

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE

FRIDAY 11 JULY 2025, 10AM – 1PM

Friends Meeting House, 6 Mount Street, Manchester M2 5NS

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 25 April 2025 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.	Report from the RFCC Finance & Business Assurance Sub-group (Papers + Information Item B) To discuss and consider the recommendations from the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub-group. <i>Introduced by Adam Walsh, EA FCRM Programme Manager, Cumbria and Lancashire (C&L) and Sally Whiting, EA RFCC Senior Advisor (GMMC)</i>	For information and discussion and approval
10:50	4.	Investment Reform Consultation To provide the opportunity to discuss the consultation proposals and our responses. <i>Introduced by Adrian Lythgo, RFCC Chairman and Nick Pearson, EA Area Flood Risk Manager (GMMC)</i>	For information and discussion
11:25		BREAK	
11:35	5.	Peatland Restoration <i>Presented by Kate Morley, RFCC Member - Conservation, Dave Brown, EA Senior FCRM Advisor (GMMC) and Dewi Jackson, Project Manager, Moors for the Future</i>	For information and discussion
12:10	6.	North West NaFRA2 Update <i>Presented by Marina Powell Currie, EA Senior FCRM Advisor (C&L) and Katy Holt, EA FCRM PSO Team Leader (GMMC)</i>	For information and discussion
12:30	7.	Climate Change Impact Assessment <i>Presented by Carolyn Otley, RFCC Member - Communities</i>	For information and discussion
12:55	8.	Any Other Business	
13:00		CLOSE	

INFORMATION PAPERS

Info item A	Briefing paper for the Mayfield Park Site Visit	NW RFCC specific
Info item B	Papers 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	FRMP2 Update Paper	NW RFCC specific
Info item F	National FCRM Update Paper	National EA
Info item G	Calendar of Meetings 2026 2027	NW RFCC Specific

Future RFCC meetings

24 October 2025 (Face to Face meeting)
23 January 2026 (Virtual Meeting)

Future RFCC Finance & Business Assurance Sub-group meetings

10 October 2025 (Virtual Meeting)
9 January 2026 (Virtual Meeting)

Afternoon site visit – Mayfield Park

Following the RFCC meeting, we invite Members and officers to join a visit to [Mayfield Park](#), the first new city-centre park to be created in Manchester for over 100 years and the centrepiece of a 24-acre development of residential, commercial and retail buildings.

While not primarily a flood risk project, it has transformed a previously derelict area of the city into a biodiverse expanse of green and blue infrastructure which delivers multiple benefits and the River Medlock, which was previously heavily culverted in the area, has been daylighted.

The design accommodates a one in 100-year+ climate change flood scenario. Nature-based systems to accommodate flooding have been favoured (e.g. rain gardens) and the wildscape areas allow for flooding, with the riverbed planted to ensure an instant impact.

In areas designed to accommodate flood water and high river flows, nature-based systems intercept and slow water discharge and encourage evapotranspiration. For example, rain gardens feature moisture-tolerant planting that absorbs excess surface runoff, instead of allowing rain to drain into the river and contribute to flood risks downstream.

After the 1pm buffet lunch following the RFCC meeting, visit attendees will be asked to wait in the RFCC meeting room and at 2pm will make their way over to St Peter's Square to get the Metrolink to Piccadilly. Once at Piccadilly the group will make its way to Mayfield Park, an approximate 5 minute walk.

The visit will be for approximately 1 hour in duration.

North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee

Draft Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 25 April 2025

Held virtually via MS Teams

Attendees:

Members

Adrian Lythgo, Chairman
Councillor Giles Archibald, Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Councillor Stephen Clarke, Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Councillor Jane Hugo, Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Councillor Alan Quinn, Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Councillor Tony Davies, Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Councillor Jaqueline Owen, Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Councillor Elizabeth Grey, Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership (Part attendance)
Councillor Mhairi Doyle, Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Councillor Mark Goldsmith, Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Kate Morley, EA Appointed Member – Conservation (part attendance)
Chris Findley, EA Appointed Member – Development and Sustainable Investment
Carolyn Otley, EA Appointed Member – Communities
Susannah Bleakley, EA Appointed Member – Coastal
Amy Cooper, EA Appointed Member - Water and Sewerage Industry
Neville Elstone, EA Appointed Member – General Business and Assurance
Paul Barnes, EA Appointed Member – Agriculture and Land Management
Stewart Davies, Environment Agency Board Member for the North West

Environment Agency Officers

Ian Crewe, Area Director, Greater Manchester Merseyside and Cheshire (GMMC)
Nick Pearson, Area Flood Risk Manager (Greater Manchester)
Mary-Rose Muncaster, Area Flood Risk Manager (Merseyside and Cheshire)
Richard Knight, Area Flood Risk Manager (Cumbria)
Fiona Duke, Area Flood Risk Manager (Lancashire)
Anthony Swarbrick, Area Operations Manager (Cumbria & Lancashire) (C&L)
Sally Whiting, Senior FCRM Advisor
Andy Tester, FCRM Programming Manager (Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire) (GMMC)
Rachel Harmer, RFCC Secretariat
Sarah Fontana, Capital Programme Co-ordinator
Boaz Sadeh, FCRM Programming Senior Advisor (C&L)
Tom Bakes, FCRM Programming Advisor (C&L)
Mia Mullender, Local Authority Capital Projects Advisor (C&L)
Robert Taylor, Local Authority Capital Projects Advisor (C&L)
Rachael Broadhurst, Local Authority Capital Projects Advisor (GMMC)
Gary Hilton, Local Authority Capital Projects Advisor (GMMC)
Debra Glover, Local Authority Capital Projects Advisor (GMMC)
Stuart Mault, FCRM Programming Advisor (C&L)

Local Authority Observers (Councillors and Officers):

Jason Harte, Westmorland and Furness Council
Ali Harker, Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Councillor Bob Kelly, Cumberland Council
Andrew Harrison, Cumberland Council
Karl Melville, Cumberland Council
Clare Nolan-Barnes, Blackpool Council
John Davies, Lancashire County Council
Lorah Cheyne, Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Imran Munshi, Blackburn with Darwen Council
Sarah Wardle, Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership (Part attendance)
Laura Gilmore, Liverpool City Council
Francis Comyn, Rochdale Borough Council (Part attendance)
Jill Holden, Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
David Boyer, Warrington Borough Council
Jim Turton, Warrington Borough Council
Matt Winnard, Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Ellie Rigby, Cheshire East Council
Dan Matthews, Cheshire East Council
Katie Eckford, NW Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator / Coastal Group Secretariat
Johnny Phillips, United Utilities Business Development Manager

Other observers:

Talha Esmail, United Utilities
Terri McMillan, incoming North West RFCC Member

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

Adrian Lythgo opened the meeting, introduced himself, and welcomed everyone.

He conveyed apologies from: Councillor Adam Langan (Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership); Councillor Tony Brennan and Councillor Daniel Barrington (Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership); and Councillor Philip Cusack (Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Partnership).

Members noted and approved the following correctly nominated RFCC LLFA Member substitutes:

- Councillor Tony Davies representing the Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Partnership on behalf of Councillor Philip Cusack
- Dave Boyer representing the Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership on behalf of Councillor Adam Langan

During the meeting it was questioned as to whether Councillor Jacqueline Owen had been correctly nominated by Councillor Laura Boyle to attend the meeting and place any votes on her behalf. Adrian Lythgo advised that any votes cast by Councillor Owen at the meeting today would not be counted. Following the meeting it was clarified that Councillor Owen had been correctly nominated by Councillor Boyle and subsequently any votes placed by Councillor Owen during the meeting were noted and accepted.

Adrian advised no declarations of interest had been received and he welcomed Terri McMillan to the meeting, who will be joining the RFCC from 1 July 2025.

Adrian highlighted that in his update to Members circulated earlier this week, there was a letter from the outgoing EA Chairman, Alan Lovell, confirming the agreement by the EA Board to the national investment programme for 2025/26. Adrian then reflected back on the outcome of the Local Choices and programme consenting process which the Committee agreed to in March 2025. With a total North West GiA allocation of £122.4 Million, he noted the North West finished in a significantly better position for communities at risk of flooding than looked likely in January when the initial allocations were announced. We secured the highest allocation of any of the 12 RFCCs nationally.

He remarked that Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) now have the very significant challenge of delivering a very large one-year programme against the background of tight resource across the public sector and the Committee will need to continue to play a constructive and supportive role in achieving delivery over the next twelve months.

Adrian again thanked all colleagues for the patience and speed with which they collaborated in a very short timescale to enable the Committee to achieve that substantial allocation to the North West, recognising the very short timescales there were for dialogue and consultation during the January to March period and the inevitable bumpiness in process that was associated with that. He advised given the timescales and ongoing policy uncertainties related to the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), it is inevitable that timescales associated with 2026/27 will also be tight and that the strength of relationships that we have across the North West between the different agencies will help the Committee to respond to another set of challenging timescales that don't resemble what we have been used to in the past.

Adrian advised he also circulated a letter from the twelve RFCC Chairs to the Floods Minister, which outlines some of the challenges going forwards, which this Committee has also highlighted. He advised Chairs will continue to seek to influence both the timescales and the content of the Spending Review as far as flood funding is concerned.

In relation to today's agenda, Adrian advised that the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group have asked for more time to consider some of the items that were originally scheduled for discussion today, which will now be discussed at the July RFCC meeting. As a result there is more time available to discuss other important items without time pressure, including the updated guidance on the use of the increased Local Levy Quick Win funding.

Ian Crewe concurred with Adrian's comments particularly around the Local Choices process and on behalf of the EA he noted it has been a really tricky time since the New Year, where officers were under pressure dealing with the flooding and its associated impacts, dealing with asset maintenance and management challenges, in addition to working through the Local Choices process. He thanked Members for making this period of time as painless as it could have been. He thanked the Committee for their input and support to what has been a complicated process.

There were no further comments or questions.

25 (18) Minutes of the RFCC meeting held on 14 March and matters arising from the January 2025 RFCC meeting

Councillor Giles Archibald enquired if there is sufficient activity underway to enable a July RFCC meeting agenda item on peatland restoration. Adrian advised there is peatland restoration work ongoing in the North West, in addition to some broader developments nationally, and links into the wider land management issues which are to be presented by Kate Morley today. He advised he believed there is enough meaningful information to have an item and there will be consultation with interested parties to prepare for this.

For clarification Rachel Harmer provided the detail of a small amendment that needs to be made to the draft minutes of the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group (F&BASG) meeting on 11 April. The minute of a comment raised by Councillor Giles Archibald at the F&BASG meeting should have included the word 'not', so it should read 'he stated that he was not comfortable with voting on the proposal today because he feels Cumbria has not received enough information'.

Adrian provided an update on the matters arising from the January 2025 meeting:

- Rainfall data
A link has been provided for access to a hydrology data explorer which provides up to date information on rainfall at any point in time.
- PFR Framework question
Responses to the questions raised by Councillor Philip Cusack were shared with Members earlier this week.

Adrian advised there were no matters arising from the meeting on 14 March as the whole meeting was to deal with the consent to the GiA Local Choices allocation for 2025/26, the EA asset maintenance programme and the Local Levy allocations for 2025/26.

The minutes of the RFCC meeting held on 14 March were nominated by Councillor Giles Archibald and seconded by Councillor Jane Hugo.

The minutes of the 14 March RFCC were approved by the Committee.

There were no further questions or comments raised.

25 (19) Report from the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group meeting

Neville Elstone reported the good discussion and debate which took place at the RFCC F&BASG meeting and hoped to be able to spend time today talking about Quick Wins funding, the RFCC Business Plan and about our financial position now.

Andy Tester provided an overview of the investment programme which forecasts that 1,439 properties will be better protected from flooding this year against a target of 1,499 properties. He reported this is a good outcome noting a tough quarter with changes to the programme in terms of severe flooding impacts and recovery costs, which have slowed in-year delivery.

Members noted that better protecting over 1,400 properties is a success and that the outcomes not quite achieved this year will now be achieved in 2025/26 or future years, giving us a strong start going into 2025/26.

Andy advised in terms of our contribution to the national target of 25,000 properties for the year (forecasting circa 27,000 properties), circa 6% are in the North West.

In terms of capital funding for this year, the North West total is £113.4 Million, which includes £103.1 Million GiA, £7.6 Million Local Levy and £2.6 Million of Partnership Funding contributions.

Forecasts at mid-March 2025 showed we are expecting to draw down £110.4 Million this year, which is £3 Million less than allocated and £5 Million less than forecasts reported at the last meeting. This is partly due to several projects being deferred or delayed (details in the report), and following the in-year national instruction to reduce the GiA over-programme (forecast overspend) to zero. The latest forecast shows a year-end overspend (remaining over-programme) of 0.1% (£129k) for the North West. Andy noted that even though we have had success in delivering outcomes and landing the GiA allocation, it has been a tough year and throughout there have been many challenges.

Actual spend at the end of February was 82% of the full year forecast. EA schemes have spent 80% of their forecast (just under £19 Million) with £88 Million left to spend. LA schemes have claimed 94% of their forecast, with £1.15 Million (6%) still left to claim for 2024/25.

In terms of capital (GiA) efficiencies, Andy advised there is always a timelag with reporting with the quarter 4 figures yet to be received. For quarters 1 to 3, total efficiency claims have been around £2.59 Million, 41% of our annual target. Andy advised it is unlikely that the target will be achieved. Despite this, we have seen a year-on-year increase in terms of North West efficiencies reported.

With regard to the Capital investment programme for 2025/26, Members again noted the North West has the largest settlement for GiA in the country, totalling £122 Million, which provides a total project expenditure of just under £135 Million.

Andy summarised the challenges throughout 2024/25 including:

- Severe flooding events across the North West in January 2025
- National steer to manage the capital over-programme down to the allocation
- Delays to Local Choices impacting in-year delivery
- Reduced timeframe of the investment programme (finishing a year early in March 2026).

Adrian Lythgo advised he wanted to return to his opening remarks - to compare the 2025/26 programme allocation of £122 Million with the forecast spend this year of circa £110 Million. This emphasises the scale and significance of the programme to be delivered in 2025/26, and the work this Committee does to provide resource to Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) in delivery of that programme is just as important as ever.

Resolved: The North West RFCC:

- Noted the progress on delivering the 2024/25 capital and resource programmes.

- Noted the approved FCERM Investment Programme and Asset Maintenance Programme allocations for financial year 2025/26 and the associated targets.

Votes in favour: Councillor Quinn, Councillor Archibald, Councillor Doyle, Councillor Davies, Councillor Clarke, Councillor Hugo, Councillor Owen, Dave Boyer, Kate Morley, Amy Cooper, Carolyn Otley, Susannah Bleakley and Chris Findley.

Local Levy Programme

Ahead of the update on the Local Levy programme and balances, Andy Tester referred to the RFCC F&BA Sub Group meeting where Members had asked to defer the vote on the Local Levy minimum balance proposals until their next meeting in June 2025. Members noted the two key discussion points on the level of risk, and the Minimum Working and Absolute Minimum balances.

Councillor Giles Archibald highlighted he just wanted to be sure that we are representing the discussion on the minimum balances. He reiterated his comment that his concern was not that the Committee should agree an Absolute Minimum balance, but that the paper stated it could never be used.

Adrian Lythgo advised he was not present at the RFCC F&BA Sub Group meeting but understands that colleagues wanted to have more time to discuss what the minimum balance should be, to be able to receive some more input from officers, and also to consult some of their wider council colleagues.

Resolved: The North West RFCC:

Noted the RFCC F&BA Sub Group agreed to defer the vote on a Local Levy Minimum Balance to their next meeting in June 2025.

Votes in favour: Councillor Quinn, Councillor Archibald, Councillor Davies, Councillor Clarke, Councillor Hugo, Councillor Owen, Kate Morley, Amy Cooper, Carolyn Otley, Susannah Bleakley and Chris Findley.

Andy Tester advised the total Local Levy resource at the start of 2024/25 was £15.757 Million (made up of income, balance carried forward and interest earned). The latest spend forecast for 2024/25 is £5.996 Million, a decrease by approx. £0.7 Million in comparison to the January 2025 RFCC meeting. This would leave a remaining balance of £9.767 Million at the end of 2024/25. Members noted a breakdown and brief reasons for some of the reductions in forecast spend.

The 2025/26 forecast also includes the two Local Levy requests for Lindow Primary School, Alderley Edge (£90k) and River Winster Rehabilitation Project (£164k), which are seeking approval at today's meeting.

One of the schemes reporting reduced Local Levy spend was Hambleton. Fiona Duke advised the amount of funding for Hambleton may need to be looked at as the works are having to be paused and only a small amount of Local Levy will be used. Councillor Stephen Clarke raised his concern about the delay and enquired as to the cause. Fiona explained that this is due to a large funding gap, which was previously due to be filled with government

funding, but which has now been removed. The scheme is now not fully funded and cannot progress to full business case and therefore will not begin construction this financial year. Fiona advised an amount of GiA has been allocated through Local Choices so work is continuing alongside Wyre Borough Council to discharge some of the planning permissions and establish the marine licences. She reported that further information will be available on The Flood Hub next week and can also be shared with Councillor Clarke outside of the meeting.

For the 2025/26 Local Levy programme, Andy Tester advised we start the financial year with a (forecast) total balance of £14.8 Million. This is made up of £4.681 Million income, £9.761 Million carried forward from 2024/25 and £0.4 Million interest on balances.

The spend forecast for 2025/26 is £10.1 Million, which includes the recommended Local Levy requests for Lindow Primary School and the Winster Rehabilitation Project. The North West is then forecast to finish the year carrying a balance of £4.732 Million.

He advised it is important to note that at this point in 2024 we were forecasting to drop below the zero balance level in 2026/27 (which is not permissible), so the work that's been taking place around Local Choices and also the additional allocation of the £9.2 Million. This has given the North West RFCC a stronger balance going into the next financial year, where there is a level of uncertainty and there will continue to be some fluctuation in the programme.

Local Levy Requests

Lindow Primary School Flood Alleviation Scheme

Andy Tester advised this Local Levy request came back to the April RFCC F&BA Sub Group and was to increase the Local Levy allocation from their original £30k request in April 2024 to £90k. The RFCC F&BA Sub Group has recommended this for approval.

Resolved: The RFCC approved the Local Levy request for £90k.

Votes in favour: Councillor Quinn, Councillor Archibald, Councillor Owen, Councillor Clarke, Councillor Hugo, Councillor Doyle, Councillor Davies, Kate Morley, Amy Cooper, Carolyn Otley, Susannah Bleakley, Dave Boyer and Chris Findley.

Winster Rehabilitation Project

Andy Tester advised this Local Levy request of £164k was recommended for approval by the RFCC F&BASG, but with the condition that the project carries out a further stage of options appraisal working with contractor 'Land and Water', and within the wider context of the Our Future Coast project, to confirm the most effective and appropriate method. The recommended proposal has the Local Levy attached to minimise any delay to the project.

Councillor Jane Hugo asked that the outputs or update report on the options appraisal be made available to the Committee to show the work that has been completed. Neville Elstone confirmed this will be available and is expected to be provided to the RFCC F&BA Sub Group in June.

Resolved: The RFCC approves the Local Levy request for £164k with the condition that the project carries out a further stage of options appraisal involving Carl Green, which will be reported back to the RFCC F&BA Sub Group in June.

Votes in favour: Councillor Quinn, Councillor Archibald, Councillor Davies, Councillor Doyle, Councillor Clarke, Councillor Hugo, Councillor Owen, Kate Morley, Amy Cooper, Carolyn Otley, Susannah Bleakley, Dave Boyer and Chris Findley.

Property Flood Resilience – Local Levy Support Proposal

Neville Elstone highlighted the good discussion at the April F&BA Sub Group and noted some really important points had been raised. It was agreed that further work to develop the proposal is needed and will be brought back to the June RFCC F&BA Sub Group for further consideration.

Councillor Giles Archibald advised his objection to the current proposal is not one of principle, but one of condition and that he does not wish to hold up progress on the project.

Neville Elstone and Councillor Giles Archibald agreed to have a discussion outside of the meeting and there were no further questions or comments.

Resolved: The RFCC notes that further work is required on the Property Flood Resilience Local Levy proposal, which will be brought back to the June RFCC F&BA Sub Group meeting for further consideration.

Votes in favour: Councillor Quinn, Councillor Archibald, Councillor Davies, Councillor Doyle, Councillor Clarke, Councillor Hugo, Councillor Owen, Kate Morley, Amy Cooper, Carolyn Otley, Susannah Bleakley, Dave Boyer and Chris Findley.

RFCC Business Plan Update

Sally Whiting provided a brief RFCC Business Plan progress update, referring to additional detail in the information papers and on the North West RFCC SharePoint site.

Members noted there has been good progress overall and of the 21 projects that have been progressed 5 are complete, 13 are progressing well of which 3 are nearing completion, and there are 3 currently behind schedule or resolving issues.

In 2024/25 the Business Plan received a Local Levy investment allocation of £1.375 Million, with a current spend forecast of £1.347 Million. The proposed programme for 2025/26 totals £1.24 Million and the indicative investment need for 2026/27 is again around £1.2 Million.

The spend forecast for 2024/25 is slightly over the allocation £1.375 Million. The final spend year end figures still need to be confirmed, but the Committee noted that variances are all either reprofiling from the previous year or funding that wasn't needed.

Members noted the proposed programme for 2025/26 of £1.24 Million, including two proposed changes which were recommended by the FBA Sub Group:

- **Uplifts to reflect cost increases** – 3% annual increases for the work programme being delivered by Newground (the Flood Hub and the support that they provide to the EA and LAs around community engagement) and for the Natural Flood Management (NFM) technical appraisal resource which sits within Mersey Forest. This equates to an additional £9k in 2025/26 and an additional £18k in 2026/27, a total of just over £27k.
- **A one-year extension to the Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator role.** The proposal is to extend the role to March 2027, which will then align the role with the other RFCC funded roles. We noted the North West SMP Co-ordinator role has been held up as national best practice. This proposal represents additional Local Levy spend of £54.6k and covers the additional one year of funding including a 3% uplift.

Sally advised that she is currently working with the Partnerships to review their strategic aims under each of the ambitions with a view to identifying if there are further projects that any of the partnerships wish to bring forward and progress.

There were no further comments or questions.

Resolved: The North West RFCC:

- Noted the update on the Business Plan implementation.
- Approved the increased funding (3% annually) for projects ID5,6,7 and 9A to cover increased costs, representing total additional Local Levy investment of £27.1k.
- Approved the extension of the funding for the SMP Co-ordinator role for 1 year to March 2027, including the 3% uplift, representing total additional Local Levy investment of £54.6k.
- Approved the proposed programme and Local Levy investment in Business Plan projects for 2025/26.

Votes in favour: Councillor Quinn, Councillor Archibald, Councillor Clarke, Councillor Doyle, Councillor Hugo, Councillor Owen, Kate Morley, Amy Cooper, Carolyn Otley, Susannah Bleakley, Dave Boyer and Chris Findley.

Quick Win funding updated guidance

Sarah Fontana provided Members with an overview of the Quick Win funding review. For the last three years, the Quick Win funding has been set at £100k per partnership and has been extremely welcomed across the region. For 2025/26 only, in recognition of the challenging GiA funding position, the Committee agreed to raise this to £250k per partnership.

The current Quick Wins funding guidance was comprehensively reviewed in 2022 by a Local Authority-led Technical Advisory Group, but in light of the significant uplift this guidance has been looked at to ensure it remains fit for purpose. Aside from some minor updates the guidance is still relevant and correct, so no major changes are proposed, but there will be some minor document references and date amendments and an additional appendix relating to this year's uplift, with the intention to keep this funding as flexible as possible within the grant claiming rules we have to work within.

Sarah highlighted certain elements of the guidance including what it could be used for but certain exclusions that it can't be.

The application process for the fund will be kept as straightforward as possible, but due to the possible increased value of projects, there will be increasing scrutiny and a proportionate amount of evidence will be expected to support the higher value bids.

LA officers were encouraged to have early conversations with Sarah or their LA Capital Project Advisor in order for support to be provided through the process.

She advised the draft refreshed guidance has already been shared with one person in each Partnership for them to do a sense check and encouraged people to contact her if there were any questions or queries or suggestions on how to further improve the process. Sarah also asked for the partnerships to provide her with detail of what the increased allocation has been used for, later in the year.

There were no further questions or comments.

25 (20) United Utilities Update – PR24 Final Determination and Sustainable Water Fund Overview

Johnny Phillips provided Members with an overview of the Price Review 2024 Final Determination and United Utilities Sustainable Water Fund. The presentation covered:

- working to drive down the storm drain overflow frequency over 400 sites across the network, with a look to see if projects have opportunities for potential hybrid work where rainwater can be removed and separated out from combined sewers to reduce the amount of grey storage currently needing to be built.
- getting a head start on future targets by reducing the need to invest in grey storage.
- securing funding to increase network resilience to the impacts of climate change and consequences of flooding work to remove rainwater over the next five years in six catchments to reduce their risk of flooding.
- working to proactively invest in providing capacity and working with partners to reduce the flood risk to communities through blue-green partnership schemes and using the Integrated Water Management Plan established in Greater Manchester and Liverpool City Region.

Members received an overview of UU's Advanced WINEP (Water Industry National Environment Programme), a rainwater management programme focusing on unlocking rainwater management solutions in the catchment areas of storm overflows, which go beyond the requirements set out in the 2025 – 30 environmental programme. This will drive £281 Million of investment (£231 Million through UUW and £50 Million leveraged from partners) for delivering wider environmental outcomes.

An overview of the Sustainable Water Fund was provided, which offers the opportunity to deliver rainwater management solutions in partnership with UU in specific areas. This fund forms part of UU's Advanced WINEP programme which unlocks early investment in rainwater management to address storm overflows.

Councillor Giles Archibald enquired about peat restoration by UU. Johnny advised he will provide the name of UU's peat restoration lead outside of the meeting. Adrian thanked Johnny for this and advised this contact will be able to help plan a substantive future RFCC agenda item on peat restoration.

Councillor Alan Quinn asked Johnny to share the information on the rainwater schemes mentioned today and advised he has an interest in these as a Prestwich councillor.

Fiona Duke advised Preston City Council will be meeting with the EA in mid May in order for the Council's senior managers to receive up-to-date training on climate change and flooding. She asked if she could share Johnny's contact details with them noting that Preston is one of UU's priority areas.

Councillor Stephen Clarke raised his concern about the actions being taken by developers and the need for a plan with regard to connecting to sewers. Johnny advised the automatic right to connect to water company drainage systems is still a barrier for UU to operating a sustainable network.

Adrian thanked Members for their comments and advised that the RFCC Chairs have been told by Defra that, although there is no certain news about Schedule 3 being taken forward, the Government have recognised the significant challenge regarding the automatic right to connect.

Paul Barnes supported the work being carried out by UU and enquired about measuring the increase in natural capital benefit. Johnny advised UU has a methodology for natural capital calculations based on the industry standard tool.

David Boyer advised this is good news and anything which can bring funding into this area is to be welcomed. He advised there had been a similar discussion at a recent Cheshire Mid Mersey meeting and one area of concern is another funding round, which take time and effort, but hopefully going forwards these can be streamlined as much as possible.

Kate Morley thanked Johnny for his presentation, advising this is a fantastic piece of work and enquired how the eligibility criteria for location is being put together. Johnny advised this is a first test to make sure that nothing is being double funded. He highlighted UU are working on 400 overflows on this AMP and anywhere where work is being carried out is marked off the map and a check is done to see if any other projects are taking place in the same area and a check can be carried out to see if the work will be eligible for the Advanced WINEP.

Adrian Lythgo noted from the presentation slide that all the areas pinpointed are areas where there have been major floods and where there are EA or LA led flood schemes in delivery. He asked if there are any opportunities about how shared investment might align in those locations. He also touched on the point raised earlier by Dave Boyer regarding LAs being stretched on revenue funding and wondered if where some of UU's investment leads to a specific flood benefit and LA's are keen on developing something, but haven't got the resource, that possibly the LA create a pipeline in that area and he suggested this conversation could be discussed offline.

Adrian thanked Johnny for his overview and advised he was interested to see the connection between the £9 Million in existing benefits and the outcomes of that, and then the scaling up to address the point raised by Paul Barnes. He noted with all of this there is still the need to scale up a lot more around surface water and its impacts.

There were no further comments or questions.

25 (21) Update and observations from the RFCC Conservation Member, including feedback from the national network of Conservation Members

Kate Morley provided the Committee with a number of observations as the NW RFCC's Conservation Member for the last twelve months and she shared information on what is happening within the RFCC Conservation Members' national network. This includes representatives from all the twelve RFCCs and is chaired by Phil Rothwell, Northumbria RFCC Chair. Members noted the purpose of this network is to ensure nature gets a fair hearing in structures and decisions and to share information, knowledge, ideas and best practice about what has and what hasn't worked in each region.

Kate advised work is underway and discussions are taking place around focusing and exploring ways in which environmental outcomes are not just one metric in the Partnership Funding calculator, but are intrinsic to what we do, especially in the face of the climate change and biodiversity crises. Conservation Members have had the benefit of presentations from across the Defra family, from learnings from the EA's £25 Million Natural Flood Management (NFM) Programme to updates from Defra's Rural Resilience Team on the £50 Million Internal Drainage Board (IDB) funds.

Discussion topics over the last twelve months have included:

- How Conservation Members can provide an environmental perspective at Committee meetings.
- Outcome Measure 4 – exploration of additional environmental outcomes benefits built into FCRM projects.
- Sharing and investigating local nature investment initiatives, which may deliver flood risk management benefits
- Work being undertaken by the British Standard Institute, funded by Defra and the devolved governments, to look to produce a Nature Investment Standard, launched in March 2025, designed to bring greater confidence and consistency to nature markets in the UK.
- Mainstreaming NFM and Working with Natural Processes update
- January 2025 Round Table discussion on NFM involving Phil Rothwell with Minister Hardy, where the Minister is keen on increasing investment in NFM. Members noted Defra are keen to use the experience gained through the £25 Million NFM Programme application process to inform how projects are assessed, they also wish to ensure proportionality.
- Environmental Land Management schemes (ELMS)
 - o Sustainable Farming Incentive (Closed to new applications in March 2025 with the fund being reviewed. Act as incentive payments to adopt sustainable farming practices and deliver environmental protection)

- Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier (geared at more complex and ambitious actions to maintain and restore habitats. This is where the main opportunity for NFM measure funding lies.)
- Landscape Recovery (56 projects currently in the development phase)
- The EA's Natural Processes Evidence Directory.

