

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE

FRIDAY 10 JULY APRIL 2026, 10AM – 11AM

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 on 24 April 2026 and matters arising (Paper) 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 C) To discuss and consider the recommendations from the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub-group. <i>Introduced by Terri McMillan, RFCC F&BASG Chair, Andy Tester, EA FCRM Programme Manager, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire (GMMC) and Sally Whiting, EA RFCC Senior Advisor (GMMC)</i>	For information and discussion and approval
10:55	4.	Any Other Business	
11:00		CLOSE	

There will be a short break before heading into the RFCC Workshop.

See next page for details of information papers

Future RFCC meetings

23 October 2026 (face to face meeting)
22 January 2027 (virtual meeting)

Future RFCC Finance & Business Assurance Sub-group meetings

9 October 2026 (Virtual Meeting)
8 January 2027 (Virtual Meeting)

INFORMATION PAPERS

		Description/Summary
North West RFCC specific papers		
Info Item A	Flood Incidents Report	A summary of flood incidents which have occurred in the last quarter across the North West. Shows some limited flooding in Cumberland and a small number of properties suffering sewer flooding (UU).
Info item B	Update from the North West and North Wales Coastal Group	Regular quarterly update from the Chair of Coastal Group covering the Shoreline Management Plan, Our Future Coast, Future Coast North West, and the North West bid for national coastal adaptation funding.
Info item C	RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group Meeting Papers	The report on the investment programme provided to the Subgroup for the meeting on 24 June, and the draft minutes from the meeting.
Info item D	Quarterly Update from United Utilities	Regular quarterly update from UU covering the Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP), integrated water management approaches in all five sub-regional partnership areas, and rainwater management initiative including a partnership funding opportunity and work they are doing in Liverpool.
EA National papers		
Info item E	National FCRM Update Paper	General quarterly update on FCRM provided for RFCCs, covering: national programmes, events, publications, announcements, scheme openings, National FCERM Strategy refresh and Floods Resilience Taskforce.
Info item F	EA Aurora Transformation Programme	An update, tailored for RFCCs, on the ongoing EA Aurora programme which includes some internal reorganisation and which will deliver improvements and efficiencies. The paper sets out which changes are relevant for RFCCs and what they will see.
Info item G	New project opportunity screening process and RFCC role	Relates to new funding policy and investment programme planning and allocation process, the enhanced formal role for RFCCs in this, and the RFCC Tailored Guidance which gives a steer on how the North West investment programme might be strengthened through some changes in its composition.
Info item G	North West RFCC Tailored Guidance	This is a slightly amended version of the guidance previously emailed to RFCC members and officers on 5 June
Info item H	FCRM Investment Programme Update	This is a national overview of the FCRM investment programme which covers: outcomes and benefits delivered in the last two years and across the last 5-year programme (2021-2026), the new outcome metrics for the new funding policy, and national allocation principles, which have taken account of feedback from RFCCs in April/May.

North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
Draft Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 24 April 2026

Attendees:

Members

Adrian Lythgo, Chairman
Councillor Giles Archibald, Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership (part)
Councillor James Shorrock, Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Councillor Alan Quinn, Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Councillor Mandie Shilton Godwin, Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Councillor Philip Cusack, Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Councillor Elizabeth Grey, Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Councillor Mhairi Doyle, Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Councillor Sam Naylor, Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Terri McMillan, EA Appointed Member – Business and Assurance
Carolyn Otley, EA Appointed Member – Communities
Susannah Bleakley, EA Appointed Member – Coastal Issues
Kate Morley – EA Appointed Member – Conservation (part)
Amy Cooper, EA Appointed Member - Water and Sewerage Industry
Aimee Brough, EA Appointed Member – Agriculture & Land Management (Catchment Based Approaches)
Paul Barnes, EA Appointed Member – Agriculture & Land Management (Farming)
Carl Green, Chair of the North West and North Wales Coastal Group

Environment Agency Officers:

Ian Crewe, Area Director, Greater Manchester Merseyside and Cheshire (GMMC) (part)
Nick Pearson, Area Flood Risk Manager (Greater Manchester)
Richard Knight, Area Flood Risk Manager (Cumbria)
Fiona Duke, Area Flood Risk Manager (Lancashire)
Adam Walsh, FCRM Programming Manager, Cumbria and Lancashire (C&L)
Andy Tester, FCRM Programming Manager, GMMC
Rachel Harmer, RFCC Secretariat
Sarah Fontana, FCRM Local authority Capital Projects Co-ordinator, GMMC
Gary Hilton, FCRM Local authority Capital Projects Advisor, GMMC
Ayush Sheth, FCRM Programming Team Advisor, GMMC
Debra Glover, FCRM Local authority Project Advisor, GMMC

Local authority Observers (Councillors and Officers):

Ali Harker, Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Matthew Waning, Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Jason Harte, Westmorland and Furness Council
Nick Rae, Cumberland Council
Andrew Harrison, Cumberland Council
Rebecca James, Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Clare Nolan-Barnes, Blackpool Council
Debbie King, Lancashire County Council
Lorah Cheyne, Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Councillor Gerald Mirfin, Lancashire County Council

Fran Comyn, Rochdale Borough Council
Jill Holden, Greater Manchester Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Thomas Mawdsley, Greater Manchester Flood Risk Partnership
Sarah Wardle, Partnership Co-ordinator, Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Louise Fortune, Knowsley Council
Jim Turton, Warrington Borough Council
Matt Winnard, Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Guy Metcalfe, Cheshire East Council
Dan Matthews, Cheshire East Council
Steve Walsh, Bolton Council
Katie Eckford, NW RFCC Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator

Presenters:

Shannon Gunning, EA FCRM PSO Advisor, GMMC
Tom De La Rosa, EA National Coastal Adaptation Lead
Dave Kennedy, EA Senior FCRM Advisor, C&L
Dave Brown, EA Senior FCRM Advisor, GMMC

Observers:

Claire Bell, Deputy Director, FCRM PPD, North

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

Adrian Lythgo opened the meeting and welcomed attendees, presenters and observers.

Adrian conveyed apologies from: Councillor Mark Goldsmith (Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership); Councillor Bob Kelly, (Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership); Councillor Tony Brennan and Councillor Jane Hugo (Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership); Carol Holt, EA Area Director (Cumbria and Lancashire (C&L)); Mary-Rose Muncaster (EA Area Flood Risk Manager, GMMC); and Sally Whiting, Senior FCRM Advisor, GMMC.

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

- Guy Metcalfe representing the Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership on behalf of Councillor Mark Goldsmith.
- Councillor Giles Archibald and Andrew Harrison representing Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership on behalf of Councillor Bob Kelly.
- Clare Nolan-Barnes representing the Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership on behalf of Councillor Jane Hugo.

Aimee Brough noted that she will not participate in the vote for the Poise Brook in principle Local Levy funding request.

Adrian noted no further declarations of interest have been received.

The Chair noted that this would be the final RFCC meeting for EA RFCC Appointed Member Paul Barnes, who has provided significant service to the Committee since July 2017. Adrian noted he will take his quarterly update of 9 April as read, except to reflect on the part regarding the new funding policy guidance, which is still emerging. Members noted webinars on the new funding policy are being run by the EA and when all that information sharing has happened the Committee will return to consider the new guidance in full, which will include the planned July workshop. He noted we know there will be an opportunity for RFCCs to have a more explicit role in shaping the pipeline of future projects, but the detail on how this is envisaged is not yet known and this will be discussed when the Committee have the full information. Members noted that there is currently sufficient information to talk through a potential collective approach to how we manage the natural flood management (NFM) pipeline, which will be discussed later in the meeting.

No further comments were raised.

26 (13) Minutes of the RFCC meeting held on 23 January 2026 and matters arising

The minutes of the 23 January 2026 RFCC meeting were proposed by Councillor Philip Cusack and seconded by Carolyn Otley.

Adrian noted he will take it that the three matters arising have been read. He highlighted to Councillor Giles Archibald that he has in view the point he raised about clarification around the funding policy and what it means for projects that are already in the programme.

No comments or questions were raised.

The minutes of the 23 January 2026 RFCC meeting were approved by the Committee.

26 (14) Recent Flooding Incidents

Adrian noted there has been some limited flooding of properties in the last three months, but thankfully it has been fairly limited as the weather has been reasonably good. He noted he will take the report as being read but asked if there were any contributions that members of the Committee wished to make.

There were no comments or questions raised.

26 (15) Report from the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group meeting

As Chair of the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group, Terri McMillan referred Members to the 10 April draft Finance Sub Group Minutes and summarised the items that are recommended for RFCC approval to be discussed today.

2025/26 investment programme

Adam Walsh provided a summary of in-year delivery for 2025/26. In terms of spend this year the February forecast shows a programme underspend of £7.8 Million against the Total Project Expenditure (TPE) allocation of £135.03 Million. This is £0.6 Million more in terms of an increase in underspend to that reported to the Committee in January. As a result, the latest

forecast position remains broadly the same, and there is a current forecast to spend 94.1% of the total project allocation of £135 Million.

For Grant in Aid, Members noted there is a current forecast to spend 97.3% of the £122.94 Million GiA allocation, which equates to a GiA underspend of £3.24 Million. The paper provided an outline of the key reasons for this reduction and although a number of opportunities were enacted, mainly to an increase in grant claims from local authorities (LAs), these were offset by reductions across several EA led schemes.

Adam noted the total remaining spend reduced by £47.7 Million to that reported to Committee in January with a further £16.4 Million for the EA and £2.8 Million for LAs remaining as at the end of February. Members noted since then these figures have further reduced and accruals have been completed to ensure spend is accounted for in 2025/26. Whilst all the GiA available has not been spent, what has been achieved has been the largest spend in any one year.

The current forecast for properties better protected is showing that 6,029 properties will be better protected across the North West in 2025/26 against a target of 5,009 with 5,715 of these claimed or receiving better protection at the end of February.

At the January RFCC meeting a forecast of 6,756 properties was reported, with the current forecast showing a reduction of approximately 700 properties. This is mainly due to a reprofile of properties better protected by the Preston and South Ribble Scheme (707 properties) now to deliver during this current quarter. This deferral was supported by the national team and the target was correspondingly adjusted to reflect this.

The key message on efficiencies from the investment programme is that the EA and LAs are not achieving their efficiency targets and overall have achieved approximately only 40% of the target. The detail up to the end of Quarter 3 was provided and Members noted there are limited submissions in Quarter 4, with the final submission date for Quarter 4 being passed. The outcome of the submissions for 2025/26 will be reported at the July Committee meeting along with what efficiencies were realised during the 5-year programme both locally and nationally.

Adam noted investment programme risks for 2025/26 include: the forecast out-turn is below the investment programme allocation; efficiency savings remain significantly below the target (61% shortfall); not all projects received the funding they requested for next year which will delay some schemes from progressing. Members also recognised these risks are in addition to the ever-present risks such as adverse weather and poor ground conditions leading to delays in delivery on the ground, or the possibility of diverting resources in responding to incidents.

Asset Maintenance programme

Members noted the (Resource) Asset Maintenance programmes have been completed and at the end of February forecasting within 1% of budget by year end. The EA national target for below required condition (BRC) assets, that are EA maintained and in high consequence systems, is 92%. Both GMMC Area and C&L Area have exceeded this target with the GMMC end of year position being 93.49% against an Area target of 93.4% and C&L being 96.5% against an Area target of 97.7%. We noted that across all assets more assets have been fixed than have failed during 2025/26, however it was acknowledged that the winter this year has been reasonably mild and has allowed work to continue.

With regard to third party assets not EA maintained, there are 291 more assets below required condition than at the start of the 2025/26 year period. Members noted the figures are slightly skewed as there was no starting position for C&L Area, so the Quarter 2 figure was used as a starting position. For 2026/27 there will be a starting position, but it is expected that the 291 figure will increase again given the current expected deterioration rate.

In January it was reported that an extra £5.5 Million was being made available nationally for 2026/27 maintenance programmes. Out of this funding pot GMMC only received £29K and C&L received £65K. The outcome of this is that the GMMC budget is the same as it was for 2025/26 and C&L's budget has increased by approximately 1%. Teams are working out what this maintenance allocation means and are finalising the local choices process, which will finish at the end of April. The maintenance programme will then be published on gov.uk at the end of May.

For the asset reconditioning allocation, C&L have received an allocation of £3.7 Million, and GMMC have received an allocation of £5.2 Million (against a GMMC bid of £11.4 Million). This is to undertake a programme of asset refurbishment works to restore Below Required Condition assets to target condition and the majority of the funding will be spent on the construction phase of the current programme of works.

Members noted the allocations for next year of £160.3 Million for the investment programme and £14.9 Million for the asset maintenance programme. This follows programme allocation approval from the EA Board in February, which was previously shared with the Committee in January and consented. The investment programme for 2026/27 has now been published on gov.uk.

Local Levy

Members received a brief overview of the 2025/26 Local Levy programme including balances, spend and forecasts for the current and upcoming years to that provided at the recent RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group Meeting.

The North West is forecasting to spend £5.7 Million of the £9.345 Million Levy allocation (62%). The forecast has reduced by £2.9 Million to that reported in January and is mainly a result of maximising GiA and re-profiling Local Levy into future years for the following six projects: Poise Brook; River Roch Rochdale and Littleborough Scheme; River Roch Rochdale Phase 2 FRMS; Hindley Group; Sankey Brook FRMS; and Blackpool Manchester Square Pumping Station and Culvert. Members noted the annual year-end audit will be completed in May and confirmation of the outcome will be reported to the Committee at the June/July meetings.

Adam confirmed the detail of the expected Local Levy balances at the end of each year based on the latest forecasts and noted the scenario provided includes the already approved Local Levy allocation of £305K (deferred to 2027/28) for Poise Brook, but does not include the additional provisional request for in principle support for Poise Brook (2030/31) to be presented by Shannon Gunning in this meeting.

Members noted the balance is projected to dip below the £2 Million minimum working balance in 2028/29, during which time the programme will continue to see change and Adam highlighted a review of the minimum working balance is scheduled for next year (2026/27).

Councillor Giles Archibald raised his concern regarding the level of funding and the predicted impacts of climate change which is expected to cause significant additional flooding and asked what is being done nationally to make it clear that there is inadequate funding to deliver the protections that our communities expect. Councillor Mandie Shilton Godwin and Councillor Alan Quinn commented on the need to look to increase the Local Levy contributions.

Adrian noted he recognised from the last Local Choices process, there are projects which aren't going as fast as we'd wish them to for this current year and he highlighted the North West has £160 Million of investment from the national funding pot, which is the largest investment in any RFCC by quite some distance, and coming off the back of £135 Million last year. He noted he will support Members who want to make the case for more funding, but that Members need to acknowledge the region has done well to secure what it has already. He added RFCC Chairs along with EA colleagues make the case annually for maximising investment in flood risk management, which will continue to be done, and comments with regard to our own North West fund will be returned to at the July workshop.

In Principle Local Levy Funding Request – Poise Brook Flood Risk Management Scheme

Shannon Gunning reported the Poise Brook FRMS is seeking in principle Local Levy support of £1.695 Million to enable the scheme to progress to outline business case and tackle severe flooding across the Poise Brook Catchment.

Members received a brief overview of the scheme and noted it is currently in its appraisal stage and the Committee are being given early notice of a £1.695 Million Local Levy requirement for the latter phases of the scheme, to be profiled across a number of years. The Committee noted the scheme has previously received £305K of Local Levy funding for project development.

There are currently 570 properties at risk within the Poise Brook catchment area, who have experienced several severe flooding events. The EA, working in partnership with United Utilities (UU) and Stockport Council, is now developing a capital scheme to explore how it can reduce the flood risk to these communities, whilst also enhancing the local environment and providing wider benefits.

Detailed design completion is scheduled for September 2029 with construction currently estimated to start in May 2031. The current estimated scheme cost is £30 Million and an overview of the potential funding gap based on cost estimates and the updated funding rules effective from April 2026 was provided.

Adrian noted the recommendation from the Finance Sub Group to the main Committee was a recommendation to support the request, with the stipulation that confirmation of the final amount of Levy contribution required the project team to come back to the Committee at a later date.

Vote: Approved: There were 15 Members in support of this in-principle £1.695 Million Local Levy funding request for the latter years of the Poise Brook FRMS Project.
There were no further comments or questions.

2026/27 investment programme

Adam Walsh provided a look ahead to the new financial year. He provided the final allocations of £160.3 Million for the investment programme and £14.9 Million for the Asset Maintenance Programme, which follows on from the EA Board approval in February this year. Members noted the investment programme for 2026/27 has been published on gov.uk and the EA asset maintenance programme is due to be published in May.

Adam brought Members' attention to an action within the national EA Allocations paper for the RFCC to review and provide feedback on the updated allocation principles, prioritisation and proposed allocation process timeline. He highlighted the deadline for feedback of 2 May and advised Members if they wished to respond to send this to Andy Tester by 2 May, as per the email sent out by Rachel Harmer.

Adrian Lythgo reminded Members that colleagues and Members had previously made a number of points with respect to the consultation on the national funding formula, including comments around the ability of sub-regions and places to have their priorities reflected in the allocation process. He highlighted that there is a read across from that to these allocation principles and that colleagues may wish to make similar points with respect to this list of allocation principles.

With regard to the funding prioritisation approach Councillor Mandie Shilton Godwin asked about non-monetised benefits, and how these are monetised, including things like carbon sequestration, improved soil health, or improved biodiversity. She asked where more information can be found. Nick Pearson noted he will contact Councillor Shilton Godwin outside of the meeting to provide her with further details and noted the EA can potentially offer a session to all RFCC members interested in learning more about it.

ACTION: Nick Pearson

RFCC Business Plan

An overview of the RFCC Business Plan dashboard was provided showing overall good progress continues to be made with 10 projects complete, 9 ongoing and on track, and 4 which are behind schedule where issues are being addressed (Amber rated). This is an improved picture compared with last quarter when 6 projects were rated Amber. The Flood Hub website (ID5) is fundamentally back on track with steps taken to keep the website live for the next few months until new contractual arrangements are in place and the Unpave the Way project (ID12) is also back on track with adequate resources now available to maintain progress on this year's key deliverables. One project is being reported as complete this quarter – the Landscape in a Changing Climate conference event (ID20).

Members noted the first three Amber rated projects are those delivering community flood resilience in conjunction with Newground CIC. Procurement rules require that the service be put out to open market tender and this tender process and the resulting contractual arrangements are being led by GMCA on behalf of the RFCC and North West RMAs. The tender process is now underway and Members noted there will be a break in service between April and around July/August and no direct community engagement support will be available to RMAs during this time. There will also be a pause in social media activity. The limited trial with South West RFCC coming on board the Flood Hub also needs to await the outcome of the tender process.

The Flood Hub website itself is reported as Green and on track this quarter as arrangements have been made to keep the website live over the next few months and efforts have gone into making sure it is as up to date as possible.

The NFM Pipeline (Cumbria) Project continues to work through financial and contractual arrangements and will now commence in 2026/27.

The Unpave the Way project is reported as Green this quarter as resourcing levels are now sufficient to enable active progression of this year's key deliverables, the Householder SuDS Guide and the LA webpage templates on paving over front gardens. The latter is now out for consultation and the SuDS Guide will be launched for consultation shortly.

Adam noted the spend forecast for this year is £1.097 Million against the approved allocation of £1.247 Million. £70K of the £150K underspend relates to reprofiling of Local Levy spend that is still needed, and £80K of the allocation was not required and will not be reprofiled, instead being released back to the programme.

The allocation for Business Plan projects in 2026/27, approved by the RFCC in January, is £1.544 Million. Members noted the future investment needs of ongoing and high priority projects, with a small proportion currently contractually committed. The balance of benefits being provided to each of the partnerships from Business Plan investment was also noted.

- Landscape in a Changing Climate Conference (ID20)

The Cumbria partnership was commissioned by the RFCC to carry out some engagement activity on land management and it was agreed that this would take the form of a conference style event and the 'Landscape in a Changing Climate' conference took place in 7 October 2025. The conference was attended by 108 people from 53 organisations and received overwhelmingly positive feedback with attendees valuing the opportunity to hear about what key organisations are already doing and planning, and to network and make connections. £12K of Local Levy support funded 3KQ to help design, plan, run and facilitate the event with great professionalism and effectiveness.

Following the conference, consideration has been given to how the actions and recommendations can be taken forwards and this has been captured in an action plan supported by the Cumbria partnership. There are various strands to this which will happen through developments and collaborative conversations prompted by the increased focus on NFM within the new national investment policy. The note on the next steps and how the actions and recommendations from the conference will be taken forward can be found on the RFCC SharePoint site and the project as approved for the RFCC Business Plan is therefore now complete.

Councillor Giles Archibald enquired who is ultimately responsible for making sure actions from the conference are taken forwards. Adrian confirmed the Cumbria Partnership has a post event action plan and are keeping the RFCC updated on progress of actions.

Dave Kennedy noted a final report from the Conference has been produced and CiFR funding is being used to progress next steps, which includes a look to commission a climate change study into some of the elements highlighted at the conference. Scoping is currently taking place to clarify an affordable aim for the study.

Adrian noted if further help from the RFCC is needed then the door to the Committee is always open.

Councillor Archibald thanked Adrian for this information and noted this is his last RFCC meeting as he is stepping down from his role within the Cumbria Partnership.

Adrian noted the recommendation from the Finance Sub Group to the main Committee was to recommend to support the closure of this project, but not the actions coming out of it.

Vote: Approved: There are 13 Members in support of the closing down of the project.

There were no further comments or questions.

2026/27 Approved Local Levy Programme

Adam provided a brief summary of the £7.421 Million Local Levy programme. The allocation for 2026/27, approved by Committee in January, totals £6.197 Million and the potential Local Levy programme forecast is £9.267 Million for 2026/27. This increase is largely a result of re-profiling Local Levy from 2025/26 into 2026/27 in order to maximise GiA spend last year. An example of this is the Rochdale and Littleborough FRM Scheme and a potential re-profiling of £1.5 Million from last year into this current year.

Members were informed it is important to note that the final out-turn for both GiA and Local Levy will be confirmed in May following the annual end of year audit. This information will be reported back to the RFCC in July.

There were no further comments or questions.

Quick Wins Update

Members have previously agreed to continue to fund Quick Wins through Local Levy by providing an allocation for each of the 5 sub-regional partnerships of £160K per year for the next 3 years with some flexibility between financial years.

Adam noted as part of the review of this funding, there was a commitment to a light touch review of the guidance, reflecting the views of the group (which was made up of representatives from each partnership), to ensure it remains as flexible as possible within the funding rules. This has now been done and the guidance document is being finalised and will shortly be sent out widely for partners to refer to.

Members noted the guidance is less restrictive than previous versions. There are additional examples of work that can be funded and clarification of what cannot be funded under the current rules. A summary of Quick Win bids from the last 5 years is available on the RFCC SharePoint site so partners can see what has been delivered in other areas. The emphasis is on the partnerships to decide their local priorities and they were encouraged to continue the development of pipelines of Quick Win projects, which can be prioritised for delivery at a sub-regional level. Members noted having that pipeline programme will help support what that the future need might be for quick wins and beyond.

Resolved: The North West RFCC:

(2025/26 investment programme)

- Noted the progress on delivering the 2025/26 investment and asset maintenance programmes.

(Local Levy Programme)

- Noted the update in delivering the 2025/26 Local Levy programme
- Provided in principle support for £1.695 Million of Local Levy funding for the latter stages of the Poise Brook Flood Risk Management Strategy, subject to the scheme details to be brought back to the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group on whether sufficient contributions have been received from expected partners.
- Noted the update on the RFCC Business Plan including issues reported
- Approved the formal completion and closure of the Landscape in a Changing Climate conference (ID20) as a Business Plan action.

There were no further comments or questions.

26 (16) 2025/26 Investment Programme Update

Members received a presentation of schemes delivered over the past 12 months, along with a look to some of the investment going into schemes this coming year.

For Lancashire and Cumbria areas Richard Knight provided details on the following schemes:

- Preston and South Ribble FRMS – Phase One is completed and Phase Two commences in May 2026
- Janssen's Pool
- Fouracres Pump, Maghull
- Kendal Flood Risk Management Scheme
- River Restoration and NFM in the Kent Catchment
- Stockdale Wath
- Appleby Flood Risk Management Scheme

Councillor Giles Archibald gave thanks and expressed the community's gratitude and appreciation to the EA for their work in Kendal.

