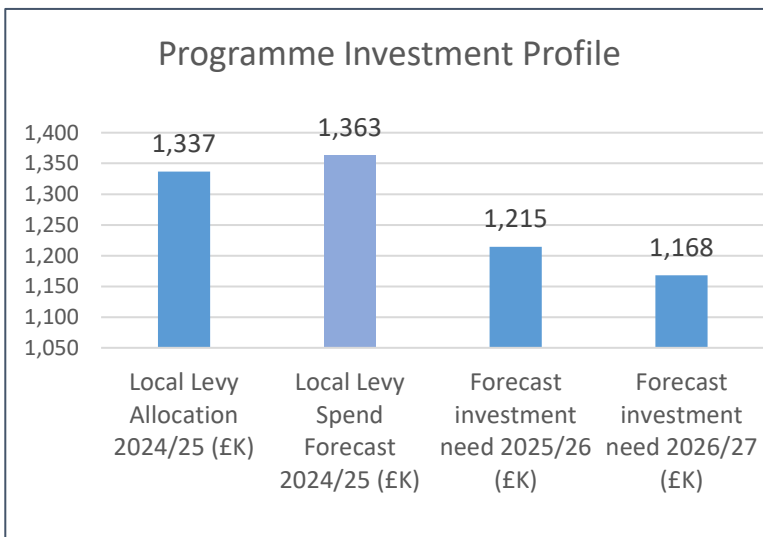
- To note the current position and latest spend forecast of the Local Levy Programme
- To note the changes in the Local levy programme
- Consider requests for Local Levy support

4. RFCC Business Plan Update

4.1 Progress Dashboard



- Good progress overall
- Of 21 projects which have been progressed:
 - 5 are complete
 - 13 are progressing well (Green)
 - 3 are behind schedule or resolving issues (Amber)



2024/25

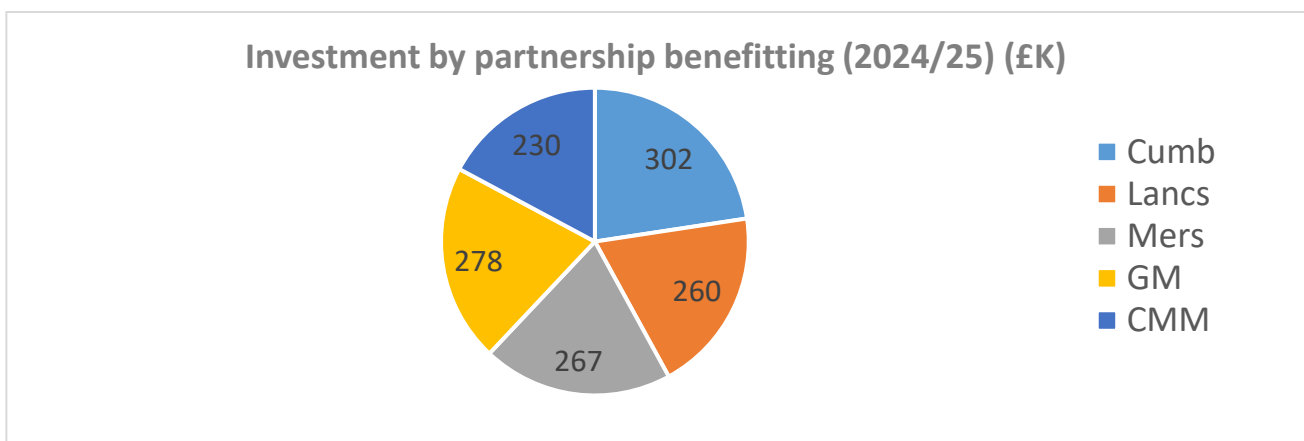
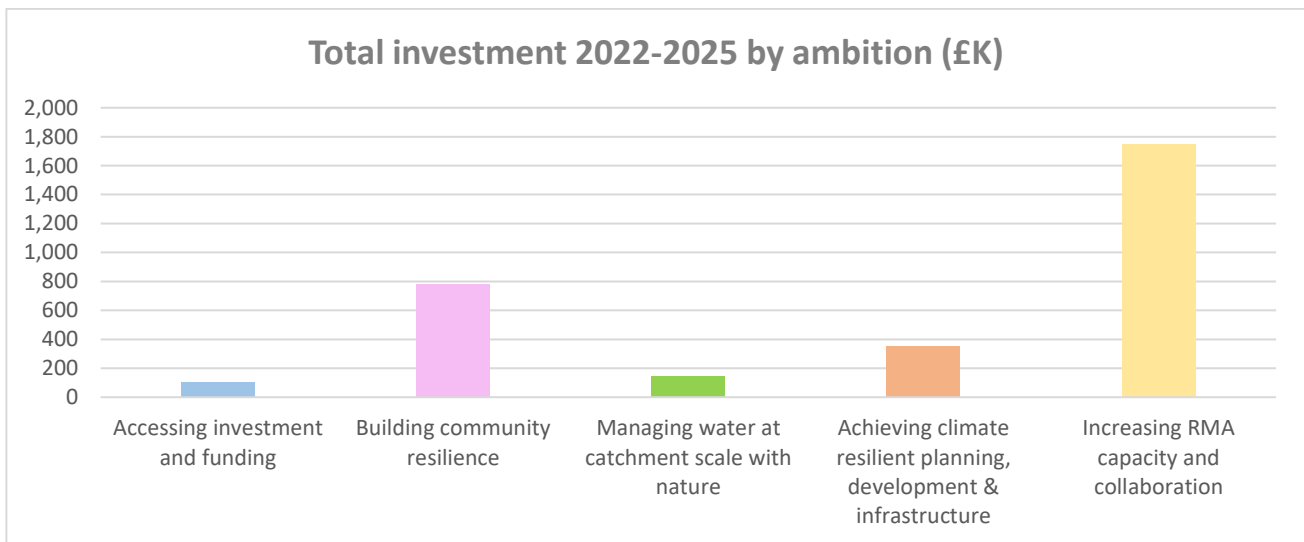
- Approved Local Levy funding: £1,337K
- Latest spend forecast £1,363K
- Forecast exceeds allocated funding by £26K, primarily due to unclaimed allocations from 2023/24 being re-profiled into 2024/25

Future years' investment needs

- Estimated at around £1.2 million in 2025/26 and 2026/27

2024/25 Investment profile by ambition			
Ambition	Local Levy Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Local Levy Spend Forecast 2024/25 (£K)	Variance 2024/25 (£K)
Accessing investment and funding	70	80	10
Building community resilience	250	262	12
Managing water at catchment scale with nature	132	66	-67
Achieving climate resilient planning, development & infrastructure	231	240	9
Increasing RMA capacity and collaboration	654	716	62
	1,337	1,363	26

Project Status by Ambition						
Ambition	No. of projects approved	Live project - RAG - Green	Live project - RAG - Amber	Live project - RAG - Red	Complete	Closed down (or merged)
Accessing investment and funding	5	2	0	0	0	3
Building community resilience	5	4	0	0	1	0
Managing water at catchment scale with nature	5	2	1	0	2	0
Achieving climate resilient planning, development & infrastructure	6	2	1	0	1	2
Increasing RMA capacity and collaboration	5	3	1	0	1	0
	26	13	3	0	5	5



A full project-level breakdown of progress and spend forecast is provided as Appendix F.

4.2 Project proposal

4.2.1 Additional Capacity (ID16) – Increase to existing approved funding

Appendix G sets out a request for the RFCC to recognise cost increases associated with several of the roles funded from Local Levy and to support an increased level of contribution to cover these increased costs. This follows a precedent already set with the Partnership Co-ordinator roles, reviewed earlier this year.

This request relates to the Local Authority Capital Project Adviser (five posts) and Capital Programme Co-ordinator roles which are hosted by the EA, and the Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator role which is hosted by Sefton Council.

Across the seven posts, the request equates to a total increase in Local Levy funding of £153.2K, spread across 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27.

Ask of the FBASG:
The Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group is asked to consider the request and support the proposed increase in the RFCC's contribution for this resource which represents a total Local Levy funding increase of £153.2k.

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Properties better protected – 2024-25 forecasts (and targets for info only)
Appendix B	Capital Funding spend to date (actual to end of October)
Appendix C	North West Local Levy 2024-25 – Allocations and Forecasts
Appendix D	Local Levy request - Liverpool Road, Warrington
Appendix E	Local Levy request - Ryles Pool, Cheshire East
Appendix F	RFCC Business Plan – Project Updates
Appendix G	Business Plan project proposal – ID16 – Increase to existing approved funding

Appendix A		Properties better protected – 2024-25 forecasts (and targets for info only)			
Scheme Name	Partnership	2024/25 Forecast	2024/25 Target (for info only)	Actuals	Comment
Abbots Mead Industrial Estate, Chester	Cheshire	12	12	0	Claiming this year
Adder Hill Great Boughton	Cheshire	3	3	0	Claiming this year
Badgers Rake Lane, Little Sutton	Cheshire	5	5	5	All claimed
Hooton Green, Ellesmere Port	Cheshire	26	26	0	Claiming this year
Old Mill Place, Tattenhall	Cheshire	10	10	0	Claiming this year
Penketh and Whittle FRM Scheme	Cheshire	221	221	221	All claimed
Ryles Pool Culverted Ordinary Watercourse	Cheshire	16	16	0	Claiming this year
Smithy Brow, Croft, Warrington	Cheshire	3	3	0	Claiming this year
Woolston Park FRM Scheme	Cheshire	13	13	0	Claiming this year
Lower Screen Programme (CLA)	Cross-Partnership	6	0		Claiming this year
Beetham Surface Water Flood Alleviation	Cumbria	0	13	0	Deferred to next year
Carlisle Appraisal Package Carlisle	Cumbria	140	0	140	All claimed
Ewan Close, Barrow in Furness	Cumbria	0	68	0	Deferred to next year
Greenbank, Ambleside	Cumbria	7	7	0	Deferred to next year
Greystoke Surface Water Flood Alleviation	Cumbria	0	20	0	Deferred to next year
Guildrey Lane, Sedbergh	Cumbria	0	15	0	
Kents Bank Road	Cumbria	0	18	0	Deferred to next year
Lindale Road Grange over Sands	Cumbria	23	23	0	Deferred to next year
Low Crosby	Cumbria	20	0	0	Claiming this year
Maryport Harbour Gates	Cumbria	100	0		Accelerated into this year
Rinkfield, Kendal Surface Water Scheme	Cumbria	0	16	0	Deferred to next year
Roachburn flood alleviation	Cumbria	0	6	0	Deferred to next year
School Lane, Staveley	Cumbria	0	12	0	Deferred to next year
Shap Beck Flood Alleviation Scheme	Cumbria	0	28	0	Deferred to next year
Spittal Farm, Wigton	Cumbria	9	9	0	Claiming this year
Tebay Surface Water Alleviation	Cumbria	0	16	0	Deferred to next year
Warwick Bridge PFR Scheme	Cumbria	16	16	0	Claiming this year