Adrian thanked Kate for providing an overview of what's happening in the conservation network and acknowledged there are a number of national initiatives which are seeking to mainstream nature-based solutions as part of the way we address flood risk, something which the North West RFCC has been doing for some time. It is good to hear all the learning is being captured and shared nationally.

From a Council perspective, Councillor Giles Archibald recognised that there are lots of things happening and many potential sources of funds and he asked how we view the Local Nature Recovery Strategies in terms of helping to organise our thoughts and our actions strategically in terms of land management.

Kate responded that she was herself not directly involved in Local Nature Recovery Strategies but was aware of their development by local authorities. She recognised the remaining challenge of bringing the right partners together to progress the opportunities, emphasising the importance of being able to build relationships with people to ensure they are coming with you on the journey for change, in order for those strategies to be delivered.

Councillor Giles Archibald raised his concern with regard to this process which he views as suboptimal and commented that this will result in less than the success that's needed given the extent of the biodiversity and climate crisis. He suggested that a discussion is held at a national senior level on the role of Local Nature Recovery Strategies and how they are implemented. Adrian Lythgo advised he will consult with his RFCC Chair colleagues to gauge the temperature around Local Nature Recovery Strategies in their areas and agreed there is a massive opportunity for wider benefits around aligned investment. Currently the wider benefits are not fully in focus at the front end of the investment process.

Councillor Alan Quinn highlighted the success of the beaver releases in Devon and also more locally.

Susannah Bleakley commented that in recognition of the significance and the importance that we are placing on NFM in our future work, are we confident that we have got the right connections with Natural England within this Committee or do other committees have other approaches, for example do they have a Natural England representative? She asked if senior officers in the EA are aligning priorities with Natural England and if there is a way to improve that partnership so that our priorities are better understood by Natural England and vice versa.

Kate Morley advised there is definitely an opportunity to reach out to Natural England colleagues and build on our current relationships to look at what their priorities are in the pipeline and how we can work together. Members also noted that currently Natural England is facing budget cuts and potential redundancies so is in a challenging position to respond to our approaches.

Adrian Lythgo reflected that the best crossover between Natural England and the RFCC family is within the Coastal Group. There are also some local project-based examples of good engagement with Natural England, for example in Cumbria around the NFM programme, but he highlighted it has been a considerable struggle to get that more strategic engagement for some time. He agreed to enquire and see what is happening across the country.

Ian Crewe thanked Kate for her presentation and advised the EA in the North West has a good strategic relationship with Natural England and he would be happy to raise the issues we have just discussed with them to see if there is more that we can do. With regard to more engagement with the RFCC, he asked if Members are aware of the increased activity the EA have particularly with the agricultural sector. He reported that EA farm inspections have increased hugely over the last 12 months and will continue to do so, which has been designed primarily to improve our relationship and understanding with the farming sector, and also to manage the water quality issues better in terms of potential pollution.

He asked Kate if she is aware of the increase in inspection regime and is there an opportunity there to work alongside the EA, bearing in mind there will be some crossover of conversation with the agricultural and land sectors in terms of ELMS. It was noted that more could be done which would improve information and understanding on both sides. Ian Crewe advised he will contact Kate outside of the meeting to take this forward.

ACTION: Ian Crewe

Paul Barnes advised on a piece of research which he encouraged the Committee to recognise – that all of the isotopes of nitrogen in the Irish Sea come from United Utilities, none from agricultural diffuse pollution.

Secondly, he remarked on what he sees is the abject failure of all the ELMS scheme, originally developed under Michael Gove's leadership, which has resulted in farmers being in crisis. He reflected that the farming sector have stopped listening to anybody. He also reflected what he sees as the limited success of the Landscape Recovery schemes in securing funding (only two of the 56 so far), limiting the benefits of the funding scheme, and potentially putting the funding in the hands of rich people.

Adrian clarified that the opinions expressed were Paul's personal opinions. Paul advised that the evidence on isotopes of nitrogen derives from Durham University and several other universities. Adrian then added that related to Paul's comment that Kate had highlighted the challenges associated with the implementation of ELMS in her excellent overview, and that from his perspective, particularly in upland areas the framework looks coherent until you realise that individual landowners have to apply for a whole series of individual measures. The RFCC and constituent partners can play a role in opportunity spotting and relationship management.

Neville Elstone advised there is significant change happening in this space and commented that he believed the devolution process will be positive with greater place-based focus for land management in future. He advised organisations in the land sector, such as the Forestry Commission and Natural England, are going to be tasked much more to work in the devolution space and incentives will be tweaked towards local place-based working. He advised the Local Nature Recovery Strategies will be part of that and the Land Use Framework consultation, that's currently ongoing, will be incredibly positive.

Adrian thanked Neville and recognised that a lot of opportunities are brought home in national policy more often than not when they are delivered at a local place level, and that a lot of the progress made is as a result of strong local partnership working. He advised the direction of this has to be positive and will strengthen this Committee's ability to work with our five sub-regions whatever devolution arrangements they decide upon, which can be a wholly positive opportunity, providing the funding is there to drive it forward.

Adrian thanked Kate for her update around the work of conservation. He confirmed that there are clear indications of Minister Hardy's wish to see more flood investment going into natural solutions, and when the funding consultation comes forward, we can respond as a Committee and see where some of the opportunities might be.

There were no further comments or questions.

25 (22) Any Other Business

Councillor Alan Quinn asked where the EA source their steel from and suggested that Defra and the EA should take the position of not importing Chinese steel instead sourcing steel from the UK, both to support our steel industry and its surrounding communities, and to reduce our carbon footprint. He commented this is also a matter of national security and that a letter should be written to Ministers.

Adrian suggested to Ian Crewe that an enquiry is made in terms of EA FCRM procurement to clarify what the current criteria are and whether there are any planned changes to make sure we are focussing on domestic steel production in our procurement of sheet steel used for FCRM. He highlighted what is done by the EA is done within the Office for Government Commerce and their framework and what advice is given to its agencies. He suggested that Local Authorities could usefully do the same in terms of their procurement decisions. Councillor Quinn agreed with this suggestion.

With regard to carbon, Nick Pearson advised that the Littleborough Flood Risk Management Scheme has been awarded an International Green Apple Award, which is an annual international campaign to recognise, reward and promote environmental best practice. He noted that although there's lots of steel being used in the scheme, it is using Eco Sheet Pile Plus, which is using electric arc furnaces to reduce the scheme's carbon footprint.

Carolyn Otley suggested the potential use of social value clauses within procurement and whether we're maximising their use to do things like creating community resilience funds that allow us to work with communities. Adrian advised this is probably something that we've got more direct control over with our Local Authority colleagues, but also with the EA as well and agreed this should also be picked up.

Finally, Adrian was keen to recognise that this is the last RFCC meeting that David Boyer will attend. David has been a senior officer at Warrington Borough Council for many years and chairs the Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership Group and has been a serial contributor to this Committee for a long time. He thanked David for the brilliant contribution he has made on behalf of both that Partnership and the people who are at risk of flooding in that area, and wished David all the very best for the future.

There were no further items of business. Adrian thanked colleagues for their contributions and advised he looked forward to seeing them in person at the July meeting. This will be in Manchester on Friday 11 July 2025.

DRAFT

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE

11 JULY 2025

**UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM THE
NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 25 APRIL 2025**

	ACTION/ MATTER ARISING	ACTIONED
1.	<p>Update and observations from the RFCC Conservation Member, including feedback from the national network of Conservation Members</p> <p>There was a brief discussion on the benefits of establishing stronger links at a strategic level between the RFCC and Natural England.</p> <p>Adrian Lythgo agreed to enquire and see what is happening with other RFCCs across the country.</p> <p>Ian Crewe advised he will contact Kate Morley outside of the meeting to take this forward.</p>	<p>This has been raised with Natural England at a strategic North West level and Natural England are receptive to establishing stronger links with the RFCC. A further meeting to discuss what form this takes is being arranged.</p>
2.	<p>AOB</p> <p>‘Councillor Alan Quinn asked where the EA source their steel from and suggested that Defra and the EA should take the position of not importing Chinese steel instead sourcing steel from the UK, both to support our steel industry and its surrounding communities, and to reduce our carbon footprint.’</p> <p>Adrian suggested to Ian Crewe that an enquiry is made in terms of EA FCRM procurement to clarify what the current criteria are and whether there are any planned changes to make sure we are focussing on domestic steel production in our procurement of sheet steel used for FCRM.’</p>	<p><i>We currently do not state in our scopes or frameworks that we must buy British and that has never been the client’s requirement (EA). The approach we take is that we ensure we use all the levers available to make the right choices for each project by giving due consideration to: sustainability, social value and value for money, levers available to us.</i></p> <p><i>Therefore, we currently ensure that the EA complies with the relevant PPN’s (Procurement Policy Note) and make changes as these are updated when we can. We currently publish our data on the following link https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/steel-public-procurement</i></p> <p><i>Alongside this data we publish a file note that shows how we are complying with this.</i></p> <p><i>We have emphasised to our supply chains that they must record how they are fulfilling their obligations both with the PPN and against other guidance mentioned such as supply chain visibility, construction toolkit, social value, Green Book etc.</i></p> <p>Looking at the procurement data, it does appear that the majority of steel used within our national capital projects is of UK origin but certainly not all of it.</p>

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NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE

Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group

Draft minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 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	NW RFCC Chairman
Cllr Giles Archibald	Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Cllr James Shorrocks	RFCC Member – Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Cllr Jane Hugo	RFCC Member – Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Cllr Alan Quinn	RFCC Member – Gtr Manchester Strategic Flood Risk P'ship
Cllr Tony Davies	RFCC Member – Gtr Manchester Strategic Flood Risk P'ship
Cllr Daniel Barrington	RFCC Member - Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Cllr Mhairi Doyle	RFCC Member - Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Cllr Mark Goldsmith	RFCC Member – Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic FR P'ship
Carolyn Otley	RFCC Member – Communities
Susannah Bleakley	RFCC Member – Coastal Issues
Kate Morley	RFCC Member - Conservation
Amy Cooper	RFCC Member – Water and Sewerage Industry
Paul Barnes	RFCC Member – Agriculture and Land Management (part attendance)
Fiona Duke	Officer – EA Area Flood Risk Manager, Lancashire
Nick Pearson	Officer - EA Area Flood Risk Manager, Greater Manchester
Adam Walsh	Officer - EA FCRM Programming Manager, C&L
Andy Tester	Officer - EA FCRM Programming Manager, GMMC
Sally Whiting	Officer – EA Senior Advisor (RFCC)
Sarah Fontana	Officer, Capital Programme Co-ordinator
Paul Bowden	EA Ops Local Delivery Lead, GMMC
Nikki Beale	EA Ops Local Delivery Lead, C&L
Rachel Harmer	RFCC Secretariat

Support Officers/Observers:

Alison Harker	Co-ordinator - Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Andrew Harrison	Officer – Cumberland Council
Nick Rae	Officer – Cumberland Council
Matthew Waning	Officer – Westmorland and Furness Council
John Davies	Officer - Lancashire County Council
Lorah Cheyne	Co-ordinator - Lancashire Partnership
Sarah Wardle	Co-ordinator - Merseyside Partnership
Louise Fortune	Officer – Knowsley Council
Fran Comyn	Officer - Rochdale Borough Council
Jill Holden	Co-ordinator - Greater Manchester Partnership
Clare Nolan-Barnes	Officer – Blackpool Council
Cllr Mandie Shilton-Godwin	Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Matthew Winnard	Co-ordinator - Cheshire Mid Mersey Partnership
Guy Metcalf	Officer – Cheshire East Highways
Dan Matthews	Officer – Cheshire East Highways

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Katie Eckford	Officer – North West SMP Co-ordinator
Terri McMillan	Incoming RFCC Member
Cllr Bob Kelly	Cumberland Council
Gary Hilton	EA Local Authority Capital Projects Advisor, GMMC
Rachael Broadhurst	EA Local Authority Capital Projects Advisor, GMMC
Ayush Sheth	EA FCRM Advisor, GMMC

Presenters:

Shannon Gunning	EA FCRM Advisor, GMMC
Iwan Lawton	EA FCRM Advisor, C&L
Chris Isherwood	Jacobs
Jim Nettle	EA Senior FCRM Advisor, Programme & Contract Management

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 Karen Shore (Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership); Cllr Tony Brennan (Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership); Cllr Philip Cusack (Greater Manchester Combined Authorities); Carol Holt (EA Area Director, C&L); Ian Crewe (EA Area Director, GMMC); Mary-Rose Muncaster (EA Area FR Manager, Merseyside and Cheshire); Chris Findley (EA RFCC Appointed Member – Planning and Development) and Carl Green (Chair of the North West and North Wales Coastal Group).

We noted and accepted the correctly nominated substitute of Councillor Tony Davies on behalf of Councillor Philip Cusack for the Greater Manchester Partnership.

Neville welcomed each of the presenters as well as Terri McMillan, a new RFCC EA Appointed Member to commence in July 2025, here to observe today's meeting and due to take over the role of Chair of the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group from the next meeting in October.

2. Feedback from the RFCC Meeting on 25 April 2025

Neville Elstone highlighted the key decisions from the additional 25 April 2025 RFCC meeting, where the RFCC:

- Approved the £90K Local Levy request for the Lindow Primary School FAS
- Approved the £164K Local Levy request for the Winster Rehabilitation Project with the condition that the project have a further stage of options appraisal, which will be reported back to the RFCC F&BASG in June.
- Deferred the Property Flood Resilience Project Proposal - RFCC noted that further work is required for the Property Flood Resilience project, which will be brought back to the June RFCC F&BASG meeting for further consideration.
- Approved the increased funding (3%) for projects ID5,6,7 and 9A to cover increased costs, representing total additional Local Levy investment of £27.1k.
- Approved the extension of the funding for the SMP Co-ordinator role for 1 year to March 2027, including the 3% uplift, representing total additional Local Levy investment of £54.6k.
- Approved the proposed programme and Local Levy investment in Business Plan projects for 2025/26.

There were no questions or comments raised.

3. Investment Programme Update

2024/25 Outturn

Adam Walsh provided a summary of the outturn position at the end of 2024/25. Against a target to better protect 1,557 properties, we better protected 1,352 properties. At the April RFCC meeting we reported a target of 1,499 properties, which was corrected to 1557 properties. This was due to several schemes re-profiling throughout the year. 86% of the properties better protected were against the three large schemes: Penketh and Whittle; Whitehaven Harbour, and Preston and South Ribble.

The North West had a total budget of £118 Million of which we spent approximately £112.5 Million, an overall underspend of £5.5 Million. He explained that £1.8 Million of this was a Local Levy funding allocation which was deferred to a future year to maximise GiA. The underspend related to many projects across the programme with some Partnership Funding (PF) contributions also being deferred to future years to align with funding profiles and comply with finance guidance.

On GiA specifically, there was a slight overspend but we delivered within 1.25% of the £103.57 Million GiA budget. This was due to some late increases in spend arising at year end relating primarily to four schemes: Appleby Town Centre (£700k), Littleborough (£600k), Padiham (£350k) and the GMC Recovery Programme (£250k). Adam provided brief explanations for these.

On Capital efficiencies, £3.4 Million has been claimed against the North West target of £10.5 Million for 2024/25. This is an increase to the £2.6 Million efficiencies claimed at the end of quarter 3 and reported to the April Committee meeting. In total the North West have claimed £15 Million in efficiencies for the first 4 years of the programme. We noted some large projects have yet to submit their efficiency claims and discussions are underway with the relevant EA and LA teams to submit their efficiency claims as soon as possible.

In terms of the asset maintenance programme for 2024/25, Adam summarised that Cumbria and Lancashire Area (CLA) spent 99% of their budget, which included £1.85 Million on Asset Electricity Costs and Flood Basin Operation Compensation Payments they were given permission to spend. Greater Manchester Merseyside and Cheshire Area (GMMC) spent 98.4% of their budget. This was to balance overspend across the wider Ops team and to keep within agreed budgets. We noted the resource staff costs final out-turn is still subject to audit and will be confirmed by the end of June 2025.

2025/26 Programme

For this year, Adam reported a current outcome forecast of 6,751 properties to be better protected against the North West target of 5,716.

The total capital investment funding available to the North West RFCC 2025/26 programme is £135.15 Million. This includes £121.99 Million of central Government FCRM GiA (Grant in Aid) and £9.78 Million of Local Levy.

Forecasts at mid-May 2025 when the EA undertook its baselining exercise show that we are expecting to draw down £141.06 Million this year, which is £5.9 Million more than allocated (4.4% over

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programme). The national programme management office has advised over-programming of no greater than 5% at this point, so we are within that.

Adam highlighted three key risks relating to capital programme spend and delivery for this year: the back-end loaded profile of delivery with 49% of the properties better protected outcomes due to be reported in March, the strong cost management to spend within our allocation, and ongoing recovery spend following the New-Years Day flooding events the costs of which will need to be absorbed within the current allocation. If we experience any further significant flooding it will put more strain onto the programme.

There were no comments or questions raised.

Resource Maintenance Programme 2025/26

Nikki Beale provided an overview of the resource maintenance programme for 2025/26 noting that the budgets appear slightly higher than previously released figures due to capital salaries re-charge now being included in the budget for the first time this financial year. Cumbria and Lancashire have a £7 Million resource budget and GMMC have £5.57 Million.

Nikki provided details of asset projects in delivery this year.

She reported that funding is also provided for the 'below required condition' assets to return them to target condition. The national target is to have 92% of assets at target condition or above. Both C&L and GMMC areas are well above that (95.5% and 93% respectively). In order to understand the health of assets, visual asset inspections need to take place, known as the T98 Inspection Programme. She advised that 99-100% of inspections are taking place on time.

Nikki provided an overview report from the asset information data system where work orders are summarised. £5.377 Million of work orders are currently in the system, which can fluctuate.

Paul Bowden then advised that seasonal factors play into the detail within the system and provided the example of the maintenance programme tailing off slightly towards the back end of the year. He provided examples of works completed in May, which include the GMMC Confined Spaces team supporting C&L on the Forge Weir on the River Lune, collaborative work with Tameside Council to remove a tree in the river Tame, and Didsbury Flood Storage Basin vegetation maintenance.

Paul then reported on their key opportunities and challenges for this including: funding available to increase the incident response skills of our suppliers; GMMC still being in recovery after New Year with no additional funding; a delay in publishing the asset maintenance programme nationally due to an IT system issue; a tight resource budget with no opportunity to overspend; and overall budget pressures which may mean that this year we cannot deliver all the maintenance we have done previously. Conveyance work in GMMC may be one activity there needs to be less of.

Councillor Giles Archibald commented that he understood it had previously been reported that the amount of river maintenance was due to be halved and he asked if the specifics on this reduction can be provided to Members as soon as possible. Nikki advised that she attended the Cumbria Strategic Partnership Meeting earlier in the year and spoke about this. Currently, due to the IT system issue, the national asset maintenance programme isn't able to be published, which will be a key mechanism for communicating this information. She reported that her colleague Rob Ide has

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been working on communicating any changes, specifically targeting communications where there are community group interests, and where there have been issues in the past, but they are not able to directly contact everyone potentially affected. Making Space for Water meetings and tactical groups are also receiving information on a catchment basis.

Adrian Lythgo advised the published programme, which is usually available on .gov.uk will be provided as soon as possible and colleagues will advise the Strategic Partnerships when this information becomes available.

Investment Programme Refresh for 2025/26

Adam provided an overview of the 2026/27 capital programme refresh draft bid process which is being carried out in two phases, the first of which is currently underway at a draft early stage. The bid will be submitted at the end of July, which is currently showing a need for £213 Million in total project expenditure with the potential to reduce the risk in flooding to approximately 15,000 properties.

Phase 1 covers projects that are in, or near construction, the support and enabling programme and the resource programme. For the projects in or near construction, these are projects that are either delivering properties in 2026/27 or are past Outline Business Case (OBC) by 1 April 2026.

Phase 2 will cover a bid for all capital pipeline/new projects and the existing projects not past Outline Business Case (OBC) by 1 April 2026. This will take place in the autumn and will commence following completion of the ongoing Defra public consultation 'Reforming our approach to floods funding' and once the new funding arrangements are finalised.

Members were asked to review the current draft programmes and to note that it is likely that only the phase 1 bid will be endorsed by Committee in October, followed by consent in January, as we await the new funding arrangements. The draft bid summary for 2026/27 for Phase 1 and by partnership was provided and we noted the final phase 1 bid will be presented at the October RFCC meetings along with Local Choices.

Votes in favour:

Cllr Archibald, Cllr Hugo, Cllr Davies, Cllr Barrington, Cllr Quinn, Cllr Doyle, Susannah Bleakley, Amy Cooper, Carolyn Otley and Kate Morley.

We recommend the RFCC:

- notes the 2024/25 capital and resource programmes outturn.
- notes the progress in delivering the 2025/26 capital and resource programmes.
- notes the draft Phase 1 capital programme refresh bid for funding in 2026/27.

Update on work to improve information on the investment programme provided to RFCC and Partnerships

Due to time constraints this item was deferred to the 11 July RFCC Meeting.

4. Local Levy Minimum Balance

Recognising that this item was presented to the April meeting, Sally Whiting provided a brief

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explanation of the background to the proposed Local Levy minimum balance options, and the uncertainty and risk that are giving rise to the suggestion to keep more Local Levy funding in reserve. She explained the distinction between the Absolute Minimum and a Minimum Working balance and reminded Members that there is already the provision for an (absolute) minimum balance in the Local Levy Strategy of 5-10% of annual income. She then also provided a reminder of the proposals.

She advised that the two options for the minimum working balance were an informed judgement rather than based on specific calculations but there was some rationale behind the figures, set out in the paper, based on Local Levy funding allocated during 2024/15. She explained that fundamentally Members were being asked whether they would prefer a fixed or a variable minimum balance amount.

She then presented a series of graphs which illustrate the different levels of minimum balance, along with potential future scenarios of Levy requests and where these would sit in relation to the minimum balances.

She briefly introduced the proposed high-level guidelines on the circumstances under which the RFCC might wish to use the contingency funding and drop below the minimum working balance but was also clear to state that it was a deliberate choice not to seek to identify a specific set of criteria, preferring to leave flexibility for the RFCC on a case-by-case basis.

Cllr Alan Quinn commented to recognise the difficult situation the RFCC will be in once the balance is forecast to drop to £2 Million and they then receive an urgent request for funding. While the RFCC might wish to retain a balance of £2 Million, it will need to make a judgment on whether to spend additional money and drop below that. He reflected that we often can't secure sufficient GiA funding for projects, private sector funding is difficult to find and hence recognised the ongoing demand for Local Levy funding. He wished to appeal to colleagues that when we go to the annual Local Levy vote in October, Members seek to support Levy increases of more than 3%.

Cllr Mark Goldsmith commented to effectively summarise the two minimum balance concepts, the £470K being an absolute minimum and the £2m acting as a 'soft' minimum balance, which in exceptional circumstances the RFCC can dip below, with a view to get it back above £2 Million as quickly as possible. He recognised it potentially as an early warning mechanism. Neville Elstone confirmed this was a good description.

Adrian Lythgo remarked that we are undisputably coming into a hiatus where national policy is changing, which will bring a period of transition if implemented. We expect to reach the point where the Local Levy balance will be at its lowest level for 15 years, and then the situation described by Cllr Mark Goldsmith will then come into play. Adrian remarked that colleagues may want to put in place a time limit on the period to which the minimum balance guidelines will apply, indicating that the proposals are designed to deal with the hiatus over the next two or so year while we transition from one funding system to another.

Councillor James Shorrocks commented that the Lancashire partnership had looked at the information and proposals earlier this week. He reported that, for ease, they wished to support the £2 Million option (Option 1). He also raised the question - at what point during that year do you still hold on to the £2 Million balance? Once we get most of the way through the year, do we then have the option to spend into that £2 Million and wait for the following financial year's funding to come on board? He also raised the question of what constitutes an emergency. He confirmed their view

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that we do need to maintain a balance above zero, and should hold onto £2 Million as a minimum, but asked for these questions to be taken into consideration.

Neville Elstone responded to this by expressing the view that we shouldn't try and write rules around urgency and when we should spend some of the contingency funding, expressing that that should be flexibility for the RFCC to retain. He then asked Councillor Shorrocks if he could take Lancashire's support for the £2 Million option (Option 1) as a proposal. Councillor Shorrocks agreed.

Neville asked the Sub Group to vote on the Minimum Working Balance option of £2 Million (Option 1).

Votes in favour:

Cllr Doyle, Cllr Barrington, Cllr Hugo, Cllr Davies, Cllr Shorrocks, Cllr Quinn, Cllr Goldsmith, Kate Morley, Susannah Bleakley, Amy Cooper and Carolyn Otley.

Cllr Archibald did not place a vote.

The proposal was supported.

Due to being under some time pressure within today's meeting, Neville did not take any of the other proposals to a vote.

There were no further comments or questions.

5. Local Levy Programme

Local Levy Programme Overview

Adam Walsh summarised the position on the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Local Levy programmes, reporting the resource balances going into the year, the income, interest on the balance, approved spend, and the resulting balance at the end of the year. The year-end balance is forecast to reduce from £10.336 Million at the end of 2024/25 to £5.858 Million at the end of 2025/26.

Adam presented the Local Levy income and expenditure scenario graph confirming that this includes the Local Levy requests to be considered today – for the Padiham and Manchester Square, Blackpool schemes, and for the Property Flood Resilience proposal.

Update on River Winster Rehabilitation Project

Neville reminded Members that at the previous RFCC meeting there was agreement to provide £164K of Local Levy funding to support the River Winster Rehabilitation Project, but with the caveat that an options appraisal exercise was carried out to ensure the proposed methodology for the work is the best course of action. Neville reported that a report on this options consideration had been provided from Carl Green and Jason Harte (Westmorland and Furness Council), which confirms that the review process has been completed and concluded that the methodology, co-designed with regulators and informed by the Lynster Farmers Group's experience, is safe, proportionate, and aligned with RFCC expectations. Neville remarked that he understood that the regulatory permissions were just about in place or are already. He thanked everyone for their time on the further work that had been carried out.

There were no further questions or comments.

Local Levy Requests

Padiham Flood Risk Management Scheme - £3.7 Million

Jim Nettle provided Members with an overview of this scheme to reduce flood risk to 77 residential properties, 69 business premises, 3 public buildings and improve critical infrastructure at Padiham. He provided details on numerous major flooding events experienced in Padiham in recent years.

He gave an overview of the scheme, including the works that have been completed so far, along with the current programme of works timeline. We noted the variety of funding contributions including GiA (£6 Million), a previously approved RFCC Local Levy contribution of £1.3 Million (£300k not yet spent), Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Deal 3 funding, Green Recovery Funding, and other government department funding.

This leaves a current funding gap of £3.7 Million, and this is forecast in the financial year 2027/28 and 2028/2029. A Local Levy contribution of £3.7 Million is required to make the scheme fully funded. This £3.7 Million is in addition to an existing £1.3 Million of Local Levy, which totals £5 Million and is within the limits of the Local Levy Strategy.

Cllr Giles Archibald raised his concern regarding the scheme's Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) target and asked how this is to be incorporated into the scheme.

Jim provided a verbal response to Councillor Archibald's question to which the following written response has been provided.

Padiham FRMS submitted and received its full planning approval prior to the recent changes in BNG legislation. This means that the project does not formally have to meet the 10% BNG target that is now a standard requirement. Under the Environment Act duties, the project team are seeking environmental enhancement opportunities and have been a key provider in the delivery of additional planting at Crow Woodland. The project has supported half of the Crow Wood Project which planted 3136 replacement trees at the woodland. Based upon our 50% share this gives us a replanting rate in excess of 16:1 against our forecast tree removals within Padiham. The local community and councillors have understood the need for tree removal and are accepting of the changes that are necessary. Where possible, ways to retain existing trees will be sought. An example of this is where there has been a modified alignment of the design so as to retain the well-known and fondly regarded Padiham Millennium Trees along Lune Street.

Cllr Giles Archibald asked if they could receive an update report in due course on the BNG delivered by the project.

Cllr Alan Quinn advised the trees removed for the Radcliffe and Redvales Flood Risk Management Scheme were laid down for a number of days to ensure that any bats who were potentially living in them could escape and the trunks were exported to the Peak District to be used in the construction of leaky dams.

Councillor James Shorrocks advised this project was discussed and supported at a recent Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership Group Meeting.

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On behalf of the Committee, and as questions that he would be putting to all Local Levy requests from now on, Adrian Lythgo asked why this request for funding needs to come now and how would the Padiham scheme likely fair if the new funding rules were to come in following the current funding consultation. Jim advised fundamentally this is around the Business Case assurance and when we submit business cases for assurance we need to be in a position for the project to demonstrate it is fully funded and able to proceed with delivery. With regard to the impact of the 90% GiA proposal in the consultation, Jim referred to the variety of funding streams shared with Members and advised he is confident the project will be viable under the new funding rules.

Fiona Duke advised by approving this Local Levy request, this will unlock a further £23.5 Million in Other Government Dept funding that has been allocated to the project and without a fully funded scheme we will be unable to proceed. Members noted the intention for the scheme to commence between March and May 2026 and the requirement to get into contract as soon as possible. If this is delayed for any reason this would likely mean that construction will be delayed to some point in late 2027, but this would only be if there was enough FDGiA available. She advised that the local residents are desperate for the scheme to go ahead. She also reported that partnership funding colleagues are working with Tesco nationally to look at protecting their larger superstores, so this may still be an additional source of funding for the scheme.

It was confirmed that the RFCC's Local Levy would be the funder of last resort and that if alternative funding was sourced then the Local Levy funding would not be required. Jim advised that since planning approval has been granted there have been developers submitting their own planning applications which present significant regeneration opportunities for Padiham.

Votes in favour: Cllr Archibald, Cllr Hugo, Cllr Shorrock, Cllr Davies, Cllr Barrington, Cllr Doyle, Cllr Goldsmith, Cllr Quinn, Kate Morley, Susannah Bleakley, Amy Cooper and Carolyn Otley.

The proposal was approved for recommendation to the RFCC.