For Greater Manchester Merseyside and Cheshire area Nick Pearson provided an overview of the following schemes:

- Littleborough - Phase One completed and Phase Two in progress and due for completion towards the end of 2027.
- Hindley Flood Risk Management Scheme, proposed scheme currently in development,
- Poise Brook Flood Risk Management Scheme, proposed scheme currently in development
- LA lead Liverpool Road, Great Sankey Scheme
- Salerno Drive culvert desiltation
- Whitewell Brook NFM Work, Rossendale – delivered over the last 18 months.

With regard to coastal schemes Carl Green provided an overview of the £52 Million Wyre Beach Management Scheme and the Rossall Coastal Defence Scheme.

As an observer Councillor Gerald Mirfin enquired regarding the social value criteria and how social value policy is constructed. Carl Green noted this is part of the SCAPE Framework, which is very much aligned with the values of the Council and he noted that he will forward the information through to the Lancashire Partnership. **ACTION:** Carl Green

Councillor Alan Quinn asked if any of the funding was from the European Union Regional Development Fund and it was noted none of this funding was obtained and this has not been accessible for a number of years.

Carl highlighted the Our Future Coast project won the award for Partner Excellence at the iNetwork Innovation Awards in 2025/26.

There were no further comments or questions.

26 (17) National Coastal Adaptation Pilots Funding

Tom De La Rosa noted the Coastal Adaptation Pilots Funding (CAP funding) was announced by Minister Hardy earlier in March. This three-year initiative (2026–2029) is designed to help England's most vulnerable coastal communities prepare for the long-term impacts of coastal erosion, worsened by climate change.

The £30 Million fund is split into two parts, £18 Million to develop the Coastal Resilience Adaptation Programme in three authorities on the East coast (East Ridings, East Suffolk and North Norfolk) and £12 Million for the remaining RFCCs, indicatively split to support deprived households and communities at risk of coastal erosion. Applications for this funding are only available to coast protection authorities (CPAs) and the indicative allocation to the North West RFCC is £1.686 Million based on 3,234 households.

Adrian Lythgo noted the paper seeks to gain support for an approach to the Expression of Interest stage of the funding application, following the proposed recommendation from the Finance Sub Group, which Members are being asked to consider, noting that the agreed approach will endeavour to maximise the support and investment to the North West.

The timeline for this funding was noted as:

- 1 April 2026 – EOI application window opened and CPAs preparing and submitting pilot submissions
- 30 June 2026 – EOI window closes
- Summer / Autumn 2026 – EOI assessment period including RFCC prioritisation
- Autumn / Winter 2026 – Pilot projects announced, CAP outline business case development and approvals

Members noted there is coastal authority and coastal group engagement and webinars taking place over March to May and details of adaptation readiness actions were provided, along with an overview of the eligibility criteria, which noted that submissions must:

- be led by a Coast Protection Authority
- align with relevant Shoreline Management Plan units
- include a 10% local funding contribution
- support long term adaptation to address coastal erosion risks
- provide confidence of viability and value for money

Submissions should also target deprived communities and households.

Non-eligible activities were also outlined. Assessment and prioritisation process details were discussed, along with details of planned engagement, support available and the sequencing timeline.

As an observer Councillor Gerald Mirfin enquired about the correlation between deprivation and coastal erosion and asked if there is any information on this that can be shared. He also noted Lancaster County Council are going to be running a mini conference on the issues which affect coastal divisions and asked Tom to make contact with him outside of the meeting should he wish to attend.

Tom noted he does have some technical research publications on erosion deprivation which can be shared with Members following the meeting. He also encouraged reaching out to East Riding Council, who have an organisation within them called the Social Value Engine, who have done a lot of work on this.

With regard to deprivation Carolyn Otley asked, when it comes to assessing bids, whether it clear what geography will be used. She noted she is aware of information that presents it as a Local Authority deprivation score and has also seen information that presents it as an LSOA (Lower-layer Super Output Area) deprivation score. Carolyn highlighted that the coastal information will be on quite localised deprivation, which will have a significant impact on which projects go forward, depending on what the geography is.

Members were informed that Local Authorities are best placed to advise on this. Tom noted some initial analysis to understand the scale of the problem has just been done - the purpose of that wasn't to confirm allocations, it was to say here's what we think and how much effort you should be putting in here.

Carolyn Otley noted this is very reassuring for this piece of work, but that it leaves a big question mark about how the EA will manage the target of 20% of the funding going into the deprived areas at a national level. Tom noted that he could not speak for the wider EA targets and programmes, but as a pilot study this has a greater uncertainty and tolerance for uncertainty on how those things play out. He noted the coastal link is still in research and there are lots of gaps evidence wise, and any requirement standards being set up won't necessarily align with wider EA investment, because the nature of the programmes are very different. An overview of the discussion held at the recent Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group Meeting on Coastal Adaptation Readiness Actions was provided.

Susannah Bleakley noted there is great value in listening to each other, sharing learning and working together, which has been the very essence of work on the North West Coast and demonstrated through the work of the Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator. Members noted that through Our Future Coast, some resources have been allocated to work together and make a coordinated collaborative bid, so there's equity and understanding as this work moves forward.

Members were asked to show their support of a collaborative approach involving all of the sub-regional partnerships in identifying and ranking those projects to be put forward for consideration to the national panel, as recommended by the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group.

Vote: Approved: There were 15 Members in support.

Adrian noted the Committee will also need an approach as an RFCC to prioritise what comes after the national screening approach has taken place. He noted there are two options:

- Option 1 – For the RFCC Chair to do it in the context of knowledge of the Committee's views;
- Option 2 - For the Committee to establish a specific panel with sub-regional partnership representation (determined by sub-regional partnerships themselves).
In this case Adrian suggested the Greater Manchester partnership isn't involved simply because they don't have a coast, so representation will come from those sub regional partnerships who have a coastline.

As a meeting observer Councillor Gerald Mirfin enquired about representation from the Lancashire Partnership and Carl noted he will contact Councillor Mirfin outside of the meeting to introduce him to the Coastal Group members to build collaboration between them and the Lancashire Partnership.

Adrian asked Members to indicate their support for Option 2, to the setting up of a small group to look at the prioritisation once it comes back from national screening and by a showing of hands there were 13 Member votes in support of this.

Adrian confirmed that as a regional Committee the North West are keen that we continue the focus we have on coastal adaptation and this work is a great opportunity to do this.

There were no further comments or questions.

26 (18) RFCC Role in Co-ordination of NFM Project Development

Adrian Lythgo noted this item is to discuss a potential a role for the RFCC in the coordination of NFM (Natural Flood Management) projects as part of the new programme.

The new national funding policy for flood risk management looks to facilitate NFM projects with a lower threshold on the need for evidence on flood risk reduction, whilst also allowing direct applications for funding from any legal entity, which is a significant change.

Members were informed the full guidance is still awaited; however, it is understood that:

- Co-ordination of proposed projects between partners is not included in the initial guidance and we don't expect it to be a feature of the final guidance
- Each RFCC will have a role in screening a final list of projects
- Projects will be prioritised for funding based largely on value for money
- While projects under £3 Million will be eligible for full GIA funding, there will be competition – additional funding contributions will be taken into account within the benefit/cost prioritisation of projects and will strengthen any bids.
- Some national mapping (heat spots) has been released - the funding is not restricted to just those sites, other areas can be included but additional information on other sites will be required

Dave Kennedy and Dave Brown presented a suggested phased approach to partner engagement and collaboration. The aim of encouraging facilitation and collaboration between

RMA and NFM delivery bodies/applicants is to spread costs, develop stronger outcomes from projects (better value for money), and effectively target flood risk reduction for communities at risk. It also allows alignment with local strategic aims and direction.

For the first phase at a strategic level, EA and LLFAs will engage with partners, outlining priority areas for NFM and ensuring collaborative opportunities between RMA and wider partners are maximised. The EA and RMA can share specific flood risk information for a prioritised list of communities.

For the second phase at a catchment scale level, engagement with potential NFM deliverers/applicants via the CaBA Catchment Partnerships will take place to help aid delivery partners in applying for projects. Projects can be drawn up and a lead partner(s) determined, timescales and dependencies can be mapped out, which also provides the opportunity to involve the EA Environment Programme teams, who interface with the Catchment Partnerships to ensure that the multiple benefits are captured.

Members were informed:

- the EA can provide prioritised lists of communities at risk of flooding from rivers that are suitable for NFM by geographical area and can also assist with interpreting the NFM priority hotspots data.
- LAs can include their surface water hotspots.
- We can help develop better understanding of some of the flood risk benefits from the Multi-coloured Manual (a requirement included in the guidance).
- We can provide the latest guidance on maintenance funding requirements (which is specifically excluded from the new policy), and on landowner agreements.
- We can help with guidance on the application process.

Members noted there is no obligation for potential NFM funding applicants to be a part of this coordinated and collaborative engagement process and any legal entity can apply for NFM funding individually. However, it is recognised that collaborating at this stage in the process will greatly assist in the quality of any applications and will reduce the likelihood of multiple bids for the same locations and in addition will enhance the strength of the bids.

Clare Nolan-Barnes enquired about the licencing requirements for the use of the Multi-Coloured Manual (MCM). It was noted a licence is required to be able to access the tool the national team have developed in order to deliver this programme of work. It was advised that LAs will already have access to this tool, but that the national team are looking at providing slightly cheaper packages for some of the NGOs e.g. charities.

Aimee Brough noted she welcomed the suggestion that we join up the schemes and the applications for funding more and that in some areas, particularly Greater Manchester, have some wider stakeholder groups, who work closely with Catchment Co-ordinators and catchment partners and asked if there are any other specific stakeholder groups that already try and convene NFM that we should make a note of.

She also noted that this pot of funding is very much welcome, but will likely have to be complemented with quite a few other sources of income and revenue, which won't stretch as far as we potentially need it to to protect those communities at risk in the North West through nature-based solutions in combination with the traditional methods.

She asked how the RFCC might look at facilitating conversations with partners around wider funding, and highlighted there is already thinking about those alternative funding methods, including speaking to people like United Utilities, who already do some NFM projects, and thinking about private finance as well.

Aimee also noted there is a lot of data and analysis that's been done in places across the Northwest, but particularly in Greater Manchester that she is aware of in terms of the optimum locations for these types of interventions, considering all of the different risk factors. She noted the work of the Upper Irwell, for example, is a good example that has had the input from the universities, so this is just about factoring those into the coordination as well and see how it can be replicated across the North West.

Councillor Alan Quinn highlighted that he wished to declare his interest as being a trustee of the City of Trees.

Carl Green highlighted a lot of the work presented today aligns with the work Future Coast North West have been pushing forward on also, advising that they have engaged with Nature North to look at investable packages for NFM and similar things across that investment portfolio in order to bring in different investment monies. He noted there are some good examples of NFM in the North West including the Wyre NFM Project, which the RFCC supports and is having good results.

Councillor Philip Cusack asked whether we concentrate enough in terms of NFM on social value. He highlighted Members were talking earlier about social value provided on the schemes by contractors and wondered whether they are being encouraged to take these NFM works into account in social value in other contracts and that would involve Framework providers also. He asked if there has been any indication from the social value portal as to whether NFM can be taken into account as social value when contracts have been awarded.

Dave Brown noted an enquiry would be made with the national team to see if there is any national evidence, specifically on social value, as far as NFM is concerned, which will be reported back to the Committee.

ACTION: Dave Brown

Paul Barnes commented there is much learning to be had in the understanding of soil science and the role it can play in NFM. He noted research below the ground needs to be the focus instead of changing the topography above the ground and this could lead to a change of emphasis on who's leading and what should be being researched.

Adrian Lythgo highlighted the work is very much about carrying out NFM measures, as highlighted in the NaFRA based evidence where there is evidence about where is at risk or what's downstream of risk and therefore the understanding is to try and organise bids that are submitted to best address the risk that the national evidence supports and complement it where we can.

Kate Morley noted this is a great opportunity for Members to make the best use of the data and to really look at how we can collaborate across the board with those communities that are at risk and she fully supports the direction of travel.

By show of hands Members confirmed they are in support of the general direction of travel, whilst fully recognising that the Committee will need to receive further information about how this work will be taken forwards. Adrian highlighted the bid submission period is only two months, from 1 July until the end of August, so the more that can be done in advance of the bid period starting hopefully the better the outcome will be.

Vote: Approved: There were 13 Members in support of this.

There were no further comments or questions.

26 (19) National FCERM Strategy Refresh

Members were referred to the EA information paper provided in the meeting pack with regard to the National FCERM Strategy Refresh and Adrian provided a brief strategy overview for those Members who were not on the Committee when the current National FCERM Strategy was developed.

He noted the current FCERM Strategy hasn't been a Strategy that sits on the shelf, but has had an action plan, which has delivered a number of tangible outcomes at a national level, which has also enabled local FCRM strategies to be developed and implemented as well. Adrian noted this is something that had quite strong support from the North West RFCC at the time it was first developed and is something that he would like the Committee to feed into as this refresh that's currently underway takes place.

Adrian noted the EA has already started engaging stakeholders on this refresh and the feedback so far is that the strategy remains fit for purpose and therefore is a basis to support the vision and long-term objectives going forward as well. However, Stakeholders have already said they'd like the refresh: to consider revisiting the balance between maintaining existing and building new flood and coastal defence assets; to give a stronger focus on surface and groundwater flood risk and sustainable drainage; to look at long-term climate adaptation; to see a stronger focus on NFM and integrated water management; to look at skills and capabilities and gaps, particularly those for LAs; to consider wider social value issues to factor in growth and development, community resilience and; to have a rethink about revisiting roles and responsibilities. He noted a lot of these items are in train, which means quite a significant agenda.

He noted there are some key themes coming out from the EA nationally about what the refresh is going to consider and those items that have been selected have a close match to the themes that stakeholders have already fed back on. Members noted the broad timeframe set out for the refresh of the Strategy, which commences in April and working through into May and June, which is where the external stakeholder launch is going to take place and where evidence will start to be gathered. Members noted there is every opportunity for our sub-regions, as well as individual RMAs, to engage with that stakeholder launch.

It was noted that a number of our sub-regions are working on Integrated Water Management Plans and on NFM initiatives and other similar initiatives and Adrian highlighted it is very much worth engaging with this strategy, which runs into a public consultation next year and he welcomed comments from Members.

Carolyn Otley noted she wouldn't disagree with any of the priorities, which probably reflect things that the CiFR project has fed into. She noted this might be moving more into implementation than the strategy refresh itself, but it's worth highlighting that in order to achieve a lot of those shifts rely on revenue funding and a more flexible approach, which don't necessarily fit well into the current capital funding model and she commented that she is not sure this issue is being addressed. She also noted of her concern that the EA is only willing to think about flood risk when it talks about community resilience and highlighted from experience it's much easier to keep communities engaged if we're talking to them about all kinds of risks.

Mandie Shilton Godwin raised her concern about the Stakeholder Engagement webinars taking place on 8 May, which is the day after the Local Elections taking place and that there will be a significant group of people who will be unable to be involved and asked if there will be any ongoing opportunities for people to get involved. It was agreed that this will be looked into outside of the meeting and an update will be sent to Members. **ACTION:** Rachel Harmer

There were no further comments or questions.

26 (20) RFCC Meeting and Workshop – 10th July 2026

Adrian referred to a recent email sent to Members confirming the plans for the July RFCC meeting and workshop, which is to have a short business meeting, predominantly based on decisions the Committee needs to take and then to move into a workshop which will continue into the afternoon and provide the opportunity to take stock on the new funding guidance, how it works and to revisit how we want to work in the North West to optimise our investment going forwards and the things the Committee wishes to collaborate on.

He noted this meeting will also provide the platform for the Chairmanship of the Committee to be handed over to Councillor Elizabeth Grey and it is envisaged that Adrian will open the meeting, be involved in it and the discussion in terms of action planning alongside Councillor Grey. Members and support officers were encouraged to make time to attend this day, which can also be used as a launching off point into how the Committee resets the Business Plan going forwards and Adrian asked Members to make every effort to attend.

There were no further comments or questions.

26 (21) Any Other Business

Adrian gave further thanks to Paul Barnes for his significant contribution to the Committee since 2017. He noted Paul was very much involved on a community level at the time of Storm Desmond whilst being a practising farmer and has been very engaged in land management aspects of the Committee's business and made a very real contribution to the Committee. It was recognised that Paul may still wish to attend the next RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group meeting in June, as it is still within his term of Membership, but this will be his last RFCC Meeting.

There were no further comments or questions.

Adrian thanked Members for their attendance and the meeting was closed.

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE

10 JULY 2026

**UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM THE
NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 24 APRIL 2026**

	ACTION/ MATTER ARISING	ACTION TAKEN
	2026/27 Investment Programme Update	
1.	With regard to the funding prioritisation approach, Councillor Mandie Shilton Godwin asked about non-monetised benefits, and how these are monetised, including things like carbon sequestration, improved soil health, or improved biodiversity and taken into account in the funding prioritisation.	More details of this will be provided within the July workshop and further information/ briefings can be provided going forwards.
2	As an observer, Councillor Gerald Mirfin enquired about social value and how social value is constructed.	Information on social value in procurement in a Lancashire local authority and EA context has been shared with the Lancashire Partnership.
	RFCC Role in the Co-ordination of Project Delivery	
3.	Councillor Philip Cusack asked whether we concentrate enough in terms of NFM on social value. He wondered whether contractors are being encouraged to take these NFM works into account in social value in other contracts and that would involve Framework providers also. He asked if there has been any indication from the social value portal as to whether NFM can be taken into account as social value when contracts have been awarded. Dave Brown noted an enquiry would be made with the EA national team to see if there is any national evidence, specifically on social value, as far as NFM is concerned, which will be reported back to the Committee.	An action was taken away to check with EA National colleagues on the EA position (Still ongoing)
	AOB	
4.	Councillor Mandie Shilton Godwin raised her concern about the stakeholder engagement webinars on the National FCERM Strategy taking place on 8 May, which is the day after the local elections taking place and that there will be a significant group of people who will be unable to be involved and asked if there will be any ongoing opportunities for people to get involved. It was agreed that this will be looked into outside of the meeting and an update will be sent to Members.	The link to the recorded webinar was emailed out the RFCC Members and support officers on 29th May and is detailed below: The site can be found here: <u>Refreshing the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) for England Engage Environment Agency</u>

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE

Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group

Draft minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2026

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

Attendees:

Terri McMillan (Chair)	RFCC Member – General Business and Assurance
Adrian Lythgo	NW RFCC Chairman
Cllr Bob Kelly	RFCC Member – Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Cllr Ashley Whalley	RFCC Member – Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Cllr Philip Cusack	RFCC Member – Gtr Manchester Strategic Flood Risk P'ship
Cllr Alan Quinn	RFCC Member – Gtr Manchester Strategic Flood Risk P'ship
Cllr Mandie Shilton Godwin	RFCC Member – Gtr Manchester Strategic Flood Risk P'ship
Cllr Tony Brennan	RFCC Member - Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Cllr Max Booth	RFCC Member – Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Cllr Sam Naylor	RFCC Member – Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic FR P'ship
Carolyn Otley	RFCC Member – Communities
Susannah Bleakley	RFCC Member – Coastal Issues
Amy Cooper	RFCC Member – Water and Sewerage Industry
Carl Green	Chair of the North West and North Wales Coastal Group
Nick Pearson	Officer - EA Area Flood Risk Manager, Greater Manchester
Adam Walsh	Officer - EA FCRM Programming Manager, Cumbria & Lancs (C&L)
Andy Tester	Officer – EA FCRM Programming Manager, Greater Manchester Merseyside and Cheshire (GMMC)
Sally Whiting	Officer – EA FCRM Senior RFCC Advisor , GMMC
Paul Bowden	Officer - EA Ops Local Delivery Lead, GMMC
Kate Pimlott	Officer - EA Ops Local Delivery Lead, C&L
Sarah Fontana	Officer – EA FCRM LAPs Co-ordinator
Rachel Harmer	RFCC Secretariat

Support Officers/Observers:

Ali Harker	Co-ordinator - Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Rebecca James	Officer – Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Andrew Harrison	Officer – Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Karl Melville	Officer Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Nick Rae	Officer – Cumbria Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Cllr Gerald Mirfin	Lancashire County Council
Rachel Crompton	Officer – Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Lorah Cheyne	Co-ordinator - Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Cllr Elizabeth Grey	Wirral Council
Sarah Wardle	Co-ordinator – Merseyside Strategic Flood Risk Partnership
Jill Holden	Co-ordinator – Greater Manchester Combined Authority
Thomas Mawdsley	Officer – Greater Manchester Combined Authority
Clare Nolan-Barnes	Officer – Blackpool Council
Matt Winnard	Officer - Cheshire Mid Mersey Partnership
Guy Metcalfe	Officer – Cheshire Mid Mersey Partnership
Sarah Parkington	Officer – Rochdale Borough Council
Elizabeth Griffin-Bennett	Officer - EA Commercial Business Relationship Manager
Crystal Orton	Officer - EA FCRM Advisor, GMMC

Steve Bassett
Paul Cobbing
Paul O'Hare

Officer – EA FCRM Directorate, PPD North
Resilient Roch Project Consultant
Manchester Metropolitan University

Presenters:

Katie Eckford Officer – North West SMP Co-ordinator
Dave Kennedy EA FCRM Senior Advisor, C&L
Fran Comyn Officer - Rochdale Borough Council

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Terri McMillan opened the meeting and welcomed all those in attendance.

Terri advised apologies had been received from: Cllr Jane Hugo (Lancashire Strategic Flood Risk Partnership); Cllr Mark Goldsmith (Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Flood Risk Partnership); Chris Findley (RFCC Member – Planning and Development); Ian Crewe, EA Area Director (GMMC); Fiona Duke, EA Area Flood Risk Manager, Lancashire; and Mary-Rose Muncaster, EA Area Flood Risk Manager, Merseyside.

We noted and accepted the correctly nominated substitutes of:

- Clare Nolan-Barnes on behalf of Cllr Jane Hugo for the Lancashire Partnership
- Guy Metcalfe on behalf of Cllr Mark Goldsmith for the Cheshire Mid Mersey Partnership

Cllr Max Booth and Cllr Ashley Whalley were welcomed to their first RFCC Finance Sub Group Meeting.

2. Feedback from the RFCC Meeting on 24 April 2026 and actions since

Terri noted the key decisions from the 24 April 2026 RFCC meeting, following recommendations from the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group on 10 April, where the RFCC:

(2025/26 investment programme)

- Noted the progress on delivering the 2025/26 investment and asset maintenance programmes.

(Local Levy Programme)

- Noted the update in delivering the 2025/26 Local Levy programme
- Provided in principle support for £1.695 Million of Local Levy funding for the latter stages of the Poise Brook Flood Risk Management Strategy, subject to the scheme details to be brought back to the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub Group on whether sufficient contributions have been received from expected partners.
- Noted the update on the RFCC Business Plan including issues reported
- Approved the formal completion and closure of the Landscape in a Changing Climate conference (ID20) as a Business Plan action.

We noted the following actions have/ are being made following discussion at the 24 April RFCC Meeting:

(2026/27 Investment Programme Update)

Cllr Shilton Godwin asked how wider benefits are monetised and taken into account in the funding prioritisation.

- More details on this will be provided through the July workshop and further briefing/information can be provided as required going forwards.

(2025/26 Investment Programme Update)

Cllr Mirfin asked about social value and how social value policy is constructed.

- Information on social value in procurement in a Lancashire local authority and EA context has been shared with the Lancashire Partnership.

(RFCC Role in the co-ordination of NFM Project Delivery)

Cllr Cusack asked about whether NFM delivered as part of flood risk schemes can be taken into account as social value when contracts/frameworks are awarded.

- An action was taken away to check with EA National colleagues on the EA position (Still ongoing)

There were no further comments or questions.

3. Investment Programme Update 2025/26

2025/26 Outturn

Andy Tester reported that, over the five-year programme (2021/22–2025/26), the North West delivered 17,026 properties better protected, representing approximately 11% of the national total. Around 10% of the programme was funded through partnership contributions and £24.8 million of efficiency savings was achieved, against a target of £50.5 million.

A summary of the 2025/26 outturn position was presented. Financial performance was strong, with approximately 93% of the allocation (£125.5 million) spent, resulting in an underspend of £9.8 million. The programme was managed with caution throughout the year, starting with a minimal over programme. A key reason for the underspend was due to maximising drawdown of GiA funding, where there was an underspend nationally, and pushing Levy contributions back to subsequent years.