Whitehaven Harbour Flood Defence Capital Replacement	Cumbria	131	131	0	Claiming this year
Frog Lane Drainage Improvement Scheme	Cheshire	3	3	0	Claiming this year
Broseley Lane	Cheshire	2	2	2	All claimed
Sefton Strategic Surface Water Management Plan Delivery Programme	Merseyside	10	10	0	Claiming this year
Bolton Inlets and Screens Improvement	Greater Manchester	66	66	0	Claiming this year
Golburn Clough, Greenfield Oldham	Greater Manchester	6	6	6	All claimed
Manchester Restoration of Open Channels of Ordinary Watercourses	Greater Manchester	10	10	10	All claimed
Radcliffe & Redvales Flood Alleviation Scheme	Greater Manchester	0	0	0	1460 properties deferred to next year
Weaste Lane, Thelwall FRM Scheme (Phase A)	Greater Manchester	11	11	0	Claiming this year
Lumb Brook, West View, Rossendale (GMMC)	Lancashire	50	50	0	Claiming this year
Preston and South Ribble	Lancashire	869	500	0	Claiming this year
TOTAL		1788	1365	384	

Partnership	Number of schemes forecasting properties better protected in 2024-25	Total 2024-25 Forecast	Total 2024/25 Target (for info only)	Actuals
Greater Manchester	4	93	93	16
Merseyside	1	10	10	0
Cheshire	11	314	314	228
Cumbria	18	446	398	140
Lancashire	2	919	550	0
Cross-Partnership	1	6	0	0
Total	37	1,788	1,365	384

Appendix B	ACTUALS (to end of October)
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Partnership	Full Year Forecast	Spend/claimed to date	Remaining to spent	EA remaining to spend	LA remaining to claim
Greater Manchester	£24,599,327	£13,486,796	£11,112,531	£10,819,915	£292,616
Merseyside	£2,235,670	£551,779	£1,683,891	£122,315	£1,561,576
Cheshire	£2,601,815	£753,323	£1,848,492	£1,075,492	£773,000
Cumbria	£31,594,847	£13,203,930	£18,390,917	£15,628,917	£2,762,000
Lancashire	£37,744,492	£15,808,690	£21,935,802	£11,086,860	£10,848,942
Cross-Partnership	£16,538,749	£4,530,303	£12,008,446	£12,008,446	£0
Total	£115,314,900	£48,334,821	£66,980,079	£50,741,945	£16,238,134

Appendix C		North West Local Levy Programme 2024-25 – Allocation and Forecast			
Partnership	Scheme Name	LRMA Type	2024/25 RFCC scenario (£k)	2024/25 Project Forecast (£k)	Comments (differed / cancelled?)
Cumbria	Low Crosby Pumping Station	EA	0	0	LL is no longer required for this project (£450k added back to balances)
Cumbria	Cumbria Quick Win Projects	LA	100	100	
Cumbria	Lyth Valley Drainage Investigations	EA	40	40	
Cumbria	Waver Wampool Pumping Station Investigation	EA	10	10	
Cumbria	Appleby Flood Risk Management Scheme	EA	1,500	0	Additional GiA had to be claimed this FY. LL reprofiled to 2025/26
Cumbria Total			1,650	150	
Lancashire	River Calder, Padiham	EA	300	300	
Lancashire	Pegs Pool and Wardleys Pool, Hambleton	EA	300	1,000	£700k reprofiled from 2023/24
Lancashire	Lancashire Quick Win Projects	LA	100	100	
Lancashire	Preston and South Ribble	EA	2,000	2,000	
Lancashire	Alt Crossens Drainage Investigations	EA	20	20	
Lancashire Total			2,720	3,420	
Cheshire/Mid Mersey	Sankey Bk FRM Scheme	EA	247	7	Project wanted to push LL back to maximise use of other funding (ARA)
Cheshire/Mid Mersey	Cheshire/Mid-Mersey Quick Win Projects	LA	100	100	
Cheshire/Mid Mersey	Ryles Pool Ordinary Watercourse Improvement Works (Ryle Street Culvert upgrading and clearance works)	LA	120	120	
Cheshire/Mid Mersey	Lindow Community Primary School Flood Alleviation Scheme	LA	30	0	Reprofiled to 2025/26
Cheshire/Mid Mersey Total			497	227	
Greater Manchester	River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough FRM Scheme	EA	1,000	1,000	

Greater Manchester	River Irwell, Kearsley	EA	396	396	
Greater Manchester	Greater Manchester Quick Win Projects	LA	100	100	
Greater Manchester	Longford Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme	LA	50	0	Project is not going ahead this year so £50k would be spent in 25/26
Greater Manchester Total			1,546	1,496	
Merseyside	Merseyside Quick Win Projects	LA	100	100	
Merseyside Total			100	100	
Cross Partnership	RFCC Business Plan projects		1337	1363	(See Appendix F for detailed breakdown)
Total Local Levy - North West			7,850	6,757	

Scheme/ Picture

Liverpool Road, Great Sankey Surface Water Management Project - NWC501E/000A/648A



Liverpool Road, Sankey Bridges is primarily an urban residential area located in Great Sankey South Ward within the administrative area of Warrington Borough Council. It is approximately 1 mile southwest of Warrington town centre.

Introduction/ Background

Liverpool Road is a victim of the local topography. It sits in a localised depression. During heavy rainfall, water accumulates at the low point of Liverpool Road / Hood Lane and Huntley Street causing flooding to highway and properties.

The area is considered as being at high risk of surface water flooding with a significant flood history. It is a recognised flooding hotspot and identified within the Warrington BC Multi Agency Flood Response plan.



Given the frequency and extents of observed events, Warrington Borough Council believes that the flood risk shown on the EA Risk of Flooding from Surface Water Mapping (above) is an underestimate of risk and that a project is required as a matter of urgency to reduce flood risk at this location.

Environment Agency Updated Flood Map for Surface Water Property Points dataset was used to identify properties at risk of surface water flooding utilising the National Receptors Dataset (NRD). For a 1 in 100 year event this area is ranked 1st out of 188 flood clusters identified within Warrington for residential properties at risk of flooding.

GIS analysis and extensive flood history has identified 62 properties (not including nearby industrial units) potentially at either significant or very significant risk of surface water flooding. Assuming 62 properties at risk move to the intermediate flood risk band as a result of a scheme, and assuming a 75 year benefit duration, this project has the potential of attracting maximum eligible FCERM GiA of £653,089 for the works. The split of properties across risk bands is below.

- Very Significant Flood Risk Band: (≥5% AEP): 25 properties
- Significant Flood Risk Band (<5% to >2% AEP): 37 properties

Given the above flood risk and significant flood history in the area, Liverpool Road is a high priority location for Warrington Borough Council. Warrington BC holds photographs of flooding at Liverpool Road, with the below estimated to be in 1960's.



Major Flood Records as follows:

- 04 July 2007 - Estimated 26 Properties Flooded
- 21 September 2018 - Estimated 26 Properties Flooded
- Storm Christoph (January 2021) - Internal Flooded: 34 / External Flooded: 1

The Council have also been called out to flood events on Liverpool Road on the following dates:

31/07/2019	07/11/2019	11/11/2019	11/09/2020	15/07/2021
10/08/2021	03/11/2021	13/12/2021	05/10/2022	

Environment Agency are looking at the flood risk associated with Sankey Brook, Dallam Brook and Longford Brook. The planning for this scheme has been underway for a number of years and current programmed completion is 2031 at the earliest. However, it is also recognised that the scheme faces significant delivery challenges.

The EA scheme will not address the surface water flood risk at Liverpool Road. This proposed scheme compliments the wider EA scheme. Therefore, there is a clear and urgent need to deliver a surface water scheme which addresses the biggest risk outside the major project in the area.

The preferred option was presented to the EA Project Team on 23rd May 2024. EA Colleagues were supportive of the scheme and recognised that surface water flood risk to the Liverpool Road, Sankey Bridges area will remain and needs to be addressed separately. It was also recognised that this project is essential to protect the area against the more frequent surface water flood events due to the long lead in time for delivery of the EA major project.

A Public Drop-in session was held on Liverpool Road to capture information and comments from the local community affected by repeated flooding events. This was well attended, by a community clearly suffering the effects of flood anxiety. Attendees provided critical feedback and a united call from the community at risk for a project to reduce flood risk.

Scheme Development

The affected area in the vicinity of Liverpool Road is a localised depression within the topography. It is proposed to collect the water at this low point and discharge the water into nearby Sankey Canal. Due to the lie of the land, it is not possible to discharge to the canal under gravity.

Clearly, flood risk mitigation is a key factor in this project. However, the Sankey canal is some 12 Km long with 7Km in Warrington and the remainder in Halton. We are currently considering options to maintain water supplies into the canal following the closure and termination of water supply to the canal from the now decommissioned power station at Fiddlers Ferry.

Project key drivers

- Flood risk mitigation to 62 properties.
- Provision of surface water into Sankey Canal.

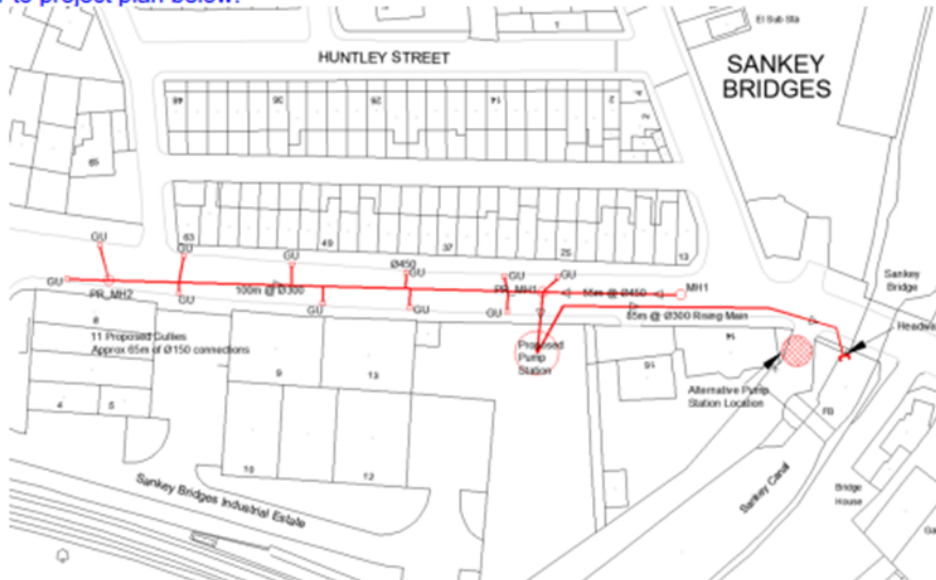
Proposed Project

The proposed project comprises the following;

- Construction of 450mm dia. Drainage system over approx. 200m length.
- Construction of 6 chambers.

- Construction of pump chamber at outfall end.
- Installation of 2no. Xylem Flygt pumps.
- Installation of petrol interceptor.
- Construction of environmental project adjacent to canal including tree, planting and seating area.
- Outfall of drainage system into the canal to top up critical water level.

Refer to project plan below.



This proposed option is sized to accommodate a 1:100year + 45% climate change rainfall event which would move the 37 properties at significant risk and 25 properties at very significant to intermediate risk.

Receiving watercourse is Sankey Canal. Our study shows there is sufficient overflow capacity within the canal to ensure downstream flood risk is not increased as a result of the proposals. A site check report using the MAGIC website did not identify any designated sites or environmental restrictions in the vicinity of the proposed works (1km radius from site).