Blackpool, Manchester Square Pumping Station - £250K

Clare Nolan-Barnes provided an overview of Manchester Square Pumping station, which was constructed in 2009 and protects approximately 4000 properties along Blackpool's main frontage from surface water flooding. The pumps and associated connection to culvert are now time expired and require Capital Maintenance to enable the protection of properties in this main location of Blackpool. The pumping station also protects the Blackpool tramway and highway from flooding. Members were made aware of the significant number of tourists, some 19 Million visitors per year, who would be impacted by the failure of this pumping station.

We noted the pumping station is completely failing right now. Blackpool Council have been working with the pump manufacturers to find a short-term solution, but a more in-depth survey and study is required to assess the requirement for pumping surface water from this area and the requirements to works to the adjacent culvert that discharges the surface water to sea. United Utilities will also be engaged in the study as the culvert is shared by both Blackpool Council and United Utilities. Clare highlighted the significant health and safety issues which this issue also raises.

Project timeline information was also provided and we noted the £250K Local Levy contribution in 2025/26 will enable the study and Outline Business Case to be carried out. The project team will

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continue to hold discussions with partner organisations to bridge the shortfall in funding as part of an agreed funding strategy and update the Committee accordingly.

Councillor Alan Quinn commented that Blackpool is one of the most deprived areas so tourism is important and it was reinforced that at least 4000 properties will be protected by this asset.

Votes in favour: Cllr Archibald, Cllr Hugo, Cllr Shorrock, Cllr Davies, Cllr Barrington, Cllr Doyle, Cllr Goldsmith, Cllr Quinn, Kate Morley, Susannah Bleakley, Amy Cooper and Carolyn Otley.

The proposal was approved for recommendation to the RFCC.

There were no further comments or questions.

6. RFCC Business Plan

Progress Update

Due to time constraints this item was deferred to the RFCC Meeting on 11 July.

Investment Mapping Feasibility Project – Findings and Recommendations

The Investment Mapping Feasibility project is an RFCC Business Plan project (ID1) sitting under the Accessing Investment and Funding ambition, led by the GM Partnership. It has been project managed by Jill Holden at GMCA, has been delivered by Jacobs consultants, and has recently completed.

Chris Isherwood from Jacobs provided an overview of the project covering the aims, the work carried out, and the outputs produced. Chris summarised that the project was looking at how local authorities are accessing funding to deliver flood risk management outcomes, to identify the barriers to accessing funding, and helping them to better understand the potential funding landscape to hopefully make accessing funding easier.

He described the workstreams of the project. Investment analysis included collecting case studies on where different authorities and organisations have delivered projects in quite different and innovative ways, and the funding sources and mechanisms that they've used. They researched potential funding sources identifying over 160 that can deliver flood and water management outcomes. They pulled all this together into 'investment pathways' - identifying ways in which projects or programmes could be funded by looking at benefit outcomes, who's funding those projects, who's expected to deliver those projects, and trying to develop a pathway through this.

They also ran engagement sessions (workshops) with flood risk management authorities and wider partners (e.g. Network Rail, National Highways) to explore both the barriers faced and ways in which they've overcome those barriers and the different funding sources that they've used. They also carried out 10 targeted interviews with organisations like National Highways, National Trust, Groundwork, City of Trees and Homes England, trying to broaden out who we're speaking to, to better understand their funding sources, how they deliver projects, especially where those projects could deliver flood and water management outcomes, and how they work in partnerships with LAs.

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Finally, they looked at possible options for visualisation of the investment information. A key part of this was identifying the data that could be used to help LA staff understand others' priorities, projects that are happening, and where the funding is targeted. Through this they identified over 290 spatial data sets that could be used. They put forward three options for potential platforms to enable the interrogation of these datasets to support better decisions around funding.

He highlighted the two key outputs from the project – a report (containing a series of appendices) which is quite long and covers a lot of information, and then secondly a funding database.

Touching on the data visualisation options identified, Chris advised that one of these which could be explored is the Environment Agency's Stakeholder Beneficiary and Mapping Tool. In terms of next steps, it's going to be about trying to integrate with that and perhaps develop that further to incorporate any funding data that is currently not in the tool.

Sally Whiting concluded by confirming that the project itself is now complete but that she will continue to work with Jill Holden to take forward the recommendations. All the project outputs will be made available on the RFCC SharePoint site shortly and we'll do some communication and promotion of those. Finally, she recommended that if anyone in an RMA is scoping a project and is considering potential funding sources, they take a look at the project outputs.

Neville enquired as to the main contact on the project now. Sally advised that this would now be herself or Jill Holden in the first instance.

There were no further comments or questions.

7. Property Flood Resilience – Outline Proposal for Local Levy Support

Shannon Gunning (EA Flood Risk Advisor) reminded Members that the EA PFR Hub Leads have been engaging with the RFCC since January 2025 on PFR and the need to seek additional funding to support delivery across the North-West.

Iwan Lawton then summarised the engagement that had taken place with Local Authorities since the April meeting, which involved presentations to partnerships and an expression of interest process to identify interest in using the EA's PFR Framework and in progressing PFR projects if funding was available. He summarised that there had been a high response rate and that a very significant majority of LAs had heard of the Framework, were interested in using it if funding was available, and could offer up known communities that could benefit from PFR.

Iwan also reported back on some of the more general comments and questions that had been raised by LAs and explained how these were being addressed through the Framework and new arrangements. This included supplier and product quality issues, addressed by the framework which provides industry-leading, fully accredited suppliers. He also touched on issues around ongoing maintenance of PFR measures, recognising that it is a challenge as ultimately it is the responsibility of the homeowner to continue to maintain their products, which is outlined in the homeowner agreements. However, he highlighted that there are resources to help aid maintenance such as the Resilico app which provides tailored reminders. He recognised the need for clear engagement with homeowners taking up PFR measures. Finally, he recognised the lack of capacity within LAs to deliver PFR projects but commented that there is a Commercial Business Support Team who can help in getting LAs onto the framework and supporting onboarding.

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Iwan provided an update on the development of a PFR project pipeline for the North West, highlighting that the EA had a potential list of communities, to which those now suggested by LAs would be added. He advised that the EA will continue to work collaboratively with LAs, with the help of the Local Authority Capital Project Advisors, to identify all communities at risk which are likely to be good candidates for PFR measures and will have further engagement with Local Authorities to discuss key priority areas.

Shannon explained that a further in-depth assessment will be carried out to determine which properties will be shortlisted to receive PFR measures. Specific prioritisation criteria to shape the pipeline are to be fully developed but this assessment could consider flood history, flood depths, flood frequency, photographic evidence and the stage of community engagement. She advised that there will be governance arrangements in place for determining the prioritisation in which sub regional partnerships will play a role in the prioritisation and decision making. We aim to ensure an even spread of PFR across the sub regional partnerships.

Shannon then went on to highlight and summarise Defra's recently launched consultation on investment reform which contains proposals which, if implemented, would significantly change the funding arrangements for PFR projects and has therefore led to them amending their Local Levy funding proposal to the RFCC.

The consultation proposes that projects costing less than £3 million will be fully funded from Grant in Aid (GiA), potentially removing the need for additional partnership funding. PFR projects are therefore likely to be eligible for 100% GiA funding. However, with more projects eligible for full GiA funding, the available funding won't go as far and we expect demand to exceed the available funding, with some but not all PFR projects fundable from GiA. This will be based on the prioritisation criteria applied. There is an initial understanding that prioritisation could be based on benefit cost ratio, but with likely additional recognition to prioritise deprived communities. However, we are yet to fully understand how prioritisation of projects will work and how this will impact PFR delivery.

She reported that it is likely that the existing qualifying criteria for GiA funding for PFR projects requiring properties to be at Very Significant flood risk will be removed as part of the new funding rules, and while this is positive it will further increase the number of properties that could be eligible for PFR. Therefore, there is no guarantee that all PFR schemes will receive GiA funding, despite being eligible, given the increased competition across the country.

To help guarantee PFR delivery across the North-West, if this remains a priority for the RFCC, Shannon explained that a portion of Local Levy funding dedicated specifically to PFR schemes is required in the short term while the funding changes are worked through. The security of having some allocated Local Levy funding will enable the EA and LA partners to work together to develop a pipeline of projects with confidence that the funding will be available to progress at least some of these. If we know that there is a Levy allocation for next year, we can understand how many projects will be able to progress next year and will be more likely to have projects ready to go to hit the ground. Not having a confirmed Levy contribution could risk setting back delivery of PFR projects for another year.

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Shannon then explained the proposal and Levy request in more detail, for the RFCC to allocate a pot of Local Levy for PFR projects for the next three years from 2026/27.

To inform the amounts of Local Levy funding requested, she explained several assumptions that have been made including the likely scale of delivery in these early years (given officer resource constraints), the typical number of properties per project, the average cost per property, and an assumed success rate on securing GiA funding for PFR projects. She presented the assumed figures and talked through the rationale behind them.

Given that it is early days for PFR in the North West, and the significant changes about to affect the funding rules, Shannon expressed the clear need for reviews during this three year period, to examine the levels of success in securing GiA, and the experience of PFR delivery in the North West (both community uptake, as well as officer capacity and process). We will also continue to review and refine the North West PFR pipeline to ensure the funding is being used to greatest effect in reducing the impact of flooding. The exact timing of these reviews is still to be determined but it is likely to be annual. She reported that they hope to be able to provide an update on any GiA funding secured for 2026/27 to the January 2026 meeting.

Finally, Shannon acknowledged that the proposal may be subject to change based on the outcome of the ongoing funding consultation, in which case the ask will be adjusted to help the RFCC deliver PFR projects.

Neville Elstone commented to check that Councillor Giles Archibald is clear that the proposed funding pot would be used flexibly, responding to concerns he had raised at the last meeting about the tight eligibility constraints around the GiA funding.

Councillor Giles Archibald thanked Neville for this clarity and asked for confirmation whether we would try to ensure the funding was spread across all the authorities and requested that this be an additional consideration. Neville confirmed that this is a commitment.

Councillor Mark Goldsmith confirmed his support and understood the need for it but commented that, at £15K per property, it does appear to be expensive.

Shannon responded to explain that £15K is the average cost for PFR from national figures but that it depends on the type and size of property, its condition, as well as the specific PFR measures required. This means that there is variation, and the cost could be lower than £15K.

Iwan Lawton also added that compared with conventional flood defences and schemes, PFR is invariably a much cheaper option.

For comparison, Neville Elstone recalled a scheme supported by Local Levy funding from the RFCC as costing £250K per property.

Councillor Alan Quinn also confirmed that he felt that £15K per property is pretty cheap and less than the costs incurred from being flooded, both to householders and to the authorities who support them.

Neville then put the proposal (pots of Local Levy funding over the three-year period) to the vote.

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Votes in favour: Cllr Archibald, Cllr Hugo, Cllr Shorrock, Cllr Davies, Cllr Barrington, Cllr Doyle, Cllr Goldsmith, Cllr Quinn, Kate Morley, Susannah Bleakley, Amy Cooper and Carolyn Otley.

The proposal was approved for recommendation to the RFCC.

There were no further comments or questions.

8. Quick Wins Funding Review

Due to time constraints this item was deferred to the 11 July RFCC meeting.

9. Minutes from the 11 April 2025 RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group Meeting for approval

We were asked to approve the draft minutes of the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub-group meeting held on 11 April 2025.

Councillor Alan Quinn proposed and Councillor James Shorrock seconded the minutes, which were approved and taken as a true record of the meeting.

There were no further comments or matters arising.

10. Any Other Business

Adrian Lythgo advised Neville Elstone's term of office on the RFCC finishes on 30th June but he has volunteered to attend the full RFCC meeting in Manchester on 11 July. He thanked Neville for his huge contribution to the Committee over the last eight years and Members joined Adrian in wishing Neville all the best for the future.

There were no further items of business.

11. Date of the next meeting

The date of the next RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group meeting is 10 October 2025.

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE

11 JULY 2025

FLOOD AND COASTAL RISK MANAGEMENT (FCRM) INVESTMENT PROGRAMME REFRESH AND LATEST UPDATES

Recommendations:

The Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (RFCCs) are asked to:

1. Note the latest FCRM Investment Programme position.
2. Support the phased approach to the refresh of the Investment and Asset Maintenance Programmes.

Headline messages:

- The programme is currently on track and well-placed to meet the 52,000 properties better protected target by March 2026.
- The refresh process for 2026/27 will be managed as a phased approach. The majority of the allocation in 2026/27 is anticipated to be projects already in the programme in 2025/26. It is, however, important to have space for new projects including those for surface water, Property Flood Resilience and Natural Flood Management.
- In the recent spending review, announced on 11 June, government committed a total of £4.2billion funding for FCRM to build and maintain defences over the next 3 years.
- On 3 June, government launched its Investment Reform consultation, which proposes a major update to their Partnership Funding policy. The consultation closes on 29 July.
- On 19 June, government published their 10-year infrastructure strategy that will launch in April 2026.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This paper provides an update on the latest position with regards to the Flood & Coastal Risk Management (FCRM) Investment Programme and Asset Maintenance Programme. The paper sets out the process to refresh the Investment Programme and asset maintenance programme to plan and prepare for the next financial year, which will be the first year of the new programme. The cycle of activities is set out in Appendix B.

2.0 Latest delivery position

- 2.1 The Government announced a two-year target of better protecting 52,000 properties between April 2024 and March 2026 by the FCRM Investment Programme. In 2024/25, the Environment Agency (EA) and other Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) together better protected over 27,500 properties by 145 schemes, against an EA corporate target of 25,000 properties better protected. The programme is therefore on track and well-placed to meet the 52,000 properties better protected target by March 2026. A range of other wider benefits were also delivered in 2024/25, including creating or improving over 108Ha of habitat and enhancing over 302km of rivers.
- 2.2 As of April 2025, 92.7% of EA high consequence assets are at their target condition. This is an increase from 92.2% in January 2025. Third party high consequence assets have seen a similar trend increasing to 89.5%.

3.0 Investment Programme – latest position

Spending Review

- 3.1 The next multi-year FCRM Investment Programme will start in April 2026. In the recent spending review, announced on 11 June, government committed a total of £4.2billion funding for FCRM to build and maintain defences over the next 3 years. This is a 5% increase on the current average £1.33billion over 2024/25 and 2025/26. We await further details of what this will mean for the programme following the Defra Group business planning process, which is expected to commence in September. This will set the capital (CDEL) and resource (RDEL) budget allocations for the spending review settlement period.

Defra Investment Reform Consultation

- 3.2 Defra launched their 8-week public consultation on Investment Reform on 3 June 2025. The consultation has two sections covering funding principles and a new approach to project prioritisation. In addition, there is a call for evidence on Alternative Sources of Funding and Devolution that will explore longer term changes.
- 3.3 The consultation sets out 3 funding principles:
1. A contribution-free allowance where the first £3million of all FCERM capital projects is eligible for full Grant-in-Aid (GiA) funding
 2. A flat rate of funding with 90% GiA funding eligibility for all FCERM capital project costs above £3million
 3. FCERM capital asset refurbishment projects are eligible to be fully funded by GiA
- 3.4 Funding will be invested to support government priorities. These priorities include focussing on areas at high risk of flooding and coastal erosion, economic growth and the wider economy, deprived areas, specific types of resilience interventions such as Natural Flood Management and Sustainable urban Drainage systems (SuDS), specific types of community such as rural and coastal), and will strengthen the role of RFCCs and recognise local priorities.
- 3.5 The Environment Agency, with input from RFCC Chairs, have supported Defra in the development of their proposals and will continue to provide support during and after the consultation closes. The Environment Agency will implement the new funding

arrangements once they are announced and update all necessary guidance and systems in due course to ensure project teams can transition to the next capital investment programme which starts in April 2026.

- 3.6 Further details can be found on the [consultation page](#).

Government's 10-year Infrastructure Strategy

- 3.7 Government published their 10-year infrastructure strategy on 19 June. On flood resilience, The Government has stated that it is providing certainty over the budget for flood defences by committing £7.9billion¹ of capital funding (2026-27 to 2035-36) for a new 10-year FCERM investment programme, benefitting around 840,000 properties by 2035-36. [This programme](#) will launch in April 2026 and will be based on improved evidence from the new national assessment of flood and coastal erosion risk (NaFRA and NCERM). The programme will integrate routine maintenance for flood defence assets and the delivery of new projects into one single investment framework.

Local Government Finance Settlement

- 3.8 Local authorities receive resource funding for local flood risk management through the Local Government Finance Settlement, administered through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2025/26 makes over £69billion available. An additional £5million in GiA funding for 2025/26 has been made available to support local authorities severely impacted by the increase in levies from Internal Drainage Boards.
- 3.9 Spending Review 2025 provides over £5billion of new, additional GiA funding over the next three years for local services that communities rely on, in addition to the annual finance settlement. This includes £3.4billion of new grant funding which will be delivered through the Local Government Finance Settlement within financial years 2026-27 to 2028-29.

Allocation Principles

- 3.10 We are currently undertaking an interim review of the FCRM Allocation Principles which will be used during this summer's refresh process to allocate funding for the first year of the next Investment Programme. RFCC Chairs have been consulted on the interim principles at their June meeting. A final review of the Allocation Principles will be completed once details of the new Investment Reform policy and Spending Review 2025 are confirmed. RFCCs will be consulted on these.

4.0 Investment Programme annual refresh

- 4.1 The refresh process for allocating funding for 2026/27 for EA and other RMA projects will be managed as a phased approach while we await the outcomes of the Investment Reform consultation and detail behind the Spending Review 2025 announcement. The aim is to support the ongoing development and funding of projects in construction and projects nearing the start of construction, as well as to provide flexibility for new and evolving schemes in the pipeline. The majority of the allocation in 2026/27 is anticipated to be projects already in the programme in 2025/26. It is, however, important to have space for new projects including those for surface water, Property Flood Resilience and Natural Flood Management.

¹ This figure does not include RDEL or some components of the CDEL (e.g. Innovation Fund)

- 4.2 Phase 1 is in line with the standard approach and the guidance was released in April 2025. Appendix B shows the process for allocating funding during 2025/26.
- 4.3 We are soon to start phase 2 of the refresh which will focus on projects at an earlier stage of development than phase 1. The output of phase 2 is expected to be available ahead of Local Choices in October. There will be a focus on developing capital maintenance projects as well as initiating development of surface water, Property Flood Resilience and Natural Flood Management projects, in line with the funding reform steer.
- 4.4 Funding for phase 2 will be spread across all RMA projects. Funding for capital maintenance of existing assets will be for both EA and other RMA projects. Capital maintenance works are principally the refurbishment or overhaul of an existing asset/complex of assets, returning it to its original standard of service whilst also extending the life of the asset.

5.0 Asset maintenance programme

- 5.1 We anticipate resource funding for EA resource maintenance in 2026/27 to be at the same level as in 2025/26, which was £140.3million. This will support asset maintenance, decommissioning, and Highland Water Contributions². Highland Water Contributions have increased by £948k in 2025/26 compared to 2024/25 allocations and we expect them to remain at the higher level.
- 5.2 The additional funding comes with the expectation that asset condition is at least 92% by April 2026. This 92% EA wide target is currently being translated into local targets. Work remains ongoing and local targets will be shared at a later date.
- 5.3 Submissions for 2026/27 asset maintenance, recondition, decommission and Highland Water Contributions are currently being developed by local teams. The outcomes of the current Spending Review will be critical in informing future asset programmes, and changes to funding rules may impact on how allocations are made for 2026/27.

6.0 Recommendations

The Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (RFCCs) are asked to:

1. Note the latest FCRM investment programme position.
2. Support the phased approach to the refresh of the investment and asset maintenance programmes.

Dan Bond
Deputy Director Portfolio Management Office
25 June 2025

Appendix A: Summary of funding allocations and announcements
Appendix B: Process for allocating GiA funding during 2025/26

² Highland water contributions are enabled under Section 57 of the Land Drainage Act 1991. An IDB may make an application to the Environment Agency for a contribution in relation to the quantity of water which that district receives from lands at a higher level outside of the Board's district. It provides funding to contribute to additional water management pressures and therefore additional pumping/maintenance required to manage water from higher in a catchment entering an IDB's Drainage District.

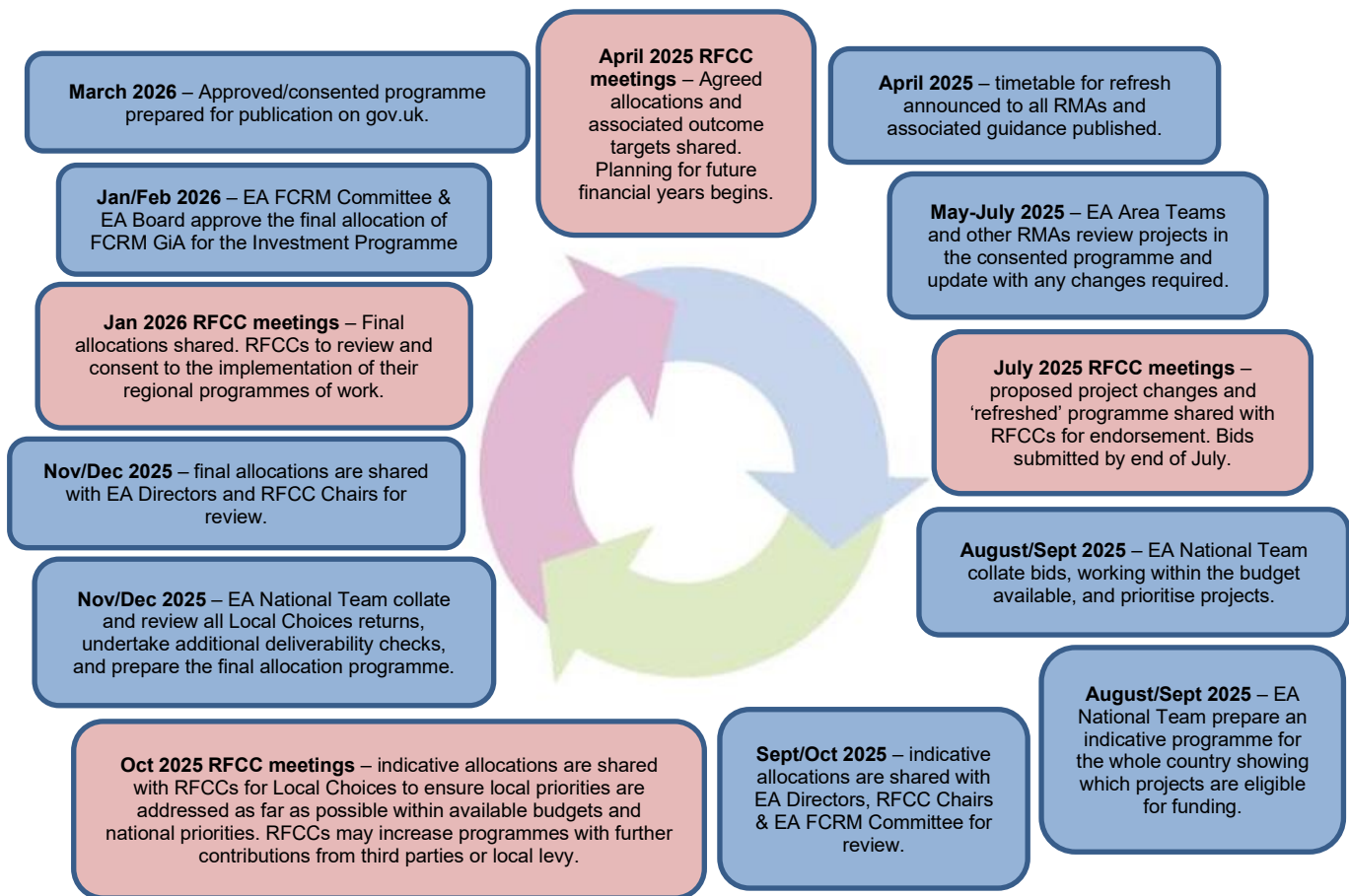
Appendix A: Summary of funding allocations and announcements

	2 year period (£2.65bn)		3 year Spending Review settlement (£4.2bn)³ <i>Precise figures TBC through Defra Group Business Planning in Autumn</i>			10 year settlement (£7.9bn)⁴
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	From 1 April 2026 until 2035/36
CDEL (£k)	737	850	890	865	860	7.9bn over 10 years
RDEL (£k)	543	520	520	520	520	Not announced
TOTAL (£k)	1,280	1,370	1,410	1385	1,380	
Spend covers	FCRM Investment Programme, Asset Maintenance, Flood & Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme (FCRIP), Natural Flood Management (NFM) Programme & support costs		FCRM Investment Programme, Asset Maintenance, Flood & Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme (FCRIP), Natural Flood Management (NFM) Programme & support costs			Capital funded investment on new defences & capital maintenance

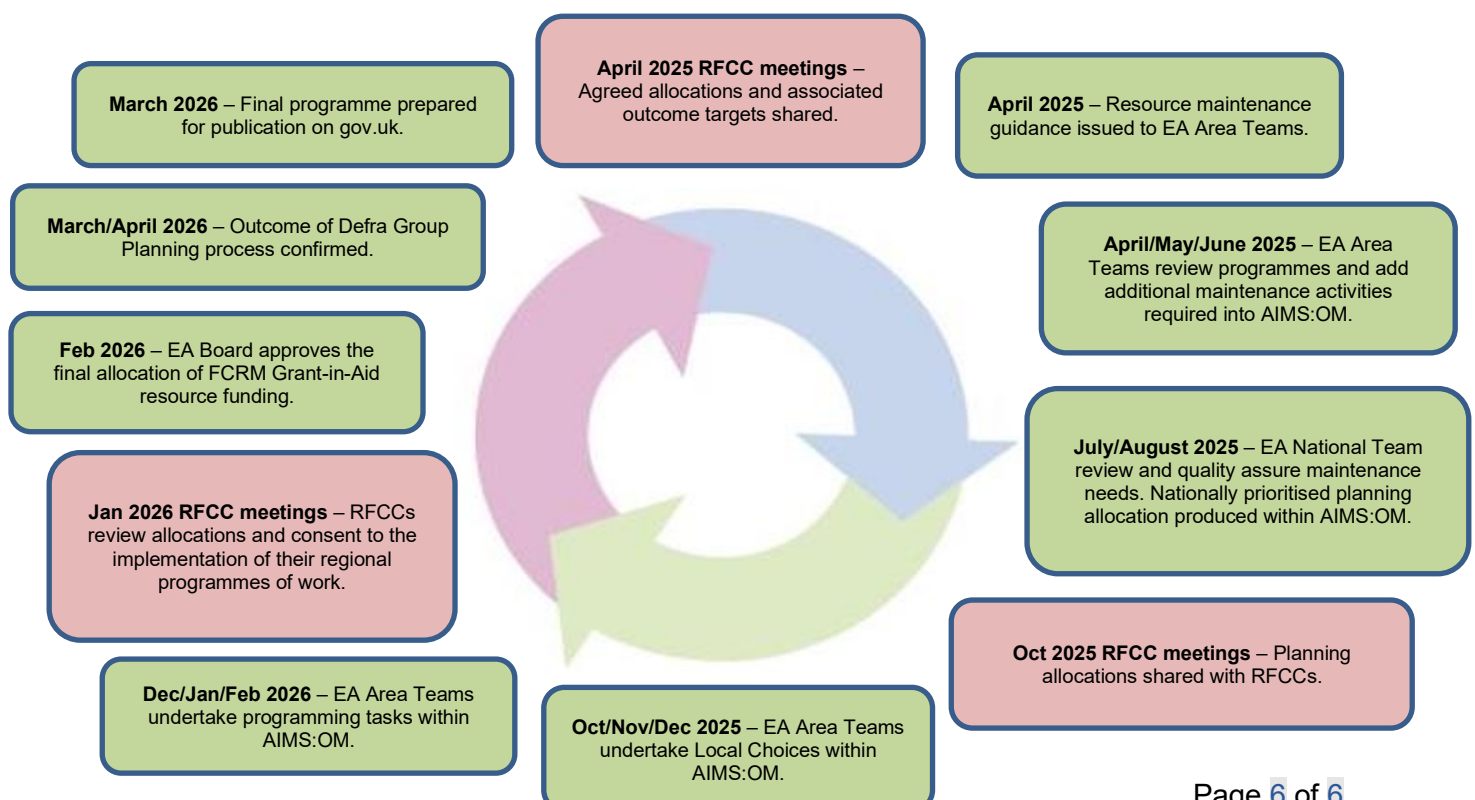
³ [Spending Review 2025](#)⁴ [UK Infrastructure: A 10 Year Strategy](#)

Appendix B: Process for allocating GiA funding during 2025/26

FCRM Investment Programme phase 1 funding allocation



FCRM asset resource maintenance funding



NORTH WEST REGIONAL FOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE

11 JULY 2025

MANCHESTER'S NEW CITY PARK - MAYFIELD

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



Local Authority: Manchester City Council

Location: Mayfield Park, Baring Street, Manchester M1 2PY

[Manchester's new city park - Mayfield Park](#)

Background

Mayfield is one of the leading regeneration schemes in the UK which exemplifies urban river restoration as part of place making whilst working with challenges that industrial legacies bring and celebrating heritage. Following allocation of public funding (£23m Get Building Fund) the Park was completed in Summer 2022 which was the first city park (6.5 acres) since Victorian times focussed on the River Medlock.

The development is led by a consortium including U&I PLC (now Landsec), Manchester City Council, London and Continental Railways and Transport for Greater Manchester. The Environment Agency were also involved in the development of the park as part of a collaborative project approach.

Conveniently positioned in Manchester City Centre on the doorstep of Piccadilly Station which welcomes 22 million passengers a year - Mayfield will be one of the best connected and most compelling new districts for enterprise with around 13,000 new jobs and 1,500 new homes surrounded by bars, cafes, shops and leisure spaces.

The landmark regeneration project has transformed a 24-acre derelict area of central Manchester into a vibrant new community with sustainable ecology at its core. Prior to this the River Medlock was in a degraded condition after a long history of urban and industrial pressures, having been home to a dyeworks, train station and postal depot at different points over the past 200 years.

The project aimed to tackle long term biodiversity loss and has re-opened a long-forgotten section of river, creating new habitat features to support wildlife. A wide range of technical disciplines worked together to create new areas of naturalised riverbanks, with native riparian species planting within and adjacent to the water's edge.