In terms of outcomes, the North West performed well against the properties better protected target by achieving 118% of the target. Three schemes together reduced the flood risk to 5,795 properties which equates to around 97% of the total in 2025/26.

2026/27 Overview

Andy highlighted that 2026/27 is the first year of a new 3-year programme. The total funding available (Total Project Expenditure (TPE)) for the North West is £170 Million for 2026/27. At this early stage we are forecasting a spend around £164 Million, which is approximately £6 Million or 3.5% below the allocation. The primary reason for that is an earlier than planned claim of £5 Million for the Wyre Beach Management Scheme in 2025/26, which was an opportunity to accelerate spending on that project and supported the national underspend last year.

Andy reported that we don't yet have a 2026/27 target for properties better protected, but this should be made available shortly. The outcome metrics from the investment programme are

changing to capture 'properties benefitting'. In this transitional year, locally we will continue to report properties 'better protected' whilst at a national level, they will convert this into 'properties benefitting'.

The North West is forecasting to better protect just under 9,000 properties better protected through 26 schemes in 2026/27. During the first two months of the financial year, 6,769 properties had already been reported.

Adrian Lythgo highlighted the changes in targets associated with the old and the new programmes. He noted that some Committee members who have been on the Committee for a long time will know that properties better protected was the primary metric for the old programme, and that was based on moving properties between risk bands. Under the new policy, those risk bands are not part of the metrics. The new metric is about properties benefitting, which will broadly mean that more properties are counted as having had benefit from flood investment than previously. Previously you could spend quite a lot of money and reduce the risk but not shift properties between risk bands. Under the new metric, any benefit to a property will be counted.

As a meeting observer, Cllr Mirfin asked what the word 'better' means in 'better protected' and if this is associated with the lower bands of the risk profile. Adrian Lythgo advised this further information can be provided on this, including at the July workshop, but that we should be focussed on the new metric going forwards.

With regard to risks to the investment programme, we noted:

- spending this year is expected to be lower than planned
- this is a transition year – finishing the current 5-year programme and starting a new 3-year plan
- new funding rules and priorities may impact what we can deliver

These risks are in addition to the ever-present risks such as poor weather and poor ground conditions leading to delays on the ground and the possibility of having to divert resources to incident response.

Asset Maintenance Programme

2025/26

Paul Bowden advised the overall North West end of year spend for 2025/26 was £15.231 Million against a forecast of £14.544 Million. He provided this broken down by the two EA Areas of Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire, and Cumbria and Lancashire. These figures are yet to be ratified, but are in line with the EA's national steer at the end of the 2025/26 financial year, where there was a national underspend which areas were encouraged to spend.

2026/27

We noted the asset maintenance allocation for 2026/27 and the split between routine maintenance and asset projects.

Paul highlighted some choices made in both areas through the EA Local Choices exercise to move funding into undertaking maintenance work, away from projects, due to a number of reasons. An example was provided for Atherton Spillway, where this work was completed via a different route, enabling the funding to be re-allocated.

Paul provided an overview of the full year forecast and actual spends to date. He reported that at present it is assumed that areas will be held to their budgets and both areas are on track with spend and also to deliver their maintenance programmes.

As a meeting observer Cllr Mirfin asked why the information was split into GMMC and Cumbria and Lancashire areas. Paul explained that this reflects the EA operational area structure but that the information can be split by local authority areas. He said this is possible however this information is shown split by how the EA areas are set up.

Kate Pimlott, who has recently taken over from Nikki Beale as the EA Operations Local Delivery Lead for Cumbria and Lancashire Area provided an overview of C&L's performance against the visual asset condition inspections that have taken place. We noted the Area is on track to complete the assigned number of inspections and understand that the target this year will be 97%, which is the same target as for the 2025/26 year.

With regard to Below Required Condition (BRC) assets (EA maintained assets), the national target has increased from 92% to 93% for the high consequence systems. No individual Area targets have been set yet. C&L Areas show an in-year reduction of 15% in BRC assets in High-Consequence systems, with GMMC Area seeing a slight increase of 2%.

With regard to third party assets which are below required condition, there is a 7% decrease in C&L Area, but with an increase of 28% in High Consequence Systems, and GMMC Area shows an increase of 7% overall, and a 4% increase in High Consequence Systems.

With regard to the information provided Cllr Shilton Godwin raised her concern about the Below Required Condition assets in that some of the numbers look quite high and questioned whether this means that assets are not maintained to a sufficient standard to keep people in their homes and their areas safe.

Kate Pimlott advised that this does not mean that the asset is going to fail imminently, but that assets are graded to ensure that we are considering the deterioration timescales, so that we are able to catch potential issues early and to put steps in place to increase that assets condition.

Adrian Lythgo advised the workshop will have a specific section on asset refurbishment, not least because not all riparian owned assets are on the EA database. He advised the current reported figures are not necessarily the complete picture, but will be part of the workshop discussion.

Cllr Mirfin enquired about an item at a previous meeting on work that is being done around mapping of assets and asked if there were any updates on this work. Adrian Lythgo advised that related to a Business Plan project and can be covered under the RFCC Business Plan item later in the meeting.

We were provided with photos of some of the maintenance activities taking place across the North West, including vegetation management and debris removal from watercourses all of which have the capacity to cause blockages and then flooding.

Cllr Mirfin asked if the information on the fallen tree removal in Clitheroe can be provided to the Lancashire Strategic Partnership. Kate confirmed that this will be actioned.

In terms of the asset maintenance programme for this year, Paul reported that Local Choices have been completed, work orders have been uploaded, and the programme is due to be published by the EA nationally on .gov.uk shortly.

Stagnant budgets this year will result in a reduction on what can be delivered compared to last year. EA maintained flood defence assets, reservoirs and public safety will be prioritised.

The nationally set target for BRC assets is 93%. This is an increase of 1% on last year. No individual Area targets have been published yet however with insufficient capital funding this year it will be extremely difficult to deliver and there is a high risk of this target not being reached.

Andy Tester then summarised the combined (capital and resource) allocations for 2026/27 of £184.9 Million.

The Subgroup noted the 2025/26 outturn reports and noted the updates on delivering the 2026/27 programmes.

There were no further comments or questions.

4. New Funding Policy and Guidance

Adrian Lythgo opened the item which is to provide a brief overview of the changes in funding policy and guidance. He acknowledged the large amount of information and guidance being provided to risk management authorities (RMAs) currently. This item is an introduction with a view to discussing them in much more detail at the July workshop, where there is the intention to drill into some of the practical implications and to think about what it is that we as a Committee need to do differently as a result of the changes in policy and guidance.

Nick Pearson provided a brief overview of the need for the policy reform which included: growing flood and coastal risks, aging infrastructure challenges, and limitations of previous funding models. The 2025 Policy reform simplifies the rules, increases transparency and speeds decision making for better risk reduction.

Headline funding rules and practical implications of these were shared, along with the detail of how projects will be prioritised. Nick referenced the commitment to greater investment in natural flood management (NFM) where non-risk management authorities (e.g. landowners and charities) can now directly bid for funding and lead NFM projects. The aim is that NFM is a fully integral part of the national investment programme and not a marginal addition as it may have been considered previously.

Nick highlighted the NW RFCC Tailored Guidance which had been shared recently. This, along with some changes to the allocation process, strengthen the RFCC role in decision making, focussing on early project shaping and prioritisation, particularly around those projects at an early stage of development.

Nick summarised the key messages within the RFCC Tailored Guidance on how the investment programme could evolve and be strengthened over the next 10 years - more investment in refurbishing existing assets, surface water flood risk, and NFM, with reduced investment in engineered schemes. This highlights the areas of opportunity for the North West.

The RFCC's role will be to encourage project submissions and in a November meeting, the RFCC will discuss the longlist projects to review and shortlist opportunities. The November discussion will remove unviable projects based on the new strategic objectives and will help to secure local funding contributions, including provision of Local Levy. The RFCC will agree an eligible shortlist by January 2027 and projects will be prioritised and allocated funding by February 2027. We noted that a lot of the funding within the programme is already allocated to projects in construction, so it may take a couple of years for new projects steered by the new policy to come into fruition.

Adrian Lythgo reminded Members of their previous response to the Government's consultation on the funding policy which emphasised the desire for RFCCs to have more local choice in what was quite a nationally driven system. He highlighted the enhanced formal role for the RFCC in prioritising projects, which have already been screened for basic eligibility and data quality by the EA nationally. He remarked that even though this is to be welcomed, it is also fair to say that it doesn't meet the level of ambition that the Committee had in responding to the Government consultation paper, but to a degree, that's now academic because the new policy has arrived and is in.

Nick reported that the EA nationally have made tools and guidance available which use the best available and consistent data, and the RFCC tailored guidance reflects what the data indicates in terms of evolving composition of the investment programme.

Adrian highlighted that while the application windows for this year feel very short, we have got longer than you might think to think about how we operationalise what we do under the new policy, because the vast majority of this year's and indeed next year's programme will still be dedicated to investment that's already in progress.

There were no further comments or questions.

5. Investment Programme - Planning and Allocation Process for 2027/28, including the role for RFCCs

Andy Tester provided some more detail on the planning and allocation process for 2027/28 (previously known as the 'programme refresh').

He reported that the process is made up of three components, which have some phases within them.

- Component 1 is ongoing in-construction schemes which form the majority of the 2026/27 programme
- Component 2 is made-up of two phases.
 - Component 2 Phase 1 is for schemes that are not yet in construction, and are already in development, which strongly align with new funding policy objectives and that need funding in 2027/28.
 - Component 2 Phase 2 is for schemes that have a strong alignment to the new funding policy and strategic direction, but don't require any allocation in 2027/28.
- Component 3 is for the new opportunities for projects, so not yet either in our pipeline or within our systems to progress. There will be an early opportunity for applications this year but funding will be very limited for a couple of years and there will be ongoing opportunity to apply for funding.

Andy reported that there are 33 schemes in construction across the North West which will form Component One.

Andy also presented the timeline for the planning and allocations process. He highlighted that we will continue to see short term funding challenges as the construction schemes start to conclude, but noted there is also an opportunity to look at the benefits and opportunities provided by the longer term planning now intended. As the current 3-year programme becomes more strongly set within the context of the 10-year national infrastructure strategy programme, there is a real opportunity for us to locally shape the future programme.

The Subgroup noted the outline process and timeline of the planning and allocation process for 2027/28.

There were no further comments or questions.

6. Local Levy Strategy Refresh

Adrian Lythgo opened to emphasise the scale of change in national policy and guidance and what that might mean for North West flood investment and increasing flood resilience. He reflected that our Local Levy Strategy was designed under the old funding policy, so now needs to be reviewed. A discussion on this will be held at our July workshop. He again acknowledged the tightness of the funding application windows this year (1 July until end of August) and the concerns around this, reiterating that if RMAs are unable to meet those windows, there will be further opportunities for new projects will be considered for funding the following year. He confirmed the Local Levy Strategy update will be looking at the year 2027/28 and beyond.

Sally Whiting provided a brief history of the Local Levy Strategy and a summary of what it contains i.e. aims and principles, guidelines on scale of Levy contributions, expectations on projects and project leads. It also makes provision for Quick Win funding for each of the sub-regional partnerships and the need for additional capacity and innovative approaches not covered by the conventional funding sources, enabled through the RFCC Business Plan.

Cllr Quinn commented on the value of Local Levy funding over the years in enabling flood schemes, he shared his concern about the reducing balance, alongside a maintained or increased demand. He would like to see a good conversation at the July workshop about funding the Local Levy pot going forwards.

As an observer, Cllr Mirfin commented on the timing of the RFCC workshop in July, just before announcements on Local Government Reform and the shape of the unitary authorities in early – mid July, given that this will change the whole context of the Local Levy within Lancashire.

Sally Whiting explained the need for a workshop now given the new funding policy having been implemented, and the application windows opening now, remarking that we want to make sure that the RFCC and its partnerships are in the best position possible to start working with that. She advised the July workshop will only very much be the beginning of the conversation and there's going to be a need to drill into aspects of the programme further and how the partnerships can effectively support its development. We expect there will be a need to follow up the workshop with many more conversations over the coming years.

Sally then reflected the likely ongoing need for Local Levy to support pipeline development given that resources and capacity within the EA and Local Authorities remain very limited. It is likely to require stronger collaboration at partnership level working with existing or newly formed Combined

Authorities and taking account of that Local Government Review (LGR) and sub-regional structures in the wider water management landscape. Sally reflected that while the national investment guidance is guidance and not set in stone, we will probably be more likely to secure investment if our proposals are aligning with those national strategic objectives.

Members noted the need for and the intention to refresh the Local Levy Strategy over the next few months, to keep this in mind during upcoming strategic discussions, and to contribute to the refresh through the opportunities mentioned

There were no further comments or questions.

5. Local Levy Programme Update

Andy Tester provided a summary of the Local Levy expenditure for 2025/26 and highlighted the top Local Levy spending projects.

We expect a final outturn spend of £5.7 Million against the £9.345 Million Local Levy allocation (62%) in 2025/26. This reduced by £2.9 Million to that reported in January, mainly a result of maximising Grant in Aid funding and re-profiling Local Levy contributions into future years for a number of projects.

Andy reported a Local Levy fund at the start of the 2026/27 year of £15.5 Million (made up of £10.461 Million in balances, £200k in interest earned on balances and £4.821 Million in Local Levy income). The approved programme for 2026/27 shows a forecast spend of £8.256 Million.

The Subgroup noted the update on the Local Levy programme.

Local Levy Funding Request – Hindley, Platt Bridge and Abram Flood Risk Management Scheme

Nick Pearson provided an overview of this scheme, which sits in the Makerfield constituency. He highlighted the numbers of properties previously affected by flooding, the high levels of deprivation of the areas covered.

He reported on the partnership working ongoing between the EA, Wigan Borough Council, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and United Utilities (UU) to develop an approach to managing flood risk from all sources in an integrated way, as part of the Greater Manchester Integrated Water Management plan (GMIWMP). This has seen a new 'sprint' approach since the New Year's Day flooding of 2025, which has seen the partnership, along with the local Flood Action Groups, develop an action plan capturing a range of measures to increase flood resilience (e.g. improved flood warning, measures to reduce flood risk from surface water, and implement Natural Flood Management (NFM) proposals). The EA-led Hindley, Platt Bridge and Abram Flood Risk Scheme will reduce the risk of river flooding and is a key part of that plan.

Nick presented the broad timeline for the scheme with selection of a preferred option in summer 2026, outline business case submission by Spring 2027, and construction from 2030 to 2034.

He summarised the wide range of options being considered, the estimated costs of circa £40 Million and benefits of around £100 Million.

In terms of funding, the scheme can attract 90% FDGIA for costs over £3 Million, so for a £40 Million scheme that would equate to £36.3 Million. The EA has been working closely with Wigan Borough Council and Greater Manchester Combined Authority to identify funding opportunities. Although it is too early to secure legally binding commitments, Wigan Borough Council have provided a letter of intent to express their intent to contribute £3 Million to the scheme. The exact figure and how this will be provided will depend on the option chosen. The EA will also be talking to other beneficiaries like UU, Home Bargains and Iceland to explore further contributions.

Cllr Shilton Godwin highlighted she had discussed this request with the Greater Manchester Partnership including leaders from other authorities and there was strong support for this scheme to go ahead.

Cllr Cusack echoed this with his support, asking if the £3 Million contribution from Wigan Borough Council includes Section 106 contributions. Nick Pearson advised he will look into this and provide the information to the Greater Manchester Partnership. **ACTION:** Nick Pearson

Cllr Quinn again remarked on the increasing frequency of named storms, the evidence of a changing climate, the ongoing demand for and the importance of Local Levy funding, noting that he is happy to support this funding request.

Cllr Kelly commented to recognise that the need for this scheme is without question, along with the need to plan and have commitments of money, but he expressed a concern about the lack of visibility of other potential needs and subsequent requests for funding. He wanted to better understand the meaning of an 'in principle' request for funding.

Adrian Lythgo responded that an 'in principle' agreement to support a scheme with Local Levy will allow partners to progress to the next stage of the business case, and when the costs and contribution needs for the scheme are firmed up, the project will be brought back to the Committee for further approval. It is at that point that the Committee will be approving an agreed sum of Local Levy funding and that will be in two or three years time when there will be greater clarity on the broader demand from other schemes. This is in line with the discussion and agreement for the Poise Brook scheme discussed at the last meeting.

The Subgroup voted in favour of recommending for RFCC approval the in principle allocation of £2 Million of Local Levy funding from 2031 for the Hindley, Platt Bridge and Abram Flood Risk Management schemes.

There were 12 votes in support.

Votes in favour:

Cllr Kelly, Cllr Shilton Godwin, Cllr Cusack, Cllr Quinn, Cllr Booth, Cllr Brennan, Clare Nolan-Barnes, Cllr Naylor, Guy Metcalfe, Carolyn Otley, Susannah Bleakley and Amy Cooper.

We recommend the RFCC:

- **notes the update and progress on delivering the 2025/26 Local Levy programme and forecasts**
- **approves the recommendation from the RFCC F&BASG to provide in principle support for the allocation of £2 Million from 2031 for the Hindley, Platt Bridge and Abram Flood Risk Management Scheme**

There were no further comments or questions.

6. RFCC Business Plan Update

Sally provided a reminder of the purpose of the RFCC's Business Plan and reported overall good progress with 10 projects complete, 1 is proposed for closure, 8 on track and 4 behind schedule (Amber rated). This is the same as last quarters report, with the addition of the project closure proposal, but there is good progress being made on addressing the issues to get the amber rated projects back on track.

We noted the approved allocation of £1.247 Million, with the actual spend being £1.1 Million. The approved allocation for RFCC Business Plan projects in 2026/27, approved by the RFCC in January, is circa £1.544 Million and the forecast spend is £1.4 Million. She reported the future investment needs of ongoing and high priority projects, with a small proportion currently contractually committed.

She provided brief updates on addressing issues with the four Amber rated projects. Three relate to the community flood resilience support (Projects 5A, 6 and 7) for which an open market tender process is in progress to select the future supplier, being led by Greater Manchester Combined Authority. This is progressing well with received tenders currently being evaluated and we remain on track to have a new contract in place by end of July 2026 and the service will then resume. In the interim, the Flood Hub website remains live but dormant with alternative contact and community communications mechanisms in place.

With regard to the NFM Pipeline for Cumbria (ID22) the project has been re-scoped taking account of developments and tools elsewhere in the country, and the new national investment policy which has brought significant changes to NFM funding arrangements and delivery mechanisms. To maximise opportunities, allow more flexibility and support research outputs, the project will use the EA's research framework and bring together Local Levy with CiFR funding. The procurement and financial approaches to establishing the project have been quite complex and are still ongoing, ensuring that the contract and supplier are appropriate, and the funding sources combined. Work will commence in 2026/27.

One project is being proposed for closure today – Coastal Centre of Excellence Business Case Development – (ID17). This project received £25K of Local Levy to further engage with partners and to further explore the appetite for, benefits of, and potential form of a centre of excellence focussing on the coast. A specialist facilitation partner, Icarus, was used to lead this work alongside the Regional Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator and this stage of work and funding has now concluded and a final report has been produced, however work to develop Future Coast North West will continue. Sally handed over to Carl Green, Katie Eckford and Susannah Bleakley to present on the findings, outputs and next steps from this project.

Scoping a Coastal Centre of Excellence – Project Update

Carl Green thanked the RFCC for their support in progressing this crucial piece of work to explore region-wide coordinated coastal management, which has now evolved from the Centre of Coastal Excellence, whose focus was primarily on evidence building, stakeholder engagement and testing delivery models. We noted this project ran from June 2025 to February 2026 and involved engaging coastal authorities and key stakeholders across the North West, whose work has helped create the foundations for a long-term regional partnership, which is continuing to work towards.

Katie Eckford highlighted this project began initially as an idea called the Centre of Coastal Excellence, which evolved from the RFCCs initial Vision in 2020, focusing on sharing skills, capacity and resource, and how that could be delivered in practice. The work has now been completed and given a clear foundation to move forward with the next steps of the Central Coastal Excellence, which is now renamed to Future Coast Northwest.

We noted the Vision for Future Coast North West is really about making things happen on the North West Coast and includes:

- The acceleration of delivery through collaboration & shared expertise
- The provision of shared expertise and practical support
- Building capacity, capability & confidence
- Enabling resilient coastal places
- Bringing additional resources into the North West

Katie advised that through the scoping work it was noted there are lots of plans, but not enough resources, skills or capacity to progress on delivery. One of the main solutions is to have a small core team that can support local authorities, which would help people work together better and share knowledge, so everyone isn't tackling the same problems separately, which will become more important as authorities start to deal with new challenges such as managed realignment and long-term adaptation. Future Coast NW is therefore about providing practical support and building capacity, so projects can move forward and deliver.

Katie reported on the approach taken by the project and the engagement that has taken place and the eight pilot workstreams, which are testing collaboration in practice. Together, the pilots which are already attracting funding and building momentum, show that a coordinated regional approach can move from ideas to delivery — and importantly, they create a clear pipeline of work that is ready for future investment.

Susannah Bleakley advised the regional pipeline development came out clearly as the strongest shared priority. The Shoreline Management Plan is a live document, they have the Our Future Coast Feasibility Studies, the Morecambe Bay Strategy and Adaptive Planning work, that's all underway, which if developed and analysed will help us to build a pipeline of work, which can then be matched to differing funding opportunities and delivered in a phased way. It is hoped that there will be success with the national Coastal Adaptation Pilot funding, and if so, that will become one of the key building blocks for Future Coast North West in terms of securing resources, and enable structures to put in place.

We noted there will be an ask for Local Levy support later in the year, which will be used as 10% match funding for the Coastal Adaptation Pilot, which would enable a huge amount of money to be levered into the North West for much better coastal management in the future.

Sally Whiting thanked them for their presentation.

To provide a forward look on the Business Plan, Sally highlighted two things. The first is a review, starting now, of the resource, support and capacity being provided through the Business Plan, either to the partnerships themselves, to the RFCC, or to the local authorities in helping them to deliver their programmes. All of this funding is approved until March 2027. The review will be informed by discussions at the July workshop and there will be a questionnaire circulated immediately after the workshop to feedback your experiences and views.

Secondly, Sally highlighted that there have been three projects in the North West which have received significant national funding from the Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme (FCRIP) over recent years - Our Future Coast, Resilient Roch (Rochdale) and the CiFR Project (Cumbria). The FCRIP funding also comes to an end in March and so all three projects are working hard on their legacy, and capturing all of that learning and legacy, what can be embedded as part of business as usual, and they are all likely to be seeking some Local Levy support to retain critical resources going forward. We noted these are not formal Local Levy asks being made today - these will be brought back to the RFCC in October – but the projects would each provide a brief summary of their anticipated Local Levy request today.

Our Future Coast

Carl Green provided a brief overview of the headline achievements from the project and Carl reported there is now a proven way of working, with the tools and experience to scale this work up across the region. They are bidding for Coastal Adaptation Pilot funding which will allow us to widen the scope to the estuaries, including the Mersey Estuary. He provided a summary of actions to build on the Our Future Coast project and to scale it up further. The next step is to build on the previous work, retaining the skills and capability we've developed, and continuing to support local authorities, especially where there are gaps in capacity or more complex challenges, like managed realignment and adaptation.

Carl advised reported that they are looking to do this through the Coastal Adaptation Pilots funding. If successful, it would allow the scaling up of work already started, using the same tools, templates and approaches, along with established ways of working and a core team to support delivery.

The Local Levy ask will be to provide the 10% match funding required for the Coastal Adaptation Pilots funding, for which the bid is anticipated to be for around £1.6 Million.

CiFR (Cumbria Innovative Flood Resilience)

Dave Kennedy provided the headlines for the CiFR project, primarily focused on inland natural flood management (NFM) and community resilience, which has concentrated on those communities that have a significant flood history and are very unlikely to get a capital FRM scheme, whose options now are largely Property Flood Resilience (PFR) measures or NFM or a combination ideally of both.

In the process of delivering this work there have been significant benefits provided by having a trusted intermediary in place between the EA and landowners, such as a representative from Natural England, who provides support, advice and access to funding for landowners, but without the negative perceptions of approaches from the EA which is also a regulator. The project has funded and successfully used Farming and Community Officers (a CiFR project-dedicated and targeted version of a Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer), hosted by Natural England, to achieve a much higher conversion rate of landowners wanting to do NFM. The ability to leverage funding through Natural England and DEFRA for countryside stewardship and SFI, remains critical as there is still no funding for maintenance of NFM assets, potentially a significant blocker to funding NFM projects through the new funding policy.