Project Delivery

Warrington Borough Council has extensive experience in the delivery of this type of project including:

- Dallam Brook Pumping Station
- Chester Road Attenuation Tanks and Pumping Station
- Higham Avenue Pumping Station Refurbishment

Warrington Borough Council would look to approach specialist Contractors to undertake the work through its Term Maintenance Contractor (Tarmac) to reduce timescales.

Project Costs

Total £499K consisting of: Electricity Connection: £50k / Pumps: £160k / Control Panel: £30k / Telemetry: £9k / Civil Engineering Elements: £200k / Contingency: £50K

Project Timeline

- Approval of Outline Business Case: November 2024
- Start Construction: June / July 2025
- In Service: November 2025

Economic Summary

The economic summary and outcome measures for the preferred option are as follows:

- PV Benefits: £3930.2k
- PV Costs: £499K
- BCR: 6.1 to 1 / Effective Return to Taxpayer: 7.9 to 1 / Raw PF Score: 101%
- PV Whole Life Cost: £644k (including £145k future costs)

The proposed solution is to reduce the risk of flooding to 62no. properties, physical and mental damages avoided over 75 years for the properties is approx £1336k (OM1B).

Other Benefits

As outlined above, closure of Fiddlers Ferry Power Station (FFPS) has led to cessation of water supply to Sankey Canal. Completion of this scheme would assist in the supply of water to the Warrington section of canal to maintain an important biodiversity / environmental corridor and habitat. It is much used and appreciated by the public for various activities including walking, cycling and fishing.

Funding and External Contributions

It is recognised that the scheme is eligible for 100% FDGiA funding, however in view of the uncertainty surrounding FDGiA funding and the urgent need for this project, Warrington BC is seeking a levy contribution of £499k to deliver the project in FY2025/26.

Warrington BC will continue to pursue FDGiA funding between now and April 2025 and if successful will return the funding to the Levy pot.

Warrington BC is unable due to its current financial position to provide a contribution to the scheme but future maintenance costs estimated (based on other pumping stations operated by Warrington BC) at £145k over the 75year design life are to be absorbed into Warrington Borough Council revenue budget. Maintenance costs have been included in the cost benefit assessment (PF Calculator) in the interest of transparency (although they are not capital costs).

Discussions have been held with United Utilities regarding contribution however their funding streams appear to have been committed to Combined Sewer Overflow spill reduction projects and as such no funding is available for this project.

Recommendation

Warrington BC requests that the Committee support a Local Levy bid of £499k to help deliver reduced flood risk to 62 properties. The project team will continue to hold discussions with partner organisations and pursue FDGiA funding and will update the Committee accordingly.

Appendix E

Local Levy request - Ryles Pool

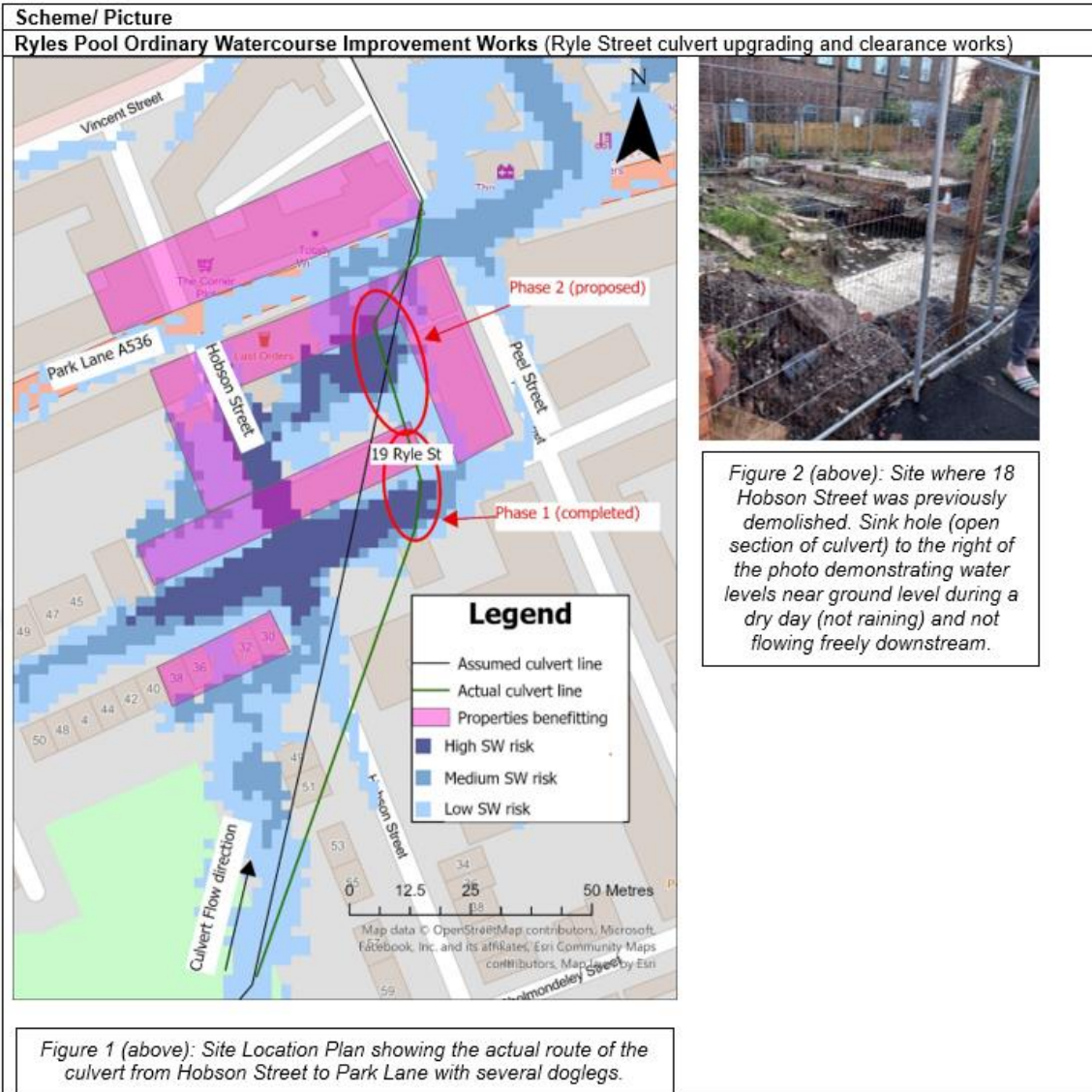




Figure 3 (left): CCTV from new 1.5m chamber looking downstream from Ryle Street towards Park Lane – shows blockage remaining beneath no. 19 Ryle Street.

Introduction/ Background

In 2018 a sinkhole developed on Ryle Street, above Ryle’s Pool ordinary watercourse, Macclesfield, Cheshire East. Consequently, Cheshire East Council carried out emergency repair works, eventually completed in 2021. During these emergency works, partial blockage of the culverted ordinary watercourse was identified under 19 Ryle Street. Cheshire East Council were not able to fully survey the culvert due to the physical obstruction within the culvert and access issues. A temporary replacement 300mm piped culvert section was put in place across the Ryle Street highway as an emergency measure to maintain some channel conveyance. The aim of this project is to resolve the blockage under 19 Ryle Street, improve conveyance, reduce the risk of culvert collapse, and therefore reduce flood risk to surrounding properties and critical infrastructure.

At present, during rainfall events, water within the watercourse at adjacent private land (residential properties) is regularly observed to be close to or at ground level (1 residential property has internally flooded twice in the last few years). Groundwater ingress into the culvert has been observed following CCTV surveys, so there is an interaction between the culvert and groundwater. It is expected that during a large rainfall event, up to 26 residential properties around Ryle Street and Park Lane, currently at high risk of surface water flooding according to Environment Agency maps, could suffer internal flooding caused in part by the failure of the culverted watercourse to sufficiently convey water.

Cheshire East Council are leading the project and have been engaging with other stakeholders, including utility service providers who have services located nearby the culvert, and riparian owners. Most of the ordinary watercourse falls beneath residential properties so is under the ownership of multiple riparian owners. There is significant local interest in a solution. In 2020 a house situated above the line of the culvert (no 18 Hobson Street) was demolished on the advice of a private insurance company (Figure 2).

Scheme Development

In Summer 2024, a business case was approved based on the following preferred option, consisting of two elements of work:

1. To install a replacement upsized culvert (from 375mm to 450mm) across Ryle Street to improve conveyance capacity, increasing the capacity of the system, thereby reducing the likelihood of the culvert surcharging and flooding properties and highways. The works will also safeguard the culvert section from further collapse (a significant health and safety improvement as well as flood risk).

Phase 1 was completed in Autumn 2024.

2. Two maintenance access manholes will also be installed to improve access for future inspection and maintenance. The provision of the upsized culvert and manholes will enable specialised tools to then clear and survey adjacent sections of the watercourse under 19 Ryle Street.

During Step 2, as much of the blockage under 19 Ryle Street was cleared as possible. However, due to the severity of the blockage encountered, and the multiple doglegs (bends) within the culvert encountered both at Ryle Street and Park Lane, which made jetting and surveying difficult, the blockage was not able to be fully cleared as planned.

This funding application is therefore applying for a contribution towards completing the second phase of works, using an alternative method to that originally planned and priced for. The following works are proposed to complete Phase 2 (see Figure 3 below):

- Install access chamber on Park Lane (upstream of Ryle Street).
- Connect into the culvert from the new access chamber in Park Lane straight on, to provide a straighter line of sight from Park Lane to 19 Ryle Street, to allow this section to be jetted and surveyed.
- Survey and clear culvert from Park Lane down to 19 Ryle Street.

The proposed works to complete Phase 2 increase the total project costs above what was originally planned and funded for. However, the additional work also benefits more properties between Park Lane and Ryle Street than originally planned. It is also still a cheaper option compared to a culvert diversion.

Phase 2 is expected to commence in January 2025 subject to funding.

Downstream of the problem area around Ryle Street, the culverted watercourse has been surveyed from Park Lane down to its confluence with the River Bollin and generally found to be in acceptable condition. Upstream of Ryle Street, there is a smaller partial blockage on third-party land where 18 Hobson Street was demolished and the land is now owned by a new landowner. This blockage is expected to be resolved by the new landowner (Cheshire East Council are already engaging with the new landowner about this). Water is currently able to flow around the partial blockage through the culvert. Costs associated with the removal of this smaller blockage are therefore not included in this business case as it is considered a separate issue which will be resolved and funded separately by a third-party landowner.



Figure 3 (left): Phase 2 where the excavation from Park Lane (red) is required to connect into the actual culvert line (green) straight on, creating a straighter route for jetting up to 19 Ryle Street. This avoids the doglegs (bends) and steps within the culvert. This will make the jetting more efficient but also safer as there will be a clearer line of sight through the section of culvert being jetted.

The total scheme economic benefits are £1,873,866.

31 residential properties are expected to directly benefit from these works over the next 50 years, through a reduction in risk of fluvial flooding from the culvert and interacting groundwater and surface water flood risk. The associated OM2 benefits are £906,032.