Place making and a strong identity has already been established at Mayfield, as a destination for diverse and varied events and activity that is accessible for all. Activities include Escape to Freight Island (F&B and entertainment offer), largescale music events, MIF events and community activities such as a school allotment project.

Multiple Benefits

- **Blue-Green Infrastructure:** Incorporates blue-green infrastructure, such as parks, sustainable drainage systems and water features to make space for water and to manage rainwater sustainably. Including 146 new trees, wildflower lawns, shrubs and flowering plants which combine biodiverse habitat areas. This helps reduce flood risk, improve water quality and enhance the local environment.
- **Restoration of Natural Functions:** Restoring natural water functions, improving biodiversity and creating a more resilient urban environment. Including 70m of deculverting and 365m improvements to the River Medlock.
- **Community and Economic Benefits:** By involving the community and creating attractive public spaces, Mayfield supports local economic growth and improves the quality of life for residents by improving access to nature and wider health benefits.
- **Improved Water Efficiency:** utilising existing wells to irrigate the park reducing reliance on the city's water supply. The development also focuses on conserving water and maximizing water efficiency in new construction.

Aerial Photography
Summer 2020



Source: Studio Egret West

Aerial Photography
Summer 2022



North West Investment Programme

Report to the North West RFCC Finance & Business Assurance Sub Group (FBASG)

27 June 2025

1. Purpose




- 1.1 This report to the Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group provides an update on the 2024-25 outturn, progress on delivering the in-year (2025-26) capital, resource, and local levy investment programmes, including the RFCC's Business Plan.

The FBASG are asked to:

- Note the 2024-25 capital and resource programmes outturn
- Note the progress in delivering the 2025-26 capital and resource programmes
- Note the draft phase 1, 2026-2027 capital programme refresh bid for funding
- Note the 2024-25 levy programme outturn and the 2025-26 levy programme and latest spend forecast
- **Recommend to RFCC for approval, the local levy request for the Padiham FRMS**
- **Recommend to RFCC for approval, the local levy request for the Manchester Square Pumping Station Scheme, Blackpool**
- Note the update on the RFCC Business Plan
- **Formally recognise the completion of two Business Plan projects**

2. Capital Investment Programme 2021-22 to 2025-26

2.1. Overview

			
	Properties to be better protected	Partnership funding	Efficiency savings
National Overview	Between 21-22 and 25-26 circa 150,000 properties will be better protected. The 24-25 and 25-26 investment programme will see £2.65 billion of investment to better protect 52,000 properties.	We have secured approximately £1.5 billion of partnership funding contributions since 21-22	Efficiency savings figures for the last 4 years i.e. 21-22 to 24-25 was £160.8 million against a cumulative target of £339 million for the five-year programme.
North West Overview	North West has protected in total 11,108 properties in the years 21-22 to 24-25.	Approximately 10% of the North West Programme is made up of partnership funding	£14.9 million of efficiencies were claimed by North West in the years 21-22 to 24-25

2.2 2024-25 Capital Programme End of Year Financial Position Summary

North West		BUDGET	End of year	
		BUDGET (£k)	ACTUALS (£k)	VARIANCE
GIA	EA	£85,444,494	£87,949,138	£2,504,644
	RMA	£18,121,000	£16,927,349	-£1,193,651
	TOTAL	£103,565,494	£104,876,487	£1,310,993
LOCAL LEVY	EA	£6,930,000	£4,957,000	-£1,973,000
	RMA	£922,000	£877,000	-£45,000
	TOTAL	£7,852,000	£5,834,000	-£2,018,000
PF	EA	£4,381,728	£1,668,021	-£2,713,707
	RMA	£2,236,500	£93,545	-£2,142,955
	TOTAL	£6,618,228	£1,761,566	-£4,856,662
TPE	EA	£96,756,222	£94,574,159	-£2,182,063
	RMA	£21,279,500	£17,897,894	-£3,381,606
	TOTAL	£118,035,722	£112,472,053	-£5,563,669

- 2.2.1 For the 2024-25 financial year, the NW had a total budget of £118 million out of which we spent ~ £112.5 million. The total underspend was £5.5 million of which ~£1.8 million of Local Levy contribution has been deferred to a future year to maximise GiA. This underspend is associated with many projects across the programme. Partnership Funding (PF) contribution has also been deferred to align with funding profiles and comply with finance guidance.
- 2.2.2 Forecasts at mid-March 2025, reported to the committee in April, showed we were expecting to draw down £110.4 million however our final accounts show we spent around £2m more than forecast. This is mainly because of four projects overspending in the last month of 2024-25; Appleby Town Centre (£700k), Littleborough (£600k), Padiham (£350k) and the GMC Recovery Programme (£250k).
- 2.2.3 We delivered £104.9 million of GiA against a budget of £103.6 million which is within 1% of our Grant in Aid allocation. This overspend was approved by the national programme management office.
- 2.2.4 For the year 2024-25 we had an overall target to better protect 1,557 properties out of which we better protected 1,352 properties across both the areas (see Appendix A). In the April RFCC meeting we reported a target of 1499 properties which was corrected to 1557 properties. This is due to several schemes re-profiling throughout the year.

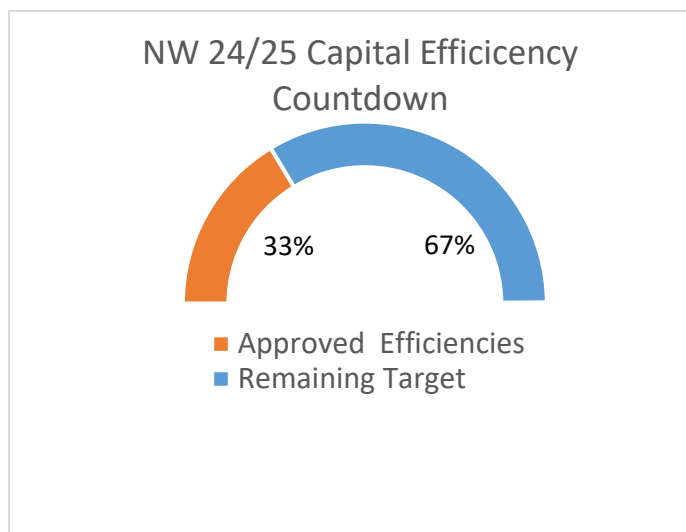
2.3 Properties better protected in 2024/25

Area	Target	Claimed
CLA: Cumbria and Lancashire	1075	960
GMMC: Greater Manchester, Merseyside, and Cheshire	426	299
Cross Partnership	56	93
Total	1557	1352

- 2.3.1 In April, we reported to the committee that the North West would better protect 1,439 properties from flooding in 2024/25. The reduction in the number of properties better protected was due to two projects being delayed and these will now claim the properties in 2025-26. These are Bolton Inlets and Screens Improvement (47 properties) and Lumb Brook, West View, Rossendale (50 properties). Preston and South Ribble FRMS also saw a reduction due to revised modelling (47 properties).

2.4 Capital Efficiencies claimed 2024-25

Area	Efficiencies claimed 2024-25
CLA: Cumbria and Lancashire	£1,765,880
GMC: Greater Manchester, Merseyside, and Cheshire	£1,657,496
Total	£3,423,376



Authority	Total GiA Spend £	10% Efficiency Target £	Efficiency Claim Value £	Variance (Target vs Claimed) £	Variance (Target vs Claimed) %
EA	87,949,138	8,794,914	3,269,428	-5,525,486	-63%
RMA	16,927,349	1,692,735	153,948	-1,538,787	-91%
Total	104,876,487	10,487,649	3,423,376	-7,064,273	-67%

- 2.4.1 The North West overall claimed efficiencies of approximately £3.4 million in 2024-25 against the target of £10.5 million i.e. 10% of FCRM GIA spent. This is an increase to the £2.6m efficiencies claimed at the end of Q3 and reported to the committee in April.
- 2.4.2 Please refer to Appendix B for a project list of efficiencies claimed in 2024-25.

2.5 2024-25 Resource Maintenance Programme End of Year Position



Area	Budget (£)	Final Position (£)
Cumbria and Lancashire (CLA)	£6,230,000	£6,176,484
CLA additional spend	£1,850,000	£1,850,000
Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire (GMMC)	£5,698,000	£5,605,053
NW Total	£13,778,000	£13,631,537

- 2.5.1 Cumbria and Lancashire (CLA) received permission to overspend on Asset Electricity Costs and Flood Basin Operation Compensation Payments – this equated to an additional £1.85million. CLA's end of year position was 99% of budget. We reported to the Committee in April that this approved overspend was £2.4m but the actual figure has now been confirmed as £1.85m.
- 2.5.2 The GMMC end of year position was 98.4% of budget. This was to balance overspend across the wider Ops team and to keep within agreed budgets.
- 2.5.3 The resource staff costs final out-turn is still subject to audit and will be confirmed by the end of June 2025. The total North West budget in 2024-25 was £8,946,000.

The FBASG are asked to:

- Note the 2024-25 capital and resource programmes outturn

2.6 2025-26 Programme - Outcomes

		* North West	North West	Actual to
		Target	Forecast	date
		5,716	6,751	0

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

- 2.6.1 The North West RFCC properties better protected target for 2025-26 is 5,716. This comprises of GMMC 1,568 and CLA 4,148. Forecast figures at mid-May 2025 indicate the North West will better protect 6,751 properties from flooding this year.
- 2.6.2 There is high confidence in delivery, however a number of properties (2,821) are forecast in March, therefore a risk that some delivery might be delayed into the 2026-27 financial year.
- 2.6.3 Please See Appendix A for the breakdown of the target by project. Area targets will be confirmed by National at the end of June and we will provide further detail at the next RFCC meeting.

2.7 2025/26 Programme – Funding and Spend

	Capital funding available	Capital forecast
	£135.153 million	£141.060 million

North West		BUDGET	Latest Forecast (mid-May)	
		BUDGET(£k)	FORECAST	VARIANCE
GIA	EA	£97,696,709	£99,121,957	£1,425,248
	RMA	£24,293,999	£29,602,630	£5,308,631
	TOTAL	£121,990,708	£128,724,587	£6,733,879
LOCAL LEVY	EA	£6,298,000	£6,428,000	£130,000
	RMA	£3,479,000	£3,132,000	-£347,000
	TOTAL	£9,777,000	£9,560,000	-£217,000
PF	EA	£2,641,000	£2,241,000	-£400,000
	RMA	£744,500	£535,000	-£209,500
	TOTAL	£3,385,500	£2,776,000	-£609,500
TPE	EA	£106,635,709	£107,790,957	£1,155,248
	RMA	£28,517,499	£33,269,630	£4,752,131
	TOTAL	£135,153,208	£141,060,587	£5,907,379

- 2.7.1 The total capital investment funding available to the North West RFCC 2025-26 programme is £135.15 million. This includes £121.99 million of central Government FCRM GiA (Grant in Aid), £9.78 million of Local Levy and £3.39 million of Partnership Funding Contributions. Sources of partnership contributions include local authorities, and other government departments such as the Department for Education and the Department for Transport.
- 2.7.2 Forecasts at mid-May 2025 show that we are expecting to draw down £141.06 million this year. This is £5.9 million more than allocated (4.4% over programme). The national programme management office has advised that over programme of no more than 5% at this point in the year.
- 2.7.3 Forecasts form part of over programme and are not approved allocations. Programme teams will keep monitoring spend throughout the year with a plan to reduce forecasts back to budgets if required.

2.7.4 The table below lists the projects with a forecast vs. allocation difference of £1m or more:

Project Name	Partnership	RMA	Allocation	Forecast	Difference
Lower Risk Debris Screen Programme - GMMC	Cross Partnership	EA	£4,490,000	£6,507,033	-£2,017,033
GMMC Recovery 2025	Cross Partnership	EA	£200,000	£3,658,488	-£3,458,488
Kendal Appraisal Package Kendal FRM Scheme	Cumbria	EA	£19,012,000	£24,400,001	-£5,388,001
Carlisle Appraisal Package Appleby Town Centre	Cumbria	EA	£2,953,153	£4,498,404	-£1,545,251
River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough Flood Risk Management Scheme	Greater Manchester	EA	£17,815,276	£19,186,842	-£1,371,566
Wyre Beach Management Scheme	Lancashire	LA	£10,000,000	£15,000,000	-£5,000,000
River Calder, Padiham	Lancashire	EA	£11,020,000	£2,196,180	£8,823,820
Liverpool City Council - Ordinary Watercourse Culverts	Merseyside	LA	£370,000	£1,370,000	-£1,000,000

2.8 2025/26 Programme – Capital Efficiencies

2.8.1 The deadline for Q1 efficiency submissions is 27 June. Details will be reported at the next RFCC meeting. The target for this year is based on the £121.99m GiA allocation received is £12.199m.

2.9 2025-26 Resource Maintenance Programme Allocation (including Resource Projects)

Area	Budget (£)	End of Yr Forecast (£)
CLA – Resource Maintenance Programme	£7,000,000	£7,000,000
Asset Projects	-	-
Flood Basin Compensation	£500,000	£500,000
Croston Basin Legal Fees	£50,000	£50,000
Principal Depot Costs	£180,000	£180,000
Glasson Dock Maintenance Contributions	£50,000	£50,000
Lane End Amenity Area Maintenance Contribution	£5,600	£5,600

MEICA Commercial Support	£363,000	£363,000
GMC Resource Maintenance Programme	£5,577,304	£5,577,304
Asset Projects	-	-
Natural Resources Wales Contribution	£230,000	£230,000
Canal & River Trust Contribution	£12,000	£0
Principal Depot Costs	£174,000	£0
Decommissioning	£220,000	£0
Commercial Support (inc MEICA)	£99,000	£99,000
Bedford Pumping Station, Leigh, De-silt	£0	£406,000

- 2.9.1 The 2025-26 Budgets appear slightly higher than previously released figures due to capital salaries re-charge now being included in the budget for the first time this financial year.

2.10 2025-26 Programmes – Delivery Risks

- 2.10.1 As stated in section 2.6, we have high confidence in achieving our properties better protected from flooding target (5,716). However, 49% of this target is forecasting to claim these properties in March 2026. Therefore, there is a risk that some of these properties might move into the next financial year. We are working closely with project teams to mitigate any project slippages to enable us to meet our target.
- 2.10.2 As we are in the final year of the capital programme, strong cost management needs to be in place to ensure we can deliver the programme on allocation. There will be limited opportunities for schemes to spend above their FDGIA allocation.
- 2.10.3 On-going recovery spend (following the New-Years Day flooding events) will need to be absorbed within the current allocation. If we experience another significant flooding event across the North West it will put more strain onto the programme.

The FBASG are asked to:

- Note the progress in delivering the 2025-26 capital and resource programmes.

3. 2026-27 Programme Refresh

- 3.1 The Annual Refresh of the FCRM Capital Investment Programme is ongoing. This year's annual refresh will look at the financial year 2026-27 only. It will take place in two phases.
- 3.2 Phase 1 covers projects that are in, or near construction, the support and enabling programme and the resource programme. For the projects in or near construction, these are projects that are either delivering properties in 2026-27 or are past Outline Business Case (OBC) by 1 April 2026. The bid for Phase 1 is to be submitted in July 2025.
- 3.3 Phase 2 will cover a bid for all capital pipeline/new projects and the existing projects not past OBC by 1 April 2026. This will take place in the autumn. This phase will commence following completion of the ongoing Defra public consultation 'Reforming our approach to floods funding' and once the new funding arrangements are finalised. We will provide more information to the RFCC at the next meetings.
- 3.4 The committee are asked to review the current draft programmes and to note that it is likely that only the phase 1 bid will be endorsed by Committee in October, followed by consent in January, as we await the new funding arrangements.
- 3.5 The draft bid summary for 2026-27 for Phase 1 and by partnership is shown in the table below. The final phase 1 bid will be presented at the October RFCC meetings along with Local Choices. More detail of the draft phase 1 bid can be found in Appendix C.

Partnership	EA/LA	No. of Projects (Phase 1)	TPE 26-27 Phase 1 (£)	Expected rOM Phase 1
Cumbria	EA	11	27,530,246	64
	LA	19	16,807,309	356
	Total	30	19,557,555	420
Lancashire	EA	14	44,212,232	132
	LA	10	58,974,880	10,884
	Total	24	103,187,112	11,016
CLA Cross Partnership	EA	6	5,300,741	791
	Total	6	5,300,741	791
Merseyside	EA	0	0	0
	LA	6	4,173,000	1,837
	Total	6	4,173,000	1,837
Greater Manchester	EA	13	36,145,692	733
	LA	5	1,960,000	61

	Total	18	38,105,692	794
Cheshire Mid-Mersey	EA	2	2,900,000	45
	LA	7	944,370	72
	Total	9	3,844,370	117
GMMC Cross-Partnership	EA	3	13,819,900	50
	LA	0	0	0
	Total	3	13,819,900	50
Total North West	EA	49	129,908,811	1,815
	LA	47	82,859,559	13,210
	Total	96	212,768,370	15,025

- 3.6 We are starting to build the next programme. This work will continue to progress alongside the new funding arrangements. We have a small number of projects in the future programme with certainty around deliverability and therefore, any delays in delivery in this programme will increase funding demands from next year, resulting in fewer opportunities to accelerate or introduce new projects into the programme. In our bid we are taking account of these risks, and we will be applying a level of over-programme that will support deliverability of both spend and outcome measures. The above is part of ongoing discussions between the EA and Risk Management Authority (RMA) colleagues, supply chain partners and project teams.

The FBASG are asked to:

- Note the draft phase 1, 2026-2027 capital programme refresh bid for funding.

4. NW RFCC Local Levy programme for 2024-25 and 2025-26

4.1 2024-25 End of Year Position

- 4.1.1 The North West RFCC started the 2024-25 financial year with a total Local Levy resource of £16.171 million (£11.213 million carried forward from 2023-24, £4.469 million income and £0.489m on balances). We have spent £5.835 million Local Levy in 2024-25 with £10.336 million remaining in balances at the end of the year.

Summary of Local Levy income and spend

2024-25	
Local Levy income and allocation summary (£ million)	
Cash balance at start of year	11.213
Local Levy income	4.469
Interest earned	0.489
Total available balance	16.171
Actual Spend*	5.835
Remaining cash balance at year end*	10.336

*Figures are still subject to the 2024-25 end of year audit, which is ongoing

Appendix D provides the detailed breakdown of actual Local Levy spend in 2024-25.

4.2 Future Local Levy programme scenario and balance forecasts

- 4.2.1 The North West Local Levy balance at the start of 2025-26 is £10.336 million (£4.681 million income plus £10.33681 million carried forward from 2024-25 and interest earned on balances of 0.4 million). The latest forecast for 2025-26 is £9.56 million with expected remaining balance of £5.858 million at the end of the financial year.

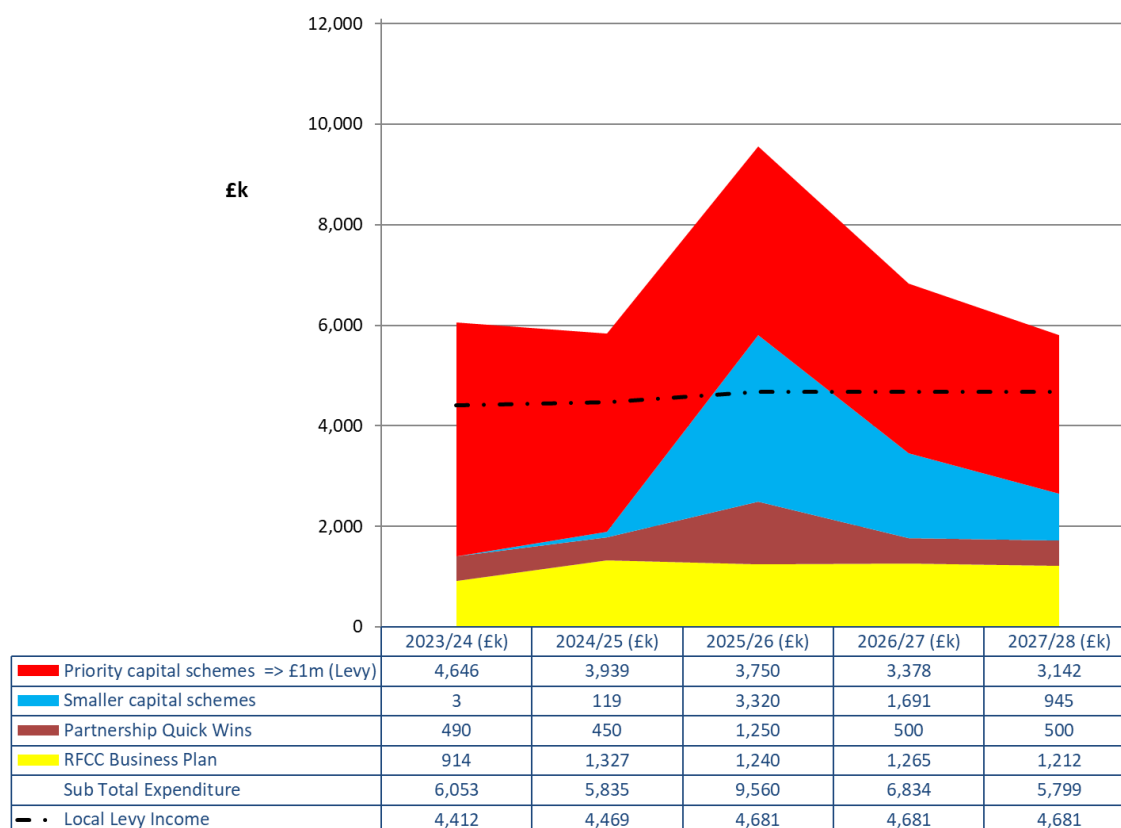
Details of the programme allocation and forecasts for 2025-26 are shown in Appendix E.

2025-26	
Local Levy income and allocation summary (£ million)	
Cash balance at start of year (expected)*	10.336
Estimated interest	0.400
Local Levy income	4.681
Total available balance*	15.417
Latest forecast	9.560
Expected remaining cash balance at year end	5.858

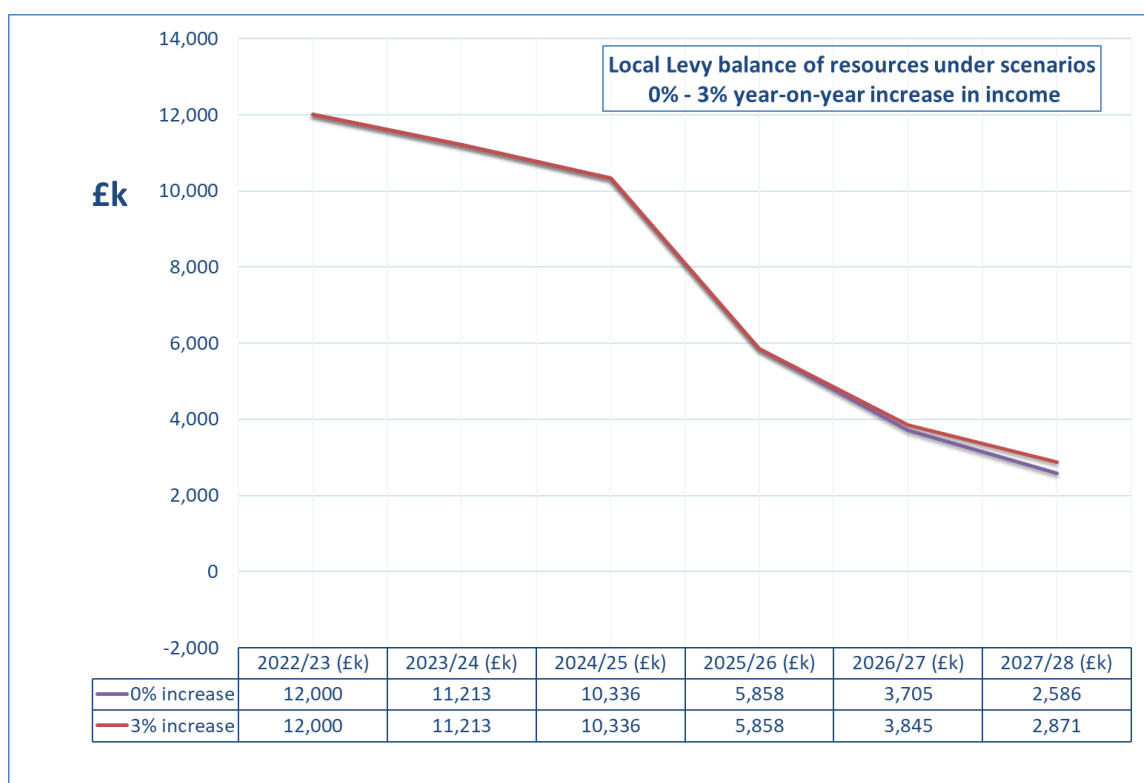
*Figures are still subject to the 2024-25 end of year audit, which is ongoing

4.2.2 The below graphs show the income and expenditure scenario and includes the Local Levy requests in section 4.3 below.

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



4.2.4 The graph below shows the expected Local Levy balances at the end of each year based on the latest forecasts. This includes the new Levy requests noted below as well as the Levy request for the Property Flood Resilience North West programme for which there is a separate paper (agenda item 7).



- 4.2.5 The Levy balance in 2027-28 reduces to between £2.586m and £2.871m depending on the percentage scenario for increases in Local Levy income. This value is close to the minimum Local Levy balance options of £2m or £2.34m (50% of current annual income) being considered and discussed previously.

4.3 Requests for Local Levy support for FCRM schemes

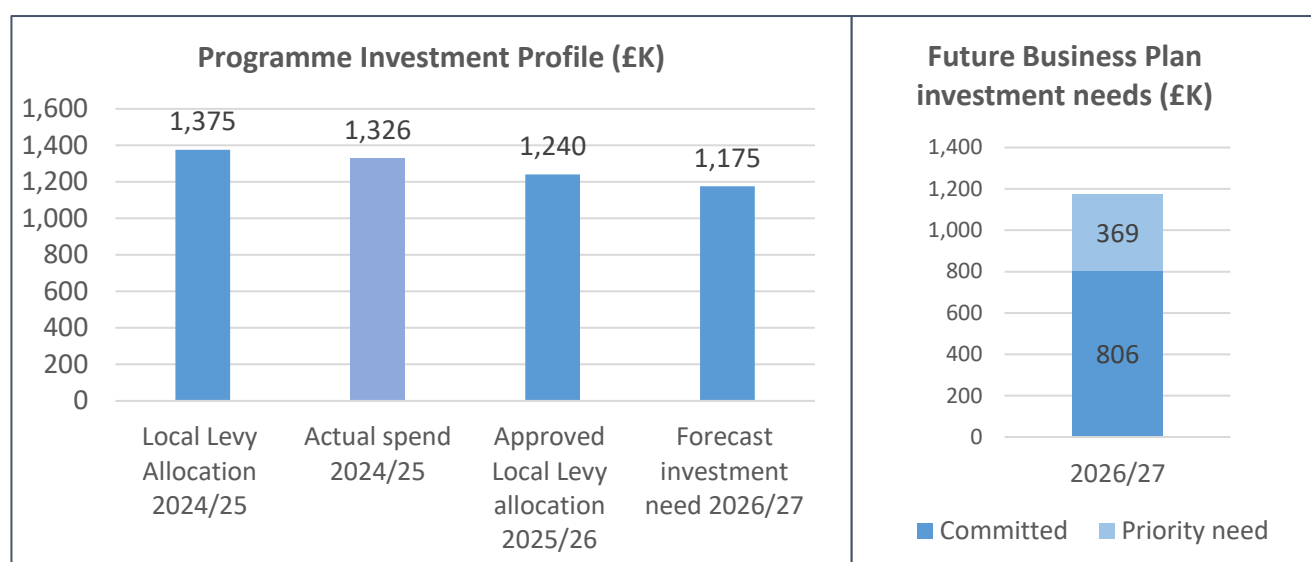
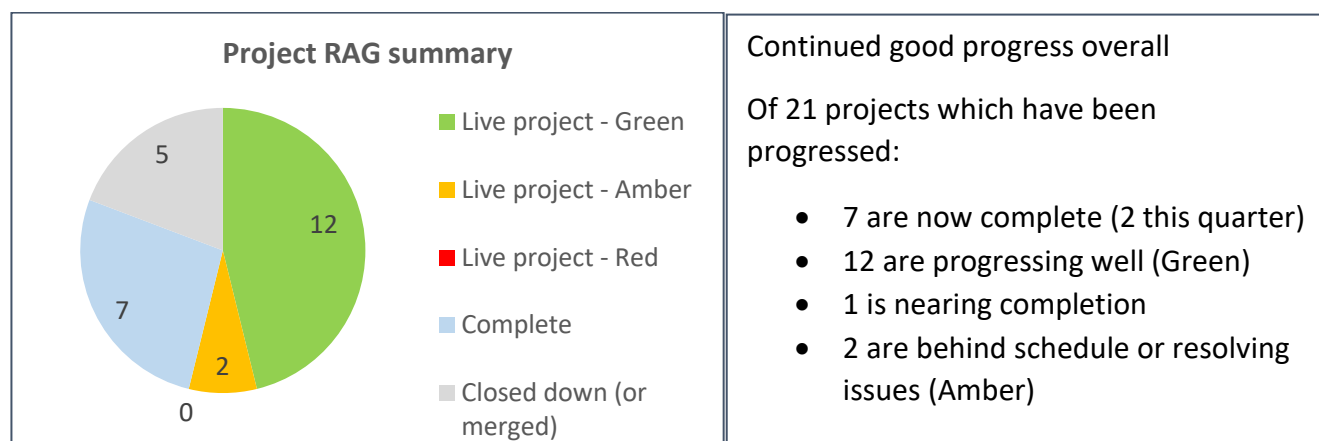
- 4.3.1 Appendix F provides a briefing note requesting an increase in Local Levy for the Padiham Flood Risk Management Scheme (Lancashire Partnership), from £1.3m previously approved, to £5m. The additional £3.7m will be spent in 2027-28 (£2.2m) and in 2028-29 (£1.5m).
- 4.3.2 Appendix G provides a briefing note for a Local Levy request for Manchester Square Pumping Station, Blackpool (Lancashire Partnership) for £250K in this financial year (2025-26).