Dave Kennedy summarised that the project will be seeking Local Levy support for 3 years of funding for:

- 1 FTE Farming and Community Officer, employed by Natural England at a cost of £66-69k pa (including on costs and inflation)

- Funding pot for NFM “quick wins” to maintain landowner support whilst main FCERM funding bid developed at a cost of £32k pa (including management costs)

This represents a total Local Levy ask of £298,295k

We noted Westmorland and Furness Council will manage the funding and the role will be able to share NFM learning from the CiFR project across the North West.

Resilient Roch

Fran Comyn advised the RFCC has previously supported the Rochdale Flood Poverty Project, which has been the first real deep dive into the causes, challenges and realities of achieving flood resilience in disadvantaged communities. The project has been nationally and internationally recognised, and its recommendations have informed the FCRIP-funded Resilient Roch project.

The Resilient Roch Project has generated extensive national and international recognition across sectors including flood resilience, insurance, housing and community engagement through its ongoing work in the local community. Project case studies have been produced and shared and the project has delivered one of the largest PFR programmes in the UK.

As the end of the PFR Project is approaching there are more than 260 properties with PFR measures, which provides a real opportunity to look at aftercare, future engagement and the piloting of new ideas going forwards, which is a stage of the PFR journey not currently understood.

Future work will include:

- The gathering and dissemination of learning and best practice from the PFR aftercare package
- Supporting local authorities in developing PFR programmes
- Supporting the development of a NW pipeline of projects

Which will:

- enable PFR post installation support and financial resilience work
- share lessons learned from the tailored engagement approach
- amplify relationships with community flood champions, communities and key community organisations to support the project

With regard to financial resilience, there will be dissemination of the insurance model in conjunction with the British Insurance Brokers Associated (BIBA) in the North West. There will be the ability to use this Rochdale-based project as a testbed for social justice elements of Flood Performance Certificates with Flood Re, regionally and nationally; for the social housing initiative with Flood Re to improve tenant financial resilience; and for insurance survey data led exploration of targeted interventions.

Fran also touched on outputs and planned deliverables, and summarised that the project looks to place the North West RFCC at the front of innovation and development of good practice for PFR. There is a large body of local evidence to support new projects and inform the future development of the RFCC Business Plan.

The sub group voted in favour of the closure of the Coastal Centre of Excellence Business Case Development Project (ID17).

There were 10 votes in support.

Votes in favour:

Cllr Kelly, Cllr Shilton Godwin, Cllr Quinn, Cllr Cusack, Cllr Naylor, Guy Metcalfe, Cllr Brennan, Cllr Booth, Carolyn Otley and Susannah Bleakley.

The Subgroup recommend that the RFCC:

- **Notes the RFCC Business Plan update, including the issues reported.**
- **Formally acknowledges the completion of the Coastal Centre of Excellence – Business case development (ID17) project**
- **Notes the forward look and keeps potential Local Levy requests in mind over the next few months**

Sally Whiting then responded to the question raised by Cllr Mirfin earlier in the meeting regarding a project the RFCC had supported on assets and asset registers. Sally advised the details of this can be provided separately, but this was a project led jointly by the Greater Manchester and Merseyside partnerships to look specifically at LLFA asset registers, their current state, and considering how we could better respond to the challenge of different organisations being responsible for different assets within an overall drainage network, but with them captured on different systems and registers. It remains an ongoing challenge to bring all of that together in one picture to understand the interconnectivity, responsibility, asset condition, and how you can deliver asset maintenance more efficiently. Sally advised that the reports from this project are available on the RFCC SharePoint site. The funded project has ended but there is ongoing work, still led by the Greater Manchester and Merseyside partnerships with regard to potential next steps in terms of a feasibility study, or an appetite/readiness study and to consider if this is something we should seek to pursue, whilst also bearing in mind national developments in terms of asset registers and systems.

Sally thanked Cllr Mirfin for offering his support to project leads and reiterated that he would be contacted and given the opportunity to offer his views at the appropriate time, reflecting the priority and timescales of the initiative.

There were no further comments or questions.

7. Minutes from the 10 April 2026 meeting

Members were asked to approve the draft minutes of the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup meeting held on 10 April 2026. The minutes were proposed by Cllr Cusack and seconded by Cllr Quinn.

The minutes of the 10 April 2026 RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup meeting were approved.

8. Any Other Business

There were no further items of business. Terri thanked all for their contributions and the meeting was brought to a close.

Date of the next meeting

The date of the next RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup meeting is 9 October 2026.

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE
10 JULY 2026
QUARTERLY FLOOD INCIDENTS REPORT

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

This report summarises the numbers of properties reported as flooded during the last quarter.

The data provided by the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authorities covers the period 1 April 2026 to 24 June 2026.

The data provided by United Utilities covers the period 2 April 2026 to 22 June 2026. The properties flooded reported by UU is assumed to be residential.

Key to data tables

The data distinguishes between property which has been reported as flooded internally and properties reporting external flooding only. It also distinguishes between residential and commercial properties flooded internally, where this info has been provided.

Degree of flooding (interval or external only)	Type of property
Int – Internally flooded properties	Comm – Commercial
Ext – External only flooding to properties	Sch – School
Unkn - Unknown	(Otherwise Residential)

Note that these RFCC reports only aim to capture the approximate scale of flood incidents which are understood to be subject to further investigation and will be not be interpreted as confirmed numbers.

Cumbria Strategic Partnership**1 April to 24 June 2026**

Local Authority area	Event Date	Community	Number of properties reported as flooded						Wider impacts (e.g. on transport and other infrastructure, on the environment)
			Sea	River	Ordinary Watercourse	Surface water	Sewer	Combination of sources or source not yet established	
Cumberland	21/05/2026	Wigton (Brocklebank)				1 (Internal)			
Cumberland	02/06/2026	Whitehaven (Mirehouse)				5 (Internal)			Flooding caused by a blocked culvert.

No reports of property flooding were received through Westmorland and Furness Council or Environment Agency channels during this period.

Narrative

Spring 2026 was the warmest on record for England and Wales. Across Cumbria and Lancashire, conditions were generally warmer and sunnier than average, with rainfall largely confined to localised, low-impact events that did not raise any significant concerns. Late May brought a brief but record-breaking heatwave, before June shifted into a more unsettled, Atlantic-driven pattern, creating a spell that felt wetter and more changeable, current heat wave being the exception. Although several south-westerly weather fronts moved across the region, precipitation, while persistent at times, did not reach levels that posed a flood-risk concern. A couple of flood alerts were issued during the period, for the Upper River Derwent on the 4th and 7th June.

The main area of focus for the period was the high spring tides in early April that coincided with the arrival of Storm Dave. While not the highest tides of the annual cycle, surge conditions associated with Storm Dave meant that levels were sufficiently elevated for us to issue widespread coastal Flood Alerts and two Flood Warnings along the Cumbrian coastline, alongside several Alerts for the Lancashire coast. This activity required the operation of several coastal defence assets as part of our routine response.

Merseyside Strategic Partnership

Nil return for properties flooded for Q1 2026/27 from the LLFAs.

Lancashire Strategic Partnership

Nil return for properties flooded for Q1.

Greater Manchester Strategic Partnership

Nil return for properties flooded for Q1.

Cheshire Mid Mersey Strategic Partnership

Nil return for properties flooded for Q1.

United Utilities Update

Below is the summary of the number of properties impacted by sewer flooding between 2nd April 2026 to the 22nd June 2026. 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	3	0	0
Merseyside	0	0	0	0
Greater Manchester	1	6	0	0
Lancashire	0	1	0	0
Cumbria	0	2	0	0

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE

10 JULY 2026

NORTH WEST AND NORTH WALES COASTAL GROUP CHAIR'S REPORT

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

This period has seen positive action in the development of the Regional Coastal Adaptation Pilot (CAP) bid - a funding opportunity explicitly focused on supporting long-term coastal adaptation. As we move into epoch two of the Shoreline Management Plan it will move the narrative of coastal management forward, from one of reliance to active participation. The Our Future Coast project has certainly learnt these lessons by communities actively participating in positive action and it is this legacy that will move coastal communities beyond resilience to proactive influence. Providing tools to change mindsets from surviving to thriving equipped with the ability to make decisions now that form the foundations for a better future.

With RFCC support the coastal group have been scoping and developing the concept for a Centre of Coastal Excellence (CoCE) model which has developed through a series of consultations and workshops. A report has been prepared for the journey so far. The CoCE concept was established to explore how a more coordinated, region-wide approach to coastal management could be developed across the North West of England. The North West Centre of Coastal Excellence (CoCE), has developed into Future Coast North West through the evolution of the project, culminating in a rename that better reflects its shared ambition: to make things happen on the North West coast by accelerating delivery through collaboration, shared expertise, and practical support.

The programme was supported by Icarus across five structured phases, from initial desk-based research through to governance development and pilot workstreams. The aim is both accelerated delivery but also the creation of capacity, capability, and confidence within the Coastal Protection Authorities responsible for the delivery of coastal management.

In the short term, many of the key individuals involved in Future Coast North West are engaged in developing and delivering pilot projects to further test approaches, strengthen partnerships, and build the evidence base for a coordinated core service delivery model. This includes taking forward coastal adaptation work through the Coastal Adaptation Pilot (CAP) funding opportunity, as well as progressing initiatives such as the Morecambe Bay Strategy. These initiatives represent important opportunities to test approaches, build capability, and generate evidence, particularly in relation to adaptation, place based coastal management and future flood and coastal erosion risk.

With the continued support of the RFCC we are seeking to bring closer linkages between the objectives of nature recovery and flood risk management. Skilling professionals within the industry and allowing access for younger people are key building blocks.

Coastal Group Activities During the Period

Since the previous RFCC update, the Coastal Group has made significant progress in moving from strategy development into practical implementation and enabling activity. Work over the last quarter has focused on establishing the foundations for long-term coastal adaptation and embedding collaborative approaches across the North West.

Key areas of progress include coordination of a regional Coastal Adaptation Pilot (CAP) funding Expression of Interest, continued development and testing of adaptive pathways as a delivery mechanism, and successful exploration of the Centre of Coastal Excellence, now operating as Future Coast North West. Collectively, these activities demonstrate a clear transition from planning to delivery readiness, with a stronger emphasis on enabling future investment and supporting consistent practice across the region.

1. Coastal Adaptation Pilot (CAP) Funding

- The CAP fund represents one of the first national funding opportunities explicitly focused on supporting long-term coastal adaptation and responding to areas of coastal erosion risk, rather than delivering traditional defence schemes. Over the last quarter, the Coastal Group has coordinated a regional Expression of Interest, bringing partners together around shared priorities and strengthening the case for North West investment.
- This collaborative approach positions the region strongly; however, successful outcomes will depend on robust prioritisation, alignment with wider investment programmes, and continued political and strategic support. While CAP does not replace existing funding models, it provides an important opportunity to test and demonstrate how adaptation-focused approaches to erosion risk can be developed and delivered in practice.
- RFCC advocacy will be important in championing the regional approach and reinforcing the strategic importance of adaptation within the broader FCERM investment landscape.

2. Adaptive Pathways – Building Awareness and Influence

- The North West continues to play a leading role in advancing adaptive pathways at a national level. Over the last quarter, the focus has shifted from development into sharing learning, building awareness, and influencing wider adoption across the sector.
- This has included presenting and contributing to key national and regional forums, including Liverpool University, Coast-R workshops, the FLOOD & COAST conference, and the Environment Agency Adaptive Pathways Programme workshop. Alongside this, a briefing note has been shared with national partners, helping to communicate the North West approach and support consistency in understanding and application.
- This programme of engagement is helping to build momentum behind adaptive pathways as a practical tool, strengthening confidence across the FCERM community and positioning the North West as a key contributor to shaping how adaptive approaches are understood and applied nationally.

3. Future Coast North West – Building Capacity and Consistency

- Future Coast North West has moved from concept into early delivery, with initial activity focused on piloting collaborative ways of working, sharing expertise, and developing tools that can be applied across multiple authorities. The central challenge facing the coast is no longer innovation, but embedding new approaches at scale, including adaptive planning, nature-based solutions, and community engagement, within the constraints of limited local authority capacity.

- This has become more pressing in light of ongoing and anticipated local government reform. Future Coast North West provides a practical mechanism to respond, enabling partners to pool expertise, reduce duplication, and support more consistent, evidence-led decision-making across administrative boundaries.

4. Our Future Coast – Transition to Legacy

- 2026 represents a critical transition year for Our Future Coast, with a shift from innovation and research into embedding learning and securing long-term impact.
- Over the last quarter, focus has increasingly turned to ensuring that the tools, relationships, and evidence developed through the programme are transferred into business-as-usual delivery. This includes alignment with CAP funding opportunities, integration into Future Coast North West, and influencing wider FCERM practice.

Key messages for RFCC Members

- The **region is moving into delivery readiness**, with practical enabling work now underway to support future schemes and adaptation planning.
- **Coastal adaptation is now a central priority**, with CAP funding providing a key opportunity to shift towards long-term planning and sustainable approaches.
- **A stronger pipeline of deliverable projects now needs to be developed and maintained**, linking strategic planning to investment. CAP funding and Future Coast North West both play an important role in enabling this, through developing adaptation-focused schemes, building evidence, and supporting partners to bring forward projects in a more coordinated and consistent way.
- **Significant further work is required to maintain SMP credibility**, including evidence development, engagement, and formal policy change processes.
- **Future Coast North West offers a proportionate, collaborative response** to capacity pressures and increasing complexity, particularly in the context of local government reform.
- **Ongoing RFCC support and advocacy will be critical** to maintaining momentum, securing investment, and reinforcing the strategic importance of the coast within the wider FCERM programme.

I very much welcome the RFCC's support for the regional approach to the CAP bid. This bid if successful will allow longer term strategic adaptation giving local communities real influence on their future pathways. The theme at the recent coastal practitioners conference was Legacy a calling for ambition and a call to act with foresight honesty and care – a legacy of long term responsibility where technical evidence and democratic decisions are aligned. The realities of change on our coastline are worrying with a stark choice of foresight and adaptive management or chaotic response and decline. Through our collaborative approach and development of the next stage of Future Coast North West, I am sure within the Coastal Group and RFCC this legacy is secure.

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

North West Investment Programme

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

26 June 2026

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report to the Finance & Business Assurance Sub-Group provides an update on the 2025–26 outturn and progress in delivering the 2026/27 in-year capital, resource, and local levy investment programmes, including the RFCC Business Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the North West RFCC Investment Programme, covering the 2025/26 outturn and progress in delivering the 2026/27 capital, resource maintenance and Local Levy programmes, alongside the RFCC Business Plan.

Financial Performance

- 2025/26 Outturn:
 - Total programme budget of £135m, with £125.5m spent (93%), resulting in an underspend of £9.8m.
 - Local Levy spend was £5.1m against £8.7m allocation, reflecting controlled deferral and alignment with Grant-in-Aid (GiA) funding.
- Drivers of variance:
 - Underspend primarily driven by project rescoping and delays (notably Padiham, Kendal, Radcliffe & Redvales and Sankey Brook).
 - Funding optimisation measures (e.g. substitution of Local Levy with GiA) supported programme delivery but contributed to the year-end variance.
- 2026/27 Forecast:
 - Total programme funding of approximately £170m, with forecast delivery of £164.2m (c.3.5% underspend).
 - Early-year reviews have identified opportunities to improve forecast spend and maximise utilisation.

Delivery Performance

2025/26 Delivery

- Strong performance against outcomes:
 - 5,934 properties better protected, exceeding the target (118%).
- Environmental outcomes delivered:
 - 2,034 ha habitat created/enhanced and 58.8 km of rivers improved.
- Delivery impacted in-year by scheme delays and rescoping but overall outcomes exceeded expectations.

2026/27 Progress

- Forecast delivery of 8,975 properties better protected (transitioning to “properties benefiting” measure under new programme).

NORTH WEST RFCC MEETING – 10 JULY 2026 – INFORMATION ITEM C

- Programme remains on track for 2026/27, with 2026/27 AGENDA ITEMS 3, 4, 5, 7 & 8
- Maintenance programme (£15.0m) underway, with asset condition performance and targets still being confirmed.

Risks, Issues and Pressures

Key programme pressures include:

- Project delivery risks:
 - Delays in major schemes driven by procurement, utilities, land acquisition and design challenges.
- Financial pressures:
 - Continued risk of underspend against GiA allocation.
 - Imbalance between RDEL overspend and CDEL underspend, requiring careful management.
- Efficiency gap:
 - £24.9m efficiencies delivered vs £50.5m target (49%), reflecting programme constraints and shortened delivery period.
- Asset management pressure:
 - Significant number of assets below required condition, with funding challenges to meet repair targets.
- Business Plan delivery risks:
 - A small number of projects remain behind schedule (Amber), primarily due to procurement complexities and transition impacts.

Local Levy Position

- 2025/26:
 - Closing balance of £10.5m, reflecting lower-than-forecast spending due to deferrals.
- 2026/27:
 - Forecast spend of £8.3m against available balance of £15.5m, with scope for further programme adjustments.
- Revised financial position indicates capacity to support additional investment, while maintaining the minimum balance threshold.
- A new request is presented for £2m Local Levy support (2031–35) for the Hindley, Platt Bridge and Abram scheme.

Strategic Context

- The programme is transitioning into a new national funding framework (from April 2026) aligned to a 10-year £7.9bn investment strategy.
- Key strategic priorities include:
 - Improving value for money and risk reduction
 - Greater focus on deprived communities (20–40% targets)
 - Increased Natural Flood Management (3–4% investment)
 - Stronger emphasis on partnership funding contributions
- The 2027/28 Investment Planning process introduces a revised structure focused on:
 - Completing projects in construction
 - Prioritising schemes aligned to new policy
 - Developing a longer-term pipeline of investment

RFCC Business Plan

- Portfolio of 23 projects progressed, with:
 - 10 complete, 8 on track, 4 behind schedule.

○ One project is proposed for the Core 6 Cluster of Excellence (ADP7) following completion of this funded phase of development work.

- ## Overall Position

- ## ACTIONS REQUESTED FROM THE FINANCE AND BUSINESS ASSURANCE SUB-GROUP

-
- INVESTMENT PROGRAMME OVERVIEW (2021–2026)

	Properties to be better protected	Partnership funding	Efficiency savings
National Overview	150,436 properties better protected between 2021-22 and 2025-26.	£1.5B in partnership contributions since 2021-22.	£206.4m efficiency savings achieved (vs. £345m target).
North West Overview	17,026 properties better protected (2021-22 to 2025-26).	10% of programme funded through partnerships.	£24.8M efficiency savings (21-22 to Q4 of 2025-26).

NORTH WEST CAPITAL PROGRAMME END OF YEAR POSITION SUMMARY 2025-26

North West		BUDGET	End of year	
		BUDGET (£k)	ACTUALS	VARIANCE
GIA	EA	£98,645,209	£89,201,278	£-9,443,931
	RMA	£24,293,999	£29,609,888	£5,315,889
	TOTAL	£122,939,208	£118,811,166	£-4,128,042
LOCAL LEVY	EA	£5,497,000	£2,462,000	£-3,035,000
	RMA	£3,252,000	£2,604,000	£-648,000
	TOTAL	£8,749,000	£5,066,000	£-3,683,000
PF	EA	£2,641,000	£1,592,581	£-1,048,419
	RMA	£939,500	£0	£-939,500
	TOTAL	£3,580,500	£1,592,581	£-1,987,919
TPE	EA	£106,783,209	£93,255,859	£-13,527,350
	RMA	£28,485,499	£32,213,888	£3,728,389
	TOTAL	£135,268,708	£125,469,747	£-9,798,961

Commentary and Risk:

- For the 2025/26 financial year, the NW RFCC had a total budget of **£135 million**, of which approximately **£125.5 million was spent** (93% of total programme expenditure). This resulted in an overall **underspend of £9.8 million**. Of this, approximately **£3 million relating to Local Levy contributions has been deferred into future years** to maximise Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant in Aid (FCERM GiA).
- The remaining underspend is associated with a number of projects across the programme, primarily due to rephasing of delivery. In addition, **Partnership Funding (PF) contributions across multiple projects have been deferred** to ensure alignment with updated funding profiles and compliance with financial guidance.

Summary of Underspend:

The majority of the underspend relates to the following projects:

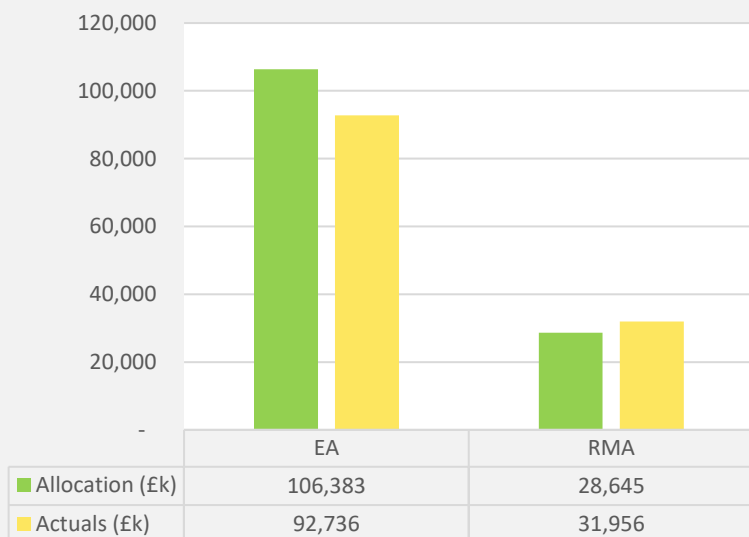
- Padiham** recorded an underspend of £10 million in total project expenditure (TPE). The time-limited allocation of Other Government Department FCERM GiA funding, which will lapse nationally at the end of 2026/27, could not be fully utilised in 2025/26 and was not reallocated during the

2026/27 Refresh. As this funding is no longer available, the project became unviable under the previous funding rules. A decision was therefore taken to defer the project and progress it under the new funding rules. This underspend was anticipated at the start of the 2025/26 financial year. Mitigating actions were taken, including bringing forward alternative programme opportunities—such as RMA claims, which are detailed later in this report—to offset the impact.

- **Kendal** experienced delays to the Aynam Road phase of the Kendal Town works. These delays were caused by third-party utility enabling works, as well as delays in the purchase of biodiversity net gain (BNG) units and land acquisition. The resulting underspend is approximately £1.4 million TPE.
 - **Radcliffe and Redvales** project recorded an underspend of approximately £1.5 million, with delivery now deferred into 2026/27. The primary causes of delay include FRAP and procurement delays, floodgate design issues, and challenges with third-party utility diversion.
 - **Sankey Brook** has experienced delays due to slippage in initial ground investigation and design work. This was primarily a result of delays in the 2024/25 Refresh and related funding challenges. As a result, the programme has been reprofiled, and ground investigations are now scheduled to begin in 2026/27.
- Forecasts reported at **mid-March 2026** and presented to the Committee in April indicated an expected outturn of approximately **£127 million**. However, final accounts show actual expenditure was **around £2 million lower than forecast**.
 - This variance is partly due to an underspend of around £300k on the Kendal Flood Risk Management Scheme and the deferral of an oRMA claim for the Morecambe Coastal Strategy (£300k), as the claim was not processed within the financial year, along with further reductions in year-end forecasts across several schemes.