This includes 26 properties (OM2As) currently at high risk of surface water flooding and 5 properties (OM2Bs) expected to be at high risk of surface water flooding in 2040s due to climate change, which will benefit from a reduced flood risk due to the proposed works.

Properties benefiting on the north side of Park Lane are within the 40% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country.

The scheme will reduce the risk of flooding to Park Lane, which is an A road and therefore considered critical infrastructure.

Commercial properties on Park Lane will also benefit from the project.

Properties situated nearby the culvert will benefit from a reduced risk of sink holes/culvert collapse so there is a significant health & safety benefit.
 The installation of new access chambers will also provide easier and safer access for future inspection and maintenance.
 Other economics benefits arise from reduced flood damages to vehicles and utilities, and reduced costs associated with health, temporary accommodation following evacuation, and emergency services response. Reduced flood damages will also reduce carbon emissions compared to not carrying out the project, for example because of the carbon impact of replacing items damaged by floodwater.

Funding and External Contributions

The total project cost (including Phases 1 & 2) is £501,786.39. The project benefit to cost ratio is 3.7 : 1.

Phase 1 (completed works) cost £270,000 was fully funded by £142,308 Grant-in-Aid (GiA) + £10,000 Cheshire East + £117,692 Local Levy (up to £120,000 Local Levy was previously approved).

Phase 2 (additional proposed works) will cost an additional £231,786.39. Cheshire East will contribute another £70,000 towards this phase. Based on the Partnership Funding (PF) Calculator, Phase 2 would be eligible for an additional £160,913 GiA. There is £2,308 Local Levy previously approved contribution remaining after Phase 1. The total of these contributions would be £233,221 (greater than the total cost). Therefore, Phase 2 has an adjusted PF score of 100% and in theory should already be fully funded.

However, based on conversations with the Environment Agency, it is understood that any in-year GiA bids are highly unlikely to be approved for the remainder of this financial year. Therefore, we are returning to RFCC to ask for an additional contribution of £159,478.39 towards this scheme, which would typically be funded via GiA.

(£231,786.39 Phase 2 cost - £70,000 Council contribution - £2,308 Local Levy remaining previously approved contribution = £159,478.39 funding gap which would typically be eligible for GiA)

This means the total requested Local Levy contribution towards the project would be £279,478.39 for phases 1 & 2 (£120,000 previously approved + £159,478.39 additional contribution requested in this application).

No future costs have been included in the costs calculation as the maintenance of the culvert is the responsibility primarily of the riparian owners rather than the LLFA. Cheshire East Highways will continue to maintain the section of culvert where it falls under the carriageway but we have not included these costs in the PFC; we are assuming that within the next 50 years (benefits period of these works) the only maintenance required would be inspection & jetting, so those kind of activities would be carried out as normal by the highways team for culvert sections under the highway.

Under partnership funding rules, this scheme is eligible for a total of £303,221 GiA (for Phases 1 & 2). However, as discussed above, it is understood that no GiA above what has been approved already for Phase 1 (£142k), is likely to be approved this financial year. Due to the urgency of the works, funding is required this financial year, which leaves a funding gap to cover what GiA would have typically contributed.

The riparian owners (residential property owners) are the main beneficiaries (apart from the Local Authority highways) for the scheme, but it is unlikely that contributions will be agreed and secured from the multiple riparian owners. There is very little capital budget available within the Local Authority to provide for these works. The Local Authority has already spent £150,000 on the previous emergency works delivered by contractors between 2018 – 2021 (installation of temporary 375mm pipe and associated temporary works, surveys, road closures, highway re-surfacing, and installation of new chamber). This figure does not include the additional cost of Council resources managing the works over the years. The Local Authority will contribute an additional £80,000 towards this project (Phases 1 & 2).

The LLFA has considered all current available Partnership Funding routes and grants, however this scheme would not be eligible for any. Therefore, it is likely a Local Levy value of £279,478.39 (£120,000 previously approved + £159,478.39 additional contribution requested in this application) is required for this financial year 2024/25, to ensure the urgent works can be completed this financial year and other budgeted Local Authority capital flood risk works across Cheshire East are not impacted.

Recommendation

The project team requests that the Committee support an additional Local Levy contribution of £159,478.39 in principle to help deliver reduced flood risk to 31 residential properties, with benefits over the next 50 years. The works will improve

channel conveyance, thereby reducing the likelihood of the culvert surcharging and flooding properties and critical infrastructure.

The works will also address the imminent flood and health & safety risk of the culvert collapsing further. Due to the culvert being under the ownership of multiple riparian owners, seeking contributions is very unlikely within the urgent timescales. If any other partner able to bridge the shortfall in funding is identified, the Local Authority will update the Committee accordingly.

Appendix F	RFCC Business Plan – Project Updates
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More details on all the projects and their outputs are now available on the RFCC SharePoint site.

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Forecast 2024/25 (£K)	Total anticipated investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Estimated investment need 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
ACCESSING INVESTMENT AND FUNDING								
ID1	Investment mapping project	Green	This project is looking at the range of potential investment sources available for flood risk measures, primarily for LAs, collating them into a data tool, and exploring options for making detailed information on these more accessible and easier to identify. The project is in its final stage with the preparation of the final report and outputs underway and under review. Apparent overspend against allocation is due only to a re-profiling from 2023/24.	25	45	45	0	0
ID2.1	Investment in the dev't of innovative green finance mechs - Wyre Catchment CIC	Green	Installation of NFM measures by the project has been ongoing and is on track for completion by March 2025. Payments claimed to date have been pro rata in line with the % of NFM interventions installed (against the agreement total contribution of up to £45K per year). Adrian Lythgo currently represents the RFCC on the Project Buyers Group, attending twice-yearly meetings. Reports are also being received by the project on the NFM measures and monitoring being installed.	45	35	55	45	45

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Forecast 2024/25 (£K)	Total anticipated investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Estimated investment need 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE								
ID5	The Flood Hub	Green	<p>Key analytics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently seeing over 20,000 page views per month now, significant growth in the last 2 years. 330 websites now link to The Flood Hub. 6527 social media followers and 328 newsletter subscribers. New Flood Safety Toolkit added, and content added to the Flood Recovery Toolkit. Current development work is ongoing to: provide content for the Unpave the Way project; creating some Property Flood Resilience animations; capturing the learning from the Flood Poverty project; and developing new educational material. Ongoing updates to FCERM scheme sections inc Kendal, Rochdale & Littleborough and Sankey Brook, plus new pages on Hilton Grace Woods and repair works at Northenden. These pages continue to receive lots of views. October has been the most popular month for social media so far this year with over 152,000 impressions and nearly 13,000 engagements, often popular in bad weather. The 'Flood Aware? Plan and 	115	115	330	115	115

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Forecast 2024/25 (£K)	Total anticipated investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Estimated investment need 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
			<p>Prepare!' Focus Week in October was the most popular campaign run this year. 'Community Flood Resilience' Focus Week was delayed until December to avoid Storm Bert comms.</p>					
ID5A	The Flood Hub - National expansion	Green	<p>We are exploring a small-scale trial with South West RFCC to test how the site and the supporting management resource can be adapted and developed to allow more than just North West RFCC to use and benefit from the site. Ultimately the aim is that this could lead to a sharing of the ongoing costs of maintaining and developing the site between RFCCs. No additional cost will be incurred by the North West RFCC. South West RFCC have approved the funding for the trial and work is underway to put in place the necessary commercial arrangements.</p>	0	0	0	0	0
ID6	Supporting community engagement on adapting to coastal change	Green	<p>This is a smaller part of the work programme being delivered by Newground. Ongoing liaison and support for the Coastal Group as required. Some of direct community engagement supported by Newground has been with coastal communities. Planning for engagement with coastal communities around potential adaptation remains in view of the Coastal Group.</p>	10	10	30	10	10

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Forecast 2024/25 (£K)	Total anticipated investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Estimated investment need 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
ID7	Action campaign – Flood resilience	Green	<p>This quarter, The Flood Hub team have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported 40+ members of the public (60% from the North West) in matters such as how to prevent internal flooding using property flood resilience measures. Attended 9 partnership meetings involving multi-agency projects, partnership working and supporting communities, and the Cumbria Association of Local Councils AGM. Supported 2 flood group meetings inc new group in West Darby. Supported risk management authorities (EA, LAs and UU) in engagement events with communities in Sankey Bridges and Dallam alongside the EA, helping residents to find and access flood insurance. This led to subsequent property visits to provide further advice and guidance on property flood resilience measures, helping residents to take the next step in protecting their homes and property against the effects flooding. 	124.55	124.55	369	124.55	124.55
ID8	Flood Poverty Project	Complete	Led by Rochdale Borough Council and the National Flood Forum, this project has provided better understanding of the factors affecting ‘flood poverty’ and their impact. It carried out a neighbourhood scale review and	0	12.3	125	0	0

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Forecast 2024/25 (£K)	Total anticipated investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Estimated investment need 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
			programme to test, share and recommend practical approaches to addressing ‘flood poverty’ issues and achieving more sustainable property level resilience outside of post flood event recovery schemes. Costs incurred in 2024/25 were part of the initial approved sum, and have been utilised to cover the costs of the final report and knowledge sharing.					
MANAGING WATER AT CATCHMENT SCALE WITH NATURE								
ID9	Whole catchment approach - GM IWMP Learning	Complete	An additional commission was given to the consultants (Jacobs) who supported the development of the GM Integrated Water Management Plan, to carry out an in-depth, lessons learned exercise to extract transferable learning more widely. Work is complete and the outputs and learning have been shared widely. Opportunities to do this on an ongoing basis will be taken.	0	0	16.57	0	0
ID9A	NFM Technical Appraisal resource	Green	5-year collaborative agreement in place (to 2026) with Mersey Forest to half-fund a technical appraisal resource for NFM (Rob Dyer), available to all North West partnerships/authorities. The forecast for this year includes the contribution for 2023/24 (£32K) which wasn’t paid until early in 2024/25, and a small	30	65.5	95.5	35	36.5

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Forecast 2024/25 (£K)	Total anticipated investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Estimated investment need 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
			increase in costs for 2024/25 (£33.5K), captured within the agreement.					
ID19	NFM project delivery	Complete	Forest Hills (£30K) was completed in 2022/23. Smithy Brook (£9K) project completed in August 23.	0	0	39	0	0
ID20	Land management engagement	Green	Consideration of a possible engagement event to focus on land management and flood risk remains under consideration by the Cumbria partnership. A proposal is being developed for a conference style event in October 2025. The funding will now be needed in 2025/26.	12	0	0	12	0
ID22	NFM Pipeline Development (Cumbria)	Amber	This project will develop a pipeline programme of potential Natural Flood Management projects which could be progressed should funding become available in the future. The tools and techniques developed/used will be shared with all the partnerships with a view to extending the approach in the future. The initial data gathering exercise on communities at risk is complete. As a result of recent developments, a change of approach/output is being considered in order to ensure that the outputs offer the maximum benefit in mainstreaming and securing funding for NFM. The project is therefore subject to	90	0	150	90	50