The FBASG are asked to:

- Note the Local Levy programme 2024-25 outturn, the 2025-26 programme and latest spend forecast.
- **Recommend to RFCC for approval, the £3.7m local levy request for the Padiham FRMS.**
- **Recommend to RFCC for approval, the £250k local levy request for the Manchester Square Pumping Station Scheme, Blackpool.**

5. RFCC Business Plan (Local Levy funded)

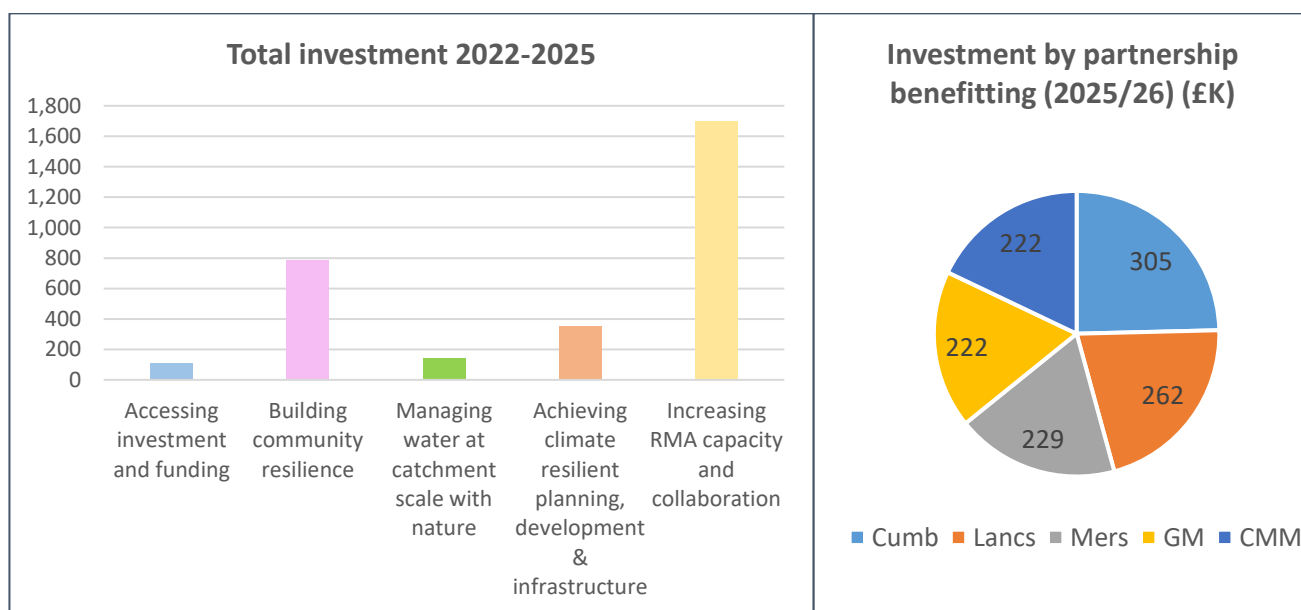
5.1. Progress Dashboard



Project status by ambition						
Ambition	No. of projects approved	Live project - Green	Live project - Amber	Live project - Red	Complete	Closed (or merged)
Accessing investment and funding	5	1	0	0	1	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	0	0	2	0
	26	12	2	0	7	5

Investment profile by ambition					
Ambition	Local Levy Allocation 2024-25	Actuals spend 2024-25	Variance 2024-25	Approved Local Levy allocation 2025-26	Forecast investment need 2026-27
Accessing investment and funding	70	91	21	45	45
Building community resilience	250	262	13	257	265
Managing water at catchment scale with nature	132	66	-67	137	97
Achieving climate resilient planning, dev't & infrastructure	231	239	8	79	60
Increasing RMA capacity and collaboration	693	668	-24	722	709
	1,375	1,326	-49	1,240	1,175

Actuals spend for 2024/25 at project level can be found in Appendix D and a project-level breakdown of progress and spend is provided as Appendix H.



Approved Programme and Local Levy investment 2025-26 (£K)			
ID	Project title	Allocation 2025-26 (£K)	Total for Ambition (£K)
2.1	Development of innovative green finance mechanisms – Wyre CIC	45	45
5	The Flood Hub	119	257
5A	The Flood Hub – National expansion to other RFCCs	0	
6	Supporting community engagement on adapting to coastal change	10	
7	Action campaign – Flood resilience	128	
9A	NFM Technical Appraisal resource – Mersey Forest collaboration	35	137
20	Land mgt and flooding engagement (event)	12	
22	NFM Pipeline (Cumbria)	90	
12	Action campaign – Paving over front gardens	79	79
15	Risk management authority capacity building programme	15	722
16	Additional capacity (to support the RFCC, partnerships and RMAs)	682	
17	NW Coastal Centre of Excellence - development	25	
		1,240	1,240

5.2. Projects completed

5.2.1 There are two projects being reported as complete this quarter.

5.2.2 ID1 Investment mapping feasibility

This project was led by Greater Manchester Combined Authority on behalf of the GM Partnership and has been delivered by Jacobs's consultants. It explores the complex landscape of funding and investment for flood and water management in the North West. It aims to support Local Authorities (LAs) and Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) in identifying and accessing diverse funding sources to deliver flood risk reduction, climate resilience, and wider environmental and social benefits.

The objectives of the project were to:

- Map existing and potential funding sources and mechanisms.
- Identify barriers to accessing funding and propose solutions.
- Develop collaborative investment pathways and options for GIS-based tools.
- Recommend systems for improved data sharing and investment planning.

The final outputs include:

- Findings report which captures the identified barriers to successfully sourcing funding for projects.
- Database of over 160 potential funding sources.
- Series of 10 case studies on blended funding models.
- Collaborative pathways to help guide LAs through the process of identifying suitable funding sources by aligning project outcomes with funding mechanisms and eligible partners.
- List of over 290 identified spatial datasets that could be used to support investment planning.
- Recommendations on how this spatial information could be shared and used, including options for GIS platforms for mapping potential investment sources. This includes the

EA's Stakeholder Beneficiary Mapping Tool which is seen as having significant potential for hosting the identified datasets.

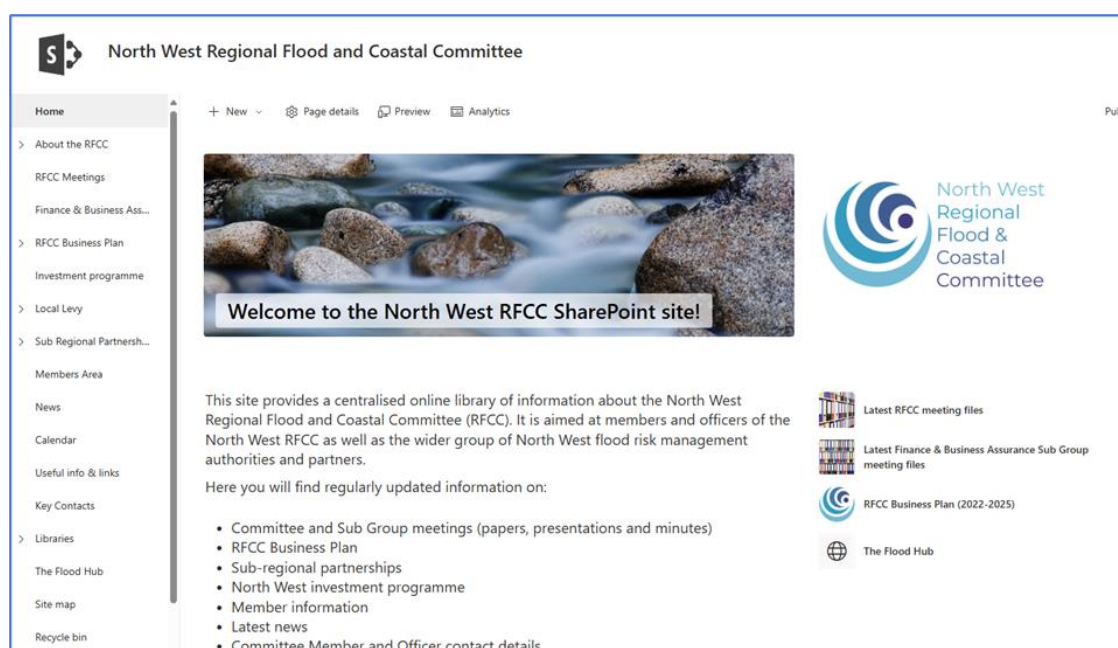
A summary presentation on the project will be provided at the Subgroup meeting on 27 June. The outputs will be shared via the RFCC SharePoint site and promotion of these within the partnerships is encouraged.

Total cost: £45K

5.2.3 ID18 RFCC SharePoint site

We set out to create a SharePoint site for the RFCC which would provide an online space for storing and sharing information on Committee business, which Members and officers can refer to as required, as well as acting as a repository for all meeting papers and presentations.

Following a survey to assess user preferences, significant work went into constructing and populating the site. A navigation tour of the site was presented at the October 2024 RFCC meeting, and the site was launched in December 2024. [North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee - Home](#)



It is now the sole mechanism for sharing RFCC papers, and the site will continue to be updated and developed. The investment programme section still requires some further development and will be informed by an ongoing exercise to review what information on the investment programme is provided to the RFCC, Subgroup and partnership groups, how/where and when.

Overall, the site is substantially complete and the RFCC is asked to formally recognise the completion of this Business Plan action.

Total cost: £0K

5.3. Project highlights

- 5.3.1 **Flood Poverty Project (ID8) wins innovation award** - The success of the project was recognised recently at the Flood and Coast Awards 2025, with the project winning the Innovation in Climate Change award, and Project Manager Sarah Parkington from Rochdale Council receiving a CIWEM Spotlight award for inspiring leadership under the banner of 'Possibility'.
- 5.3.2 **The Flood Hub website (ID5) continues to track record growth** and use despite the dry and warm first half of the year. Content development is always ongoing with a particular recent focus on PFR and SuDS.
- 5.3.3 **Increasing awareness and interest in Property Flood Resilience measures** – (ID7 Flood Resilience Action Campaign) - It is becoming apparent that there is growing awareness and interest in Property Flood Resilience measures from homeowners, both those who are being proactive and seeking to fund it themselves and in terms of enquiring about grants. There is anecdotal evidence for this from the interactions the New ground Flood Team and RMAs have with residents at community flood risk events, and in the enquiries that the New ground team receive via the website and respond to.
- 5.3.4 **Unpave the Way features in national publications and at Flood and Coast (ID12)** – In March, a case study on the Unpave the Way Garden was launched on the Susdrain community website, and in April it featured as a double-page spread article in the ADA Gazette. Then in June, the project had a display pod on the LLFA stand in the Flood and Coast exhibition, arranged by Lancashire County Council colleagues and attended by members of the project team. This provided a fantastic opportunity to highlight what we are doing with others, in particular local authorities elsewhere. Work is now underway to produce the Householder SuDS Guide and once this product is available, communications and promotion will be stepped up.

5.4. Recommendations

The FBASG are asked to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the update on the RFCC Business Plan implementation. • Formally recognise the completion of project ID1 Investment mapping feasibility. • Formally recognise the completion of project ID18 RFCC SharePoint site.

APPENDICES

Appendix A	2024-25 Properties Better Protected - Actuals
Appendix B	2025-26 Properties Better Protected Forecast and Target Data (for info only)
Appendix C	Capital Efficiencies claimed – 2024-25
	Programme Refresh 2026-27 Phase 1 Bid – Project List
Appendix D	North West Local Levy Actual Spend – 24-25
Appendix E	North West Local Levy Programme 2025-26 – Updated Programme
Appendix F	Local Levy request – Padiham Scheme
Appendix G	Local Levy request – Manchester Square Pumping Station Scheme, Blackpool
Appendix H	RFCC Business Plan – Project summaries

Appendix A	2024-25 Properties Better Protected - Actuals 2025-26 Properties Better Protected Forecast and Target Data (for info only)
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2024-25 Properties Better Protected - Actuals

Scheme Name	Partnership	2024/25 Forecast	2024/25 Target	Actuals
Ryles Pool Culverted Ordinary Watercourse	Cheshire	16	16	0
Woolston Park FRM Scheme	Cheshire	13	13	13
Abbots Mead Industrial Estate, Chester	Cheshire	12	12	0
Weaste Lane, Thelwall FRM Scheme (Phase A)	Cheshire	11	11	11
Old Mill Place, Tattenhall	Cheshire	10	10	0
Adder Hill Great Boughton	Cheshire	3	3	0
Badgers Rake Lane, Little Sutton	Cheshire	5	5	5
Hooton Green, Ellesmere Port	Cheshire	26	26	0
Penketh and Whittle FRM Scheme	Cheshire	221	221	221
Smithy Brow, Croft, Warrington	Cheshire	3	3	0
Lumb Brook, West View, Rossendale	Cross Partnership	50	50	0
Lower Screens Programme 2022-2023	Cross Partnership	6	6	6
Lower Risk Debris Screens	Cross Partnership	0	0	87
Whitehaven Harbour Flood Defence Capital Replacement	Cumbria	131	131	131
Greenbank, Ambleside Surface Water Flooding	Cumbria	7	7	7
Lindale Road Grange over Sands	Cumbria	0	23	0
Low Crosby	Cumbria	0	20	0
Warwick Bridge PFR scheme	Cumbria	0	16	0
Spittal Farm, Wigton	Cumbria	0	9	0
Walkden Climate Resilient Neighbourhood	Greater Manchester	8	8	0
Golburn Clough, Greenfield, Oldham	Greater Manchester	6	6	6
Bolton Inlets and Screens Improvement	Greater Manchester	66	66	19
Manchester Restoration of Open Channels of Ordinary Watercourses	Greater Manchester	13	13	10
Preston and South Ribble	Lancashire	822	869	822
Frog Lane Drainage Improvement Scheme	Merseyside	3	3	3
Sefton Strategic Surface Water Management Plan Delivery Programme	Merseyside	10	10	11
TOTAL		1442	1557	1352

2025-26 Properties Better Protected Forecast and Target Data (for info only)

Scheme Name	Partnership	2025-26 Forecast	2025-26 Target (for info only)
Radcliffe & Redvales FRM Scheme	Greater Manchester	907	1460
Longford Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme	Greater Manchester	37	76
Turf Hill	Greater Manchester	0	21
West End Road, St Helens	Cheshire	0	11
Smithy Brow, Croft, Warrington	Cheshire	2	0
Abbots Mead Industrial Estate, Chester	Cheshire	12	0
Adder Hill Great Boughton	Cheshire	3	0
Hooton Green, Ellesmere Port	Cheshire	26	0
Bolton Inlets and Screens Improvement	Greater Manchester	47	0
Coronation Park Greasby Flood Relief	Merseyside	12	0
Liverpool Road, Gt Sankey Surface Water Management Project	Cheshire	62	0
Lindow Primary School FAS	Cheshire	4	0
Wyre Beach Management Scheme	Lancashire	3000	3000
Preston and South Ribble	Lancashire	707	707
Maryport Harbour Gates	Cumbria	26	26
Brecon Road Scheme, Blackburn	Lancashire	18	22
Etterby Terrace, Carlisle	Cumbria	16	16
Warwick Bridge PFR scheme	Cumbria	16	16
Low Crosby	Cumbria	15	20
Spittal Farm, Wigton	Cumbria	9	0
Pendle Level 2 Brierfield Surface Water Management Plan	Lancashire	0	85
Darwen Central, Darwen	Lancashire	0	59
Chester Close, Blackburn	Lancashire	0	58
Parbold Village Options appraisal and Scheme Delivery	Lancashire	0	40
Whalley Surface Water Improvement Scheme	Lancashire	0	35
Kirkland Road, Ennerdale Bridge	Cumbria	0	21
Tebay Surface Water Alleviation	Cumbria	0	16
Guildrey Lane, Sedbergh	Cumbria	0	15
River Annas, Bootle, Cumbria	Cumbria	0	12
Lower Screens Programme 2022-2023	Cross Partnership	1832	0
TOTAL		6751	5716

Partnership	Number of schemes forecasting properties better protected in 2025-26	Total 2025-26 Forecast	Total 2025-26 Target (for info only)	Actuals
Greater Manchester	4	991	1557	0
Merseyside	1	12	0	0
Cheshire	7	109	11	0
Cumbria	9	82	142	0
Lancashire	8	3,725	4,006	
Cross-Partnership	1	1832	0	0
Total		6,751	5,716	0

Appendix B	Efficiencies Claimed – 2024-25
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Project Name	Partnership	RMA	Efficiencies Claimed in 24-25
Cockermouth Asset Reconditioning	Cumbria	EA	£33,323
Mersey Assets Reconditioning	Cross Partnership	EA	£30,688
Kendal FRMS	Cumbria	EA	£1,473,167
GMMC Lower Risk Debris Screens	Cross Partnership	EA	£360,701
National Coastal Monitoring Programme (Northwest RCMP)	Cross Partnership	EA	£148,208
NW Lower Risk Debris Screens	Cross Partnership	EA	£800
Preston & South Ribble FRMS	Lancashire	EA	£138,584
Radcliffe and Redvales	Greater Manchester	EA	£230,085
Recovery and Reconditioning	Cross Partnership	EA	£26,000
River Mersey (South Manchester Catchments) Strategy Project	Greater Manchester	EA	£285,611
River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough FRMS	Greater Manchester	EA	£447,455
Sankey Brook FRMS	Cheshire/Mid Mersey	LA	£153,948
Skirting & Whangs Beck FRMS	Cumbria	EA	£94,807
Total Efficiencies Claimed			£3,423,377

Appendix C	Programme Refresh 2026-27 Phase 1 Bid – Initial Project List
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NOTE THIS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND REPRESENTS A SNAPSHOT IN TIME FROM JUNE 2026

These tables are available in Excel spreadsheet form on the RFCC SharePoint site [here](#)

Cumbria and Lancashire Area

Project ID	Project Name	Environment Agency Area	Lead Risk Management Authority - Name	Lead Risk Management Authority - Type	County	Gateway 2	Total Project Expenditure – 2026-27	Total rOMs – 2026-27
2019/20-000071	Kendal Appraisal Package Kendal FRM Scheme	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cumbria	10/04/2019	23,051,773	
2020/21-001085	Blackpool Beach Nourishment Scheme	Cumbria and Lancashire	Blackpool Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Lancashire	14/06/2023	22,430,000	2,024
2019/20-000123	Preston and South Ribble	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Lancashire	18/02/2020	17,040,000	
2019/20-000118	River Calder, Padiham	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Lancashire	04/09/2019	15,380,000	
2020/21-000718	Little Bispham to Bispham Coast Protection	Cumbria and Lancashire	Blackpool Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Lancashire	15/03/2022	15,000,000	1,831
2019/20-000096	Wyre Beach Management Scheme	Cumbria and Lancashire	Wyre Borough Council	District	Lancashire	10/03/2020	14,133,116	6,878
2019/20-000111	Millom and Haverigg Flood Alleviation	Cumbria and Lancashire	Cumberland Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	31/07/2025	9,233,809	
2020/21-006336	Anchorsholme Coast Protection Scheme	Cumbria and Lancashire	Blackpool Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Lancashire	15/08/2024	5,500,000	
2019/20-000088	Pegs Pool and Wardleys Pool, Hambleton	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Lancashire	23/12/2019	4,806,320	
2023/24-012605	Newbiggin A5087 Coast Road Coastal Erosion	Cumbria and Lancashire	Westmorland and Furness Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	01/08/2025	2,700,000	
2020/21-001427	Glasson Dock Gate	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Lancashire	01/04/2026	2,300,000	
2023/24-013186	CLA Pumping Station Refurbishments	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cross Partnership	18/09/2024	2,186,200	
2022/23-011639	Lower Screens Programme 2022-2023	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cross Partnership	29/04/2022	2,100,187	791
2020/21-000713	Stubb Place and Eskmeals Coastal Erosion Protection	Cumbria and Lancashire	Cumberland Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	30/08/2025	1,768,000	
2020/21-000989	Burrow Beck Conveyance Improvements	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Lancashire	02/06/2023	1,389,500	17
2025/26-014279	CLA 25-27 Recon PCM Cumbria	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cumbria	26/05/2025	1,340,000	
2020/21-004673	Cumbria River Restoration Package	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cumbria	01/04/2021	1,287,000	
2023/24-012751	Garstang Gate Repair	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Lancashire	07/08/2023	1,240,000	
2025/26-014278	CLA 25-27 Recon PCM Lancs	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Lancashire	01/04/2025	1,074,000	

2020/21-001103	Darwen Central, Darwen	Cumbria and Lancashire	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Lancashire	01/09/2025	1,000,000	59
2020/21-010109	Corby Weir Fish Pass Project	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cumbria	24/10/2025	772,001	
2023/24-013021	Parton FCERM	Cumbria and Lancashire	Cumberland Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	20/12/2025	675,000	67
2020/21-005716	Hydrometry and Telemetry Capital Projects	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cross Partnership	31/01/2022	650,000	
2020/21-000906	Stanhope Road, Carlisle	Cumbria and Lancashire	Cumberland Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	01/12/2025	600,000	72
2020/21-000882	Silloth Groyne Replacement	Cumbria and Lancashire	Cumberland Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	29/08/2025	600,000	
2019/20-000075	Skirting Beck, Egremont	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cumbria	18/09/2017	520,000	
2019/20-000067	Carlisle Appraisal Package Appleby Town Centre	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cumbria	18/11/2021	497,579	64
2023/24-012586	Harraby Surface Water Investigation	Cumbria and Lancashire	Cumberland Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	01/12/2025	450,000	81
2019/20-000085	The Sluice, Back Drain	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Lancashire	03/03/2026	371,000	100
2019/20-000042	Starr Hill Sand Dunes Environmental Works	Cumbria and Lancashire	Blackpool Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Lancashire	14/03/2013	283,764	
2020/21-008104	Cumbria Quick Win Projects	Cumbria and Lancashire	Cumberland Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria		250,000	
2022/23-012043	Whittle-le-Woods	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Lancashire	12/07/2024	248,232	
2020/21-001104	Brecon Road Scheme, Blackburn	Cumbria and Lancashire	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Lancashire	01/08/2025	233,000	28
2020/21-001106	Chester Close, Blackburn	Cumbria and Lancashire	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Lancashire	08/09/2025	230,000	58
2020/21-000880	The Tannery, Burton in Kendal Surface Water Scheme	Cumbria and Lancashire	Westmorland and Furness Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	01/04/2026	190,000	11
2020/21-008087	Support for Community Resilience - CL	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cross Partnership	25/09/2020	175,000	
2023/24-013285	CLA 24-25 Bridges	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cross Partnership	08/04/2024	138,000	
2023/24-013203	Wyre Catchment Readiness Project	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Lancashire	01/07/2024	125,000	15
2020/21-001362	NFM - Trawden Natural Flood Management Delivery	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Lancashire	02/08/2022	100,000	
2020/21-008102	Lancashire Quick Win Projects	Cumbria and Lancashire	Lancashire County Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Lancashire	10/01/2016	100,000	
2023/24-012588	Wigton Road, Carlisle Surface Water Scheme	Cumbria and Lancashire	Cumberland Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	01/12/2025	83,000	9
2023/24-012594	Renwick, Cumbria	Cumbria and Lancashire	Westmorland and Furness Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	31/03/2026	70,000	22
2023/24-012584	Castle Carrock Surface Water Scheme 2	Cumbria and Lancashire	Cumberland Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	01/04/2026	65,000	6
2019/20-000054	Cote Beck, Halton Flow Control	Cumbria and Lancashire	Lancaster City Council	District	Lancashire	01/04/2026	65,000	6
2024/25-013975	CLA REC - Broadfleet Outfall Repair	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Lancashire	09/07/2024	58,180	

2025/26-014351	Cumwhinton Flood Alleviation	Cumbria and Lancashire	Cumberland Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	01/04/2026	57,000	10
2023/24-013433	NW Mapping and Modelling 2 (CLA_	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cross Partnership	11/03/2024	51,354	
2019/20-000116	Fleetwood and Copse Brook	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Lancashire	14/07/2023	50,000	
2023/24-013056	Grange Coastal Defences	Cumbria and Lancashire	Westmorland and Furness Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	01/10/2025	37,500	
2020/21-008105	Alt Crossens Drainage Investigations	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Lancashire	06/10/2021	30,000	
2023/24-012592	Croglin Beck Culvert	Cumbria and Lancashire	Westmorland and Furness Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	01/04/2026	28,000	4
2023/24-013284	CLA 24-25 Asset Reconditioning PCM (Cumbria)	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cumbria	08/04/2024	20,000	
2022/23-012316	CLA Landscape Maintenance - Rickerby	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cumbria	09/03/2023	12,430	
2022/23-012314	CLA Landscape Maintenance - Carlisle Phase 1	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cumbria	09/03/2023	10,809	
2020/21-005519	Lyth Valley Drainage investigations LDW 41595	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cumbria	05/10/2021	10,000	
2022/23-012315	CLA Landscape Maintenance - Gosling Sike	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cumbria	09/03/2023	8,654	
2020/21-000898	Kirkland Road, Ennerdale Bridge	Cumbria and Lancashire	Cumberland Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	01/07/2025		24
2021/22-010761	Lindale Road Grange over Sands	Cumbria and Lancashire	Westmorland and Furness Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	27/10/2022		23
2020/21-000897	Guildrey Lane, Sedbergh	Cumbria and Lancashire	Westmorland and Furness Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	30/12/2025		15
2023/24-012627	River Annas, Bootle, Cumbria	Cumbria and Lancashire	Cumberland Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cumbria	30/07/2025		12

Greater Manchester Merseyside and Cheshire Area

Project ID	Project Name	Environment Agency Area	Lead Risk Management Authority - Name	Lead Risk Management Authority - Type	County	Gateway 2	Total Project Expenditure - 2026/27	Total rOMs - 2026/27
2019/20-000081	River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough Flood Risk Management Scheme	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Greater Manchester	10/05/2018	18,196,808	733
2021/22-011450	Lower Risk Debris Screen Programme - GMMC	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cross Partnership	01/04/2022	13,000,000	
2023/24-013055	River Roch, Phase 2 Rochdale FRMS	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Greater Manchester	11/03/2024	7,989,000	
2024/25-013838	Northenden Weir Repair	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Greater Manchester	31/05/2024	3,500,000	
2019/20-000097	Sankey Brook Flood Risk Management Scheme	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cheshire Mid-Mersey	25/10/2024	2,400,000	
2019/20-000082	Radcliffe & Redvales FRM Scheme	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Greater Manchester	12/10/2018	2,214,000	
2024/25-013710	ENVDidsbury FSR Drawdown	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Greater Manchester	31/05/2024	2,000,000	

2023/24-013430	Liverpool City Council - Ordinary Watercourse Culverts	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Liverpool City Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Merseyside	01/10/2025	2,000,000	1,762
2020/21-006228	North West Strategic Coastal Monitoring Programme	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Merseyside	-	1,195,000	
2021/22-010762	River Mersey (South Manchester Catchments) FRM Strategy 2021_22	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cross Partnership	16/02/2023	879,400	
2025/26-014353	Property Flood Resilience GMMC EA	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cross Partnership	02/03/2026	787,500	50
2019/20-000091	The Pool, Southport	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Merseyside	30/09/2024	703,000	55
2020/21-000570	Wigan Structural Survey and Inspection of Poor and Very Poor Assets - Phase 2 Perry Brook	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Greater Manchester	24/11/2025	700,000	30
2019/20-000056	Shaw, Cringle, Ley, and Willow Brook	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Manchester City Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Greater Manchester	22/09/2025	525,000	10
2024/25-013775	Harrop Brook Culvert Repair	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cheshire Mid-Mersey	01/04/2024	500,000	45
2024/25-013773	Balladen Brook Culvert Repair	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Greater Manchester	30/04/2024	500,000	
2020/21-001179	Turf Hill	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Greater Manchester	20/10/2025	415,000	21
2022/23-012261	Ladybarn, Cringle Brook, DEF	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Greater Manchester	tbc	300,000	
2022/23-011936	Haley Road South Burtonwood Surface Water Management Project	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Warrington Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cheshire Mid-Mersey	01/11/2025	270,000	25
2020/21-000601	Upper Irwell Strategy	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Greater Manchester	05/09/2024	225,000	
2020/21-001328	Timperley Brook Surface Water Management	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Greater Manchester	30/12/2025	220,000	
2024/25-013633	Weaste Lane Thelwall FRM Scheme Phase B	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Warrington Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cheshire Mid-Mersey	01/11/2025	220,000	27
2023/24-012756	St Helens Cemetery and Crematorium Flood Alleviation Scheme	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	St Helens Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cheshire Mid-Mersey	01/08/2025	145,000	
2023/24-013022	ENVPCMLEighEastBedfordBrookAMP	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Greater Manchester	16/10/2023	116,484	
2020/21-008115	Cheshire-Mid-Mersey Quick Win Projects	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Cheshire West and Chester Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cheshire Mid-Mersey	-	100,000	
2020/21-003280	Merseyside Quick Win Projects	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Liverpool City Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Merseyside	19/11/2021	100,000	
2020/21-008116	Greater Manchester Quick Win Projects	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Manchester City Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Greater Manchester	31/12/2021	100,000	
2020/21-001138	Sefton Strategic Surface Water Management Plan Delivery Programme	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Merseyside	01/04/2024	100,000	
2023/24-012645	Alder Lane Orford FRM Study	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Warrington Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cheshire Mid-Mersey	01/10/2025	100,000	
2024/25-013777	Millers Brook Culvert Repair	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Greater Manchester	15/04/2024	75,000	
2024/25-013776	Folly Clough Culvert Repair	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Greater Manchester	01/04/2024	75,000	
2024/25-013774	Hockery Brook Culvert Repair	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Greater Manchester	01/04/2024	75,000	
2020/21-000705	Whiston Lane Flood Alleviation Scheme	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Merseyside	30/03/2026	75,000	20

2023/24-012682	Old Mill Place, Tattenhall	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Cheshire West and Chester Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cheshire Mid-Mersey	27/02/2026	69,370	10
2023/24-012705	The Paddocks, Whitegate	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Cheshire West and Chester Council	Lead Local Flood Authority	Cheshire Mid-Mersey	31/03/2025	40,000	10
2023/24-013365	ENVGMMC RECOVERY	Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Environment Agency	Environment Agency	Cross Partnership	13/03/2024	32,400	