NORTH WEST TOTAL PROJECT EXPENDITURE (TPE) 2025-26 – End of Year

NW RFCC TPE - In-Year Capital Programme



Top 10 TPE Spending Projects (by Actuals)

Project Name	Lead	Allocation TPE (£)	Forecast TPE (£)	Actuals TPE (£)
River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough Flood Risk Management Scheme	EA	17,815,276	18,303,972	19,080,315
Kendal Appraisal Package Kendal FRM Scheme	EA	19,012,000	18,092,462	17,572,311
Wyre Beach Management Scheme	EA	10,000,000	16,500,000	16,500,000
Preston and South Ribble	EA	10,660,000	12,521,516	12,093,776
Lower Risk Debris Screen Programme - GMMC	EA	5,090,000	6,975,739	7,095,672
Carlisle Appraisal Package Appleby Town Centre	EA	2,953,153	4,917,322	5,085,055
Anchorsholme Coast Protection Scheme	LA	4,000,000	4,000,000	4,000,000
Little Bispham to Bispham Coast Protection	LA	1,950,000	2,950,000	2,950,000
Blackpool Beach Nourishment Scheme	LA	1,500,000	2,500,000	2,950,000
ENVCLA_Janson Pool 23-24	EA	2,489,311	2,428,199	2,418,996

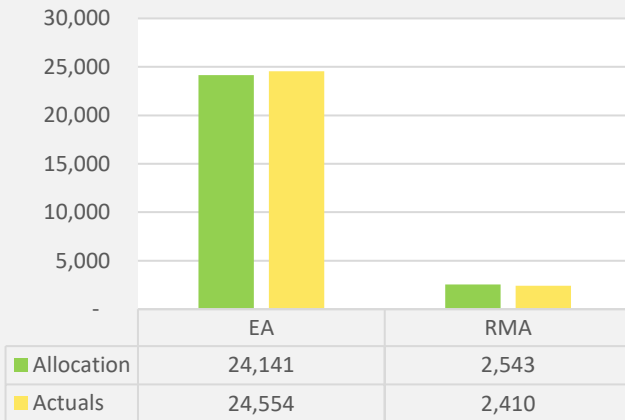
Commentary and Risk:

- The majority of the Grant-in-Aid (GiA) underspend against budget is attributable to the Padiham Flood Risk Management Scheme (FRMS), which recorded a £9.0m underspend, and the Kendal FRMS, with a £1.3m underspend.
- To partially mitigate the overall Environment Agency (EA) underspend, a number of measure's were enacted to enable claims to be brought forward from future years for oRMA's, these were:
 - Wyre Beach Management: additional £6.5m claim
 - Little Bispham to Bispham Coast Protection: additional £1.0m claim
 - Blackpool Beach Nourishment Scheme: additional £1.0m claim
 - Millom and Haverigg Flood Alleviation: additional £1.0m claim
- In Quarter 4, FCERM GiA utilisation was maximised by substituting Local Levy funding with GiA. This approach returned approximately £3.0m to Local

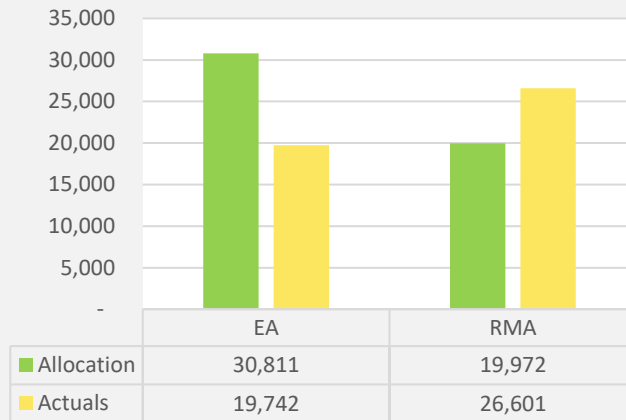
Levy balances. However, this adjustment contributed to an overall project expenditure underspend at year-end.

TOTAL PROJECTS EXPENDITURE BY PARTNERSHIP 2025-26 - EOY

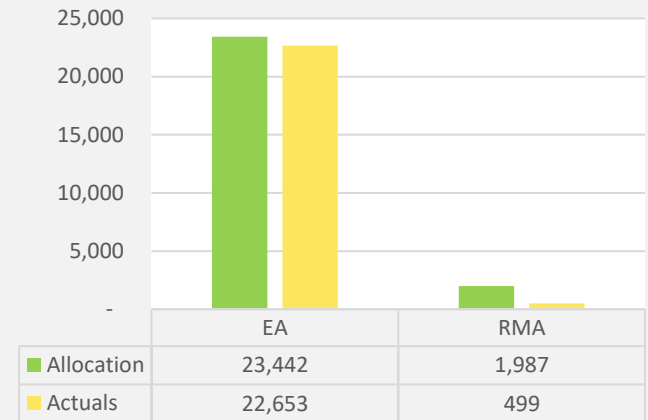
Cumbria Programme



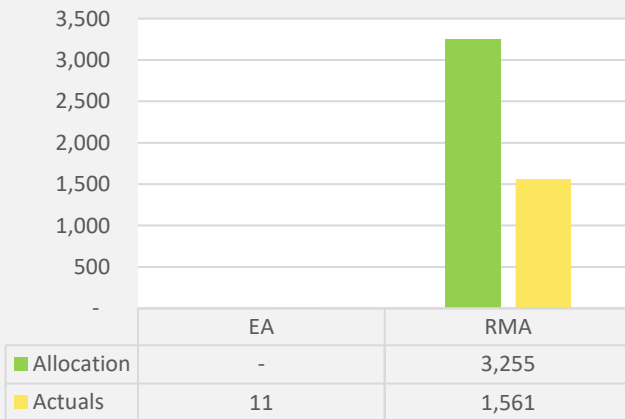
Lancashire Programme



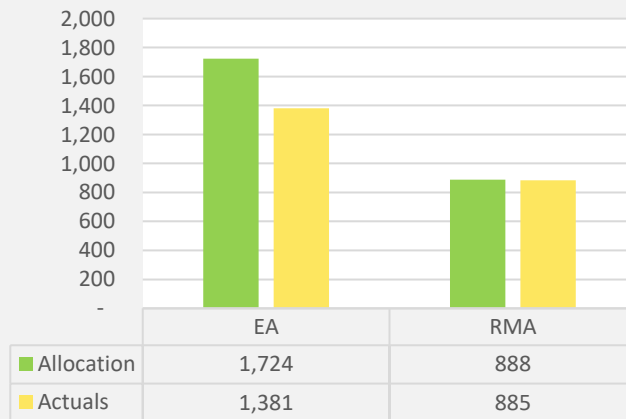
Greater Manchester Programme



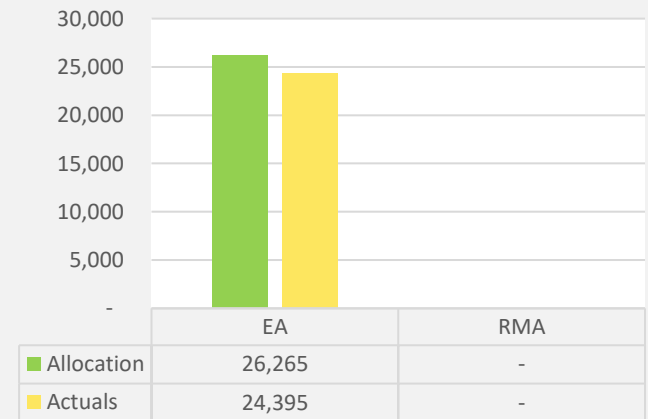
Merseyside Programme



Cheshire Programme

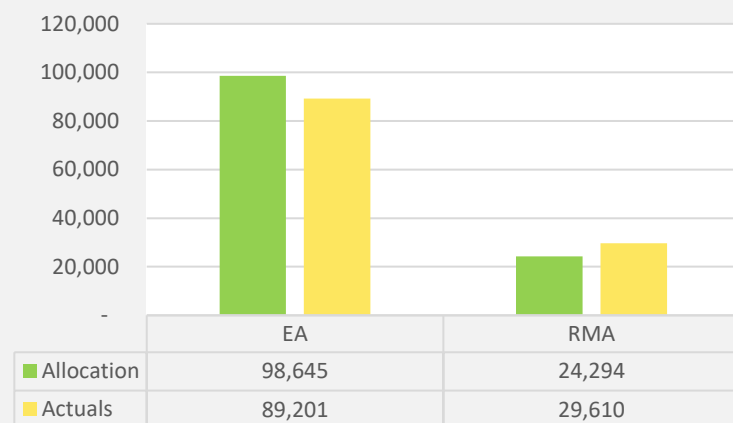


Cross-Partnership Programme



NORTH WEST GRANT in AID (GIA) EXPENDITURE 2025-26 - EOY

NW RFCC GiA- In-Year Capital Programme



FCERM GIA Capital (CDEL) / Resource (RDEL) splits

Area	Resource (RDEL)		Capital (CDEL)	
	Budget (£k)	Actuals (£k)	Budget (£k)	Actuals (£k)
Cumbria and Lancashire	5,237	7,034	76,044	70,458
Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire	5,960	7,755	35,698	33,565
North West Total	11,197	14,789	111,742	104,023

Commentary and Risk:

- The FCERM GIA year-end position shows an underspend of approximately £4 million, equivalent to 3% below the North West allocation.
- At year end, GMMC spent £41.3 million against an allocation of £41.6 million (99.3%), while CLA spent £77.5 million against an allocation of £81.3 million (95.3%), resulting in an underspend of around £4 million. As reported previously, mitigation measures were introduced to reduce the risk of underspend. While these actions helped to narrow the gap, they were not sufficient to fully close the difference between the allocated budget and actual spend.
- CDEL / RDEL forecast split requirements:**
There is a requirement to clearly split FCERM GIA expenditure between Capital (CDEL) and Resource (RDEL) in line with allocated budgets. Year-end figures show an RDEL overspend of approximately £3.6 million and a CDEL underspend of approximately £6.7 million. The RDEL overspend has been supported by the Environment Agency National Programme Management Office (PMO) and was reported through quarterly Most Likely Outturn submissions throughout the year.

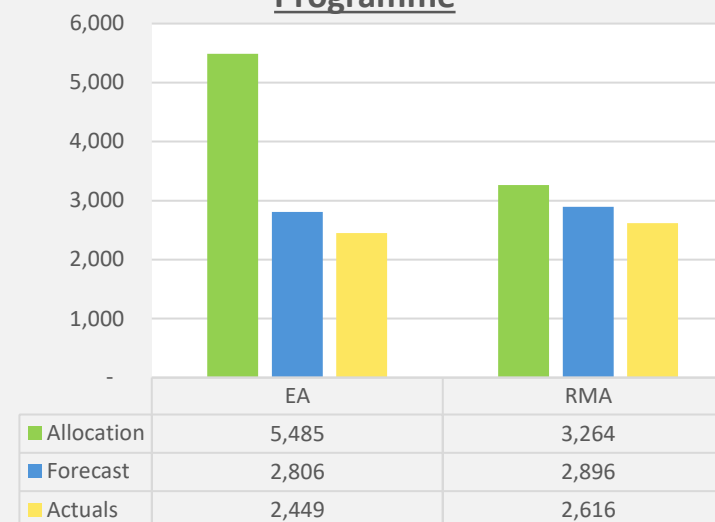
NORTH WEST LOCAL LEVY PROJECT EXPENDITURE 2025-26 – End of Year

Top 10 Local Levy Spending Projects (by Forecast)

Project Name*	Lead	Allocation LL (£)	Forecast LL (£)	Actuals LL (£)
Carlisle Appraisal Package Appleby Town Centre	EA	0	1,500,000	1,320,106
Millom and Haverigg Flood Alleviation Scheme	LA	500,000	500,000	500,000
Pegs Pool and Wardleys Pool, Hambleton	EA	0	400,000	143,876
Little Bispham to Bispham Coast Protection	LA	350,000	350,000	350,000
Blackpool Beach Nourishment	LA	350,000	350,000	350,000
River Winster Rehabilitation Project	LA	164,000	164,000	164,000
Lindow Community Primary School Flood Alleviation Scheme	LA	90,000	120,000	0
Longford Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme	LA	0	70,000	0
Alt Crossens Drainage Investigations	EA	50,000	50,000	0
Lyth Valley Drainage Investigations	EA	30,000	30,000	0

*Excludes Quick Win projects and RFCC Business Plan projects, all forecasting £250,000 for each partnership

NW RFCC Local Levy - In-Year Capital Programme



Commentary and Risk:

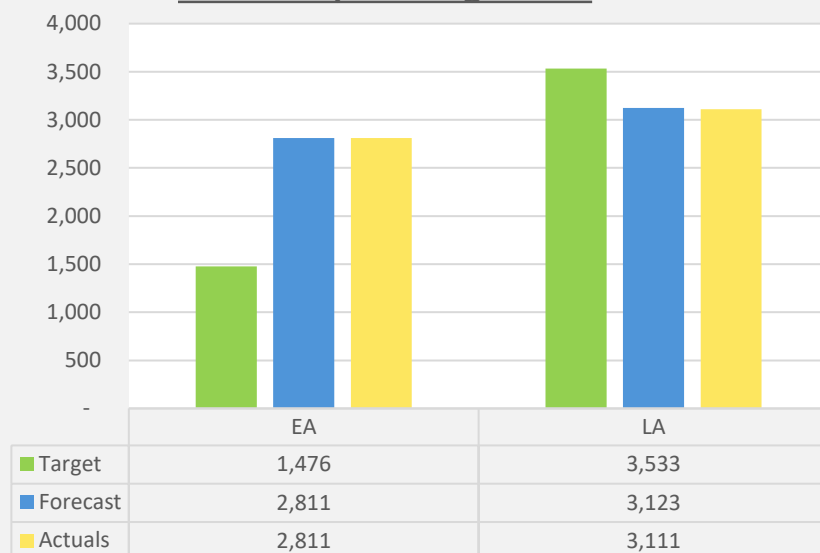
- The graph above includes investment relating to both the 'Quick Wins' initiatives and the RFCC Business Plan. Further detail on the RFCC Business Plan is provided in a later section of this report (see **NW RFCC Business Plan**).
- The March financial forecast indicated an expected spend of £5.7m from the £8.749m Local Levy allocation for 2025/26 (65% of the total allocation). The outturn position shows actual expenditure of £5.0m, representing an underspend of approximately £0.7m against the March forecast.
- The underspend is primarily due to the deferral of some claims into 2026/27, where works remain ongoing. Examples include:
 - Lindow Primary School**, with completion expected in August; and
 - Longford Brook**, with completion currently forecast for July.

Please refer to Appendix B for the detailed list of the Local Levy programme allocation, forecasts and actuals for 2025-26



NORTH WEST OUTCOME MEASURES 2025-26 - 'PROPERTIES BETTER PROTECTED' – End of Year SUMMARY

**NW RFCC rOM2+3 (Properties)
In-Year Capital Programme**



Properties Better Protected - Top 10 Projects (by Forecast)

Project Name	Lead	rOM2&3 Target	rOM2&3 Forecast	rOM2&3 Actuals
Wyre Beach Management Scheme	LA	3,000	3,000	3,000
Lower Risk Debris Screen Programme - GMMC	EA	0	2,588	2,588
Lower Risk Debris Screens Programme - CLA	EA	0	207	207
Bolton Inlets and Screens Improvement	LA	0	47	47
Falcondale Road, Winwick, Warrington	LA	0	23	23
Clifton Villas, Backford	LA	0	16	16
Warwick Bridge PFR scheme	EA	16	16	16
Abbots Mead Industrial Estate, Chester	LA	0	12	0
Carlow Close, Hale Village	LA	0	9	9
Spittal Farm, Wigton	LA	0	9	9

Commentary and Risk:

- For 2025/26, the North West target was to better protect 5,009 properties. Delivery exceeded this target, with 5,934 properties better protected across both the GMMC and CLA areas. This represents approximately 118% of the target.
- At the April North West RFCC meeting, a forecast of 6,029 properties was reported. The final outturn of 5,934 properties reflects a reduction of 95 properties from the March forecast. This decrease is primarily due to several schemes being re-profiled at the end of the financial year.
- The schemes affected are outlined below:
 - Liverpool Road, Great Sankey Surface Water Management Project** – originally forecast to protect 62 properties; delivery has been deferred into

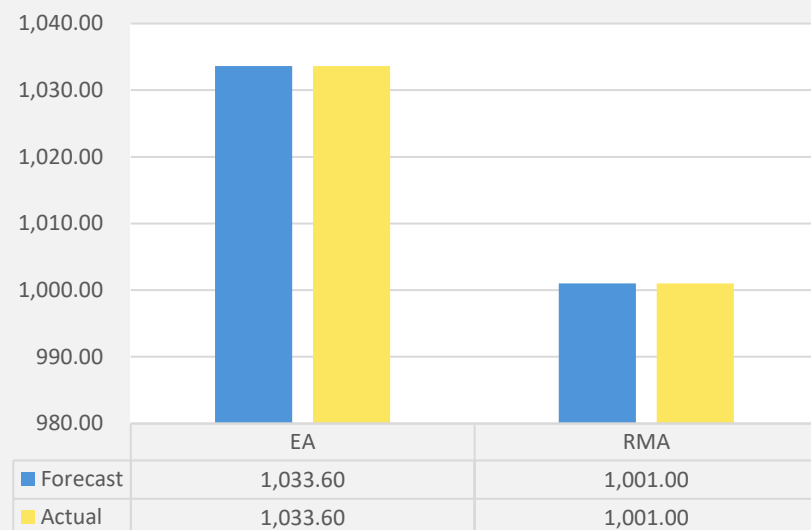
the current financial year and has now been claimed.

- **Hooton Green, Ellesmere Port** – originally forecast to protect 26 properties; delivery has been deferred.
- **Lindow Primary School FAS** – originally forecast to protect 4 properties; delivery has been deferred to August.
- **Adder Hill, Great Boughton** – originally forecast to protect 3 properties; delivery has been deferred.

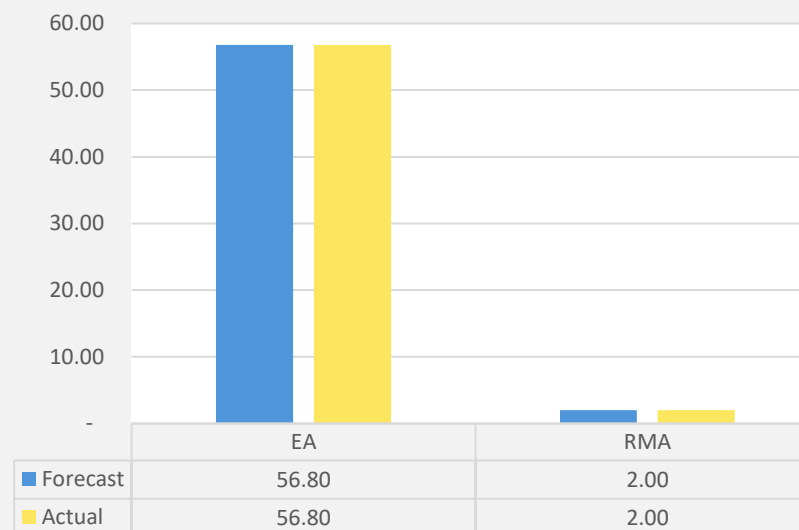
Please refer to Appendix C for the detailed list of end of year figures for properties better protected in FY 2025–26.

NORTH WEST ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOME MEASURES (HABITAT CREATION/ENHANCEMENT/RIVER IMPROVEMENT) 2025-26

**NW RFCC rOM4a (Hectares of improved habitat)
In-Year Capital Programme**



**NW RFCC rOM4b (Kilometers of rivers improved)
In-Year Capital Programme**



There is no set target for environmental outcomes 4a and 4b, however we are required to record the delivery and claim the benefits. Definitions for Outcome Measure 4a and 4b can be found in appendix A.

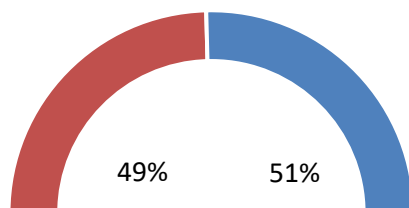
Environmental outcomes - Contributing projects in 2025-26

Row Labels	Partnership	RMA Type	rOM:4A Forecast (Ha)	rOM:4A Actual (Ha)	rOM:4B Forecast (km)	rOM:4B Actual (km)
Cumbria River Restoration Package*	Cumbria	EA	1,028.80	1,028.80	56.80	56.80
Preston and South Ribble	Lancashire	EA	4.80	4.80	0.00	0.00
River Winster (Local Levy funded)	Cumbria	RMA	1,001.00	1,001.00	2.00	2.00
Total			2,034.60	2,034.60	58.80	58.80

*Delivery over years 21-22 to 25-26 and claimed in 25-26

NORTH WEST CAPITAL EFFICIENCIES – OVERALL PROGRAMME – 2021-2026

NW Capital Efficiency Countdown



- Approved Capital Efficiencies
- Remaining Target

The North West has achieved £24.9m against a target of £50.5m, leaving a shortfall of approximately £25.5m (51% of the overall target). The five-year investment programme covers the period from 2021–22 to 2025–26.

The table below summarises efficiency reporting from 2021–22 through to Q4 2025–26. Efficiencies are reported on a quarterly basis.

The outcome of this KPI is awaited in order to understand the impact of the six-year programme being shortened by 12 months, and to assess whether targets will be revised accordingly. Any further updates will be reported to the North West RFCC.

Please refer to Appendix D for the detailed list of properties better protected in FY 2025–26.

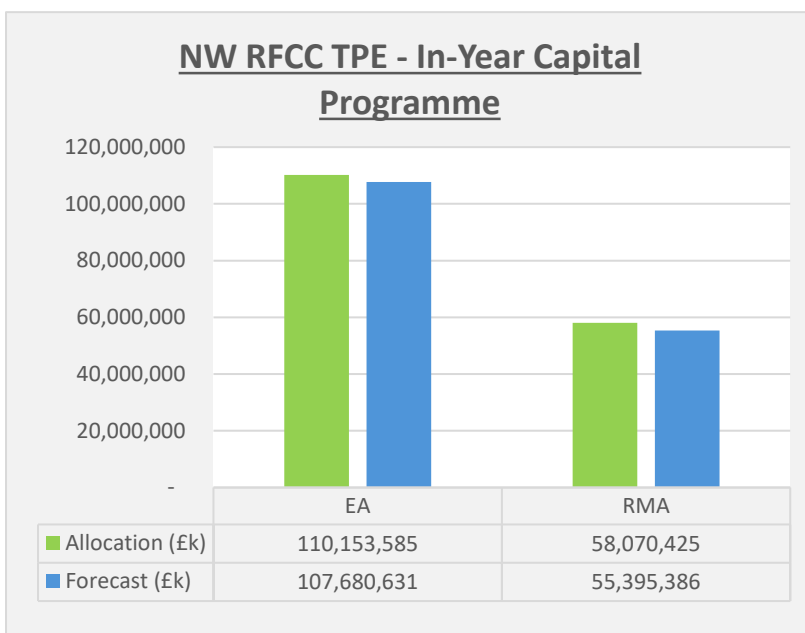
As of end Q4 2025-26					
Area	5 Year Total GIA Spend	5 Year Programme Target (10% all GIA spend)	5 Year Programme Realised Efficiencies	Variance (Target vs Realised)	Variance (Target vs Realised) %
Cumbria and Lancashire	£342,616,430	£34,261,643	£15,354,331	-£18,907,312	45%
Greater Manchester, Merseyside, and Cheshire	£162,691,670	£16,269,167	£9,528,681	-£6,740,486	59%
Total	£505,308,100	£50,530,810	£24,883,012	-£25,647,798	49%

As of end Q4 2025-26					
Authority	5 Year Total GIA Spend	5 Year Programme Target (10% GIA spend)	5-Year Programme Realised Efficiencies	Variance (Target vs Realised) £	Variance (Target vs Realised) %
Environment Agency	£399,446,980	£39,944,698	£18,576,041	-£21,368,657	47%
Local Authority	£105,861,120	£10,586,112	£6,306,972	-£4,279,140	60%
Total	£505,308,100	£50,530,810	£24,883,013	-£25,647,797	49%

The FBASG are asked to:
• Note the final outturn for the 2025/26 Investment programme • Note the final outturn for the 2025/26 Local Levy programme

2026-27

NORTH WEST TOTAL PROJECT EXPENDITURE (TPE) 2026-27



Top 10 TPE Spending Projects (by Forecast)

Project Name	Lead	Allocation TPE (£)	Forecast TPE (£)
Kendal Appraisal Package Kendal FRM Scheme	EA	25,271,338	22,881,489
River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough Flood Risk Management Scheme	EA	17,758,711	18,707,628
Blackpool Beach Nourishment Scheme	LA	17,690,000	17,690,000
Little Bispham to Bispham Coast Protection	LA	14,600,000	14,600,000
Preston and South Ribble	EA	17,353,196	13,891,401
Lower Risk Debris Screen Programme - GMMC	EA	11,190,016	11,190,017
Millom and Haverigg Flood Alleviation	LA	8,233,809	7,233,000
Wyre Beach Management Scheme	LA	9,133,116	4,270,124
Anchorsholme Coast Protection Scheme	LA	4,000,000	4,000,000
Lower Risk Debris Screen Programme - CLA	EA	6,065,742	3,705,000

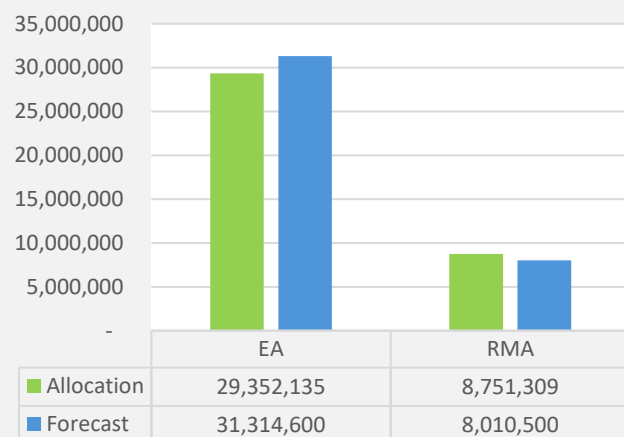
Commentary and Risk:

- The total capital and resource funding available for the North West RFCC 2026–27 programme is approximately £170 million. This comprises £160.5 million of central government Flood and Coastal Risk Management Grant in Aid (FCRM GiA), £5.8 million of Local Levy, and £3.69 million of partnership contributions. Partnership funding is provided by sources including local authorities and other government departments, such as the Department for Education and the Department for Transport.
- Forecasts as of mid-May 2026 indicate an expected drawdown of £164.2 million this year. This is approximately £6 million (3.5%) below the allocated budget. The primary reason is that £5million of Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) GiA was claimed in the previous financial year against the Wyre Beach Management Scheme to support the 2025–26 position, leaving less requirement for funding to claim against this project in the current year.
- Programme teams have recently completed their Quarter 1 ‘most likely outturn’ and May baseline review, identifying early opportunities to increase the forecast and maximise spend in line with the allocated budget.