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Forecast 2024/25 (£K)	Total anticipated investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Estimated investment need 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
			some delay while this re-scoping is explored and concluded.					
ACHIEVING CLIMATE RESILIENT PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE								
ID10	Evidence gathering – Climate resilience within planning & dev't	Amber	<p>2022/23 Liverpool University student projects successfully completed in January 2023 and recommendations considered by Steering Group to inform future work.</p> <p>A second round of projects was carried out in 2023/24 focussing on planning conditions and enforcement. These draft reports are still to be reviewed and summarised.</p> <p>The RFCC has now lost its direct link into Liverpool University and this resource due to a change in RFCC membership.</p> <p>A recommendation will be made in due course on whether to close the project or whether to continue with evidence gathering via another approach.</p>	0	0	0	0	0
ID12	Action campaign – Unpave the Way	Green	<p>Project successfully featured garden exhibits at the RHS Urban Show in April and the RHS Tatton Show in July. This was really well received and has received publicity and media coverage with the reach of the project continuing to grow. The garden was reconstructed in Whitaker Park, Rawtenstall, to continue educating and inspiring the public.</p>	86	87	135	65	70

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Forecast 2024/25 (£K)	Total anticipated investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Estimated investment need 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
			Work is ongoing with the current focus on developing a Householder SuDS Guide and working with LAs on how the planning process can discourage paving over with impermeable surfaces.					
ID4/13	Data sharing and mapping of flood risk and drainage assets	Green	Project being led jointly by Greater Manchester and Merseyside partnerships. Phase 1 (Audit of LLFA Asset Registers) complete and report produced. Phase 2 (Case studies and mapping of asset data sharing challenges) complete with report produced. Phase 3 ongoing to engage stakeholders in the case study areas to explore more joined-up, collaborative approaches to asset maintenance). Slight variance against allocation is due to reprofiling from 2023/24.	145	153	197	0	0
ID21	Highways SuDS Design Guide	Complete	A technical guide to support the delivery of more SuDS in complex urban environments that are buildable, adoptable, maintainable and value for money, both as retrofit (street improvement schemes) and as part of new developments. Guide has now been published and is available on the RFCC Sharepoint site.	0	0	20	0	0

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Forecast 2024/25 (£K)	Total anticipated investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Estimated investment need 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
INCREASING RMA CAPACITY AND COLLABORATION								
ID14	LA capital project delivery challenges	Complete	Project complete as a specific Business Plan action. Ongoing activity is now through the LA Capital Project Advisers and ID15 (Capacity Building Programme)	0	0	0	0	0
ID15	Risk management authority capacity building programme	Green	Ongoing activity, led by the Capital Programme Co-ordinator and the team of LA Capital Project Advisers, to identify RMA training and development needs, to respond to this directly or to secure wider national provision of training, feeding into the development of EA national training provision generally, and signposting and helping LAs to effectively use the national Sharepoint site on developing capital projects. There is a small amount of Local Levy funding allocated to support training activity but wherever possible opportunities to tap into national EA training budgets are progressed so that no Local Levy is needed.	25	0	25	15	15
ID16	Additional capacity (to support the RFCC, partnerships and RMAs)	Green	Partnership Co-ordinators – all five roles filled and ongoing with funding approved to March 2027. LA Capital Project Advisers – all five roles filled and ongoing with funding approved to March 2027.	629	716	1,745	678	692

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Forecast 2024/25 (£K)	Total anticipated investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Estimated investment need 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
			Capital Senior Co-ordinator – role filled and ongoing to 2027. Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator – role filled, ongoing and funding approved to March 2026 The 2024/25 forecast includes the cost increases set out in Appendix G.					
ID17	NW Coastal Centre of Excellence - Develop business case	Amber	The scoping and feasibility work done to date has been captured in a report which is currently undergoing review. Progress is behind schedule due to resource constraints. The funding allocated has not yet been required.	0	25	0	0	0
ID18	RFCC SharePoint site	Green	Development of the site is substantially complete and the site was launched to the RFCC community on 18 December 2024. The site will be updated and developed over time. Once any initial access issues have been resolved and any initial feedback addressed, this project will be proposed as Complete.	0	0	0	0	0

Appendix G**Business Plan project proposal – (ID16) Additional Capacity Increase to existing approved funding****Background**

Through Action ID16 of the Business Plan, the RFCC uses Local Levy funding to provide some vital additional capacity to support the effective functioning of the RFCC and its partnerships, and to support local authorities develop and deliver capital projects. Shortage of resource and capacity has been a longstanding and increasing issue in local authorities and is now increasingly being felt within the Environment Agency as well.

The level of funding contribution provided by the RFCC for specific roles has always been approved at a static level for a number of years, but there are increases in pay and on-costs over time.

In recent years, there has been a precedent of the RFCC recognising increases in costs over time, approving small increases in funding where these have been proposed during role reviews.

Most recently when the LA-hosted Partnership Co-ordinator roles were reviewed (April 2024), future cost increases were factored in upfront. The Local Levy funding contribution was increased from £30K to £37K per year, factoring in on-costs across the five host local authorities, and estimated cost increases of 4% in 2024/25, 3% in 2025/26 and 3% in 2026/27.

For other roles where funding was approved some time ago and future cost increases have not been built in, shortfalls are now emerging.

This paper asks the RFCC to recognise the increases in costs of these roles and to support an increase in the Local Levy contribution.

The proposal covers the following three role types:

Role	Host Authority	Current Local Levy funding (£K)	Duration of funding approval
Local Authority Capital Project Adviser (5 roles)	EA	54	To 31 March 2027
Capital Programme Co-ordinator (1 role)	EA	69	To 31 March 2027
Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator (1 role)	LA	50	To 31 March 2026

Local Authority Capital Project Advisers

These are officers hosted by the Environment Agency, dedicated to supporting Local Authorities with the development and delivery of capital projects, including Quick Wins. Ongoing feedback from Local Authorities continues to confirm the significant value that these roles provide.

There are five roles, effectively one per partnership (although the 3FTEs of resource is deployed as required across Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire authorities).

The roles were first approved in 2016, fully funded by the RFCC from Local Levy, at a contribution of £50K per year. When the roles were reviewed in 2021, the RFCC approved continued funding until March 2027 at an increased level of £54K to reflect increases to cost levels at the time. Since then, costs have increased further with no corresponding increase in the Local Levy contribution, and there is now a shortfall of funding for these posts from 2024/25.

The Levy contribution required to cover the costs of these roles in 2024/25 is £60K.

To sufficiently cover costs for the following two years, the RFCC are asked to support additional small percentage increases for 2025/26 and 2026/27. For planning purposes, these increases are estimated to be the same as those agreed for the Partnership Co-ordinators - 3% in 2025/26 and 3% in 2026/27. Actual costs will be reported back to the RFCC once known.

Roles originally introduced 2016	£50K per year (£250K total/year)
Roles reviewed and renewed in 2021	£54K per year (£270K total/year)
Increased level of contribution requested for 2024/25	£60K (£300k total)
Estimated level of contribution required for 2025/26 (+3%)	£62K (£310k total)
Estimated level of contribution required for 2026/27 (+3%)	£64K (£320k total)

The total additional Local Levy funding required to cover the cost increases of the five LA Capital Project Advisers to March 2027 is **£120K** (£24K for each of the five roles).

Capital Programme Co-ordinator

This is a single senior advisor role hosted by the Environment Agency, which leads and co-ordinates the team of Local Authority Capital Project Advisers, supports the identification and provision of training and capacity building for Local Authorities including through national networks, and works with the sub-regional partnerships to support the monitoring and delivery of their capital programmes.

This role was first introduced in 2021, when the Local Authority Capital Project Adviser roles were being reviewed and it recognised the need for a senior co-ordinating role. The Local Levy contribution agreed was £69K per year for an initial trial period of two years.

A review of the role was undertaken and concluded in January 2024, confirming the value and ongoing need for this role, along with some recommendations for further improvements which have been implemented. No increase in the level of contribution was requested at this time, which has therefore remained at £69K per year since 2021, approved to March 2027.

Role first introduced 2021	£69K per year
Role reviewed and renewed in Jan 2024	£69K per year
Increased level of contribution requested for 2024/25	£76.2K
Estimated level of contribution required for 2025/26 (+3%)	£78.5K
Estimated level of contribution required for 2026/27 (+3%)	£81K

The total additional Local Levy funding required to cover the cost increases of this role to March 2027 is **£28.7K**.

Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator

This role has been operational since March 2016, hosted by Sefton Council. It is critical for enabling the ongoing update, refresh and implementation of the Shoreline Management Plan and its policies, and is fundamental to the effective functioning of the North West and North Wales Coastal Group. It is recognised as national best practice for effectively coordinating coastal management across a diverse and complex coastline.

When first supported, the funding contribution from the RFCC was £40K per year. The role is part funded by the RFCC and part by the Coastal Group. The RFCC’s contribution was increased to £50K on review in 2020. The funding for the role has been approved by the RFCC to March 2026. The level of contribution has remained static since 2020. Increases of 3% per year for 2024/25 and 2025/26 are now requested to reflect cost increases.

Role first approved 2015	£40K per year
Role reviewed and renewed in Dec 2020	£40K per year
Increased level of contribution approved from 2022/23	£50K
Increased level of contribution requested from 2024/25 (+3%)	£51.5K
Estimated level of contribution required for 2025/26 (+3%)	£53K

The total additional Local Levy funding required to cover the cost increases of this role to March 2026 is **£4.5K**.

The profile of the total additional Local Levy funding required across all the roles is:

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
£38.7K	£52.5K	£62K	£153.2k

Recommendation

The Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group is asked to consider, and recommend to the RFCC, increases in the Local Levy contributions already approved for these roles, to account for increases in costs. This equates to additional Local Levy funding of **£153.2K** for all roles over the three years.

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE**24 JANUARY 2025****NORTH WEST AND NORTH WALES COASTAL GROUP CHAIR'S REPORT**

RECOMMENDATION: The RFCC are asked to note the content of this report.

The challenge to build a nation ready for, and resilient to, flooding and coastal change – today, tomorrow and to the year 2100 was set in the 2020. The [Roadmap to 2026](#) set a number of challenges and milestones for the coast that sets out the practical actions to achieve this ambition. With three overriding ambitions to achieve: Climate Resilient Places, Growth and Infrastructure and A nation ready to respond and adapt to flooding and coastal change. The route along this Roadmap has seen better protecting and preparation of communities by significant investment in coastal assets and in innovation which contribute to wider priorities including local nature recovery, carbon reductions and more integrated water solutions. Innovative programmes such as Our Future Coast will shape the future for greater community resilience and ensure joint outcomes for nature and the environment. The conveying and better understanding of the risk faced, have been achieved through significant milestones such as the delivery of the Shoreline Management Plan Explorer which will be enhanced early in the New Year by the National Coastal Erosion Mapping being integrated into the site.

Whilst the focus of the current programme is focused on protection of property the future will see a greater emphasis on community wellbeing and the infrastructure and amenities that deliver places that people aspire to live. Resilience of assets will remain at the heart of this health and prosperity led agenda. In 2023 around 400 natural hazards resulted in circa 87,000 deaths and economic losses amounting to \$202.7 billion¹. These figures highlight the urgent need for resilient infrastructure and preparedness in building a sustainable future. The Coastal Group working on these principals is embarking on a demonstrator project based around the Fylde coast area that will identify critical infrastructure and its resilience to coastal erosion and flood risk. By working in collaboration with strategic planners across the infrastructure providers we aim to build collaborative partnerships to help shape and inform investment decisions and future pipelines of work.