Appendix D	Local Levy Actual Spend – 2024-25
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Project Name	Partnership	RMA	Local Levy Actual spend
FCRM schemes			
Ryles Pool Culverted Ordinary Watercourse	Cheshire Mid Mersey	EA	£117,692
River Irwell, Kearsley	Greater Manchester	EA	£128,214
River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough Flood Risk Management Scheme	Greater Manchester	EA	£1,002,299
Alt Crossens Drainage Investigations	Lancashire	EA	£1,004
Pegs Pool and Wardleys Pool, Hambleton	Lancashire	EA	£797,678
Preston and South Ribble	Lancashire	EA	£2,011,253
Quick Wins			
Cheshire-Mid-Mersey Quick Win Projects	Cheshire Mid Mersey	LA	£100,000
Cumbria Quick Win Projects	Cumbria	LA	£100,000
Greater Manchester Quick Win Projects	Greater Manchester	LA	£99,817
Lancashire Quick Win Projects	Lancashire	LA	£50,000
Merseyside Quick Win Projects	Merseyside	LA	£100,000
RFCC Business Plan			
ID1 Potential investment and partner map	Cross Partnership	LA	£44,491
ID2 Investment in the development of innovative green finance mechanisms - Wyre CIC	Lancashire	EA	£46,000
ID5 The Flood Hub	Cross Partnership	EA	£115,000
ID6 Supporting community engagement on adapting to coastal change	Cross Partnership	LA	£10,000
ID7 Action campaign – Flood resilience	Cross Partnership	EA	£124,550
ID8 Flood Poverty Project	Cross Partnership	LA	£12,691
ID9A NFM partner support funding - Mersey Forest (Tech appraisal resource)	Cross Partnership	EA	£65,500
ID12 Unpave the Way	Cross Partnership	EA	£86,451
ID4/13 Data sharing and mapping of flood risk and drainage assets / Collaborative approach to asset maintenance and management	Cross Partnership	LA	£152,700
ID16 Additional capacity – LA Capital Project Advisors / Capital Programme Coordinator	Cross Partnership	EA	£356,000
ID16 Additional capacity – Shoreline Management Plan Coordinator	Cross Partnership	LA	£99,600
ID16 Additional capacity – Partnership Coordinators	Cross Partnership	LA	£184,530
ID16 Additional capacity – Support for North West RFCC (Business Plan Implementation)	Cross Partnership	EA	£30,000
Total Local Levy Spend			£5,835,470.00

Partnership	Scheme Name	LRMA Type	2025-26 RFCC scenario (£k)	2025-26 Project Forecast (£k)
Cumbria	Carlisle Appraisal Package Appleby Town Centre	EA	0	1,500
Cumbria	Cumbria Quick Win Projects	LA	250	250
Cumbria	Lyth Valley Drainage Investigations	EA	30	30
Cumbria	Millom	LA	500	500
Cumbria	River Winster Rehabilitation Project	LA	164	164
Cumbria	Waver Wampool Pumping Station Investigation	EA	10	10
Cumbria Total			954	2,454
Lancashire	Alt Crossens Drainage Investigations	EA	50	50
Lancashire	Little Bispham to Bispham Coast Protection	LA	350	350
Lancashire	Blackpool Beach Nourishment	LA	350	350
Lancashire	Fleetwood & Copse Brook Scheme	EA	1,770	0
Lancashire	Lancashire Quick Win Projects	LA	250	250
Lancashire	PFR Thurnham	EA	255	255
Lancashire	Pegs Pool and Wardleys Pool, Hambleton	EA	0	400
Lancashire	Blackpool Manchester Square	LA	250	250
Lancashire Total			3,275	1,905
Cheshire/Mid Mersey	Cheshire/Mid-Mersey Quick Win Projects	LA	250	250
Cheshire/Mid Mersey	Lindow Community Primary School Flood Alleviation Scheme	LA	90	120
Cheshire/Mid Mersey	Sankey Bk FRM Scheme	EA	161	161
Cheshire/Mid Mersey Total			501	531
Greater Manchester	Alder Forest, Eccles	EA	400	400
Greater Manchester	Greater Manchester Quick Win Projects	LA	250	250
Greater Manchester	Longford Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme	LA	0	70
Greater Manchester	Poise Brook	EA	305	305
Greater Manchester	River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough FRM Scheme	EA	1,500	1,500

Greater Manchester	River Roch, Phase 2 Rochdale FRMS	EA	380	380
Greater Manchester	Hindley Group	EA	275	275
Greater Manchester Total			3,110	3,180
Merseyside	Meols Parade Coast Protection, Wirral	LA	447	0
Merseyside	Merseyside Quick Win Projects	LA	250	250
Merseyside Total			697	250
RFCC Business Plan	ID2 Development of innovative green finance mechanisms – Wyre CIC	EA	45	45
RFCC Business Plan	ID5 The Flood Hub	EA	119	119
RFCC Business Plan	ID6 Supporting community engagement on adapting to coastal change	EA	10	10
RFCC Business Plan	ID7 Action campaign – Flood resilience	EA	128	128
RFCC Business Plan	ID9A NFM Technical Appraisal resource – Mersey Forest collaboration	EA	35	35
RFCC Business Plan	ID20 Land mgt and flooding engagement (event)	LA	12	12
RFCC Business Plan	ID22 NFM Pipeline (Cumbria)	LA	90	90
RFCC Business Plan	ID12 Unpave the Way	EA	79	79
RFCC Business Plan	ID15 Risk management authority capacity building programme	EA	15	15
RFCC Business Plan	ID16 Additional capacity (to support the RFCC, partnerships and RMAs) – EA hosted resources	EA	419	419
RFCC Business Plan	ID16 Additional capacity (to support the RFCC, partnerships and RMAs) – LA hosted resources	LA	263	263
RFCC Business Plan	ID17 NW Coastal Centre of Excellence - development	LA	25	25
RFCC Business Plan Total			1,240	1,240
Total Local Levy - North West			9,778	9,561

Breakdown of Local Levy(£k) by Partnership (Forecast)

Allocation (£k)	2025-26	
	EA	LLFA
Greater Manchester	2860	320
Merseyside	0	250
Cheshire Mid-Mersey	161	370
Cumbria	1540	914
Lancashire	705	1200
RFCC Business Plan (Cross partnership)	850	390
Total	6116	3444

Number of associated projects by Partnership

No. of schemes	2025-26 to 2026-27	
	EA	LLFA
Greater Manchester	5	2
Merseyside	0	2
Cheshire Mid-Mersey	1	2
Cumbria	3	3
Lancashire	5	3
Cross-Partnership	13	2
Total	27	14

Scheme/ Picture

- Section 1: Upstream of Bendwood Footbridge
- Section 2: Bendwood Footbridge to Padiham Bridge
- Section 3: Padiham Bridge to Station Road Bridge
- Section 4: Padiham Greenway to Station Road Bridge
- Section 5: Green Lane to Padiham Greenway

- Section 3 - Town Hall wall. This is a flood defence wall, which was completed in April 2023
- Section 2 - Bendwood Estate. This is a flood defence wall and flood gate, which was completed in April 2024



Introduction/ Background

Padiham experienced a major flood event on Boxing Day 2015, flooding 77 residential properties, 69 business premises, and 3 public buildings (Padiham Town Hall, fire station, and library). The main source of flooding was from the River Calder. It is believed this was the largest flood event to affect Padiham since the 1866 floods.

Padiham experienced flooding during Storm Ciara on 9 February 2020. Several town centre businesses suffered internal flooding, and many others only avoided this due to property level protection (e.g. flood gates). The main highway, Burnley Road, was impassable. Approximately 10 properties near to the river reported cellar flooding due to groundwater levels, although a minor number reported that this was directly from the River Calder.

We have met with beneficiaries of the scheme including United Utilities, Lancashire County Council, Burnley Borough Council (which includes the Chief Executive of Burnley Council and Burnley Councillors, Cabinet Members, and relevant ward Councillor) and the MP. All are supportive of the scheme and want it to go ahead.

In previous years, we have engaged with numerous private businesses that fall within the areas of benefit, but we were unable to secure any additional funding from these. With the existing economic climate, re-engaging with these businesses is unlikely to yield any private contributions.

Scheme Development

Section 1-4 involves new and improved flood walls, flood gates and embankments along the River Calder and Green Brook. The scheme provides a Standard of Protection (SoP) of a December 2015 flood event (2% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) for present day) for 149 residential and non-residential properties, and a 1 in 25-year return period for the future epoch 2040.

Key milestones:

- Business Case Update Report (BCUR) 6 submission Spring 2025
- Full Business Case submission and approval by Autumn 2025
- Contract Award by Spring 2026
- Construction to start Spring 2026 and be completed before Winter 2028

Economic and other monetised benefits of the Padiham FRMS is approximately £65 million. The benefits for the present-day value damages includes residential and commercial properties, utilities (water, gas, and electricity), mental health costs, temporary accommodation, emergency services, cars, and carbon net benefit.

77 Residential properties will benefit from the scheme, all of which are in a deprived area. Alongside this, it will benefit 69 business premises, 3 public buildings, improve critical infrastructure (Padiham Bridge) which is a main commuter route, water, and electricity infrastructure.

Environmental Benefit

- 5 trees will be planted for every tree removed, this will be a mixture on and off site.
- There has been scheme off site tree planting in 2023 at two woodland areas in the catchment (Crow wood 2.5ha and Northwood 2.21ha).

Landscape Improvements

- Public realm improvement works at Boyes and Centenary Gardens. During the planning application this was recognised by Burnley Borough Council as significant benefit to the Padiham community.

Social benefits

- Improving the quality of trees, grass, and wildflowers will improve the health and wellbeing of Padiham residents.
- The Padiham communities that are at risk of flooding are classified within the 20-40% most deprived areas in England. By achieving the standard of protection provided by the scheme, the detriment created by the flood risk would be substantially reduced and would help to encourage future economic growth and investment in Padiham.
- The scheme promotes regeneration

Funding and External Contributions

The estimated total scheme cost is £40.7million. Through the completion of the draft Business Case Update Report 6 (which is being submitted in June 2025) the final scheme cost is yet to be released, due to finalisation and risk from the economic assessment partnership funding (PF) calculator.

Below are the funding contributions to date:

- Grant in Aid - £6million
- Northwest Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (Local Levy) - £1.3 million (£300k not yet spent)
- Asset Replacement Allowance - £300,000
- Local Enterprise Partnership - £3million of Growth Deal 3 funding
- Green Recovery Funding - £2million
- Pre-September 2024 - Other Government Department Funding (OGD) - £3million
- Post- September 2024- OGD - £21.35million

The current funding gap is £3.7million, and this is forecast in the financial year 2027-28 and 2028-2029. We are looking for a local levy contribution of £3.7million, to make the scheme fully funded. This £3.7million is in addition to an existing £1.3million of local levy, which totals to £5million and is within the limits of the local levy strategy.

When the Padiham Scheme was costed in 2024 and further OGD funding was secured, the scheme was fully funded.

However, since then, the scheme has experienced cost increases due to design changes required but not limited to:

- Unforeseen ground conditions and additional technical challenges of working in an urban area – e.g. multiple service diversions and uncertainty on Section 5 development (less developed part of the scheme).
- Cost increases due to supplier resource costs and material availability.
- Increased risk allowance
- Implementation of further Property Flood Resilience (PFR) measures

The project team, has as can be seen, pursued, and secured a wide range of funding contributions for the project, but needs to pursue this bid for a Local Levy contribution. Should the funding gap be reduced, or the Risk allocation and Optimism Bias allowance not be as high as the Partnership Funding Calculator indicates, the project would return any remaining unspent Local Levy following delivery of the project.

Recommendation

The project team requests that the Committee support a Local Levy contribution of £3.7million, £2.2m in 2027-28 and £1.5m in 2028-2029, to help deliver reduced flood risk to 149 properties in Padiham. We will continue to fill the funding gap via the sources noted above and use the Local Levy during the final year of delivery and as a last resource, returning any unspent local levy on completion of the project.

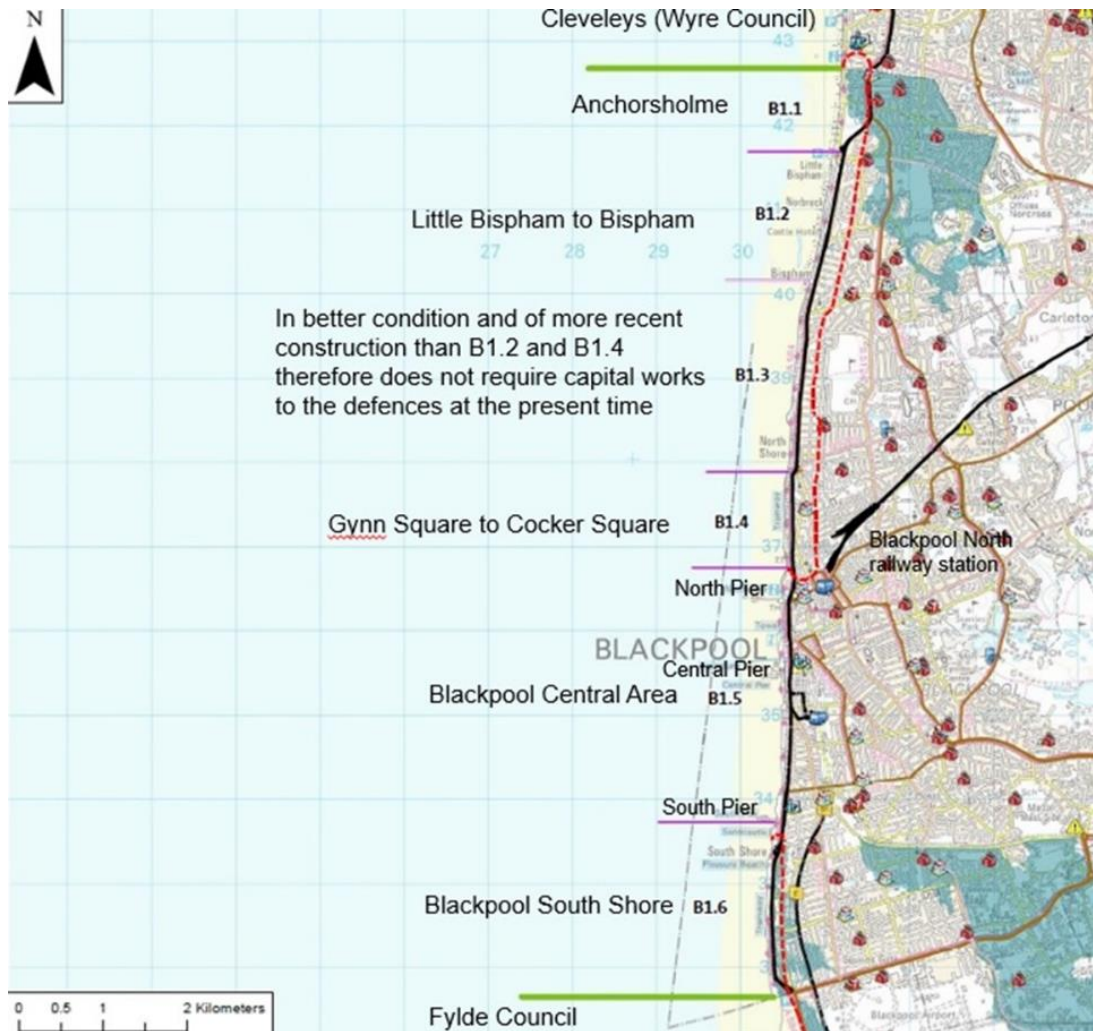
This would take the Local Levy amount to £5million which is within the limits of the local levy strategy.

Appendix G

Local Levy request – Manchester Square Pumping Station, Blackpool

North West RFCC Local Levy Briefing – Manchester Square Pumping Station, Blackpool**Scheme/ Picture**

Manchester Square Pumping Station and associated culvert works.

**Introduction/ Background**

Manchester Square Pumping station was constructed in 2009 and protects approximately 4000 properties along Blackpool's main frontage (area B1.5) from surface water flooding.

The pumps and associated connection to culvert are now time expired and require Capital Maintenance to enable the protection of properties in this main location of Blackpool.

In addition to the properties protected this pumping station also protects the Blackpool tramway and highway from flooding.

Blackpool attracts over 19M visitors per year who would be impacted by the failure of this pumping station.

Blackpool Council have been working with the pump manufacturers to find a short-term solution, but a more in-depth survey and study is required to assess the requirement for pumping surface water from this area and the requirements to works to the adjacent culvert that discharges the surface water to sea. United Utilities will also be engaged in the study as the culvert is shared by both Blackpool Council and United Utilities.

Scheme Development

Blackpool Council are leading on a programme of coast protection works in the area of the pumping station (B1.5), supported by their delivery partner, Balfour Beatty, and with Capital Funding via the Environment Agency. These works can deliver efficiencies if carried out at the same time as the coast protection works.

The replacement pump scheme and associated connection to the United Utilities culvert is required to protect properties highway and tramway from flooding.

Whilst this work is aimed at surface water management, these works will tie in with coastal protection works being delivered as efficiencies can be made by utilising the same contractor for the work, access and compound areas can also be utilised.

A summarised timetable for the two projects is shown in the table below:

		Project Name	
		Manchester Square pumping station	Central Beach Nourishment
Milestone	OBC	Dec 25	March 23
	Detailed Design	Dec 26	Sept 25
	Construction Start Date	April 27	Feb 26
	Benefits Realised	Mar-28	Mar-28
	Scheme completion	Q2 28-29	Q2 28-29

Without intervention the pumping station will fail and back surge from the system causes inspection chambers along the frontage to rise and cause serious health and safety issues.

It has previously been reported that “The certainty provided by the Council’s programme of coast protection capital works has provided the business community with the confidence to continue investing in the redevelopment of the town, e.g. developers in the central station area specifically asked for the Council’s plans to protect their investments from coastal flooding and erosion. The Council have recently been awarded £90m to invest in housing regeneration the Central Drive Area of Blackpool (which is parallel to the promenade) this is to encourage further private funding in businesses, therefore protection from flooding is critical to this future investment”. Investment in protection from surface water flooding will enhance this confidence in investment in the town.

Funding and External Contributions

The estimate cost for the study is £250k

The intervention at this stage by the RFCC is considered necessary to provide Local Levy funding to enable the study and OBC to be prepared in this financial year 25-26 to enable the construction of the works at the same time as the coast scheme in this area. The benefits of doing the work at the same time and using the appointed Coast protection Contractors will enable efficiencies to be realised.

Recommendation

The project team requests that the Committee support a Local Levy contribution of £250k in 25-26 to enable the study and OBC to be carried out for the Manchester square pumping station scheme, which better protects circa 4000 residential properties, in line with the justifications set out above. The project team will continue to hold discussions with partner organisations to bridge the shortfall in funding as part of an agreed Funding Strategy and update the Committee accordingly.

Appendix H	RFCC Business Plan – Project summaries
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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)	Actual Spend 2024/25 (£K)	Total investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Approved Allocation 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
ACCESSING INVESTMENT AND FUNDING								
ID1	Investment mapping project	Complete (Proposed)	<p>This project has looked at the range of potential investment sources available for flood risk measures, primarily for LAs, collated them into a data tool, and explored options for making detailed information on these more accessible and easier to identify.</p> <p>The project has recently completed the final deliverables. Sharing of the outputs and knowledge will be ongoing starting with a summary presentation to the FBA Subgroup on 27 June.</p> <p>£25K allocation for 2024/25 reflected anticipated partial claim in 2023/24 which missed year-end, therefore full claim was in 2024/25.</p>	25	45	45	0	0
ID2.1	Investment in the dev't of innovative green finance mechs - Wyre	Green	<p>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).</p>	45	46	66.3	45	45

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Actual Spend 2024/25 (£K)	Total investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Approved Allocation 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
	Catchment CIC		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.					
BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE								
ID5	The Flood Hub	Green	<p>Key analytics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently seeing over 25,000 page views per month, including in early 2025 when it has been notably dry and warm. This represents significant growth in use of the site over the last 2 years. 407 websites now link to The Flood Hub as a trusted resource. 7105 social media followers and 372 newsletter subscribers. <p>Recent/current development work is ongoing and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant refinement of Local Area Map filter functionality, including addition of SuDS case studies. General content review for updates Page updates completed: SuDS, PFR, how flood risk is managed 	115	115	315	118.5	122

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Actual Spend 2024/25 (£K)	Total investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Approved Allocation 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All toolkits and booklets are being reviewed to update resources and update and add watermarks. Also adding promotion via links with blogs. Supported Unpave the Way project with creation of new QR codes to track where website hits are linked to specific engagement events. Carried out an in-depth audit of content on gov.uk and compared it with The Flood Hub Creation of new animations on PFR pages – will be easy to use in social media campaigns. Educational material – developing KS4 River Landscapes lessons, for launch late summer. Additional ‘strategy’ page created - River Mersey Embankments at Didsbury and Northenden New ground Flood and Sustainable Communities teams are working together on a new project on flood resilient ‘yards’ (backyards). The intention is to create a demo ‘yarden’ located in Burnley. <p>FCRM Schemes pages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates made on seven schemes in April and May including restructuring of the pages and 					

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Actual Spend 2024/25 (£K)	Total investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Approved Allocation 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
			addition of a visualisation on Littleborough, and addition of a consultation on Preston and South Ribble. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schemes pages had 5,580 pageviews and 618 downloads in April and May Future 3% annual funding uplifts to 2027 were approved by the RFCC in April 2025.					
ID5A	The Flood Hub - National expansion	Green	We are exploring a small-scale trial with Southwest RFCC to test how the site and the supporting management resource can be adapted and developed to allow more than just Northwest RFCC to use and benefit from the site. 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 Northwest RFCC. Southwest RFCC have approved the Local Levy funding for the trial. Current work is to put in place the necessary commercial arrangements and some initial collation/development of Southwest specific content.	0	0	0	0	0
ID6	Supporting community engagement on adapting	Green	This is a smaller part of the work programme being delivered by New ground. Ongoing liaison and support for the Coastal Group as required. Some of direct community engagement supported	10	10	30	10.3	10.6

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Actual Spend 2024/25 (£K)	Total investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Approved Allocation 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
	to coastal change		by Newsround has been with coastal communities. Planning for engagement with coastal communities around potential adaptation remains in view of the Coastal Group and is a key strand of the Our Future Coast project. Future 3% annual funding uplifts to 2027 were approved by the RFCC in April 2025.					
ID7	Action campaign – Flood resilience	Green	<p>New ground Flood Team activity in Q1 includes: Social media and focus weeks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comms plan in place for full year • Focus weeks on SuDS and PFR so far in Q1. • SuDS one particularly well received across all social media platforms despite dry weather. • PFR one also successful with extended reach through promotion by Lancs councils in particular. • Next Focus Week in June us on NFM. • New ground has also been proactive during Business Continuity week promoting flood resilience messages. <p>Supporting communities and individuals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended one partnership meeting and supported the EA on three community flood drop-ins. Provide opportunity for direct 	124.55	124.55	365	128	132

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Actual Spend 2024/25 (£K)	Total investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Approved Allocation 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
			<p>engagement. Noticeable that more homeowners (usually those who have experience near misses) are becoming more receptive to the idea of PFR and protecting their own homes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carried out two property visits to advise on PFR, on the back of contacts made at drop-in events. Supported new relatively new flood groups in Wigan and Liverpool as well as ongoing support to Whitworth community group. Responded to 32 enquiries from the public (72% in the Northwest) via The Flood Hub and provided advice. Common themes are PFR (products and implementation, grants) and insurance (access, for both landlords and residents, Build Back Better). <p>Future 3% annual funding uplifts to 2027 were approved by the RFCC in April 2025.</p>					
ID8	Flood Poverty Project	Complete	<p>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 programme to test, share and recommend practical approaches</p>	0	12.3	73.2	0	0

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Actual Spend 2024/25 (£K)	Total investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Approved Allocation 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
			to addressing 'flood poverty' issues and achieving more sustainable property level resilience outside of post flood event recovery schemes. Spend in 2024/25 was part of the initial approved sum and covered 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	16.6	0	0
ID9A	NFM Technical Appraisal resource	Green	5-year collaborative agreement in place (to June 2026) with Mersey Forest to half-fund a technical appraisal resource for NFM (Rob Dyer), available to all Northwest partnerships/authorities. Project previously covered a partner contribution to Moors for the Future which concluded in 2022/23. The 2024/25 spend included the contribution for 2023/24 (£32K) which was processed early in	30	65.5	108.8	35	36.5

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Actual Spend 2024/25 (£K)	Total investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Approved Allocation 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
			2024/25, and a slight increase in costs for 2024/25 (£33.5K), captured within the agreement. Future 3% annual funding uplifts to 2027 were approved by the RFCC in April 2025.					
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	The Cumbria partnership in conjunction with the CiFR project are leading this event and planning of target audiences and agenda items is actively underway. The event will be held in Kendal on 9 October 2025. Spend forecast to be confirmed – likely to reduce from £12K allocated.	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 to ensure that the outputs offer	90	0	0	90	60

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Actual Spend 2024/25 (£K)	Total investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Approved Allocation 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
			the maximum benefit in mainstreaming and securing funding for NFM. The project is therefore subject to 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	This project aims to influence householder choices on the design and paving of front gardens, seeking to address the increase in impermeable driveways which contributes to surface water flooding.	86	87	135	79	60

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Actual Spend 2024/25 (£K)	Total investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Approved Allocation 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
			<p>The project successfully featured garden exhibits at the RHS Urban Show in April and the RHS Tatton Show in July 2024. This was 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> <p>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.</p> <p>UU are a key partner in the project and links to UU's rainwater management initiatives funded through the Advanced WINEP programme are being explored.</p>					
ID4/13	Data sharing and mapping of flood risk and drainage assets	Green	<p>Project being led jointly by Greater Manchester and Merseyside partnerships.</p> <p>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 report now substantively complete.</p>	145	153	197	0	0

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Actual Spend 2024/25 (£K)	Total investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Approved Allocation 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
			Final stage will be consideration of recommendations and how to take this forward with partners. It is expected that the project will be reported as complete in October 2025. Slight spend variance against allocation is due to reprofiling of claims from 2023/24.					
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
INCREASING RMA CAPACITY AND COLLABORATION								
ID14	LA capital project delivery challenges	Complete	Project complete as a specific Business Plan action. National EA initiatives and changes to process and forms have delivered improvements. Ongoing activity is now through the support of LA Capital Project Advisers and ID15 (Capacity Building Programme).	0	0	0	0	0
ID15	Risk management authority capacity	Green	Ongoing activity, led by the Capital Programme Co-ordinator and the team of LA Capital Project Advisors, to identify RMA training and development needs, to respond to this directly or	25	0	25	15	15

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Actual Spend 2024/25 (£K)	Total investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Approved Allocation 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
	building programme		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 if required but wherever possible opportunities to tap into national EA training budgets are progressed so that no Local Levy is needed. No Levy funding was needed in 2024/25. A potential need for around £15K has been highlighted in 2025/26.					
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. Capital Programme Co-ordinator – role filled and ongoing to 2027. Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator – role filled, ongoing and funding approved to March 2026 Partial contribution for RFCC Business Plan implementation management resource ongoing.	668	668	1,697	682	694

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Approved Allocation 2024/25 (£K)	Actual Spend 2024/25 (£K)	Total investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	Approved Allocation 2025/26 (£K)	Estimated investment need 2026/27 (£K)
ID17	NW Coastal Centre of Excellence - Develop business case	Green	The scoping and feasibility work done to date has been captured in a report. Planning for a further focussed programme of engagement with potential interested parties to further scope and develop the proposal is now actively underway, to commence over the summer. The funding previously allocated has not yet been required. This is expected to be used in 2025/26.	0	0	0	25	0
ID18	RFCC SharePoint site	Complete (Proposed)	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. Further work is ongoing to develop the investment programme section. No significant access issues have been experienced. Optional navigation tutorials will be offered once further development of the investment programme section is complete.	0	0	0	0	0

North West RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group – June 2025**Local Levy Minimum Balance****Discussion Paper (Amended version of the paper provided to April meeting)****1. Purpose of paper**

- 1.1. This paper discusses and proposes a new (higher) minimum balance for the Local Levy fund, as proposed recently by Members, due to the observed and forecast rapid reduction in the balance, and the increased risk and uncertainty around the flood and coastal erosion risk management investment programme.

2. Background

- 2.1. The North West Local Levy is raised from Local Authorities at a rate voted on annually by RFCC Elected Members. This is currently set at a rate of £4.681 million per year. The RFCC allocates this Local Levy funding to projects led by both the EA and other risk management authorities (primarily Local Authorities). The types of project supported include large capital schemes, small scale Quick Win funding pots for the partnerships to allocate, and Business Plan projects.
- 2.2. Unspent Local Levy funding carries over from one year into the next and over time a balance of funding can be built up. This enables individual years to have a larger programme than the annual income alone would allow.
- 2.3. The RFCC has a Local Levy Strategy, last refreshed in April 2024, which sets guidelines on a minimum balance which should be preserved. This is to enable the RFCC to react to immediate priorities in-year, even if the agreed programme is largely or fully using the annual income. The minimum balance set by the Strategy is 5-10% of annual income, in line with Defra guidance. This would equate to £235K - £470K. There is additional provision in the Strategy for the RFCC to consider allocating some contingency funding and how this could be used, once the balance is drawn down towards the minimum.

3. Levy balance – Recent history and forecast

- 3.1. Over the last few years, the Local Levy balance has peaked at around £12 million and has then been reducing significantly due to an increasingly larger programme. This forecast reduction is partly what prompted the development of the initial Local Levy Strategy in 2020.
- 3.2. Table 1 below sets out what the balance has been or is forecast to be at the end of each financial year. This was the data as at April 2025.