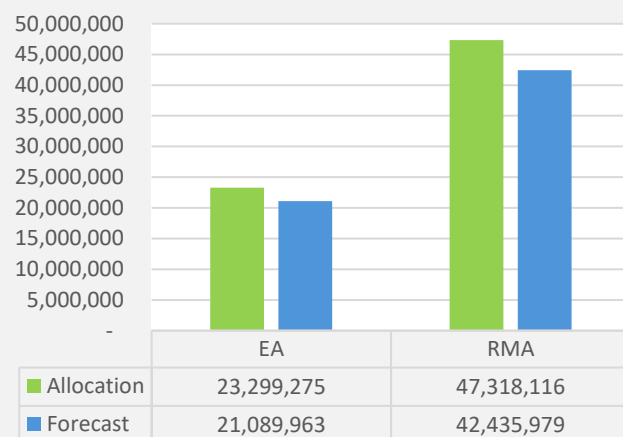
Please refer to Appendix E for the summary of all in-year funding sources in terms of budget, forecasts and actuals.

TOTAL PROJECTS EXPENDITURE BY PARTNERSHIP 2026-27

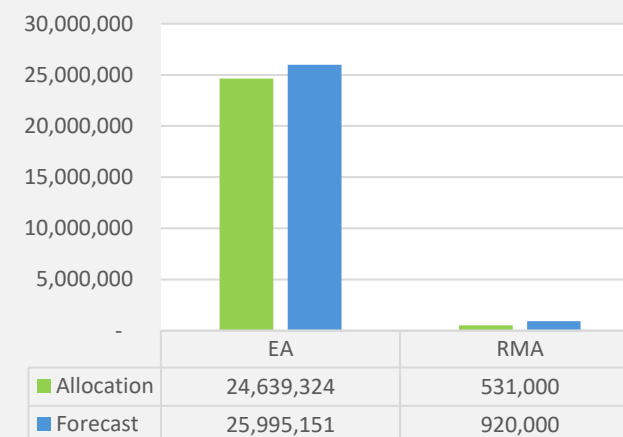
Cumbria Programme



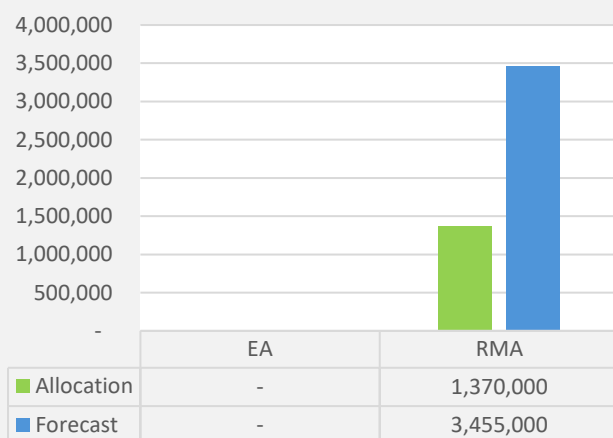
Lancashire Programme



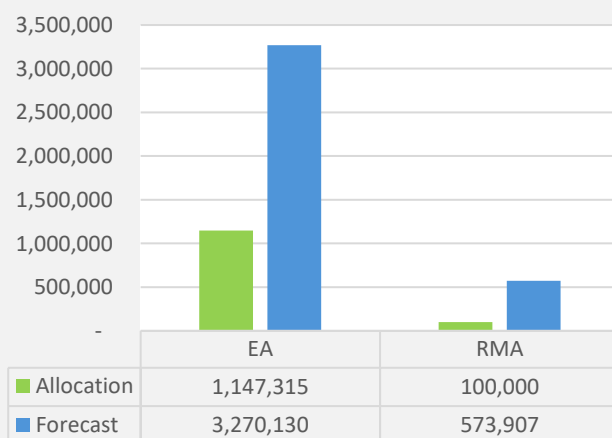
Greater Manchester Programme



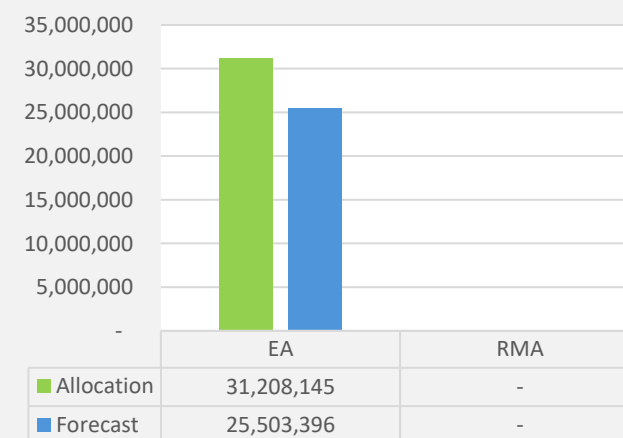
Merseyside Programme



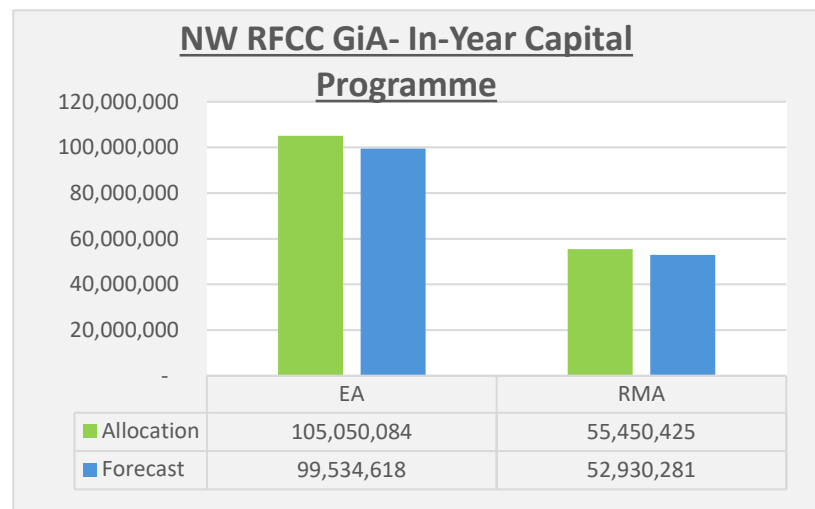
Cheshire Programme



Cross-Partnership Programme



NORTH WEST GRANT IN AID (GIA) EXPENDITURE 2026-27



FCERM GIA Capital (CDEL) / Resource (RDEL) splits

Area	Resource (RDEL)		Capital (CDEL)	
	Budget (£k)	Forecast (£k)	Budget (£k)	Forecast (£k)
Cumbria and Lancashire	6,565,905	4,997,741	110,184,436	104,595,025
Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire	8,143,313	6,284,111	35,606,855	36,588,022
North West Total	14,709,218	11,281,852	145,791,291	141,183,047

Commentary and Risk:

Programme Forecast Position:

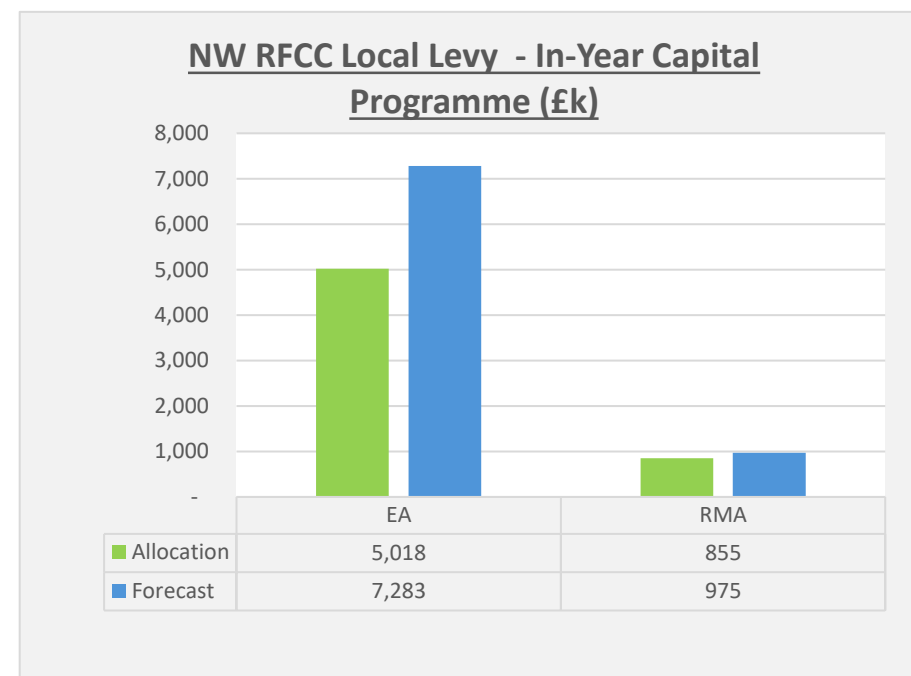
- The latest FCERM GIA forecast shows an expected programme underspend of approximately **£8 million (around 5%)** against the North West allocation. Several opportunities have already been brought into the programme to strengthen this position, and additional options are currently being explored.
- Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire (GMMC) is forecasting a **balanced position for both CDEL and RDEL**, while continuing to maximise FCERM GIA spend to support individual projects and the wider programme.
- In Cumbria and Lancashire (CLA), as previously reported, **£6.5 million of CDEL GIA** was claimed against the Wyre Beach Management Scheme in the last financial year. This was done to support the 2025/26 financial position, resulting in less to claim against this project in the current year.
- CDEL / RDEL Forecast Split Requirements:**
We are required to provide a clear breakdown of FCERM GIA expenditure between **Capital (CDEL)** and **Resource (RDEL)**, ensuring alignment with the overall allocation.

NORTH WEST LOCAL LEVY PROJECT EXPENDITURE 2026-27

Top 10 Local Levy Spending Projects (by Forecast)

Project Name*	Lead	Allocation LL (£k)	Forecast LL (£k)
Preston and South Ribble	EA	2000	2,000
River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough FRM Scheme	EA	500	2,000
Property Flood Resilience - North West	EA	675	675
River Roch, Phase 2 Rochdale FRMS	EA	0	380
Sankey Bk FRM Scheme	EA	302	302
PFR Thurnham	EA	0	254
Pegs Pool and Wardleys Pool, Hambleton	EA	0	241
Lindow Community Primary School Flood Alleviation Scheme	LA	0	120

*Excludes Quick Win projects and RFCC Business plan projects, all forecasting £160,000 for each partnership



Commentary and Risk:

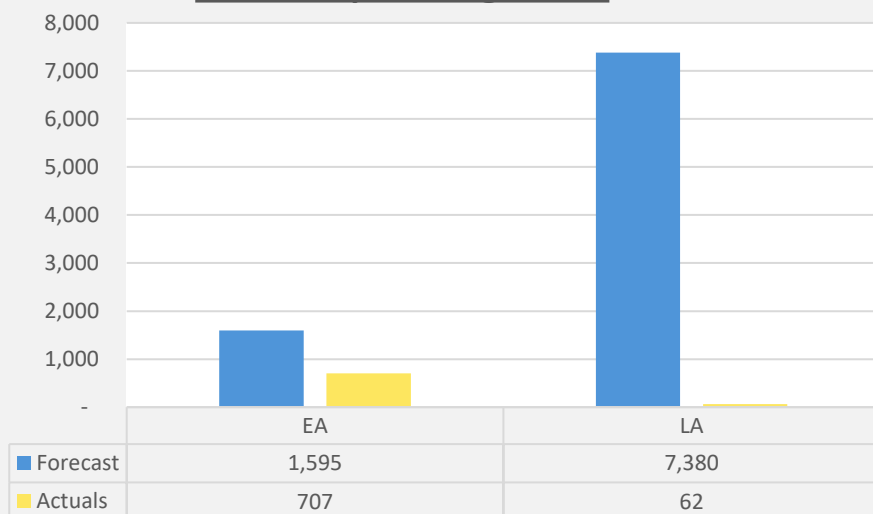
- The graph above includes investment from both the *Quick Wins* initiatives and the RFCC Business Plan. Further details on the RFCC Business Plan are provided in a separate section of this report (see *NW RFCC Business Plan*).
- The latest financial forecasts indicate expected expenditure of **£8.3m** against an initial **Local Levy allocation of £5.9m** for the current year. Total levy balances for **2026/27 are £15.482m**.
- This variance is primarily due to projects previously allocated funding last year deferring their Local Levy spend into the current year. This approach was used to maximise **2025/26 Grant-in-Aid (GiA)** expenditure, as outlined in the *April Finance and Business Assurance Sub-Group Report*.
- There may be further opportunity to defer expenditure from the current financial year, and this is currently being explored.

Please refer to Appendix F for the detailed list of the Local Levy programme allocation and forecasts for 2026-27



NORTH WEST OUTCOME MEASURES 2026-27 - 'PROPERTIES BETTER PROTECTED'

NW RFCC rOM2+3 (Properties) In-Year Capital Programme



Properties Better Protected - Top 10 Projects (by Forecast)

Project Name	Lead	rOM2&3 Forecast	rOM2&3 Actuals
Wyre Beach Management Scheme	LA	6878	0
Lower Risk Debris Screen Programme - GMMC	EA	739	0
Preston and South Ribble	EA	707	707
Darwen Central , Darwen	LA	69	0
Carlisle Appraisal Package Appleby Town Centre	EA	64	0
Liverpool Road, Gt Sankey Surface Water Management Project	LA	62	62
Lumb Brook, West View, Rossendale	LA	50	0
CLA Property Flood Resilience	EA	50	0
Shaw, Cringle, Ley and Willow Brook	LA	42	0
Brecon Road Scheme, Blackburn	LA	38	0

Commentary and Risk:

- The NW RFCC forecast for *properties better protected* in 2026/27 is **8,975**. This total comprises:
 - 281 in GMMC
 - 7,855 in CLA
 - 839 cross-partnership properties
- Area-level property targets have not yet been received. These are expected in the coming weeks and will be reported in the next Finance and Business Assurance Sub-Group.
 - Some *properties better protected* have already been claimed in April 2026, carried forward from the 2025/26 programme. These include:
 - Liverpool Road, Great Sankey Surface Water Management Project (62 properties)
 - Preston and South Ribble (707 properties)
- This is a transitional year, as the previous five-year programme has concluded and a new three-year programme (2026/27–2028/29) has commenced. As

part of this transition:

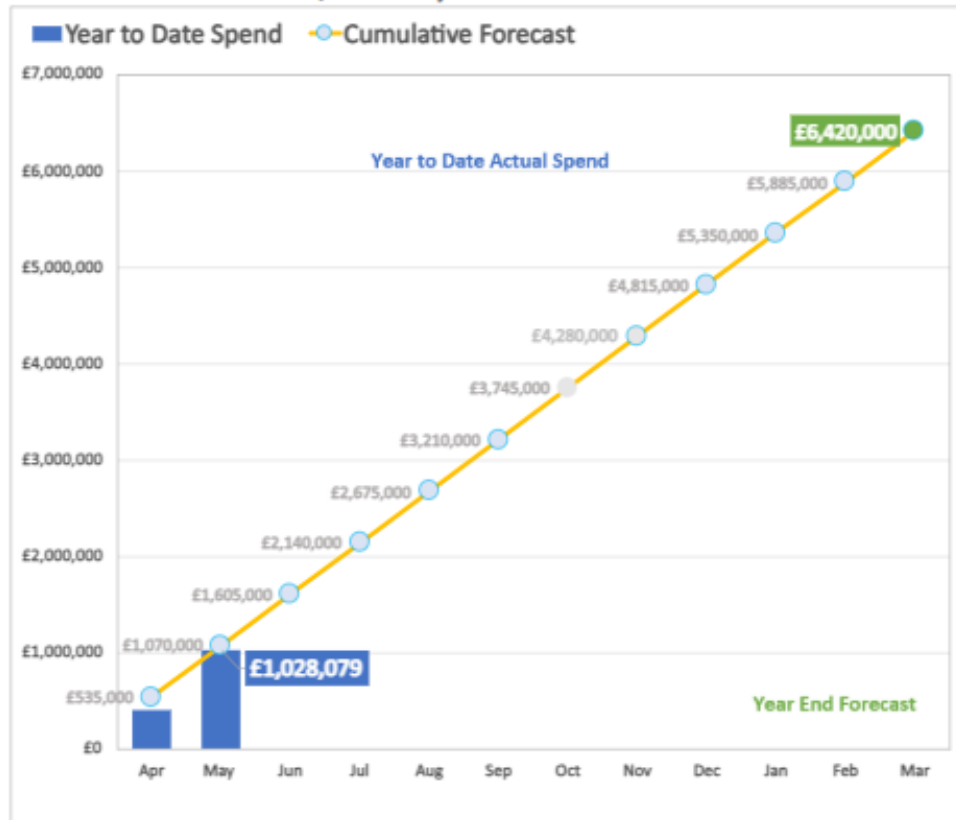
- The outcome measure will change from “*properties better protected from flooding*” to “*properties benefiting*.”
- Schemes currently in construction will continue to report *properties benefiting* until systems and metrics are updated.
- The *properties benefiting* measure will contribute to the new 10-year infrastructure strategy.

Please refer to Appendix G for the detailed list of properties better protected in FY 2026–27.

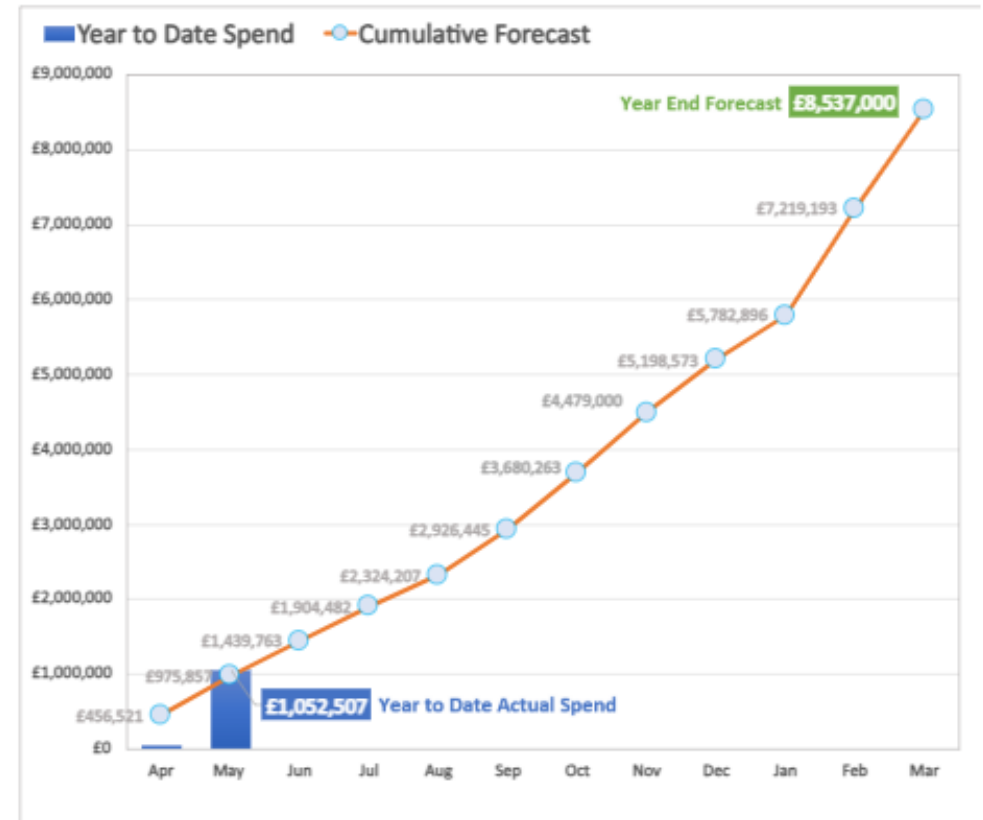
RESOURCE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2026-27

We have a combined Northwest maintenance budget of **£14,957,000**. The tables below show the split across the two areas and forecasted spending profile. We are still within quarter one of the maintenance program and forecasts will be refined as we move through the year.

Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire



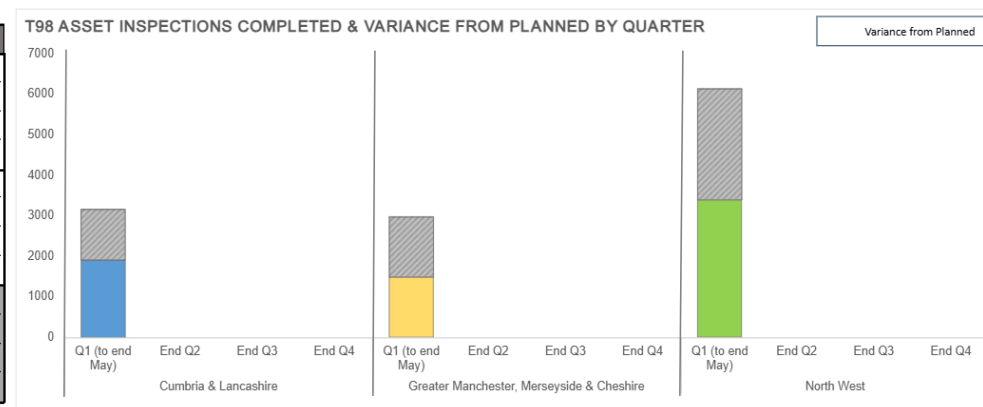
Cumbria & Lancashire



Environment Agency Below Required Condition Assets Position (Data to end May 26)

All assets undergo visual inspection by our asset inspectors as part of a rolling program to assess their health and condition. If an asset falls below its target condition score, it is classified as below the required standard. The table below shows the total number of programmed quarterly inspections across the Northwest. We do not yet have a target set for 2026/27 but would anticipate it be the same as last year at 97% of inspections completed on time.

Area	Quarter	Planned	Complete	Variance
Cumbria & Lancashire	Q1 (to end May)	3164	1909	1255
	End Q2	2526		
	End Q3	2836		
	End Q4	2343		
Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Q1 (to end May)	2977	1491	1486
	End Q2	2930		
	End Q3	2318		
	End Q4	1954		
North West	Q1 (to end May)	6141	3400	2741
	End Q2	5456		
	End Q3	5154		
	End Q4	4297		



Where assets are classified as below required condition (BRC) and cannot be rectified quickly using available resources we initiate further investigation and prepare a funding bid for refurbishment. Environment Agency maintained assets have a nationally set target for asset repairs. This is an individual target for each Area. We have not yet received our individual Area targets yet however the National target is 93% which is an increase on last year.