Collaborative working is key to the success of this initiative and forms the core of the coastal group's values. We are core members of the North West Coastal Forum and share key business objectives with the RFCC. Within this is the development of a Coastal Centre of Excellence in the North West which will build upon the skills and knowledge gained through the Our Future Coast project to deliver the initiatives and projects necessary for resilient and economically viable coastal communities.

¹ [World Bank Blogs](#)

Coastal Group Activities

1. Coastal Group Achievements Video 2024

Discover our recent achievements in coastal management—watch the video here: [Coastal Group Achievements 2024](#).



2. Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) Refresh: Putting Policies into Action

Managed Realignment

Approximately 157.6km of the North West and North Wales coastline is now advancing into Managed Realignment policies as we enter SMP epoch 2.

Addressing Funding Challenges

Managed Realignment projects face significant funding hurdles. To address this, a pipeline of potential sites is being compiled to secure future funding opportunities.

Exploring Adaptation Pathways

Through the *Our Future Coast Project*, we are examining adaptation pathways and trigger mechanisms to streamline decision-making processes and ensure proactive management.

Welsh Government Stock Take

A stock take has been initiated to review North Wales' delivery of SMP policies during epoch 1 (2005–2025). The North West is eager to adopt this method and is working with the Welsh Coastal Forum to align practices.

3. Coastal Group Handbook: Launching Soon

A new Coastal Group Handbook is nearing completion. Designed as a practical guide for both new and existing members, it will cover Governance, roles and responsibilities and a five-year action plan tailored to the group's objectives. This handbook is distinct from the National Coastal Handbook, which is also recently been launched.

4. Mapping Critical Infrastructure Along the Coast

A new project is underway to map critical infrastructure along the Fylde, Wyre, and Blackpool coastline. The project will identify and map critical infrastructure and assess its vulnerability and interconnectedness. It also aims to encourage infrastructure providers and large landowners to integrate SMP insights into their investment decisions, focusing on long-term flood and coastal erosion risks.

We are in the project planning phase, working to secure commitments from key stakeholders, finalize the project scope, and allocate resources.

Once approved, the project will proceed through the following phases:

1. Data Gathering: Collect data across all sectors.
2. Interdependency Analysis: Examine how infrastructure systems interact.
3. Scenario Testing: Test various scenarios to understand vulnerabilities and resilience.
4. Strategy Development: Prepare actionable recommendations to enhance infrastructure management.

Our Future Coast

The Our Future Coast Team has recently expanded to accommodate the fast pace of this programme's delivery. On the 6th January 2025, we have welcomed [Ian Elson](#), who is the Site Lead for Fleetwood Ro-Ro & Fluke Hall Marshes.

On the 13th January 2025, we have welcomed [Ellie Brown](#), who takes over the Programme Manager role.

A revised OFC Org Chart can be viewed here: [OFC Org Chart \(Jan 2025\).pdf](#)

Adaptation Pathways

The first meeting to test approaches to developing Adaptation Pathways has been undertaken for Hest Bank. This work is being undertaken as an iterative process so the learning from this first site is currently being drawn out alongside writing up a report for the site. Preparation is also underway for the next site on the Fylde Coast with a view to a site visit being undertaken in January and a workshop in February. Alongside these ideas are being captured and developed for how to develop tools to help practitioners undertake this process themselves.

Engaging Our Communities

Community engagement continues to be a cornerstone of the Our Future Coast programme. A notable success has been our work with the farming community, where collaboration has driven meaningful contributions to enhancing natural coastal resilience. Building on this success, we are expanding the scope of this work by onboarding additional specialists to deepen relationships and develop tailored strategies that align with the needs of farming stakeholders.

To ensure targeted and effective engagement, stakeholder analysis and bespoke engagement plans have been developed for each site. These plans reflect the strategic differences and unique requirements of each location, enabling a focused approach that addresses specific community and environmental needs.

This tailored, site-specific engagement ensures that we not only foster strong partnerships but also build shared ownership of resilience solutions. Through this collaborative approach, we aim to empower local communities as champions of innovative flood and coastal risk management strategies.

Monitoring and Research

The first of the coastal process reports has been received, this was for Roa Island. The report has provided a good overview of the seasonal coastal change in relation to beach elevations and the wave and current climate. The wave and current climate would have been extremely difficult to capture using traditional techniques. Similarly, the seasonal change of beach levels would have been difficult as some of the areas would not be safe

to survey on foot and the frequency of data collected would have been prohibitively expensive using aircraft mounted lidar. This helps us to understand where the use of radar-based monitoring can add value to existing monitoring techniques.

Working in Partnership

Our last Partnership Workshop was held 13th November 2024 at Morecambe Town Hall. The event's great attendance gave multiple stakeholders opportunity to network, receive a progress update on the Our Future Coast programme of works, and allowed for gathering of lessons learned.

Our Future Coast team

- Carl Green, OFC Project Sponsor (carl.green@wyre.gov.uk)
- Ellie Brown, OFC Programme Manager (ellie.brown@wyre.gov.uk)
- Amy Collier, OFC Assistant Project Manager & Dissemination Lead (amy.collier@wyre.gov.uk)
- Susannah Bleakley, Comms and Engagement Lead (susannah@sbleakley.com)
- Graham Lymbery, Monitoring Lead & Adaptation Pathways Co-Lead (lymbery.graham@gmail.com)
- Joseph Earl, Engagement Officer North & Morecambe Bay Partnership (Joseph@morecambebay.org.uk)
- currently on sabbatical with interim cover in place until March
- Nicola Parkinson, Engagement Officer South, Lancashire Wildlife Trust (nparkinson@lancswt.org.uk)

Coastal Centre of Excellence in the North West

A proposal for the Coastal Centre of Excellence in the North West (CCENW) has now been drafted by Suzi Ilic (previous coastal advisor) and Carl Green with contributions from Katie Eckford and Andy Shore. The proposal contains a framework for the centre, its key activities, structure, and the resources required together with a reporting mechanism to the coastal authorities and the RFCC. The proposal will be reviewed by the coastal advisor and the chair of NWRFCF.

While the primary role of the centre will remain focused on coastal flooding and erosion risk and delivery of the NW SMP, the proposal also looks at synergies with other organisations that work on the coast and coastal communities. The centre will be in a good position to work jointly on solutions of challenges beyond coastal flooding and erosion such as; land use in coastal catchments, influencing water quality and sediment delivery to the coast, water quality due to pressure on waste water systems, coastal landfills, housing and infrastructure development, coastal squeeze on habitats and climate action plans. These challenges provide opportunities for alternative joint funding outside FCERM.

Working in this new landscape requires agile staff, with skills and expertise currently not found in all local authorities. The centre will enable the coastal community to address this gap, by bringing together staff with expertise currently present in single local authority, expertise developed in OFC and by providing staff training and development, students' internship, and placements in collaboration with the Higher Education sector in the North West.

Summary

In the North West we are well along the Roadmap to 2026 with significant investment and impressive delivery of coastal defence infrastructure improvements by the Coastal Protection Authority Councils. Other key coastal outcomes have been delivered through partnership, including the SMP refresh and delivery action plans. The SMP Explorer allows greater visibility to the SMP and an improved interface with the planning system. We are at the midpoint of the Our Future Coast innovation project and have learnt and shared greatly from our communities which will shape the delivery of both Nature Based Solutions and greater coastal change adaptation.

Throughout the process we are building skills and networks critical to the delivery of climate resilient places. The Coastal Centre of Excellence will build upon these competences and partnerships to develop coastal guardians skilled to meet the challenges of the next decade. We also continue to work with our partners to understand criticalities and align investment, to play our part in ensuring infrastructure will be more resilient to current and future risks from flooding and coastal change.

I would like to thank Bea Beggs our OFC Programme manager for her dedication and drive to make the project a success. I am sure she will take fond memories from her time working on the North West coast. She leaves a strong team of enthusiastic and motivated individuals who are ready for the challenge ahead.

Carl Green – Chair, North West and North Wales Coastal Group

North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee



January 2025 update from United Utilities

Recommendation: The Regional Flood and Coastal Committee is asked to note the content of this report and provide any further comments

1. Introduction

United Utilities Water (Uuw) has agreed with the Chair to produce a quarterly report to better inform the Committee of any Uuw packages of work they may find relevant.

If you have any queries, please contact the Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) team at DWMP@uuplc.co.uk.

2. Flooding Summary

Below is the summary of the number of properties impacted by sewer flooding between 22nd September 2024 and 7th January 2025. This is unverified data at this time, and so the numbers are likely to fluctuate until the regulatory data is signed-off for our full year regulatory reporting for Ofwat. 'Severe weather' refers to incidents where properties flood due to a storm in excess of a 1 in 20 return period.

Strategic Partnership	Internal Hydraulic (not Severe weather)	External Hydraulic (not Severe weather)	Internal Hydraulic severe weather	External hydraulic severe weather
Cheshire	1	9	0	2
Merseyside	8	52	7	10
GMCA	35	48	47	42
Lancashire	32	135	1	22
Cumbria	2	9	0	0

3. Uuw Business Plan for 2025—2030

On the 19th of December, we welcomed our PR24 final determinations from Ofwat, which set out the price, investment and service package that customers receive for the period 2025-30 (AMP8). We received some positive news for flooding and coastal resilience activities, with the green light given for key programmes focused on improving resilience to climate change and driving storm overflow reductions.

Our Advanced WINEP programme was accepted in full at final determination providing £231m of innovative investment and partnerships to deliver rainwater management solutions in catchment areas where storm overflows need to be improved to meet Storm Overflow Discharge Reduction Plan (SODRP) targets after completion of the AMP8 WINEP.

This programme aims to invest in 'best value' and 'least regret' actions, with a focus on driving rainwater management interventions which will reduce or eliminate the future requirement of investing in grey storage to meet government targets. Furthermore, through the removal of conventional regulatory barriers of timeframes, geography and penalties, this programme also allows the flexibility to co-plan and co-deliver with stakeholders to in turn deliver wider benefits in addition to improving river water quality through a reduction in the frequency of storm overflow activations. Interventions delivered may provide additional benefits to the environment and society in a range of ways including sequestering carbon,

reducing flood risk, enhancing drought resilience, increasing biodiversity and improving access to amenity and recreation.

Our programme focuses on urban areas, particularly Greater Manchester and currently has 7 named schemes within the following areas:

- Blackburn
- Bury
- Rochdale
- Tameside
- Trafford

However, the programme is flexible enough to include other areas based on criteria being met.

Additionally, our proposed Rainwater Management (Climate Resilience) programme has been accepted in full. Ofwat has approved £50m for the delivery of rainwater management interventions, such as sustainable attenuation and disconnection, to provide resilience against the forecasted increase in the risk of sewer flooding driven due to climate change. The conditions attached to this programme focus these activities to a selection of high-risk drainage areas. Engagement with the relevant stakeholders will therefore commence over the coming months as we mature our proposals. More information on this will follow in April's update.