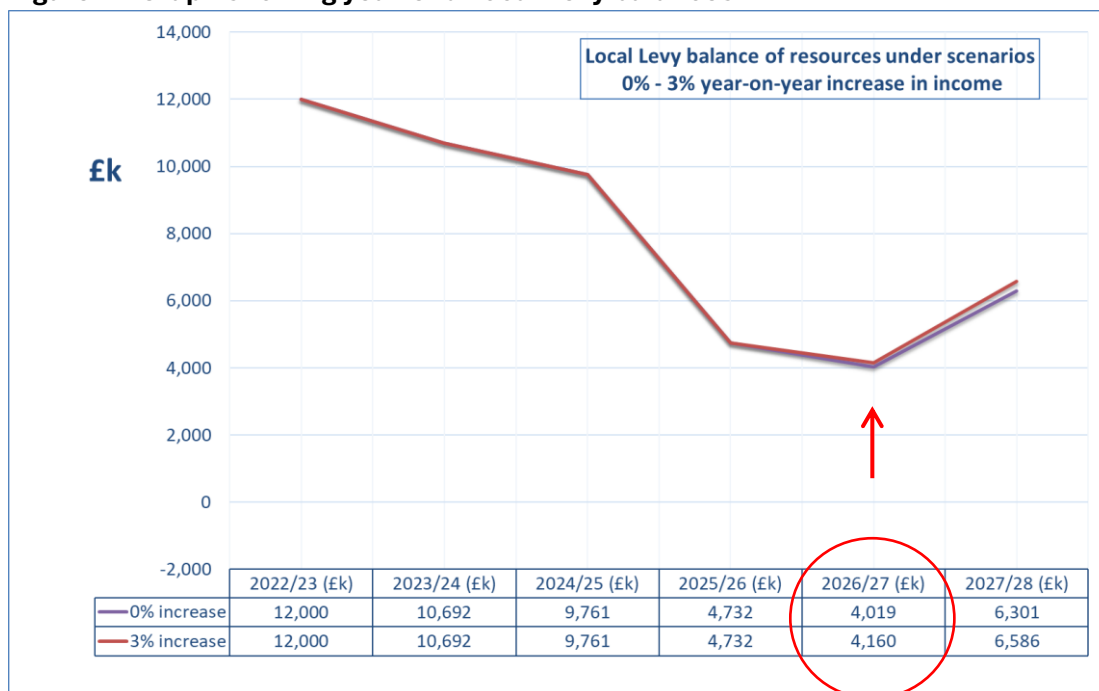
Table 1 Year-end Local Levy balances (Actual and Forecast)

Year (end of)	Local Levy balance (£ million)
2022/23	12
2023/24	10.692
2024/25	9.761 (Forecast)
2025/26	4.732 (Forecast)

2026/27	4.019 (Forecast)
2027/28	6.301 (Forecast)

3.3. Figure 1 below illustrates this, with the balance currently forecast to reduce to a minimum of around £4 million at the end of 2026/27. This was the forecast and graph reported to the April Sub Group and RFCC meetings.

Figure 1 – Graph showing year-end Local Levy balances



4. Current circumstances and risks

4.1. The RFCC wanted to see the balance reduce from its high of £12 million. This is now happening and with current approved allocations, the balance is forecast to continue to reduce quite rapidly over the next two years. There are a number of factors contributing to this rapid reduction:

- Flood risk schemes are becoming more complex and are costing more. Funding from GiA and other sources often falls short, leaving large funding gaps. The Committee has been happy to support increasingly large contributions to help close these gaps on some major capital schemes. In 2024, the refreshed Local Levy Strategy set the maximum contribution to any individual scheme at £5 million.
- There has been significant inflation in material and construction costs over recent years. While the Committee agreed that Local Levy should not be used to cover this cost inflation in the short term, over time this is simply resulting in higher cost schemes, leaving larger funding gaps.
- The challenging GiA allocation and Local Choices process for 2025/26 has put additional pressure on Local Levy funding to enable some priority schemes to keep going. This process saw the allocation of £2.45 million of Local Levy to schemes which could all have been funded from GiA, had it been available.

4.2. We are in a period of significant change in flood risk management which brings additional risks and pressures, and Local Levy funding may be called upon to help support. These include:

- Repeated severe winters with multiple named storms leading to severe flooding and damage to flood risk assets which require immediate remediation and then repair.
- The government's ending of the investment programme a year early, which has increased financial pressure on the 2025/26 programme, and brought changes in the prioritisation of schemes (to prioritise those delivering outcomes by March 2026). This will likely mean there is no spare GiA funding available in 2025/26 so there may be additional calls on Local Levy. The sums of Local Levy funding being requested may also be proportionately larger than in the past as the RFCC are now being asked to consider allocating Local Levy as a replacement for eligible (but unavailable) GiA.
- The government's plan to change the partnership funding rules in ways which are yet unknown. A consultation is expected April/May 2025 and the new rules are expected to apply for the new investment programme from April 2026. Transitional arrangements are expected but this could potentially change the shape of the programme in ways which either help or hinder local flood risk priorities, with calls on Local Levy to help manage a smooth transition.
- The intention for new data on flood risk (including climate change scenarios) through the new national flood risk assessment (NAFRA2) and coastal erosion risk using the new national coastal erosion risk mapping (NCERM) to inform and shape the investment programme going forwards. The detail of how this will work is not yet clear. Again this may help or hinder local flood risk priorities.

4.3. This picture of uncertainty and risk has led to a proposal from Members that the Committee should agree a higher minimum balance, at least for the next few years.

5. Options for minimum working balance

5.1. The Committee wishes to agree a higher minimum balance so that some funding is held in reserve to respond to immediate and priority works. Therefore, there are clearly some circumstances under which the Committee would agree to use some of the balance and for it to subsequently be replenished.

5.2. A new 'minimum **working** balance' is proposed. This is different to an '**absolute minimum** balance' which is a much lower amount of funding that would always be preserved unless the RFCC make the decision to use some of it under very exceptional circumstances. It is prudent to retain a small reserve as forecasts and claims can change unexpectedly during the course of the year, normally downwards but there can occasionally be claims from allocations in previous years that weren't previously forecast. To leave nothing at all in reserve could, in the worst case scenario, lead to an unaffordable forecast and the need to rapidly reprofile an element of the programme to the following or a future year.

5.3. It is proposed that the higher end of the existing minimum balance of 10% of annual income (£470K), be retained, but as the '**absolute** minimum balance'.

5.4. Two options are proposed for the new 'minimum **working** balance': 1) a fixed balance of £2 million, and 2) 50% of the annual income.

5.5. Option 1 - £2 million (fixed)

- 5.5.1. £2 million is proposed as one appropriate balance between making active use of the Local Levy funding, while keeping some in reserve to respond to in-year pressures and asks. £2 million was also the level proposed by the RFCC membership.
- 5.5.2. For comparison to inform this, looking back across the 2024/25 financial year:
 - Over the course of the 2024/25 year, in response to in-year asks, additional Local Levy allocations of £319K in 2024/25 and £268K in 2025/26 were approved.
 - £2.6 million of Local Levy was allocated for 2025/26 through Local Choices where there was insufficient GiA to fund priority schemes. Excluding the two major coastal schemes, this additional use of Local Levy totalled £1.9 million.
- 5.5.3. Another benefit of selecting this option is that £2 million is a fixed sum that is very clear and memorable against which to assess Levy requests in the future.

5.6. Option 2 – 50% of annual income

- 5.6.1. The 2025/26 Local Levy income is set at £4.681 million so a 50% minimum balance would be £2.34 million.
- 5.6.2. This is slightly higher than the £2 million option leaving a bit more in reserve to respond to in-year or short-term pressures (considering the scale of recent in-year approvals) and would increase in future years should the RFCC vote to increase the Local Levy rate.
- 5.6.3. One disadvantage of a percentage-of-income minimum is that it is likely to change over time, it requires knowledge of the annual income and a simple calculation, and is therefore a bit less easy to use.

6. Management of minimum balance

- 6.1. The following proposed guidelines are suggested in terms of how the fund would be managed.
- 6.2. It is proposed that an absolute minimum balance of 10% of the annual income (currently £470K) is always preserved unless the RFCC make the decision to use some of it under very exceptional circumstances.
- 6.3. The difference between the absolute minimum balance and the minimum working balance would then effectively become contingency funding which the Committee could choose to use under particular circumstances.
- 6.4. Circumstances under which the Committee might consider using some of the contingency funding may include:
 - Activity and spend which is unavoidable (must dos), possibly where there would otherwise be a significant increase in flood risk, and where no other funding is available. Since these are likely to be emergency works, it is likely to be contingency fund use in the current or following year.
 - Schemes which are in construction and where funding gaps emerge which cannot be filled from any other funding sources.

- 6.5. Requests for Local Levy contributions to schemes which are not already in construction or not emergency asset repairs will not generally be approved if they cause the forecast balance to drop below the agreed minimum working balance (i.e. £2 million or 50% of annual income) in any foreseeable future year. If there are several asks which would collectively cause the balance to drop below the working balance, the Committee would need to prioritise these and make decisions as to which to support so as to maintain the minimum working balance.
- 6.6. If the Committee considers that use of some of the contingency funding is needed to support urgent and critical actions (and to allow the balance to drop below the minimum working balance), it may wish to consider whether there should be a link between the balance and the annual Levy rate vote, creating an expectation of increased Local Levy contributions to replace any contingency funding used.

7. Local Levy percentage contribution

- 7.1. The current Local Levy Strategy sets the guideline that for Levy contributions of £0.5 million or more, the Levy contribution should not represent more than 15% of the total scheme cost, and with a cap of £5 million for each project. For Levy contributions under £0.5 million, the Levy contribution should not be the majority funding (i.e. more than half).
- 7.2. Given the shortage of GiA funding in 2025/26, the RFCC has seen these as exceptional circumstances, and has taken the decision to support some priority schemes with Local Levy funding as a replacement for eligible GiA. This has represented Local Levy contributions of more than 50% in some cases (some up to 100%).
- 7.3. To make the Levy funding go further, it is proposed that the Committee confirms the 15% and 50% contribution guidelines as the norm but with the continued provision for consideration of exceptional circumstances. This would still allow the RFCC to grant larger Levy % contributions for priority schemes where other funding is not available.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1. The RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group is asked to consider, discuss and make the following recommendations to the RFCC:
 - That there should be a new **absolute minimum balance** of **10% of annual income** which is always preserved unless the RFCC make the decision to use some of it under very exceptional circumstances.
 - That there should be a **new minimum working balance** of either:
 - Option 1 - £2 million
 - Option 2 - 50% of annual income
 - That there should be a link between use of the contingency funding and the annual Local Levy rate vote – in other words that there should be an expectation of a higher rate of annual income to replenish any contingency funding used.

- That the Levy contribution proportion guidelines applying to schemes (50% for under £0.5 million, and 15% above £0.5 million) are confirmed as the expected norm, with consideration of exceptional circumstances.

APPENDIX 1 – Extract of relevant section from Local Levy Strategy

5. Programme and fund management

- 5.1. We will continue to build a long-term Local Levy programme to show how the funding will be used over the coming years, how this is predicted to change any balance, and to provide greater certainty around Local Levy funding contributions.**

This relies on all risk management authorities planning ahead and developing pipeline projects of all sizes for the coming years.

- 5.2. We will continue to allocate Local Levy funding to enable as much activity as possible. We intend to reduce the balance and then keep it at a lower level than in previous years.**

Once we have achieved a smaller balance, natural fluctuation in the programme size may cause the balance to increase again but we would expect this to be allocated to the future programme.

We will consider setting a trigger level (desirable maximum balance) which if reached will initiate a review of the balance and future programme to identify any proactive action required to accelerate spend.

- 5.3. When a smaller balance of funding is achieved, we will consider if there is a need to introduce some unallocated contingency funding to retain some additional flexibility in the programme.**

This will enable the RFCC to respond to short term needs without significantly disrupting the indicative programme.

- 5.4. We will not allow the balance to fall below 5 - 10% of annual income, maintaining a reserve for unplanned but urgent and high priority work. This is in accordance with Defra's recommendation.**

If this minimum balance position were to be reached, we would need to agree the detail of how it is managed and what would be eligible uses.

North West RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group – 27 June 2025

Update on the River Winster Rehabilitation Project

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

1. Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the River Winster Rehabilitation Project following the RFCC's conditional approval of £164,000 in Local Levy funding in April 2025. In lieu of a formal options appraisal report, the project team has engaged in a technical dialogue with key partners including the Environment Agency and Land & Water, leading to confirmation that the proposed phased dredging methodology remains appropriate. The project is now ready to proceed to delivery subject to the receipt of the approved MMO licence and that the licence conditions are met.

2. Background

- **Project Lead:** Lynster Farmers Group (LFG)
- **Coordination:** Westmorland and Furness Council (LLFA)
- **Other stakeholders:** Natural England, MMO, Network Rail, EA
- **Purpose:** Restore the outflow of the River Winster through phased dredging and strategic channel shaping, as part of a broader saltmarsh and outflow maintenance strategy

3. Informal Options Review & Technical Endorsement

While no formal multi-option appraisal report was produced, a structured technical review took place between April and June 2025.

Key actions:

- **Method validation by Carl Green** – following submission of detailed dredging proposals by LFG, and a detailed list of the options considered by the Lynster Farmers Group has been reviewed and an audit for why the selected options have been chosen was undertaken.
- **Confirmation that phased dredging is viable** – no need to re-open or redesign methodology
- **Land & Water support** – available to provide advice but not instructed to redesign the method
- **Recognition of progress** – RFCC concerns about delay were addressed through project continuity

“We have assessed the proposals and are satisfied that the series of dredging phases has a good chance of success.”

— Carl, May 2025

4. Method Summary

The method supported includes:

- Use of bog mats to access and stabilise the channel flanks
- Excavation of a pilot channel with low-ground-pressure tracked equipment
- Avoidance of Training Wall unless reinforced and assessed for structural viability
- Coordination with Natural England and MMO to ensure licence compliance
- Monitoring and adaptive management after each dredge phase

This approach aligns with existing permissions and reduces risk while maintaining innovation.

5. Value for Money and Trial Learning

This project is a trial case study under the Our Future Coast framework. As such:

- Any underspend will be returned or reallocated, per RFCC expectations
- Lessons learned will be documented through a case study report
- A final cost-effectiveness assessment will follow completion of Phase 1 works

6. Next Steps

Date	Action
June 2025	Submit RFCC update report (this document)
July 2025	Confirm MMO licence status & notify RFCC of final start date
Sept 2025	Commence dredging (Phase 1)
Nov 2025	Submit progress report to RFCC Finance Sub-Group
Q1 2026	Evaluate environmental and flow impact of initial phase

7. Conclusion

The River Winster Rehabilitation Project has passed informal technical appraisal and is ready to proceed. The methodology, co-designed with regulators and informed by LFG's experience, is safe, proportionate, and aligned with RFCC expectations. We are committed to transparent reporting, innovation capture, and responsible fund use.

8. Recommendation

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

Carl Green
Wyre Borough Council

Jason Harte
Westmorland and Furness Council

June 2025

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE FINANCE AND BUSINESS ASSURANCE SUB GROUP MEETING

27 JUNE 2025

PROPERTY FLOOD RESILIENCE PROPOSAL

The RFCC is asked to consider allocating a pot of Local Levy to support the delivery of PFR projects across the North-West for the next three years from 2026/27.

1. Background

The North-West Environment Agency Property Flood Resilience (PFR) Hub Leads have been engaging with the RFCC since January 2025 on the topic of PFR and the need to seek additional funding to support the delivery of PFR projects across the North-West. To help the RFCC come to a determination we were asked to present a picture of the potential scale of demand and appropriateness of PFR across the region and to begin to build a pipeline of potential projects across the Environment Agency and local authorities.

Since the April 2025 meeting with the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup, Defra has launched a public consultation on investment reform for flood risk management and resilience which proposes major updates to the Partnership Funding policy ahead of the next investment programme starting in April 2026. Whilst the result of the consultation will not be known for some time, the North-West Hub Leads have updated the proposal to the RFCC based on the information available at the launch of this consultation.

2. Engagement with RMAs - Conclusion and Northwest EA Maps

Since the April meeting, the Hub Leads have been actively engaging with local authorities across the North-West to raise awareness of the PFR Framework and to better understand which LAs would be interested in utilising the Framework and progressing PFR projects if a funding mechanism was in place to support delivery.

We used an expression of interest form to capture interest in delivery of PFR from all North West local authorities. To support this, discussions have been had with the Partnership Co-ordinators and at the tactical partnership groups to continue the conversation on PFR. In total, expression of interest forms were sent to 37 local authorities (LLFAs and district councils), with 24 responding to date.

We have had a really positive response from LAs showing a high level of interest in delivery of PFR. The results can be summarised as follows:

1. 88% of respondents answered **‘yes’** when asked if they had ‘previously heard of the EA’s PFR framework.’
2. 100% of respondents answered **‘yes’** when asked if ‘they would be interested in using the PFR Framework if there was a Local Levy top-up to help fund PFR schemes.’
3. 96% of respondents answered **‘yes’** when asked if there were ‘any known communities within their jurisdiction that would benefit from a PFR scheme’.

The expression of interest also included the opportunity for LAs to add further comments, which revealed some key themes as shown below:

Theme 1: General support – LAs confirmed additional funding via Local Levy would be beneficial to engaging communities and developing PFR schemes.

“PFR scheme could support a pro-active campaign to increase engagement with potentially affected communities.”

“Extra funding for these projects would really help us be able to move schemes forward.”

Theme 2 – Past concerns with suppliers – Some RMAs stressed known issues with previous suppliers, reinforcing the benefit of utilising the approved PFR framework providers.

“Some communities have had PFR before. Installed PFR previously through the Defra Repair Grant. Issues with suppliers previously through the Defra Repair Grant installation.”

Theme 3: Capacity & resource – Having the resource to deliver PFR schemes was listed as a potential blocker to delivery. However, the new streamlined approach, coupled with the support available from the EA’s dedicated Commercial Business Support Team, should alleviate this.

“Processes to be clear and easy to follow. Level of detail required to be proportionate to project size...”

“Financial constraints are often a barrier to project delivery, so any funding is always a big help in flood schemes/projects. However, another constraint is typically officer time and expertise in making funding bids, administering and delivering projects related to flood risk management...”

Theme 4: Future Maintenance – A position on whether future maintenance of PFR should be funded remains an important consideration. Long-term this should rest with the homeowner, however it may need to be determined on a case-by-case basis.

“Has any consideration been given to future ownership and funding of maintenance of PFR as this can be a blocker to LAs promoting and delivering PFR schemes?”

In conclusion, the expression of interest activity successfully demonstrates that there is a demand and an appetite to deliver PFR projects across local authorities. Several communities were put forward as potential candidates, indicating the demand and direction of a future PFR pipeline. It has also reinforced some key areas of focus going forward, particularly around an approach to future maintenance.

3. Investment Reform Consultation

Defra launched their consultation on investment reform on Tuesday 03 June with an announcement by Minister Hardy at the Flood & Coast conference. The consultation proposes a major update to the current Partnership Funding policy which has been in place since 2011.

The consultation proposes that projects costing less than £3 million will be fully funded from Grant in Aid (GiA), potentially removing the need for additional partnership funding. If this is agreed and implemented, this will potentially address the funding challenges we have previously discussed for delivering PFR schemes through GiA. However, with more projects eligible for full GiA funding, the available funding won’t go as far and we expect demand to exceed the available funding. It is therefore likely that some projects will be successful in receiving full GiA funding with other projects not receiving any funding. This will be based on the prioritisation criteria applied. There is an initial understanding that prioritisation could be based on benefit cost ratio, but with likely additional recognition to prioritise deprived communities. However, we are yet to fully understand how prioritisation of projects will work and how this will impact PFR delivery.

It is also likely that the existing qualifying criteria for PFR projects requiring properties to be at *Very Significant* risk to qualify for GiA funding will be removed as part of the new funding rules, potentially further increasing the number of properties that could be eligible for PFR.

Therefore, there is no guarantee that **all** PFR schemes will receive GiA funding, despite being eligible, given the increased competition across the country. As a result, we believe a portion of Local Levy funding dedicated specifically to PFR schemes will still be required to help guarantee PFR delivery across the North-West if this remains a priority for the RFCC. In the short term while the funding changes are worked through, the security of having some allocated Local Levy funding will enable the EA and LA partners to work together to develop a pipeline of projects with confidence that the funding will be available to progress at least some of these.

Considering the above, our ask to the RFCC has been tailored to reflect these proposals. This is explained further within the 'proposals' section below.

4. Pipeline & Prioritisation Methods

The EA in both North West Areas have worked to identify an indicative pipeline of communities that could benefit from a PFR scheme. This high-level assessment has been made utilising the EA's 'Communities at Risk' dataset. The communities identified by local authorities through the expression of interest will be brought together with this to see the full picture and we will continue to work collaboratively with LAs, with the help of the Local Authority Capital Project Advisors and Commercial Business Support Team, to identify all communities at risk which are likely to be good candidates for PFR measures.

A further in-depth assessment will be carried out to determine which properties will be short-listed to receive PFR measures. Specific criteria for North West prioritisation to shape the pipeline are to be fully developed but this assessment will consider flood history, flood depths, flood frequency, photographic evidence and the stage of community engagement. We would also seek to ensure a fair and broadly even distribution of PFR projects across the sub-regional partnership areas.

5. Proposal

Our proposal is for the Committee to consider allocating a pot of Local Levy to support the delivery of PFR projects across the North-West for the next three years from 2026/27.

We have made significant progress over the past 6 months and are keen to maintain momentum on PFR across the North-West.

The investment reform consultation proposals are likely to be more favourable towards PFR in general but it is still at consultation stage, the final rules are not yet clear, and the transition arrangements into the new programme, plus the risk of demand out-stripping the available funding mean that we can not be sure of receiving much GiA funding for PFR in 2026/27. This risk, without a levy contribution, would mean setting back delivery of PFR projects for another year .

In order to inform the amounts of Local Levy funding requested, the Hub leads have worked up various assumptions including the likely scale of PFR delivery in these early years (given officer resource constraints) and an assumed success rate on securing GiA funding for PFR projects.

To calculate the amount of local levy required, we have taken a realistic look at the potential number of PFR projects and assumed number of properties per project (taking an average of 15 properties). We then considered the total cost for PFR, which was based off an average of £15,000 per property. We then considered our likely success rate in securing GiA, making cautious assumptions given the unknown

implication of the new Partnership Funding rules and increased competition nationally. The proportion is lower in the first year due to the change to the funding rules, uncertainty on prioritisation, and the need for transitional arrangements to support ongoing schemes.

The table below shows these assumptions and the resulting proposed profile of Local Levy funding which could be required across the Northwest for 3 years from 2026/27.

	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Number of PFR Project	4 *	8 *	10 *
Assumed number of properties per project	15	15	15
Total cost of PFR Projects	£900,000	£1,800,000	£2,250,000
Assumed success rate in securing GiA	25%**	50%**	50%**
GiA we aim to secure	£225,000	£900,000	£1,125,000
Local Levy that could be needed	£675,000	£900,000	£1,125,000

*Assumed number of PFR projects has been selected on the basis that that experience and confidence in delivery will develop year-on year

**Estimation of likely GiA funding for PFR schemes in light of the latest consultation information.

Given that it is early days for PFR in the North West, and the significant changes about to affect the funding rules, it is clear that reviews will be essential during this three year period. These reviews will examine the levels of success in securing GiA, the experience of PFR delivery in the North West (both community uptake, as well as officer capacity and process. We will also continue to review and refine the North West PFR pipeline to ensure the funding is being used to greatest effect in reducing the impact of flooding. The exact timings of these reviews is still to be determined but it is likely to be annual. We hope to be able to provide an update on any GiA funding secured for 2026/27 to the January 2026 meeting .

Having the commitment of this Local Levy funding from the RFCC would provide sufficient confidence for the EA and local authorities to work in collaboration to highlight potential projects that can be ready to start in April 2026.

We will seek to secure as much GiA as possible for PFR and depending on the pipeline and capacity for delivery, it may be that the Local Levy allocation is not fully needed and could be released back to the programme. We will continue to update the RFCC at the review points on what PFR is deliverable in the North West and what funding is available, to review the level of Local Levy support to be provided.

Finally, we acknowledge this proposal may be subject to change based on the outcome of the ongoing funding consultation. Should the picture change, we are committed to adjusting our ask accordingly to help the RFCC deliver PFR projects.

Please can the committee support our funding ask for the 3 years, beginning in 2026/27.

Shannon Gunning
Adam Costello
Iwan Lawton

June 2025

North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee



July 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 8th April 2025 to the 20th June 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	0	0	0	0
Merseyside	0	0	0	0
GMCA	0	0	0	0
Lancashire	0	10	1	12
Cumbria	0	4	1	1

3. Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) update

On 20 May 2025, Defra published the guidance for the next iteration of the DWMP, referred to as 'Cycle 2'. You can read the DWMP guidance on Defra's website ([Guidelines for Statutory Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans \(DWMPs\) - GOV.UK](#)).

Since the guidance was published, Uuw has been working hard in the background to start building the foundations of the plan. In the coming months, you will find out more on elements such as:

- the launch of our updated website for this iteration of the DWMP;
- the DWMP Annual Progress Report which will provide an update on how we are progressing through the different development stages of the plan at a catchment level;
- our approach to developing the 'Strategic Context' which is the first stage of the DWMP process. This stage is centred around setting the long-term vision and ambition for the North West; and
- updating Uuw's population growth forecast that is used across many areas of the business to ensure that growth is being accounted for in everything that we do.

If you would like to know more, please get in touch with the team via the mailbox at DWMP@uuplc.co.uk.

4. Integrated Water Management

4.1 Cumbria

Last month, UUW, Cumberland Council and the Environment Agency came together to discuss future water management opportunities for Carlisle. The three organisations discussed the intention to explore opportunities towards an integrated water management approach for Carlisle. Following on from this meeting, plans are now in place for a Carlisle focused workshop to be held in September 2025. The workshop will bring together key colleagues from our organisations and wider stakeholders to share plans, identify priority areas and themes, and explore opportunities for collaborative working.

Across the county, activity continues to focus on exploring future potential collaborative opportunities through engagement, mapping and planning activities.

4.2 Lancashire

Engagement with Blackpool Council on the refresh of the Turning Tides Partnership continues 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.

4.3 Greater Manchester

Since the last report, the sprint activity for the Integrated Water Management Plan (IWMP) cluster of Hindley and Platt Bridge has concluded. The technical optioneering and strategic reports are being finalised with Jacobs, and the IWMP team is working to produce an action plan for future activity, considering which recommendations from the report to take forwards. The sprint aimed to improve water management practices for the benefit of the people of Wigan, with a focus on addressing the significant flood risk in the Platt Bridge area, an issue that requires a collective and integrated solution, whilst also looking at opportunities to improve water quality. There will be a briefing to Mayor Andy Burnham in July on the outcomes from the sprint and the action plan for continued work.

The GM trilateral put in a response letter to the Cunliffe review call for evidence, based on our lived experience of working together in the integrated water management space. The response echoed asks outlined to senior Defra leaders following their visit earlier this year. A key theme was promoting collaborative decisions between water management authorities about the prioritised outcomes at a city-region or catchment scale, providing the 'missing middle' between local circumstances and national policy. The response also advocated for streamlining and aligning existing water plans and planning processes, and other water management planning such as flood risk plans, alongside pooling together of existing funding streams at a spatial level to allow money to be spent more effectively and efficiently.

The IWMP Annual Business Plan 2025-26 was approved by the CA leaders on 30th May. On the 25th of June the GM scrutiny committee will be looking at the progress made by the GM IWMP over the last two years. On the 27th of June the trilateral will host the Ofwat Board, who are keen to learn more about the work the trilateral partnership is doing through the GM IWMP.

A joint funding bid between the IWMP and the University of Manchester into the Impact Acceleration Account has recently been successful. The 12-month project directly supports the development of an integrated digital platform for water management planning across Greater Manchester by co-developing a robust, evidence-based and future-ready digital infrastructure roadmap to underpin long-term development of a digital twin for GM water systems. This is critical to achieve the IWMP's vision to 'manage GM water wherever it falls, to enhance the environment, support people and forge prosperous places by working together.' The post-doctoral position will be advertised shortly.

The Micker Brook Place Based Planning group have confirmed four themes of activity for 2025-26, which are: Upland Natural Flood Management and storage, Improving Poynton, Collaborative Carr Brook, and Lady Brook resilience. There are various outcomes and milestones associated with each theme.

5. Rainwater Management

As a continuation of our rainwater management property level trials following the last update, we have made successful progress in the customer up-take and installation of different rainwater planters across several different targeted locations. In Hale, Cheshire we have successfully installed 104 dual-function planters, that capture rainwater and provide both additional storage to be slowly released into the network, but also water re-use capability for homeowners i.e. for watering plants. For these 104 installations in Hale, assuming each planter is emptied and refilled 4 times per year, this equates to a total combined 12,480 litres of water available for reuse annually, and an additional 15,600 litres of storage created.

This financial year, we have also started the process of trialling our own specific rainwater management customer incentives in Droylsden, Prestwich and Moston, to drive up-take and enthusiasm for property level interventions. These incentives include;

- Individual customer incentive – a personal incentive to receive a discount of either £50 or £100 on the surface water fixed charge, dependent on % of roof area diverted to the device / number of planters installed. Customers in this area are additionally entered into a prize draw for a chance to win a permeable driveway for their home.
- Community focused incentive – the higher the uptake of properties in the area, the higher the bill discount all of the properties receive. Discount ranging from 0 - 25% uptake at £50, to 76% - 100% uptake at £200.
- Community focused incentive (+ NHH's) – as above incentive including a non-household incentive scheme with partnership support to drive further engagement in the community.
- Driveway grant incentive – UU to provide a grant (m² cost) to encourage customers to replace their non-permeable driveway with a permeable driveway.

In Prestwich, Manchester, we have 214 customers signed up to our individual customer incentive scheme so far, equating to a total combined 25,680 litres of water available for reuse annually, and an additional 32,100 litres of storage created. Alongside this project we are in the planning stages for Droylsden, Manchester for the community focused incentive in July targeting 1,180 households, and back to Prestwich, Manchester for our driveway grant scheme at the end of summer with approximately 3,000 households included.

Additional projects over the summer period include the creation of a more climate resilient Greater Manchester via our work with a total of 18 schools in three strategic locations; Manchester, Salford and Rochdale. Schools of interest were selected based on their current and future surface water flood risk due to climate change. During the summer we will be working with our partners to design and install varying

levels of green infrastructure, including smaller-scale SuDS such as raingardens, and fun and interactive installations such as bespoke planters that engage students with environmental topics such as biodiversity, geographical and biological cycles.