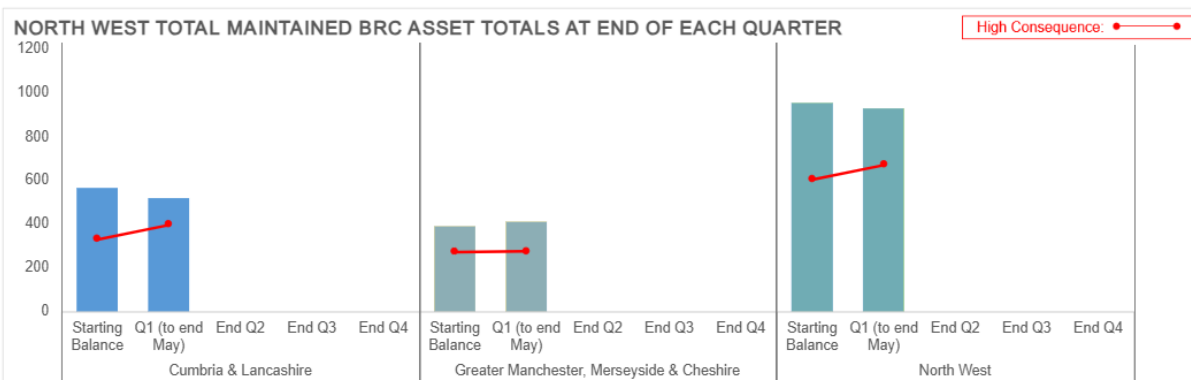
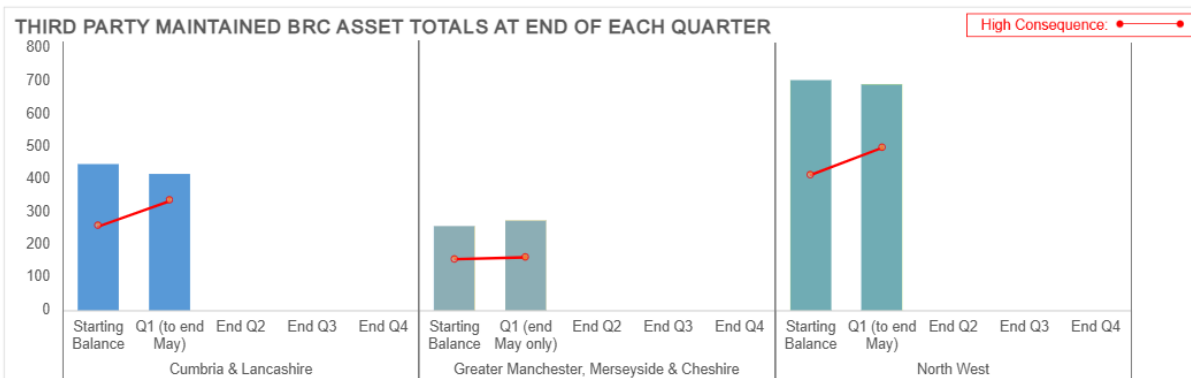
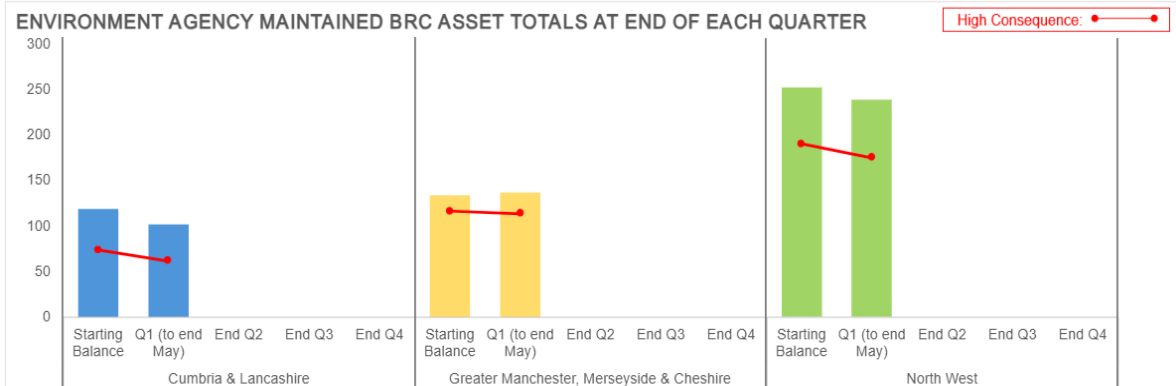
The Reconditioning funding budget has been allocated for 2026-27 and is intended to deliver planned 'fix's' in that year and design for delivering 'fix's' the year after, but is below the funding required to meet our asset fix targets. ***A paper has been prepared explaining the process around BRC assets in more detail and is contained in the Appendix H in this report.***

The tables below show the current BRC asset numbers and how many of those are in high consequence systems split into EA and Third Party maintained assets. The graphs show the progress in reducing the total numbers of BRC assets across the year, bearing in mind new failures are constantly being added during the year as asset inspections are completed.

Environment Agency BRC Assets			
Area	Quarter	Below Required Condition	High Consequence
Cumbria & Lancashire	Starting Balance	119	74
	Q1 (to end May)	102	62
	End Q2		
	End Q3		
	End Q4		
Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Starting Balance	134	117
	Q1 (to end May)	137	114
	End Q2		
	End Q3		
	End Q4		
North West	Starting Balance	253	191
	Q1 (to end May)	239	176
	End Q2		
	End Q3		
	End Q4		

Third Party BRC Assets			
Area	Quarter	Below Required Condition	High Consequence
Cumbria & Lancashire	Starting Balance	446	258
	Q1 (to end May)	416	335
	End Q2		
	End Q3		
	End Q4		
Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Starting Balance	256	156
	Q1 (end May only)	274	162
	End Q2		
	End Q3		
	End Q4		
North West	Starting Balance	702	414
	Q1 (to end May)	690	497
	End Q2		
	End Q3		
	End Q4		

North West BRC Assets			
Area	Quarter	Below Required Condition	High Consequence
Cumbria & Lancashire	Starting Balance	565	332
	Q1 (to end May)	518	397
	End Q2		
	End Q3		
	End Q4		
Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	Starting Balance	390	273
	Q1 (to end May)	411	276
	End Q2		
	End Q3		
	End Q4		
North West	Starting Balance	955	605
	Q1 (to end May)	929	673
	End Q2		
	End Q3		
	End Q4		



The FBASG are asked to:

- Note the progress on delivering the 2026-27 Investment and Resource Maintenance programmes

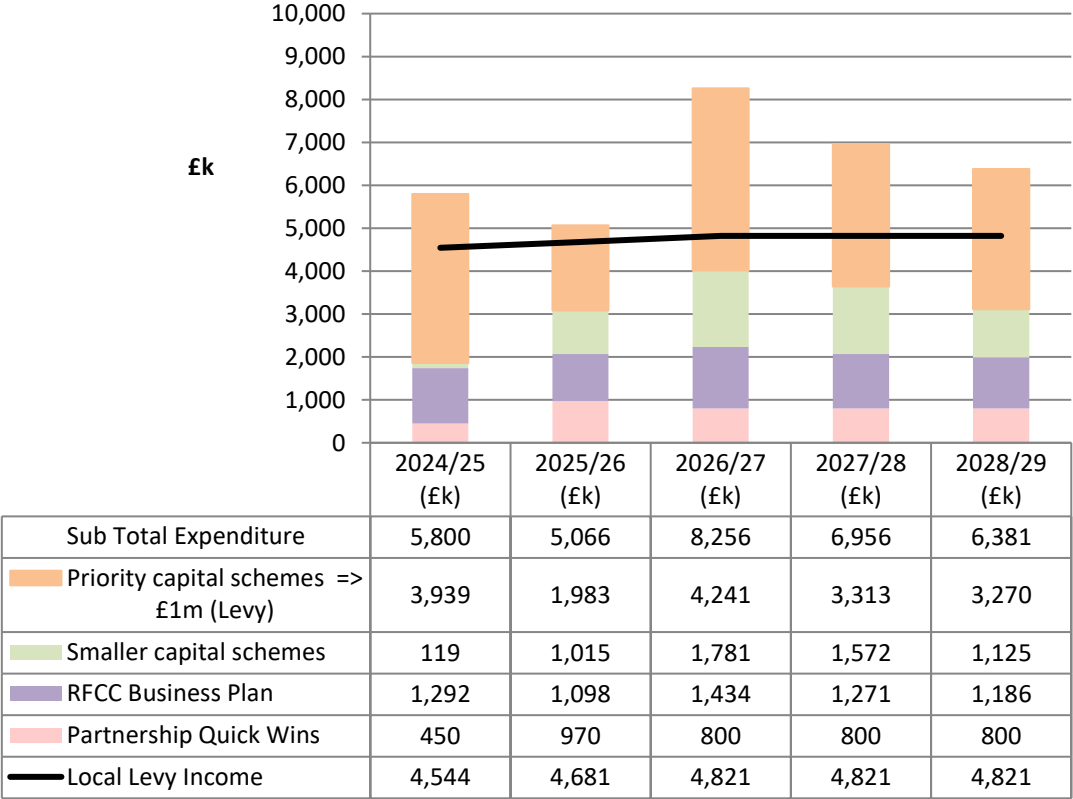
 NW RFCC LOCAL LEVY PROGRAMME FOR 2025-26, 2026-27 & 2027-28

Local Levy income and allocation summary (£ million)	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28 (indicative)
Cash balance at start of year	10.446	10.461	7.226
Local Levy income	4.681	4.821	4.821
Interest earned	0.400**	0.200**	0.200**
Total available balance	15.527	15.482	12.247
Total Actuals/Forecast	5.066	8.256	6.956
Remaining cash balance at year end	10.461	7.226	5.291

***Interest is to be confirmed*

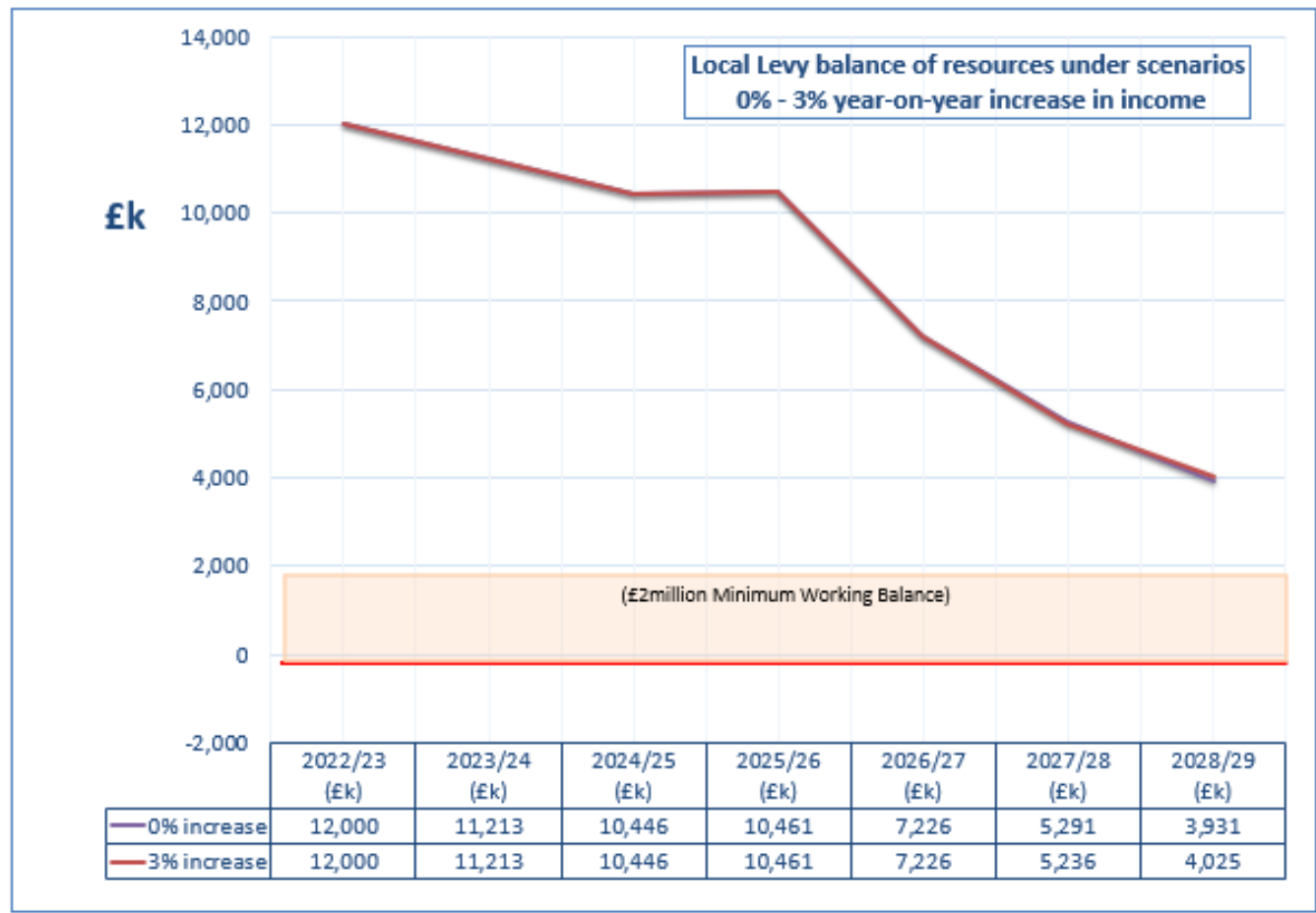
Local Levy Expenditure Scenario

This chart shows the breakdown of the Local Levy spend (actuals and forecasts) by activity classification per year.



Local Levy Balance Scenario

This graph shows the expected Local Levy balances at the end of each year based on the latest forecasts.



Programme Balance and Minimum Working Balance

In the April Finance and Business Assurance Sub-Group papers, it was reported that the balance was projected to fall below the £2 million threshold in 2028/29. This position has now improved following the return of approximately £1 million of Local Levy to budgets. This change is due to two projects not proceeding as originally planned:

- Meols Parade Coast Protection, Wirral (£755k)
- South Ulverston Integrated Flood Risk Management Scheme (£300k)

The minimum working balance was introduced in 2025 to manage a defined period of change and uncertainty over the subsequent few years. It is scheduled for review in 2027.

Overall, the revised position indicates that there may be capacity within the programme to support additional investment.

New Requests for Local Levy Support

There is one new request for Local Levy funding to support the Hindley, Platt Bridge and Abram Flood Risk Scheme.

This request is presented for information at this stage, with approval in principle being sought. The funding is not required until the period 2030/31 to 2034/35. The total Local Levy contribution requested is £2 million, to be spent between 2031 and 2035.

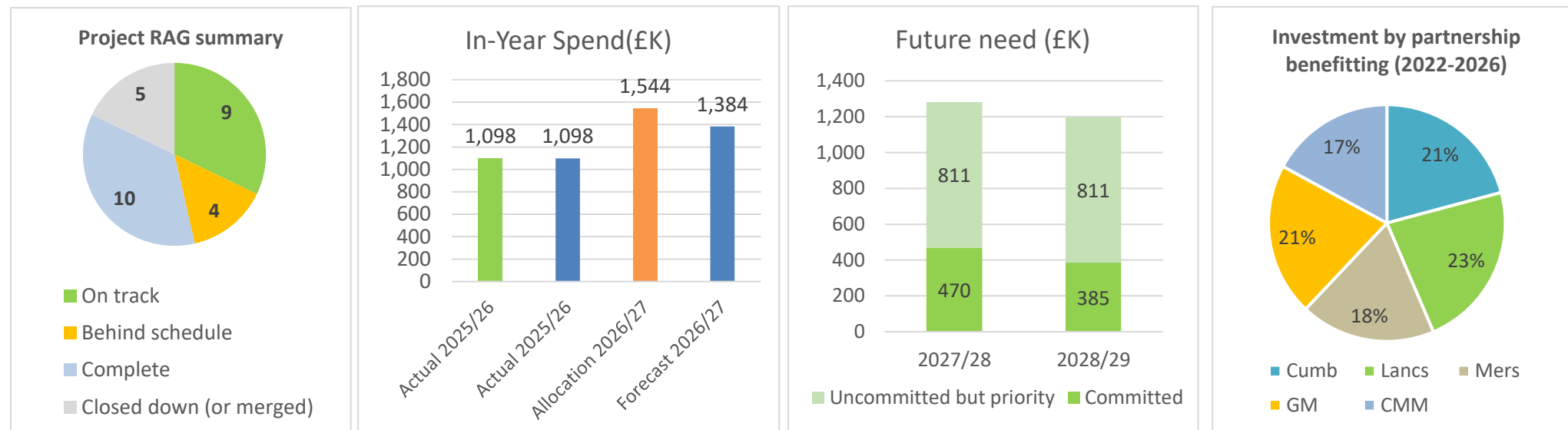
As this funding falls outside the current investment programme period (2026/27 to 2029/30), it has not been included in the charts and figures presented on the previous page.

Please refer to Appendix I for the briefing note for the above Local levy request.

The FBASG are asked to:
• To provide in principle support for the allocation of Local Levy funding for the Hindley, Platt Bridge and Abram Flood Risk Scheme: £2million

Dashboard

See Appendix J for full project level detail



Ambition	Projects	On track	Behind schedule	Not started/ On hold	Complete	Closed down (or merged)	Actual 2025/26	Allocation 2026/27	Forecast 2026/27	Total investment 2022-2027 (£K)	Committed Local Levy need 2027/28	Additional indicative funding need 2027/28	Committed Local Levy need 2028/29	Additional indicative funding need 2028/29
Accessing investment and funding	5	1	0	0	1	3	53	55	55	219	58	0	60.4	0
Building community resilience	5	1	3	0	1	0	258	265	174	1,305	262	0	274	0
Managing water at catchment scale with nature	7	3	1	0	3	0	79	394	394	617	85	0	41	0
Achieving climate resilient planning, development & infrastructure	6	1	0	0	3	2	67	65	75	483	65	0	10	0
Increasing RMA capacity and collaboration	5	3	0	0	2	0	642	716	686	3,004	0	711	0	711
Unallocated/indicative								50				100		100
	28	9	4	0	10	5	1,098	1,544	1,384	5,627	470	811	385	811

Summary

10 projects are complete, 1 is proposed for closure, 8 are on track, and 4 are behind schedule (Amber rated). This is the same as last quarter's report with the addition of the project closure proposal. Good progress is being made on addressing the issues to get the amber rated projects back on track.

Issues (Amber rated projects)

Building community resilience (Projects 5A/6/7) – Flood Hub website and support for community engagement

- The open market tender process to select the future supplier, being led by Greater Manchester Combined Authority, is progressing well with received tenders currently being evaluated. We remain on track to have a new contract in place by end of July 2026 and the service will then resume.
- In the interim, the Flood Hub website remains live but dormant with alternative contact and community communications mechanisms in place.

NFM Pipeline (Cumbria) (ID22)

- The project has been re-scoped taking account of developments and tools elsewhere in the country, and the new national investment policy which has brought significant changes to NFM funding arrangements and delivery mechanisms. To maximise opportunities, allow more flexibility and support research outputs, the project will use the Environment Agency's research framework and bring together Local Levy with CiFR funding.
- The procurement and financial approaches to establishing the project have been quite complex and are still ongoing, ensuring that the contract and supplier are appropriate, and the funding sources combined. Work will commence in 2026/27.

Projects proposed for closure

Coastal Centre of Excellence – Business case development (ID17) – This project was allocated £25K of Local Levy funding to further engage with partners and to further explore the appetite for, benefits of, and potential form of a centre of excellence focussing on the coast. A specialist facilitation partner, Icarus, were used to lead this work. This stage of work and funding has concluded and a [final report](#) has been produced. The initiative has been renamed Future Coast North West and work will continue to shape and develop this.

Forward look

Additional Capacity (ID16)

Through project ID16 Additional capacity, the RFCC supports all risk management authorities and the sub-regional partnerships by funding some people resources to provide additional capacity where it is needed. This includes the five coordinators of the partnerships (LA hosted and half Local Levy funded), the Shoreline Management Plan Coordinator (and Coastal Group Secretariat) (LA hosted and fully Levy funded), and a team of Local Authority advisors (EA hosted and fully Levy funded) who are wholly dedicated to supporting LAs deliver their investment programme and Quick Win projects. The funding approval for all the roles currently extends to March 2027 and we therefore now need to review the benefits provided, the needs they are meeting and how the new funding policy is changing these needs, to confirm what is needed beyond March 2027.

The review is starting now, with a questionnaire being prepared to gather feedback. This will be disseminated to all RFCC members, and relevant LA and EA officers. The review will be sponsored and overseen by Richard Knight (EA Area Flood Risk Manager) and an RFCC member sponsor (tba). Discussions at the 10 July RFCC workshop will also inform this. The findings of the review and the proposal will be brought to the RFCC round of meetings in October 2026.

North West Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme (FCRIP) projects - Legacy

Three projects in the North West have benefited from significant national funding over the last few years through the FCRIP. These are CiFR (Cumbria), Our Future Coast, and Resilient Roch (Greater Manchester). This programme and funding comes to an end in March 2027. The projects have been considering their legacy, experience gained, lessons learned etc in recent months, and the RFCC will do what it can to sponsor the dissemination and embedding of knowledge gained.

The projects are currently considering what ongoing resources would help to more fully develop and embed project outcomes, rather than risking losing significant good work. The projects are considering proposals for the RFCC to provide some Local Levy funding to enable this. Brief presentations from the projects will be provided at the 26 June Subgroup meeting for them to share their current thinking. It is expected that any formal Levy funding requests will be brought to the October round of meetings.

The FBASG are asked to:

- Note the update to the Business Plan and the forward look
- Acknowledge and recommend to the RFCC the closure of project ID17 Coastal Centre of Excellence – Business case development

INVESTMENT PLANNING AND ALLOCATION PROCESS 2027/28

Flood and Coastal Risk Management (FCRM)

In the spending review 2025 (SR25) announced in June 2025, the government committed a total of £4.2billion funding for FCRM to build and maintain defences over 3 years between April 2026 and March 2029. During the same period there was an announcement on the longer-term investment programme UK Infrastructure: A 10 Year Strategy. This strategy commits to £7.9billion of capital investment in building and repairing flood defences over 10 years from April 2026 to March 2036, to benefit around 840,000 properties from the risk of flooding.

This longer-term commitment gives us the flexibility to transition the change to the government's new funding policy, while continuing to improve flood protection for communities across the country. It recognises that we need time to complete projects already underway and gradually invest more, while continuing to maintain existing defences, natural flood management, property-level resilience and sustainable drainage alongside more traditional schemes.

This is the start of a new 10-year Programme running from April 2026 where the government has committed to funding flood and coastal risk management for 10 years as part of its wider infrastructure plans.

Following a government policy review, new government funding rules were announced in October 2025 and reflect evidence that showed previous rules made it harder to deliver certain types of projects, for example natural flood management, property flood resilience and refurbishment of existing assets. The new funding rules will apply from 1 April 2026.

The new rules mean that more projects will be eligible for funding in the future. Therefore, projects will need to be prioritised to ensure the investment programme as a whole meets the governments strategic objectives set out in the funding policy.

The strategic objectives are:

- Value for money
- Reducing flood and coastal erosion risk
- Focussing on deprived areas: at least 20% of FCERM investment will be directed to the most deprived quintile, and at least 40% to the 2 lowest quintiles combined, over both the next 3-year and 10-year periods
- Increasing investment in natural flood management: at least 3% of FCERM investment over the next 4 years, and 4% of FCERM investment over the next 10 years is directed to NFM
- Prioritising projects with contributions from others.

We need to carefully manage the transition period as we complete projects that are in construction and move towards new projects that follow the new funding rules.

The funding for year one and the majority of year two of the new investment programme starting in April 2026 will be almost entirely focused on completing existing projects in construction, these will remain on the old funding policy.

We recognise that there are also projects that are currently paused in their development due to the availability of funding. These projects will transition to the new funding policy. Work is underway to support projects to self-assess how well they align to the new funding policy.

The outcome of this will be reviewed and projects with:

- Good alignment to the new policy will be encouraged to apply for funding in the 2026-27 Investment Programme and Allocation Process. It is unlikely that all of these projects will receive funding in 2027/28 due to the limited funds, however they should expect to receive an allocation at some point in the future.
- Poor alignment to the new policy, steps should be taken to rescope the project so that it aligns with the new policy.