Finally, we also had positive news regarding our proposed partnership contribution to a scheme being developed by Sefton Council to protect the Crosby coastline from the effects of coastal erosion. Our proposed contribution of £9.9 million has been approved and we will now work with Sefton Council to confirm next steps.

4. Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) update

Following the draft guidance consultation in October 2024, a number of collaborative workshops were held between Defra, Ofwat, the Environment Agency and all ten Water and Sewerage Companies (WaSCs). The workshops provided an opportunity to discuss feedback provided by WaSCs during the consultation and to collectively work through the key issues raised where it was agreed necessary. Defra are currently due to publish the Cycle 2 DWMP guidance in the first quarter of 2025.

5. Place-based Planning across all 5 counties

As above, since the last quarterly update United Utilities has received our final determinations. The determination includes several programmes which have a strong partnership working element which will be key for the Place Based Planning Managers across all 5 counties to support through existing relationships and creation of new ones.

5.1 Cumbria

Activity has continued to focus on expanding our place-based planning approach, exploring future potential collaborative opportunities across the wider county, through engagement, mapping and planning activities.

As part of our strategic partnership with the National Trust, we have identified value in setting up place-based liaison groups bringing together key colleagues from both organisations. We held our first Cumbria strategic liaison group in November which facilitated valuable discussion and an exploration of

collaboration opportunities. We have agreed we will hold these meetings quarterly, with the next one planned for the end January 2025.

5.2 Lancashire

Engagement with Blackpool Council on the refresh of the Turning Tides Partnership has commenced and support has focussed on reviewing the governance and roles and responsibilities within the partnership. The partnership is also reviewing the working groups that function within it and is currently consulting members on taking a place-based approach. The Fylde Hub group (set up under Natural Course) has been consulted on this and has suggested that the group functions within the Turning Tides Partnership as a place based delivery group. The review and consultation with partners and the Turning Tides Board is set to continue into 2025 before being confirmed.

5.3 Merseyside

The partnership between U UW, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) and Mersey Rivers Trust is close to reaching a significant milestone. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has now been agreed in principle with a potential signing in Q4. The partnership is already committed to working collaboratively to manage the significant water management challenges but the MOU will help formalise the approach.

The vision document, referenced in October, is also due for completion in Q4 which will set the foundation for the creation of a five-year action plan for long-term Integrated Water Management Planning.

5.4 Greater Manchester

The Integrated Water Management Plan (IWMP) is the key place-based planning activity in Greater Manchester and two of the Place Based Planning sub-groups (Micker Brook and Poise Brook) are now reported within the IWMP governance. Since the previous report another group has started up looking at the South Manchester Urban Brooks (SMUB) although this sits outside of IWMP governance for now.

As mentioned in the October report, the IWMP team have been recruiting. In December the IWMP team onboarded a project co-ordinator (GMCA) who previously worked as the Irwell Catchment Partnership Co-ordinator at Groundworks. They will support the team, the trilateral partnership and local authorities in developing and delivering projects to achieve the outcomes and priorities as outlined in the Annual Business Plan and devolution deal. They will also support developing business cases, commissioning technical support to progress and deliver projects.

The IWMP team have been engaging with academics on the requirement for an 'Integrated Catchment Model' for the Greater Manchester city region. This currently does not exist but would be extremely beneficial to ensure at a high level that the interventions being promoted by IWM are deployed in the right place and at the right time to deliver the outcomes. Since the last quarterly report, Imperial College London have hosted a workshop with the IWMP to build scenarios for testing in the modelling and initial model build is expected to be complete in January. Next steps will be validation of the model and scenario testing.

Engagement with Rebalance Earth is ongoing to develop approaches for innovative green finance and unlocking investment opportunities in integrated water projects across GM. This includes submitting a bid to the Ofwat Innovation fund in January 2025. U UW is also lead water company, with letters of support

from the trilateral partners GMCA and EA, on a second bid to the fund in January around trialling treatment and destruction methods for PFAS.

In early 2025 (date TBC) the team will be hosting a visit for senior officials from Defra who wish to learn more about the IWMP approach in Manchester, following the Labour conference in Liverpool where Jo Harrison spoke.

5.5 Cheshire

Solid progress has been made with Cheshire East Council on the ambition to work in partnership on SuDS and wider water management. Further engagement is planned in Q4 to identify if some of the opportunities identified in the county can progress to the next stage following Ofwat's final determination. One such opportunity at Quarry Bank Mill is in the modelling phase with the results expected early in Q1.

The Integrated Catchment Model for Northwich was completed and identified several potential options for mitigating flood risk. A feasibility study of the options is ongoing, with the results expected later this year. Additionally, funding to explore the feasibility of the proposed Weaver Gowy Water and Wildlife Credit Scheme is earmarked to be available in Q1.

6. Strategic Planning

Strategic Asset Managers (SAM) are now all embedded within their local counties and have been working closely with the place-based planning team, operational teams and the wider asset management team. The SAMs have been initiating conversations to start developing the long-term county plans and including current and future needs, risks and opportunities.

The SAMs have also begun to attend local council strategic flood management meetings and contributing and identifying any partnership opportunities.

7. Green Recovery Funding

We continue to focus our efforts in delivering the SuDS and natural flood management (NFM) schemes via external collaborative partnership approaches. The scheme deadline will remain open until all funding has been allocated, although this is likely to be naturally closed February 2025 as a result of the scheme deadline. We are still receiving some potential external and internal schemes to review under the green recovery benefits criteria.

Fourteen schemes have been awarded funding. Additionally, four schemes were awarded funding but turned out to be non-viable so ultimately closed and four further opportunities are being explored. The majority of the schemes are public realm regeneration schemes, incorporating raingardens and tree pits, and are in line with the Government levelling-up grant funding criteria. The schemes underway to date have an average UUV contribution of 26% and provide a partnership contribution rate of £25 million, offering an average 26% water volume reduction in the areas the SuDS have been installed. In addition, the schemes are expected to deliver a circa £53 million natural capital benefit for the North West.

Work is being undertaken through the council framework providers, with hard landscaping already in place and planting season pending. Highways gullies are being disconnected in combination with road re-profiling to ensure maximum flow is received by the rain gardens where possible.

Schemes recently delivered include:

Rock Street, Oldham - The scheme consists of raingardens, recreational park area and permeable surfaces, disability ramps and a cycling route with cycle racks. This provides an active travel walking and cycling route into the town centre. The space was a disused leisure centre site and associated car park in the heart of Oldham Town Centre that has been rejuvenated with a SuDS enabled active travel route and recreational park space which is fully accessible to all.

The scheme was designed by Oldham Council in consultation with Unity and Delivered by Rowan Ashworth on behalf of Oldham Council, within the agreed funding criteria for Green Recovery and as per agreed design.

The scheme overall cost was £1.6M with U UW contributing 44%, achieving £3.56M natural capital benefit.

The sewer benefit was to attenuate the flows entering the combined sewer system from the site, thus providing climate resilience capacity for the future. This was achieved.

Oldham Council has ambition to repeat the ethos of this type of SuDS scheme across other areas in Oldham Town Centre and are already in talks with us to use our drainage network to supply surface water into a new Jubilee park sustainable development they will be building over the next 5 years.



Figure 1: Rock Street, Oldham fully accessible permeable park

Kingsway, Stretford Public Realm - The scheme consisted of raingardens, tree pits and permeable surfaces, children's play areas, recreational seating and a reduction from a four-lane highway to two lanes to create the space to make this possible. The highway has been active throughout the changes and the scheme has been installed during active lane closures, maintaining public access to the medical centre and surrounding housing.

The scheme was designed by Civic Engineers and Delivered by Aligned Construction on behalf of Trafford Council, within the agreed funding criteria for Green Recovery and as per agreed design as set out in the U UW Trafford Council contract.

The scheme overall cost was £3.2M with U UW contributing 4.5%, achieving £3.5M natural capital benefit.

The sewer benefit was to attenuate the flows entering the combined sewer system from the site, thus providing climate resilience capacity for the future. This was achieved.



Figure 2: Kingsway, Stretford public realm redevelopment

NW RFCC MEETING – 24 JANUARY 2025 – INFO ITEM E

RFCCs | Environment Agency National FCERM Update

January 2025

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Flood events

September 2024

- September saw excess of 130 mm rainfall in parts of southern Midlands and southern England, where it was particularly wet compared to average. Some of the counties experienced their wettest September on record and for Bedfordshire and Oxfordshire, it was the wettest calendar month they counties have seen since 1836. Over 690 properties flooded mainly through surface water flooding and over 8,300 were protected.

Our response

- Throughout the incident, our teams were out on the ground, operating flood defences, putting up temporary and demountable barriers, closing flood gates, clearing trash screens, and reassuring local communities. We worked collaboratively with partners, visited impacted locations, collected and shared valuable information, assessed impacts and causes, and provided guidance and support to affected communities.
- We closely monitored any damaged defences and put in place mitigation measures. We also carried out any necessary urgent or emergency repairs.

Weather forecast winter 2024/25

- The chances of a wet period for November to January are similar to normal according to the Met Office. However, we are heading into winter after a wetter than normal summer in certain parts of England. This means there is more moisture in the soil and higher river and groundwater levels than this time last year, in certain parts of the country. Therefore, the EA is preparing for heightened flood risk.

- The EA are working to a reasonable worst-case scenario of multiple and repeated flooding events. We have 275 mobile pumps and 25km of temporary barriers strategically located across England to allow deployment when necessary.

Flood services

Flood Action Week 2024

- The Environment Agency’s annual awareness week, [Flood Action Week](#), was held during 14-20 October. The week was timed to coincide with the first anniversary of Storm Babet and focused on increasing public preparedness for flooding and what the Environment Agency and its partners are doing to be prepared for the winter. It promoted the immediate and longer term (property flood resilience) actions that people can take to prepare for flooding and highlighted the social impacts of flooding, particularly on young people and children.
- Overall, the week generated a high degree of media coverage (over 110 pieces) across broadcast, print, online, trade and regional publications with our key messages included throughout. Our national social media content generated 333.2k impressions and there were a total of 29,528 views to our GOV.UK pages ([Prepare for flooding: Protect yourself from future flooding - GOV.UK](#), [Sign up for flood warnings - GOV.UK](#), [Check the long term flood risk for an area in England - GOV.UK](#)). This represents an increase of 9,944 views on Flood Action Week 2023.

Delivering the FCERM Strategy and Roadmap

FCERM strategy roadmap update

Together with our partners, we are continuing to make good progress against the commitments outlined in the [FCERM Strategy Roadmap](#). To date, the FCERM Strategy Roadmap has led to a number of recent and upcoming successes that are designed to help risk management authorities:

- We worked with CIWEM and the Association of British Insurers to share information about flood resilient repair with the insurance sector, so better information can be provided to home and business owners whose properties have flooded. CIWEM's [Be Flood Ready PFR Community of Practice website](#) launched in June.
- We have recently developed digital communication and education tools to raise awareness of flood and coastal risks among younger people.
- We successfully completed a [Rapid Flood Guidance trial](#) between May and September 2024 to enhance surface water forecasting capabilities. This was achieved in partnership with the Met Office and Flood Forecasting Centre, and forms part of our work to improve forecasting capabilities for surface water flooding.