Finally, this quarter we have launched our Sustainable Water Fund pilot, a new fund to help local authorities across the region to manage rainwater in a sustainable way. This fund offers the opportunity for local councils to reduce the amount of rainwater entering the sewer network via the use of rainwater management or nature-based solutions, and is targeted at local authorities to support schemes within active travel, town regeneration, highways improvements, flood risk management, parks and recreation. As part of an initial pilot project we have 19 applications currently under review, with the full scheme to launch in September.



NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE – FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT PLANS UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION: The RFCC are asked to note the content of this report for the Northwest, Solway Tweed and River Dee FRMPs. Members are asked to continue to champion implementation of FRMPs in their own organisation.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

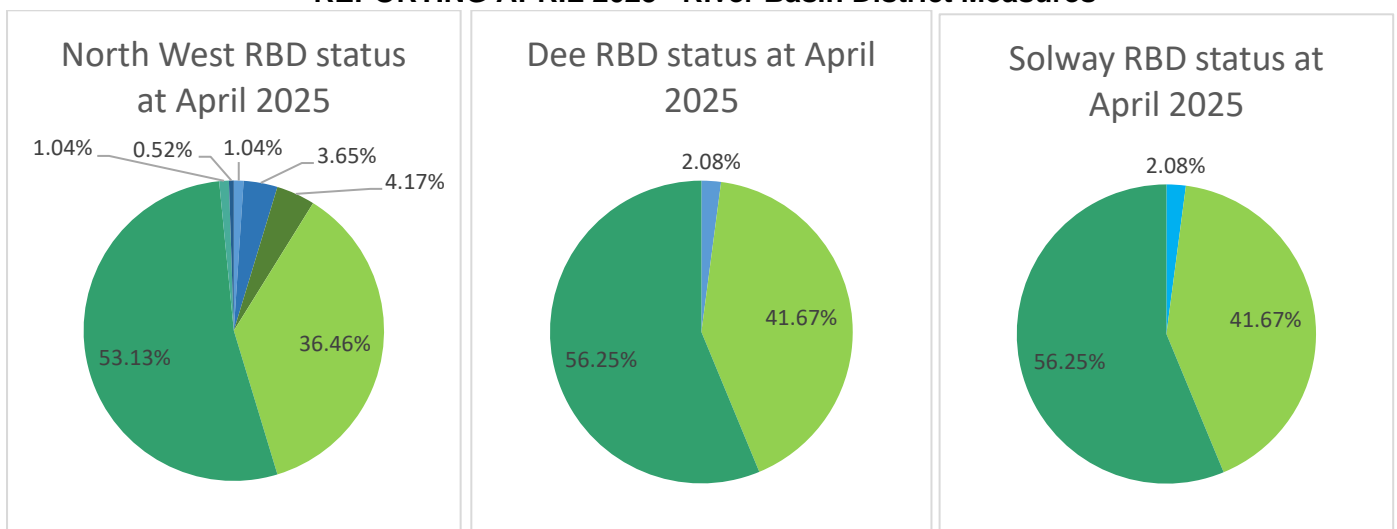
Since the Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP) briefing provided to the RFCC in July 2024, the NW Virtual FRMPs group has:

- Refined the process for collating LLFA data for status changes to their measures (for national, River Basin District and specific Flood Risk Area measures) for changes in status from July 2024.
- Processed data to send to the national team through Flood Plan Explorer, which is available to view by the public on the Environment Agency's [Flood Plan Explorer](#) (FPE) mapping tool.
- Collated updates from the Environment Agency and LLFAs in March 2025 and updated the Flood Plan Explorer with status changes.
- Some staff changes have occurred in the virtual team.

2.0 REPORTING ON FRMPs

All the River Basin District measures were updated at the end of April and will be published on the Environment Agency's [Flood Plan Explorer](#) (FPE) mapping tool.

REPORTING APRIL 2025– River Basin District Measures



Key – Status of Measures	
Not started - Proposed	On Going - Construction
Not Started - Agreed	Completed
On Going	Cancelled now Superseded

Comments on progress 2024-2025

We have not seen a significant change in the status of the measures reported. This could be due to a low return rate when we asked for updates and due to the change in the legal status. As a Virtual FRMPs team we have reduced resource and have not been as proactive in chasing for updates.

It is worth noting that in total the North West RBD has 192 FRMP measures, whereas the Dee has 48 and Solway Tweed has 47. Therefore, in the Northwest pie chart 3% completed equates to 6 measures but 2% in the others equals 1 measure in each district.

Some FRMP measures are not able to be completed until the end of the FRMPs cycle, but over the next year we expect even more to move from Not Started to On Going.

REPORTING 2025 – LLFAs including Flood Risk Area's (FRA's) measures

- We will be requesting all LLFAs including the 15 with specific FRA's to update the status of any FRMPs relevant to their area later this year. This is inline with biannual reporting we have previously undertaken
- Submissions show they are aware of and working on the FRMP measures although less actively than previously.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION: The RFCC are asked to note the content of this report for the Northwest, Solway Tweed and R Dee FRMPs. Members are asked to continue to champion FRMPs implementation in their own organisation.

RFCCs | Environment Agency FCERM Update

June 2025

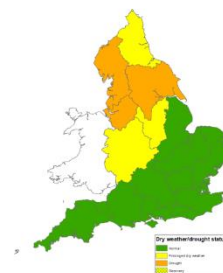
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Weather events

Prolonged dry weather

England has seen the driest spring on record since 1893, and the warmest spring on record since 1884. For the whole of England, May only received just over half of the long-term average rainfall, and this is a similar picture so far in June. The rainfall seen at the end of May and beginning of June helped to stabilise the position but was not enough to reverse the impacts of the previous months of dry weather.

As of 19 June 2025, the Environment Agency areas of Yorkshire, Cumbria and Lancashire, and Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire remained in drought status, with West Midlands, North East, and East Midlands areas in 'Prolonged Dry Weather' status. Each of these 6 areas have activated their drought plans. Droughts are characterised by a prolonged period of dry weather, creating a shortage of water and impacting the environment, agriculture, businesses and public water supply. River flows are reflecting the drier conditions seen, with most rivers in northern and central England being notably low or exceptionally low for the time of year. For more information, read our [water situation reports](#).



It is the role of the Environment Agency to monitor, report and act to reduce the impacts of drought on people and the environment. We also oversee the actions of water companies to ensure that public water supplies are secure. We have scaled up our incident response at a national level and have increased the frequency of the National Drought Groups (NDG). The NDG brings together government and the main sectors to plan and manage strategic drought actions. The NDG last met

on 5 June 2025. You can read the press release following the meeting [here](#). We have recently published a blog on our [preparedness to drought and the water resilience challenge](#) on [GOV.UK](#).

Looking ahead, the latest [Met Office 3-month outlook](#) published on 27 May 2025 for the period June – August 2025 predicts the chance of a hot summer being higher than normal, which is consistent with our warming climate. This brings an increased risk of heatwaves and heat-related impacts. Rainfall signals are fairly weak with large variations possible across the UK. Some regions are likely to see heavy downpours and thunderstorms which bring a risk of surface water flooding.

FCRM capital programme update

Flood and Coastal Risk Management Capital Investment Programme

The Secretary of State for Defra agreed a target of 52,000 properties better protected under a 2 year (2024/25 and 2025/26) £2.65 billion flood and coastal risk management capital investment programme.

During 2024/25 we better protected 27,543 properties across England. To achieve this target we will need to better protect 24,457 properties in 2025/26. On 31 March 2025 government [published](#) the full list of projects to be allocated investment between April 2025 and March 2026, to be delivered as part of the 2-year programme.

As part of this announcement, Floods Minister Emma Hardy detailed a further £16 million in funding for Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs), to significantly boost flood resilience of rural communities and agricultural land across England. This is in addition to the £75 million previously allocated under the IDB Fund and this brings the total investment in the fund to £91 million. The Environment Agency manages this fund and to date has issued over 260 grants.



Working closely with IDBs and Defra, 199 projects have already been completed, providing improvements that are transforming our water network's resilience. This work is safeguarding IDB maintained infrastructure; extending the life of some assets by 15+ years and helping to avoid damages valued at £1.3 billion over the next few decades.

Grant Funding Agreements valuing over £27 million have been issued to IDBs affected by the 2023/24 winter floods, whilst £64 million has already been allocated to IDBs for the delivery of asset improvements

In total, the IDB Fund is improving water level management across 400,000 hectares of agricultural land which includes over 91,000 homes and businesses. Both agricultural land and properties will benefit from improved flood and land drainage assets and it ensures IDBs can repair and replace life expired flood risk management assets, manage rising costs, and continue their crucial work in reducing flood risks.

Spending Review 2025

On 11 June 2025 the government [published](#) the Spending Review 2025 (SR25), which sets out government departmental budgets for day to day spending for the next 3 years.

The SR25 settlement prioritises progress on the government’s growth mission by committing £4.2 billion over 3 years, from 2026/27 to 2028/29, to build and maintain flood defences, protecting communities across England from the dangers of flooding.

Infrastructure Strategy

On 19 June 2025, further information on the longer-term investment programme was [announced](#) with the publication of the government’s [UK Infrastructure: A 10 Year Strategy](#). This Strategy commits to £7.9 billion capital investment in building and repairing flood defences over 10 years from April 2026 to March 2036, to better protect around 840,000 properties from the risk of flooding.

Note: The £4.2 billion announced on 11 June 2025 for the SR25 includes capital and revenue spending, and includes revenue funded work such as routine maintenance. The £7.9 billion announced on 19 June as part of the 10-year UK infrastructure strategy is solely capital spending – meaning the total spent on boosting resilience is substantially higher.

Defra consultation on floods funding

On 3 June 2025 Defra launched their [consultation](#) on Investment Reform, with an [announcement](#) by Minister Hardy at the Flood & Coast Conference in Telford. The consultation proposals were co-developed with the Environment Agency.

The consultation proposes a major update to the current Partnership Funding policy which has been in place since 2011. The analysis in the consultation has been informed from our experience with the current investment programme as well as using the work we have developed to assess a pipeline of potential opportunities for future investment.

Included in the consultation is a Call for Evidence on longer term improvements exploring alternative sources of funding and devolution.



The new funding policy will set rules by which capital projects are eligible for funding and prioritised from the start of the next FCERM investment programme in April 2026. The make up of the projects on the new programme will be determined by the final flood funding policy reforms when they are finalised later in 2025.

The consultation will be open for 8 weeks until 29 July 2025, after which Defra colleagues will collate and analyse feedback before they finalise their policy. The Environment Agency will not be formally responding to the consultation, given our work to inform proposals, but will continue to work closely with Defra colleagues.

You can respond to the consultation here: [Reforming our approach to floods funding - Defra - Citizen Space](#)

FCRM restructure

The FCRM Flood and Infrastructure Improvement Programme (FIIP) was delivered in early 2025, consolidating FCRM, Project and Programme Delivery, and Navigation teams into a single Directorate. The changes ensure a clear line of sight through policy to delivery, on all aspects of our flood and coastal risk remit. This restructuring will be critical in ensuring we have the right delivery model for the new flood investment programme, due to start in April 2026.

Following on from FIIP, the Aurora transformation programme has been commissioned by the Environment Agency Executive Director Team (EDT), that aims to prepare the Environment Agency for delivery of a new flood investment programme and transform our approach to asset management. This Programme is being led by Josie Bateman, Director in the National FCRM team.



It will enable us to become more efficient and effective in what we do, ensuring our assets work reliably and we are creating greater resilience across the community to current and future flood and coastal erosion risk.

We will ensure that warning and informing before, during and after flooding events is maintained and strengthened; we are committed to maintaining safe, reliable, and sustainable assets that protect the environment and communities; and we will continue to invest in new infrastructure and nature-based solutions that reduce flood risk.

We are engaging with many groups to seek expert input and views, and will be keeping RFCC Chairs informed of the latest progress on this work, including with an item at the RFCC Chairs meeting on 18 June 2025.

Flood services

Update on new flood warning system testing

The current Flood Warning System (FWS), in use for over 20 years, will be retired by the end of 2025. A new, modern Warning System is being developed to enhance efficiency, reliability, and user experience in line with climate resilience goals.

The new FWS has now been tested by members of the public, organisations, partners and those Environment Agency employees responsible for issuing alerts and warnings. This has provided valuable feedback on registration, alert delivery, usability and performance.

Insights from the testing are shaping ongoing development and helping to refine the system. This will ensure the system is user-focused and effective at delivering critical alerts.

We are planning for a full launch of the new FWS in September 2025. Members of the public, organisations, and professional partners will be provided with guidance documents, 'how-to' videos and dedicated support channels to help with the transition to the new system. In addition, over 1,000 Environment Agency staff will undergo certified training to ensure smooth adoption and effective use of the new system.

For further information please contact: NextWarningService@environment-agency.gov.uk

Working with FCERM stakeholders

Flood Resilience Taskforce

The Flood Resilience Taskforce held its [3rd meeting](#) in Liverpool on 21 May 2025. The meeting was chaired by Minister Emma Hardy, and Phillip Duffy, Caroline Douglass and Paul Clements attended on behalf of the Environment Agency.

Bolstering the nation's resilience to flooding, including in Merseyside, was top of the agenda. The meeting was chaired by Floods Minister Emma Hardy and hosted by Mersey Fire and Rescue Service at their National Resilience Centre of Excellence, one of the UK's most advanced emergency service training facilities, used to co-ordinate national responses to large scale incidents and provide firefighters with the necessary training and skills to respond to events such as severe flooding.



The taskforce meeting brought together partners including Defra, Cabinet Office, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, the Environment Agency, the Met Office, Local Resilience Forums, Mayoral Offices, emergency responders, the National Farmers Union, and environmental interest groups. The next meeting is due to take place in September 2025.

Coastal Practitioners Conference

On 13 and 14 May 2025, the Coastal Practitioners Conference was held in Cromer, North Norfolk. The conference is an annual event hosted by the Environment Agency and the Coastal Group Network. It is attended by a range of organisations that have a role in managing the coast. It provides a valuable space to create and maintain professional networks, build skills and capability and share good practice and learning.

This year there was a focus on adaptation with a number of presentations and site visits on local [Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme](#) (CTAP) locations. It was attended by around 200 practitioners, with around 25% of attendees being early careers professionals.



In 2026 the conference will be held in Weston Super Mare, where a number of flagship projects such as Steart Marshes and the Bridgwater Tidal Barrier will be showcased.

Working with the Town & Country Planning Association on coastal management

We have worked with the Town & Country Planning Association (TCPA) to deliver 3 webinars on coastal management. These webinars aimed to provide coastal planners and elected members with an understanding of coastal management tools including Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) and the National Coastal Erosion Risk Map (NCERM). They also introduced some of the links between coastal management and spatial planning.

The 3 webinars were held on:

- 20 May – An introduction to coastal planning (for planners in coastal authorities)
- 21 May – An introduction to coastal planning for elected members
- 22 May – Coastal planning – tools and best practice



Over 370 people joined the webinars over the 3 sessions from a variety of local authorities around the English coast. All of the events were recorded, and will be made available for viewing on the [TCPA YouTube Channel](#).

For more information contact coastalresilience@environment-agency.gov.uk

FCERM collaboration with Natural England

In May 2025, a Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Service Level Agreement (SLA) was signed between the Environment Agency and Natural England (NE). This agreement aims to provide the Environment Agency with access to technical advice from NE on key FCERM projects in England – part of the Environment Agency and NE’s commitment to strengthening delivery of the current FCERM capital programme.

The SLA focusses primarily on those high risk, high opportunity capital programme projects for which Natural England’s advice can be incorporated at the design or pre-planning phase, helping to prevent time delays or increased project costs. The SLA is active until 31 March 2026, and can be accessed by all Environment Agency hub teams, but excludes projects on the Humber and Solent & South Downs, where local agreements are live.



A key benefit of the SLA is the securing of NE’s expert staff time. This offers improved access to timely and consistent technical advice from Natural England into project design and planning. The SLA will therefore streamline delivery, reduce risk, and enhance the overall quality of capital programme outcomes.

The SLA will be managed in the Environment Agency by the National Environmental Assessment Service (NEAS) and overseen by a joint Steering and Governance Group. A list of priority projects will ensure that the SLA remains focussed on the most important capital projects, and it will be updated regularly through joint quarterly discussions in each of the 6 Environment Agency hubs.

Whilst we may consider incorporating other RMA-led schemes in future, this agreement only includes priority projects within the Environment Agency’s capital flood programme.

For more information please contact naomi.dixon@naturalengland.org.uk or nick.pedder@environment-agency.gov.uk

Rapid Flood Guidance service returns for summer 2025

The Rapid Flood Guidance (RFG) service is part of the Surface Water Flood Forecasting Improvement Project (SWFFIP) which is a [Defra](#) and [Environment Agency](#) funded initiative, contributing to Defra's [Surface water management action plan - July 2018](#) and implemented by the [Met Office](#) and [Environment Agency](#) through the [Flood Forecasting Centre](#) (FFC).

The RFG makes use of new convective weather forecasting (nowcasting) capability from the [Met Office's Expert Weather Hub](#) - combined with information from the FFC's hydrometeorologists.



Following a [successful trial in 2024](#), the RFG service will return for summer 2025 between 2 June and 17 October 2025. As in 2024, the 2025 service will provide: an advisory badge on the front page of the Flood Guidance Statement (FGS) for days when there is a heightened risk of rapid flooding, and RFG updates - issued on heightened risk days.

Coastcraft

At the Flood and Coast conference in Telford from 3-5 June 2025, the Environment Agency held a pre-launch of Coastcraft. This is a new educational game developed for the Minecraft Education Edition (MEE), delivered by Cornwall Council as part of the Environment Agency's Flood and Coastal Innovation Programme (FCIP).

Coastcraft is aimed at ages 9-14yrs (KS2 and KS3 of the National Curriculum). Players can learn about coastal landscapes, how sand dunes are used as a nature-based solution, and can explore strategies to respond to climate change and sea level rise. They can also visualise a range of potential futures in places such as Bude, Cornwall, influenced by choices they make in the game.

Players consider the complexities of coastal adaptation, learning that working with nature is sometimes more appropriate than hard engineering approaches, and that balancing environmental, social and economic priorities in coastal management strategies is often challenging.



The release of Coastcraft follows the success of the Environment Agency games [Rivercraft](#) and [Rivercraft 2](#), already available on MEE, and providing an innovative educational resource for flood risk management and nature-based solutions to flooding. These games have had over 250,000 session plays since 2022, and the MEE platform is available in 140 countries and used in over 40,000 school systems. It has a user base of over 35 million students and teachers.

The Environment Agency worked closely with Cornwall Council and the Geographical Association to ensure the game met the requirements of the National Curriculum, and the game has been tested in both primary and secondary schools.

Please look out for further announcements coming soon. For more information please contact coastalresilience@environment-agency.gov.uk

Springpod – virtual FCRM work experience

The Environment Agency and Defra’s first virtual work experience (VWEX) programme went live on Monday 16 June 2025. Developed by educational specialists in the Environment Agency’s flood and coastal risk management (FCRM) Strategic Workforce Planning and Skills Team, VWEX provides an accessible and inclusive alternative to in-person work experience for young people (aged 13+) from all backgrounds.

In partnership with [Springpod](#), this programme will improve the visibility and accessibility of the Environment Agency, providing young people with the opportunity to learn about FCRM and opportunities to develop a career through our entry level programmes.



This freely available programme aligns with the objectives in our Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy Roadmap, People Strategy and Career Entry Strategy. Young people will learn valuable new skills and the difference they can make for future generations by working for the Environment Agency.

From Monday 16 June 2025, young people can apply to undertake the programme on Springpod’s Environment Agency page [Environment Agency Opportunities - Your Environment, Your Career | Springpod](#).

For further information, please contact: STEM@environment-agency.gov.uk

RFCC chair appointment

Defra held interviews for Chairs for the Anglian (Northern), Trent, Wessex and Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (RFCCs) throughout April and May 2025. The results of these interviews will be announced once a decision on the recommendations has been made by the minister.



Events

Flood and Coast conference

Between 3-5 June 2025 the annual [Flood and Coast conference](#) convened by CIWEM, and Environment Agency Excellence awards took place at the International Conference Centre in Telford.

Hundreds of delegates, organisations and partners attended this year’s event, with the theme of connecting our flood and coastal risk management, and engaging with neighbouring sectors, to deliver government growth ambitions.



Our Environment Agency stand took prominence in the exhibition Hall showcasing our innovative products and digital services. Staff engaged with delegates throughout the 3 days presenting things such as: Coastcraft, Extended Reality pilots, AI User Cases and our relaunched [Check Your Long Term Flood Risk](#) and [Flood Map for Planning](#). We also undertook some user research to gain insights into how we might further develop our services.

This year's programme was built around 3 emerging themes:

Day 1 - Understanding government growth ambitions and developing proactive strategies to support delivery. During the day we heard from Environment Agency Chair Alan Lovell, CIWEM Director of Policy Alastair Chisholm, and Emma Hardy MP, Minister of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Alan Lovell outlined progress on protecting more homes and communities from flooding, and the opportunities that both the new National Flood Risk Assessment (NaFRA) and natural flood management present for protecting communities. Minister Hardy outlined the government ambitions for growth and the role the Flood and Coast community plays in delivering against these.

There were also sessions led by a number of partners, including on youth engagement for a resilient future in flood risk management, natural flood management, local authority risk management, surface water flood management, coastal growth, AI and flood resilience and women in FCERM.



Day 2 - Delivering sector integration by defining and expanding our networks. During the day we heard from CIWEM President Hanah Burgess and Mark Lloyd from The Rivers Trust on integrated approaches to flood and coastal risk management, with exploration of what's required to make them a reality. We also heard from Environment Agency Director of FCRM, Innovation, System and Services, Josie Bateman on the value each sector contributes to and derives from flood risk management.

There were also sessions led by a number of partners, including on insurance and financial resilience, adaptation pathways, Flood and Coastal Innovation Programmes, partnership working, the new National Flood Risk Assessment (NaFRA) and National Coastal Erosion Risk Mapping (NCERM) projects, and coastal communities.

Day 3 - Equipping the sector with the skills and knowledge needed for effective action. During the day there we heard from Mary Long-Dhonau OBE, on the meaning of property flood resilience, and Nicole McNab, Head of Strategic Partnerships at Southern Water and Mark Garratt, Deputy Director Capability, Stakeholder Management & Engagement at the Environment Agency, as part of a discussion on how we best attract and retain the next generation of talent for FCERM

There were also sessions led by a number of partners, including on Biodiversity Net Gain, getting charted with CIWEM, climate resilience, updates on a number of flood alleviation schemes, and engagement with the parliamentary process.

Flood and Coast excellence awards and Women in FCERM awards

During the evening of Wednesday 4 June 2025, the Environment Agency held its annual [Flood and Coast excellence awards](#) and [Women in Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management \(WiFCERM\) awards](#), recognising the work and innovations happening across the flood and coastal community. And the winners are:

Flood and Coast excellence awards

★ Climate Resilient Places (projects above £3 million) –

Holderness Flood Alleviation Scheme, East Hull Pumping Station and Castle Hill Flood storage - JBA Bentley

★ Climate Resilient Places (projects less than £3 million) -

Southern Water and the residents of the Pan Parishes – Southern Water

★ **Community Action** - Glasson Dock Property Flood Resilience – Watertight International

★ **Digital Excellence** - National Flood Risk Assessment (NaFRA2) – The Environment Agency, Defra Digital and Jacobs

★ **Innovation in Climate Resilience** – The Rochdale Flood Poverty Project – Rochdale Borough Council & JBA Consulting

★ **Surface Water Management** – Devon Resilience Innovation Project – Devon County Council

★ **Working with Nature** – Stronger Shores – South Tyneside Council

★ **Early Career Professional** - Katie Hargreave-Smith – Buckinghamshire Council



Women in FCERM (sponsored by the Environment Agency)

★ **Rising Star Award** - Dr Kate Smith

★ **Equality Leadership Award** - Youvrani Thimmegowda

★ **Laura Baird Special Recognition Award** - Debs Nutt

Environmental Audit Committee inquiry: Flood Resilience in England

On 19 May 2025, Julie Foley, Director, Strategy and Adaptation at the Environment Agency appeared before the Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) as part of its ongoing inquiry on '[Flood resilience in England](#)'.

There were 2 sessions. Witnesses on the first panel were: Mary Long-Dhonau OBE, Property Flood Resilience Consultant, FloodMary.com; Siobhan Connor, Chair, Shrewsbury Action Group; and, Graham French, Owner, Kingfisher Café. Alongside Julie Foley, witnesses on the second panel were: Tracey Garrett, Chief Executive, National Flood Forum; and Ian Moodie, Technical Manager, Association of Drainage Authorities.

The sessions covered a wide range of subjects on flood resilience, but specifically focussed on the division of responsibilities between risk management authorities (RMAs), and communication and engagement between RMAs and impacted



communities. Other subjects covered included asset maintenance, property flood resilience, flood funding formula, and flood warning systems. The sessions can be viewed [here](#) and the [transcripts](#) are here. In July 2025, the EAC will take evidence from Minister Hardy and Environment Agency representatives, including Philip Duffy.

Nature and Flooding roundtable: EA2030

On 19 May 2025 the Environment agency held a workshop, hosted by Caroline Douglass, on 'Nature and Flooding'. This forms part of the Environment Agency's new corporate strategy up to 2030 (EA2030).

The workshop was attended by number of FCERM stakeholders, including: the Rivers Trust, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, National Flood Forum, Natural England, ADEPT, Wildlife Trust, Flood Re, Association of British Insurers.

The workshop revealed strong stakeholder alignment on several key priorities, and demonstrated significant goodwill among stakeholders including on opportunities for collaboration, shared mapping resources, skills development, and integrated catchment approaches.

On governance reform opportunities, there was significant interest in evolving RFCCs to include broader water and nature remits, potentially serving as integration mechanisms at the regional level. RFCCs experience on this was also highlighted in the conclusions published on 3 June 2025 in the Independent Water Commissions [Interim Report](#), led by Sir Jon Cunliffe on the water sector and how it regulated.

FCERM publications and announcements

Property flood resilience

On 16 May 2025, the [terms of reference](#) for a new independent review of property flood resilience (PFR) were published. In January 2025 the Environment Agency commissioned '[Floodproof: an action plan to build resilience](#)'. This action plan sets out recommendations from the Property Level Flood Resilience Roundtable, chaired by Peter Bonfield.



Current Magazine – June 2025

This new edition focuses on a wide range of projects looking to achieve Net Zero Carbon, create better, safer places for communities and enhance environments. Also includes articles on the importance of creating climate resilient places, how we can incorporate Artificial Intelligence into our work to make efficiencies in cost, resources and carbon, and celebrating the release of new flood and coast data for NCERM and NAFRA. [Read the magazine here.](#)



Innovation Supplement – June 2025

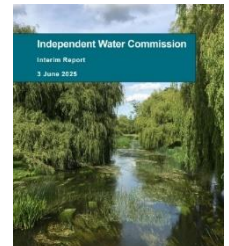
This edition features a range of projects around the country that are helping to reduce both cost and carbon. It features projects and trials that are looking to help with decarbonisation through steel reduction, investigating low carbon concrete options as well as moving away from diesel pumps and trialling hydrogen fuel cells.

[Read the magazine here.](#)



Independent Water Commission: review of the water sector

On 3 June 2025, the Independent Water Commission, led by Sir Jon Cunliffe, published an [Interim Report](#) following a review on the water sector and how it is regulated. The Commission was tasked with making recommendations to create a water system fit for the future.



We have provided the Commission with evidence and information about our role in managing the water environment, water industry regulation, the overarching management of water, and how some decision making could be devolved to regional or catchment level. You can read the Environment Agency's evidence [here](#).

The Interim Report sets out the Commission's preliminary conclusions under 5 areas: Strategic direction and planning; The legislative framework; Regulatory reform; Company structures, governance, ownership and management; Infrastructure and asset health.

We expect the full recommendations from the Commission to be published in early July 2025.

FCERM research and development programme – case studies

On 4 April 2025, the FCERM research and development programme [published a collection of case studies](#). They highlight how research has been used to improve flood and coastal erosion risk management by connecting people who have operational problems with researchers who have solutions.

The case studies cover diverse topics – from modelling with advanced technologies like digital twins, to using natural flood management measures, to applying people's local flood knowledge and improving how we work with communities.

FCERM research and development programme – rapid evidence assessment

On 22 May 2025, the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) research and development programme published a [Rapid evidence assessment \(REA\) of flooding and coastal erosion on agricultural land and businesses](#). This REA will inform analysis and policymaking for flood and coastal erosion risk management (FCERM), climate adaptation, farming and food system resilience in England and Wales.

It focuses on the costs, benefits, and impacts of mitigation measures and aims to support FCERM, agricultural policy, land use, and climate adaptation strategies. The research was conducted by WSP, Cranfield University, and Exeter University. The project was funded by Defra, as part of the joint FCERM research and development programme.

Reservoir safety biennial report

On 26 June 2025 we published the latest [Biennial report on reservoir safety: 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2024](#). The report set out actions the Environment Agency has taken in its role as the reservoir regulator, under the requirements of the Reservoirs Act 1975 during the previous 2 years. We have produced a biennial report since 2007.

Flood scheme openings and updates

- [Leigh expansion and Hildenborough embankment scheme - GOV.UK](#)
- [New scheme in Oxford to protect every home and business from risk of River Thames flooding - GOV.UK](#)
- [£7m beach management scheme reduces flood risk in Lincolnshire - GOV.UK](#)
- [Dunball Sluice £9.7 million upgrade completed - GOV.UK](#)

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Environment Agency

National FCRM Business and Stakeholder Management Team

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June 2025

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE

11 JULY 2025

CALENDAR OF RFCC MEETINGS FOR 2026/27

Recommendation: The North West RFCC is asked to consider and approve the proposed meeting dates for 2026/27.

1. We have previously agreed the date of Friday 23 January to be our first meeting in 2026.
2. RFCC meeting date windows for 2026/27 have now been provided by our National team and in line with this guidance the following meetings dates are proposed:
 - Friday 24 April 2026 (expected to be virtual)
 - Friday 10 July 2026 (expected to be in person)
 - Friday 23 October 2026 (expected to be in person)
 - Friday 22 January 2027 (expected to be virtual)
3. The Committee is asked to consider and approve the proposed meeting dates for 2026/27.