‘National assessment of flood and coastal erosion risk in England 2024’ report

- On 17 December 2024 we published a [‘National assessment of flood and coastal erosion risk in England 2024’](#) report. The report identifies national trends in terms of the source and characteristics of flood risk, the distribution of risk across England, and the potential for these to change in the future.

- The report includes a summary of the [new National Flood Risk Assessment \(NaFRA\) data](#), that will provide a single picture of current and future flood risk from rivers, the sea and surface water, using both existing detailed local information and improved national data. For the first time this new data will include the potential impact of climate change on flood risk. The report also includes a summary of the new [National Coastal Erosion Risk Map \(NCERM\)](#), based on a further 10 years of coastal monitoring data and the latest climate change evidence.
- On 28 January 2025 we aim to publish the new NaFRA 'Risk of Flooding from Rivers, Sea and Surface Water' data on '[Check your long term flood risk](#)' and new NCERM data on '[Check coastal erosion risk for an area in England](#)', and [Shoreline Management Plan Explorer](#). In both cases, the data will be available as open data on data.gov.uk. In spring 2025 we aim to publish the new NaFRA 'Flood Zone' data on '[Flood Map for Planning](#)' and available through GOV.UK
- We have worked collaboratively with Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) on the surface water mapping information for the new NaFRA, and with Coastal Protection Authorities (CPAs) on the coastal erosion risk products for NCERM. As part of our stakeholder engagement, we held a webinar on 19 November 2024, to introduce them to our new flood and coastal erosion risk information. This was attended by over 700 attendees from LLFAs and CPAs.

£200m Flood and coastal innovation programmes - publication of mid-programme report

- On the 28 October we published our mid programme report for the £200m Flood & Coastal Innovation Programmes (FCIP). The report builds upon the [mid programme summary published in June 2024](#). It provides more detail for FCERM practitioners and relevant trade organisations to learn about the innovation, challenges, delivery and embedding activities associated with the innovation programmes to date.
- The achievements of these programmes include:
 - 97 new natural flood management schemes delivered, using natural processes to slow the flow of floodwaters through techniques such as leaky dams, wetland ponds and enhanced marine habitats
 - Almost 600 new monitoring sensors around the country to measure river levels and provide accurate and timely warnings ahead of flooding
 - 25 PhD positions funded to train the next generation of flood experts and develop new approaches to the challenges of climate change and extreme weather
- For more information visit our [website](#) or email innovativeresilience@environment-agency.gov.uk

Natural Flood Management (NFM) Programme

- We have completed assurance of the NFM Programme project business cases and have 34 projects that are now entering delivery. We are working with a further 4 projects to strengthen their business cases. More information can be found at - [Natural flood management programme - GOV.UK](#).
- We have developed a National NFM heat map to help us target our investment in NFM in the future alongside other resilience measures to get the biggest outcomes from a flood risk reduction perspective.

Statutory Drainage & Wastewater Management Plans (DWMPs)

- As of 1 September 2024, Drainage & Wastewater Management Plans ([DWMPs](#)) have been made statutory under Section 79 of the Environment Act 2021. This now makes the preparation, publication, and maintenance of a DWMP a statutory obligation for sewerage undertakers.
- This offers a unique opportunity for companies (with support from Water UK) to publicly demonstrate how they will improve their performance over the short, medium and long-term whilst also recognising pressures such as population growth, urban creep and climate change.
- The root causes of both storm overflow spills and surface water flooding can be the same; a lack of capacity within the drainage network, operational failures such as sewer blockages, and collapses. The investments identified through DWMPs will therefore have multiple benefits. We expect this to provide partnership working opportunities where companies are able to show leadership and collaboration with others.

Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCRM) Research

- We are supporting the [Centre for Doctoral Training for Resilient Flood Futures \(Flood-CDT\)](#). The first cohort of PhDs started in September 2024. They are based at the universities of Bristol, Loughborough, Newcastle and Southampton. We recently advertised projects for the second cohort of PhDs. Full time and part time positions are available, with funding. Further details are available on the [Flood-CDT website](#).
- We established a new environmental evidence synthesis community of practice (EESyCOP). The practice of evidence synthesis is developing rapidly. There is a real and urgent need to develop evidence synthesis capability to get evidence to decision makers in a way they can use.
- The aim of the COP is to share ways of working, information, improve capacity and capability for evidence synthesis. The group will help to standardise approaches for collating and synthesising evidence and communicating evidence to decision-makers. Member organisations include Collaboration for Environmental Evidence, Natural England, Forest Research, and Nature Scotland.

FCRM capital programme update

FCRM Capital Programme

The [current FCRM Capital Investment programme](#) started in April 2021. To date we have delivered over 300 projects achieving over 94,000 properties better protected in the first 3 ½ years of the programme, having invested £2.5bn. The programme has also created or improved 2,565 hectares of habitat, enhanced 237km of rivers and delivered 54 natural flood management projects.

Reservoir Safety Reform Programme

We have updated our [information page](#) with the latest news and progress from the Reservoir Safety Reform Programme. This provides updates on how the programme is developing and signposting on how to get involved in research work that will help shape how the reforms are developed. These include:

- **Wales is joining the Reservoir Safety Reform Programme** - The Deputy First Minister for Wales confirmed the Welsh Government's intention to join the Reservoir Safety Reform Programme and implement the reforms across Wales. You can find information on the Reservoir Safety Reform Programme for Wales in both the [Welsh](#) and [English](#) language.
- **Review of reservoir on-site emergency flood plans** - Earlier this year a survey was launched to gather evidence of the costs and benefits of on-site emergency flood plans. The findings from this research were presented at a webinar on 25 July with stakeholders. The webinar recording and presentation are available on our information page: [Records, registers and management systems](#)
- **Single reservoir owner survey** - In September, we carried out a telephone survey with single reservoir owners. The data we have collected from the survey will feed into and shape the Reservoir Safety Reform programme. If you would like to be part of the focus group, please contact RSR_Programme@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Risk Assessment for Reservoir Safety (RARS)

- In addition to its role as the Enforcement Authority for reservoirs in England, the EA is also the largest reservoir owner in the UK with 221 large raised reservoirs, most of which are used for flood storage. These reservoirs fall under the Reservoirs Act 1975 which places strict management practices in place, particularly around inspection and supervision.
- With the expected lowering of the threshold for regulation from 25,000m³ to 10,000m³, we have been working to identify our smaller reservoirs that will be subjected to regulation in the future. Data is being collected and improvement works being undertaken where required.
- Risk Assessment for Reservoir Safety (RARS) is an industry best practice guide for the assessment of risk from reservoirs. It takes a three-tiered approach to assess and quantify the risk posed by reservoirs.
- We are putting all our Large Raised Reservoirs through the RARS assessment process, and we are currently undertaking Tier 2 assessments on our full portfolio. This will enable us to demonstrate that the risks posed from our reservoirs are acceptable and enable us to target interventions where risks can be reduced further. We are adapting the guide for use on Flood Storage Reservoirs (FSRs) and hope to share these amendments with industry so that partner organisations can more easily undertake RARS assessments on their own FSRs.

International

- We participated in International Guidelines for Natural and Nature Based Features for Flood Risk Management Conference in Washington DC.
- Philip Duffy and Caroline Douglass travelled to the Netherlands from 11 – 13 November 2024. The visit continued to build on the longstanding existing partnerships with Dutch counterparts and enhanced further the knowledge sharing and expertise between organisations.
- The trip included visits to the Maeslant Barrier in Rotterdam, a water treatment plant near Utrecht and to a series of flood defence measures including a water pumping station and levees. Meetings took place with representatives of Rijkswaterstaat (RWS) including Martin

Wijnen, RWS Director General and Bart Vonk, RWS Coordinating Advisor for Barriers. At Hoogheemraadschap De Stichtse Rijnlanden (HSDR) - one of the 21 Dutch regional water authorities, meetings took place with HSDR Chair Jeroen Haan and Marian Bootink, HSDR Crisis.

- In Rotterdam the City's Acting Chief Resilience Officer Johan Verlinde discussed the challenges faced by cities such as Rotterdam and London against the backdrop of a changing climate. A wide variety of topics were covered across the three days including incident management, asset management and the challenges of ageing infrastructure, managing flood risk and community awareness, water treatment methodologies, waterway management and finally innovations sustainable urban drainage solutions.

FCERM publications and announcements: links

- [£200 million flood and coastal innovation programmes: mid-programme report](#) – an update on the programmes, highlighting the innovations and challenges in achieving flood and coastal resilience, adaptation, and coastal transition
- [Rural flood resilience partnership: 2024 to 2026 work plan](#) - a work plan developed in partnership to support the objectives of the FCERM Strategy Roadmap and help vulnerable rural communities when faced with flooding
- [Post - incident reporting for reservoirs: annual report 2023](#) - details on the reservoir incidents that were reported to us during the year under review
- [Natural flood management programme](#) - with the updated list of projects that are ready for implementation
- [River Wye: conditions, closures and restrictions](#) – river conditions, restrictions and safety information for boaters on the Rivers Wye and Lugg
- [River Thames: corporate accommodations tariff](#) – 2024 to 2025 tariff which applies to all accommodation licences granted to corporate bodies of any kind
- [River Thames: private accommodations tariff](#) – 2024 to 2025 tariff which applies to all accommodation licences for private structures
- [River Thames scheme](#) – highlighting updates from the recently concluded 5-week supplementary consultation

Latest Current Magazine and Innovation Supplement

- The latest editions of [Innovation Magazine](#) and [Current Magazine Autumn edition 2024](#) are now available.
- Current Magazine is produced to promote innovation, share, and standardise across the flood and coastal community. The adjoining Innovation supplement is recognition of the growing importance of shared innovation for collective benefit. You can find past editions [here](#), and you can subscribe [here](#).

Flood scheme openings and updates:

- [Public exhibitions for Hurst Spit to Lymington](#) - The Environment Agency & partners are encouraging people to visit public exhibitions sharing draft proposals for the coastline between Hurst Spit and Lymington.
- [Severn Valley communities invited to learn about plans for area](#) - Communities along the Severn Valley are invited to find out more about plans to manage water and enhance communities at a series of drop-in events.
- [Updated plans to protect Pevensey and Eastbourne from flooding](#) - Efforts include reversing power of the storms as public gets to shape project
- [New gate installed at Leigh flood storage area](#) - More than 1,400 homes better-protected from flooding as Kent facility will hold 25 per cent more water than now, enough to fill 600 Olympic swimming pools.
- [Devon and Cornwall farmers urged to plan for heavier rainfall](#) - Farmers are being urged not to take chances and gamble high-risk crops against a changing climate in Devon and Cornwall.
- [Inspiring ‘Unpave the Way Garden’ to be moved to Whitaker Park](#) - Showcasing innovative approaches to managing flood risk and sustainable garden design the garden is set to be opened at its new permanent home in Rawtenstall.
- [Restoration](#) of Gloucester flood embankment helping to better protect around 50 properties from flooding
- [Property flood resilience measures completed - Kent](#), protecting 119 properties in the community at significant risk of river-flooding in East Peckham, Kent
- [Newlyn coastal research and development project](#) - allowing us to investigate their performance in an intertidal location which experiences high wave energy

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