Investment Planning and Allocation Process

The 2027/28 Investment Planning and Allocation process (formally known as Refresh) will be formed of three main components with the aim of building a longer-term programme. This year will be a step change in how we manage, allocate and prioritise funding as we look to align projects with our future direction as set out in SR25. Therefore, the three objectives for this year's process are:

1. Support the ongoing funding requirements for projects in construction.
2. Develop priority projects that align with the government's strategic objectives and National Investment Steer, and to invest in new projects to meet the 10-year FCERM investment programme ambitions.
3. To build a longer-term programme – bids will not be restricted to 1-year - however future years funding will be indicative.

Component 1 – In construction projects

Component 1 will comprise of funding for in-construction projects, the enabling and support programme and Moderation projects. Funding bids for this cohort of schemes will follow previous bid deadlines: Support and Enabling is the end of June, and in-construction schemes end of July.

Proposed Component 1 and Moderation Projects (Moderation Projects highlighted in blue)

Project Name	Environment Agency Area	Lead Risk Management Authority - Name	Project Type
Carlisle Appraisal Package Appleby Town Centre	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Defence
Kendal Appraisal Package Kendal FRM Scheme	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Defence
Millom and Haverigg Flood Alleviation	Cumbria and Lancashire	Cumberland Council	Defence
Preston and South Ribble	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Defence
Little Bispham to Bispham Coast Protection	Cumbria and Lancashire	Blackpool Borough Council	Defence
Blackpool Beach Nourishment Scheme	Cumbria and Lancashire	Blackpool Borough Council	Capital Maintenance
Darwen Central , Darwen	Cumbria and Lancashire	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	Defence
Brecon Road Scheme, Blackburn	Cumbria and Lancashire	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	Defence

Chester Close , Blackburn	Cumbria and Lancashire	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	Defence
NFM - Trawden Natural Flood Management Delivery	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Defence
Anchorsholme Coast Protection Scheme	Cumbria and Lancashire	Blackpool Borough Council	Defence
Lower Screens Programme 2022-2023	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Capital Maintenance
Cockermouth Asset Reconditioning Project	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Capital Maintenance
CLA Landscape Maintenance - Carlisle Phase 1	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Defence
CLA Landscape Maintenance - Gosling Sike	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Defence
CLA Landscape Maintenance - Rickerby	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Defence
ENVCLA_RiverMede 23-24	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Capital Maintenance
ENVCLA_Janson Pool 23-24	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Capital Maintenance
ENVCLA_Wild Boar 23-24	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Capital Maintenance
ENVCLA_Yoad Pool 23-24	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Capital Maintenance
CLA Pumping Station Refurbishments	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Capital Maintenance
Wyre Catchment Readiness Project	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Capital Maintenance
CLA Property Flood Resilience	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Defence
PFR - Bampton Grange	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Defence
Egremment SuDs Works	Cumbria and Lancashire	Environment Agency	Defence
River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough Flood Risk Management Scheme	Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire	Environment Agency	Defence
Lower Risk Debris Screen Programme - GMMC	Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire	Environment Agency	Defence
Radcliffe & Redvales FRM Scheme	Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire	Environment Agency	Defence
ENVDidsbury FSR Drawdown	Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire	Environment Agency	Capital Maintenance
Salford Flood Alleviation Improvements	Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire	Environment Agency	Defence
Balladen Brook Culvert Repair	Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire	Environment Agency	Capital Maintenance

Shaw, Cringle, Ley and Willow Brook	Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire	Manchester City Council	Defence
ENVGMMC RECOVERY	Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire	Environment Agency	Capital Maintenance

Component 2 – Projects not in construction

Component 2 will be formed of projects that are not in construction (between Strategic Assessment and Full Business Case). These projects will follow the new 2025 Funding Policy.

This component will be further split into phase 1 and 2:

Phase 1 will form projects that have alignment to the new strategic goals and require investment in 2027/28. It is anticipated that this phase will be highly competitive across the country and funding will be limited until the 'in -construction' schemes conclude.

Phase 2 will be the remaining projects that have not been submitted as part of phase 1 but align with the new Funding Policy and don't require an allocation in 2027/28.

Component 3 – Early Project Opportunities

Component 3 will be formed of 'brand-new' projects applications and shared with the NW RFCC in November for local guidance and assessment. The new funding policy and strategic objectives place greater emphasis on Natural Flood Management where we anticipate more opportunities to be identified in this phase.

Investment Planning and Allocation Process – Timeline	
Support and Enabling and Moderation	Funding bid submission – late June
Component 1 – In construction projects	Funding bid submission – 31 July
Component 2 – Projects not in construction	Funding bid submission – 15 August
Component 3 – Early Project Opportunities	Funding bid submission – late September
Surface Water Investment Model (SWIM)	New project opportunities can be submitted between 1 July and 31 August Projects received after this window can still be reviewed by the NW RFCC and considered for development funding in future years
Natural Flood Management Project Opportunities	Standalone NFM project opportunities under £3million. Bidding window will be from 1 July to 31 August

APPENDICES

Appendix A	DEFINITIONS (ROMS, CDEL/RDEL, ETC.)
Appendix B	NORTH WEST LOCAL LEVY ACTUAL SPEND – 2025/26
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Appendix D	CAPITAL EFFICIENCIES CLAIMED – 2021 - 2026
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Appendix A	DEFINITIONS
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1) Environmental Outcomes – rOM4 (Reporting Outcome Measure)

- a) rOM 4A – Habitats created/ Habitats enhanced (ha) such as Intertidal Wetlands, Wet woodlands, Grassland, Ponds & lakes, Woodlands, Wetlands & wet grasslands, Heathland and Arable land
- b) rOM 4B – Rivers Enhanced (km) such as Length of comprehensive river restoration, Length of Partial restoration, Length affected by major single improvement.

2) CDEL / RDEL

- a) CDEL - Capital Departmental Expenditure Limit. Capital expenditure relates to the creation or significant improvement of assets.
- b) RDEL - Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit. Resource is anything that does the following i.e. routine maintenance, early project development (Pre-Gateway 1), investigations & studies, incident management

3) RAG (Red, Amber, Green) definition for Outcome measure Properties Better Protected target

- a) Green $\geq 85\%$ of the target
- b) Amber $< 85\%$ and $\geq 75\%$
- c) Red $< 75\%$

4) T98 Asset Inspection

T98 is a national accreditation to undertake visual flood defence asset inspections. The accreditation was developed by the Environment Agency and the Flood Hazard Research Centre (FHRC) at Middlesex University.

The 1 to 5 score for condition grade is well used within UK FCRM organisations. The overall condition grade reflects the weighted average condition grade of the various elements making up the asset.

Assets are inspected regularly in a set frequency based on asset type and risk.

5) Below Required Condition Assets (BRC)

An asset where an inspection confirmed the condition is below a set target based on asset type and risk. These assets require intervention to bring it back to target condition.

6) Other Risk Management Authority (oRMA)

The investment programme delivery is categorized by type of risk management authority into the Environment Agency and other Risk Management Authorities (RMAs). In the North West oRMAs are generally local authorities.

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Appendix B	NORTH WEST LOCAL LEVY ACTUAL SPEND – 2025/26
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Partnership	Scheme Name	RMA Type	2025/26 RFCC scenario (£k)	2025/26 Project Forecast (£k)	2025/26 Project Actuals (£k)
Cumbria	Carlisle Appraisal Package Appleby Town Centre	EA	0	1,500	1485
Cumbria	Cumbria Quick Win Projects	LA	250	250	215
Cumbria	Lyth Valley Drainage Investigations	EA	30	30	0
Cumbria	Millom and Haverigg Flood Alleviation	LA	500	500	500
Cumbria	River Winster Rehabilitation Project	LA	164	164	164
Cumbria	Waver Wampool Pumping Station Investigation	EA	10	10	0
Cumbria Total			954	2,454	2,364
Lancashire	Alt Crossens Drainage Investigations	EA	50	50	0
Lancashire	Little Bispham to Bispham Coast Protection	LA	350	350	350
Lancashire	Blackpool Beach Nourishment	LA	350	350	350
Lancashire	Fleetwood & Copse Brook Scheme	EA	1,770	0	0
Lancashire	Lancashire Quick Win Projects	LA	250	250	124
Lancashire	PFR Thurnham	EA	255	1	1
Lancashire	Pegs Pool and Wardleys Pool, Hambleton	EA	0	400	148
Lancashire	Blackpool Manchester Square	LA	250	0	0
Lancashire	Wyre Investment Readiness Project (ID2)*	EA	45	53	52
Lancashire Total			3,320	1,454	1,025
Cheshire	Cheshire/Mid-Mersey Quick Win Projects	LA	250	250	239
Cheshire	Lindow Community Primary School Flood Alleviation Scheme	LA	30	0	0
Cheshire/Mid Mersey Total			280	250	239
Greater Manchester	Greater Manchester Quick Win Projects	LA	250	250	142
Greater Manchester	Longford Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme	LA	70	0	0
Greater Manchester	Poise Brook	EA	305	0	0
Greater Manchester	River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough FRM Scheme	EA	1,500	0	0

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Greater Manchester	River Roch, Phase 2 Rochdale FRMS	EA	380	0	0
Greater Manchester	Hindley Group	EA	275	0	0
Greater Manchester Total			2,780	250	142
Merseyside	Merseyside Quick Win Projects	LA	250	250	250
Merseyside Total			250	250	250
RFCC Business Plan	Building Community Resilience – Flood Hub website (ID5)	EA/LA	119	119	120
RFCC Business Plan	Building Community Resilience – Support for coastal adaptation engagement (ID6)	EA/LA	10	10	10
RFCC Business Plan	Building community resilience – Action campaign (ID7)	EA/LA	128	128	128
RFCC Business Plan	Mersey Forest NFM Tech App Collab (GMMC-led) (ID9A)	EA	35	67	67
RFCC Business Plan	NFM Pipeline Development (Cumbria) (ID22)	EA	60	0	0
RFCC Business Plan	Unpave the Way (Front gardens) (ID12)	EA	79	66	66
RFCC Business Plan	RMA Capacity Building (ID15)	EA	15	0	0
RFCC Business Plan	Additional capacity – LA Project Advisors and Programme Coordinator (ID16)	EA	389	342	342
RFCC Business Plan	Additional capacity - Partnership Coordinators (ID16)	LA	210	192	192
RFCC Business Plan	Additional capacity – Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator (ID16)	LA	53	53	53
RFCC Business Plan	Support for North West RFCC (Business Plan Implementation) (ID16)	EA	30	30	30
RFCC Business Plan	Support for Coastal Adaptation (Coastal Centre of Excellence ID17)	LA	25	25	25
RFCC Business Plan	RFCC Conferences (ID25)	EA	12	12	12
RFCC Business Plan Total			1,165	1,044	1,045
Total Local Levy - North West			8,749	5,702	5,065

AGENDA ITEMS 3, 4, 5, and 6

Appendix C	2025-26 PROPERTIES BETTER PROTECTED - TARGET, FORECASTS AND ACTUALS (FOR INFO ONLY) – End of the year
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Scheme Name	RMA	Partnership	2025/26 Forecast	2025/26 Target (for info only)	Actuals
Liverpool Road, Gt Sankey Surface Water Management Project	LA	Cheshire	0	0	0
Hooton Green, Ellesmere Port	LA	Cheshire	0	0	0
Falcondale Road, Winwick, Warrington	LA	Cheshire	23	0	23
Clifton Villas, Backford	LA	Cheshire	16	0	16
Abbots Mead Industrial Estate, Chester	LA	Cheshire	12	0	0
Carlow Close, Hale Village	LA	Cheshire	9	0	9
St Marys Close, Appleton	LA	Cheshire	5	0	5
Lindow Primary School FAS	LA	Cheshire	0	0	0
Adder Hill Great Boughton	LA	Cheshire	0	0	0
Smithy Brow, Croft, Warrington	LA	Cheshire	2	0	2
West End Road, St Helens	LA	Cheshire	0	11	0
Lower Risk Debris Screen Programme - GMMC	EA	Cross-Partnership	2588	0	2588
Lower Screens Programme 2022-2023	EA	Cross-Partnership	207	0	207
Warwick Bridge PFR scheme	EA	Cumbria	16	16	16
Spittal Farm, Wigton	LA	Cumbria	9	0	9
Etterby Terrace, Carlisle	LA	Cumbria	0	16	0
Guildrey Lane, Sedbergh	LA	Cumbria	0	15	0
Kirkland Road, Ennerdale Bridge	LA	Cumbria	0	21	0
Low Crosby	LA	Cumbria	0	20	0
Maryport Harbour Gates	LA	Cumbria	0	26	0
River Annas, Bootle, Cumbria	LA	Cumbria	0	12	0
Tebay Surface Water Alleviation	LA	Cumbria	0	16	0
Bolton Inlets and Screens Improvement	LA	Greater Manchester	47	0	47
Longford Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme	LA	Greater Manchester	0	76	0
Radcliffe & Redvales FRM Scheme	EA	Greater Manchester	0	1460	0
Turf Hill	LA	Greater Manchester	0	21	0
Wyre Beach Management Scheme	LA	Lancashire	3000	3000	3000
Brecon Road Scheme, Blackburn	LA	Lancashire	0	22	0
Chester Close , Blackburn	LA	Lancashire	0	58	0
Darwen Central , Darwen	LA	Lancashire	0	59	0
Parbold Village Options appraisal and Scheme Delivery	LA	Lancashire	0	40	0
Pendle Level 2 Brierfield Surface Water Management Plan	LA	Lancashire	0	85	0
Preston and South Ribble	EA	Lancashire	0	0	0

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Whalley Surface Water Improvement Scheme	LA	Lancashire	0	35	0
Coronation Park Greasby Flood Relief	LA	Merseyside	0	0	0
TOTAL			5934	5009	5922

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	47	1557	47
Merseyside	1	0	0	0
Cheshire	11	67	11	55
Cumbria	9	25	142	25
Lancashire	8	3,000	3299	3000
Cross-Partnership	2	2,795	0	2795
Total	35	5,934	5,009	5922

Appendix D	North West Capital Efficiencies claimed – 2021- 2026 – Whole Programme
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Scheme	Area	RMA	Efficiency Value (FDGIA)
BWEM Debris Screens	GMC	EA	£67,502
ENVFinchetts Gtr RECON 24-26	GMC	EA	£6,535
ENVPCMLeighEastBedfordBrookAMP	GMC	EA	£21,947
ENVRECON2324 Mersey Assets	GMC	EA	£30,688
Irwell Vale to Chatterton	GMC	EA	£8,564
Lower Risk Debris Screens GMMC Assesments	GMC	EA	£585,626
National Coastal Monitoring Programme (Northwest RCMP)	GMC	LA	£148,208
NW Lower Risk Debris Screens - GMMC	GMC	EA	£346,861
NW Low Risk Debris Screens	GMC	EA	£800
Penketh and Whittle FRMS	GMC	EA	£403,960
Radcliffe and Redvales	GMC	EA	£230,085
River Mersey (South Manchester Catchments) Strategy Project	GMC	EA	£335,977
River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough Flood Risk Management Scheme	GMC	EA	£4,573,165
Sankey Brook FRMS	GMC	EA	£203,211
West Kirby Flood Alleviation Scheme	GMC	LA	£2,565,553
Alt Breach Repair and Maghull Review	CLA	EA	£80,133
Appleby Town Centre FRMS	CLA	EA	£60,497
Caton Road Lancaster Phase 3 FRMS	CLA	LA	£421,687
Catterall Footbridge Replacement	CLA	EA	£148,089
CLA Recovery and Reconditioning	CLA	EA	£171,591
Cockermouth Asset Reconditioning	CLA	EA	£120,036
Cutting the Carbon	CLA	EA	£15,624
Kendal FRMS	CLA	EA	£7,659,109
Low Crosby FRMS	CLA	EA	£620,879
NW Lower Risk Debris Screens - CLA	CLA	EA	£57,811
Pegs Pool & Wardleys Pool, Hambleton	CLA	EA	£122,074
Preston & South Ribble FRMS	CLA	EA	£1,237,920
Preston & South Ricontractor 2le FRMS	CLA	EA	£1,067,165
Recovery and Reconditioning	CLA	EA	£90,254
River Calder, Padiham	CLA	EA	£35,012
Skirting & Whangs Beck FRMS	CLA	EA	£169,495
Threlkeld Urgent Culvert Repair Works	CLA	EA	£105,432
Wyre Beach Management Scheme Phase 2	CLA	LA	£3,171,524
Total efficiencies claimed			£24,883,014

Appendix E	SUMMARY OF ALL IN-YEAR FUNDING SOURCES – BUDGET & FORECAST – 26/27
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North West		BUDGET	Latest Forecast (mid-may)	
		BUDGET(£k)	FORECAST	VARIANCE
GIA	EA	£105,050,084	£99,534,618	-£5,515,466
	RMA	£55,450,425	£52,930,281	-£2,520,144
	TOTAL	£160,500,509	£152,464,899	-£8,035,610
LOCAL LEVY	EA	£5,018,000	£7,283,000	£2,265,000
	RMA	£855,000	£975,000	£120,000
	TOTAL	£5,873,000	£8,258,000	£2,385,000
PF	EA	£1,689,000	£2,341,720	£652,720
	RMA	£2,000,000	£1,115,105	-£884,895
	TOTAL	£3,689,000	£3,456,825	-£232,175
TPE	EA	£111,757,084	£109,159,338	-£2,597,746
	RMA	£58,305,425	£55,020,386	-£3,285,039
	TOTAL	£170,062,509	£164,179,724	-£5,882,785

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Appendix F	NORTH WEST LOCAL LEVY 2026-27 Programme
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Partnership	Scheme Name	RMA Type	2026/27 RFCC scenario (£k)	2026/27 Project Forecast (£k)
Cumbria	Cumbria Quick Win Projects	LA	160	160
Cumbria	Lyth Valley Drainage Investigations	EA	10	10
Cumbria	Waver Wampool Pumping Station Investigation	EA	10	10
Cumbria Total			180	180
Lancashire	Alt Crossens Drainage Investigations	EA	30	30
Lancashire	Preston and South Ribble	EA	2,000	2,000
Lancashire	Lancashire Quick Win Projects	LA	160	160
Lancashire	Pegs Pool and Wardleys Pool, Hambleton	EA	0	241
Lancashire	Wyre NFM (Investment Readiness) Project (ID2)*	EA	55	55
Lancashire	PFR Thurnham	EA	0	254
Lancashire Total			2,245	2,740
Cheshire	Cheshire/Mid-Mersey Quick Win Projects	LA	160	160
Cheshire	Sankey Bk FRM Scheme	EA	302	302
Cheshire	Lindow Community Primary School Flood Alleviation Scheme	LA	0	120
Cheshire/Mid Mersey Total			462	582
Greater Manchester	Greater Manchester Quick Win Projects	LA	160	160
Greater Manchester	River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough FRM Scheme	EA	500	2,000
Greater Manchester	River Roch, Phase 2 Rochdale FRMS	EA	0	380
Greater Manchester Total			660	2,540
Merseyside	Merseyside Quick Win Projects	LA	160	160
Merseyside Total			160	160
Cross-Partnership	Property Flood Resilience - North West	EA	675	675
Cross Partnerhisp Total			675	675
RFCC Business Plan	Building Community Resilience – Flood Hub website (ID5)	EA/LA	122	93
RFCC Business Plan	Building Community Resilience – Support for coastal adaptation engagement (ID6)	EA/LA	11	6

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RFCC Business Plan	Building community resilience – Action campaign (ID7)	EA/LA	132	75
RFCC Business Plan	Mersey Forest NFM Tech App Collab (GMMC-led) (ID9A)	EA	39	39
RFCC Business Plan	NFM Pipeline Development (Cumbria) (ID22)	EA	130	130
RFCC Business Plan	Peat Restoration - Programme development and delivery (ID23)	EA	150	150
RFCC Business Plan	Upper Irwell IWM / NBS Strategy (ID24)	EA	75	75
RFCC Business Plan	Unpave the Way (Front gardens) (ID12)	EA	65	75
RFCC Business Plan	RMA Capacity Building (ID15)	EA	15	15
RFCC Business Plan	Additional capacity – LA Project Advisors and Programme Coordinator (ID16)	EA	402	375
RFCC Business Plan	Additional capacity - Partnership Coordinators (ID16)	LA	210	206
RFCC Business Plan	Additional capacity – Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator (ID16)	LA	55	55
RFCC Business Plan	Support for North West RFCC (Business Plan Implementation) (ID16)	EA	30	30
RFCC Business Plan	RFCC Conferences (ID25)	EA	5	5
RFCC Business Plan	RFCC Business Plan - Unallocated (C&L)	EA	50	50
RFCC Business Plan Total			1,491	1,379
Total Local Levy - North West			5,873	8,258

*Part of RFCC Business Plan

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

Forecast (£k)	2026-27	
	EA	LA
Cumbria	20	160
Lancashire	2,580	160
Greater Manchester	2,380	160
Merseyside	0	160
Cheshire	302	280
Cross-Partnership	675	0
RFCC Business Plan	1,326	55
Total	7,283	975

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Appendix G

2026-27 PROPERTIES BETTER PROTECTED - FORECASTS AND ACTUALS

Scheme Name	RMA	Partnership	2026/27 Forecast	Actuals
Abbots Mead Industrial Estate, Chester	LA	Cheshire	12	
Adder Hill Great Boughton	LA	Cheshire	3	
Clifton Road, Runcorn Culvert Rehabilitation	LA	Cheshire	9	
Hooton Green, Ellesmere Port	LA	Cheshire	26	
Lindow Primary School FAS	LA	Cheshire	4	
Old Mill Place, Tattenhall	LA	Cheshire	10	
The Paddocks, Whitegate	LA	Cheshire	10	
West End Road, St Helens	LA	Merseyside	11	
Balladen Brook Culvert Repair	EA	Environment Agency	35	
Lower Risk Debris Screen Programme - GMMC	EA	Environment Agency	739	
Ashton Hayes PFR Project	LA	Cheshire	13	
Liverpool Road, Gt Sankey Surface Water Management Project	LA	Cheshire	62	62
Shaw, Cringle, Ley and Willow Brook	LA	Greater Manchester	42	
Wigan Structural Survey and Inspection of Poor and Very Poor Assets - Phase 2 Perry Brook	LA	Greater Manchester	30	
Coronation Park Greasby Flood Relief	LA	Merseyside	12	
Longford Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme	LA	Greater Manchester	37	
Lumb Brook, West View, Rossendale	LA	Cross-Partnership	50	
Wyre Beach Management Scheme	LA	Lancashire	6878	
Preston and South Ribble	EA	Lancashire	707	707
Darwen Central , Darwen	LA	Lancashire	69	
Carlisle Appraisal Package Appleby Town Centre	EA	Cumbria	64	
CLA Property Flood Resilience	EA	Cross-Partnership	50	
Brecon Road Scheme, Blackburn	LA	Lancashire	38	
Maryport Harbour Gates	LA	Cumbria	26	
Lindale Road Grange over Sands	LA	Lancashire	23	
Low Crosby	LA	Cumbria	15	
TOTAL			8975	769

AGENDA ITEMS 3, 4, 5, and 6

Partnership	Number of schemes forecasting properties better protected in 2026-27	Total 2026-27 Forecast	Actuals
Greater Manchester	3	109	0
Merseyside	2	23	0
Cheshire	9	149	62
Cumbria	3	105	0
Lancashire	6	7,750	707
Cross-Partnership	3	839	0
Total	26	8,975	769

Environment Agency Briefing Note on Below Required Condition Assets

March 2026

This note is to be shared with our partners and Councillors at the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Finance Sub-Group. Its aim is to give an overview of how we, the Environment Agency, manage flood risk assets.

Visual Inspections

We inspect our flood risk assets through a programme of visual inspections, called our T98 programme. We have specially trained asset inspectors whose job is to walk our defences, embankments and other assets providing us with a visual inspection condition score for our assets.

Condition Grade Score

Our assets are scored on a scale of 1-5, any asset assessed as being a grade 4 or 5 is classed as 'below required condition'. Our Asset Advisors will investigate and bid for funding to repair and make sure it is included within a future year's investment programme.

Action Plan

Once an asset falls below required condition, it is investigated and an agreed improvement plan with contingency measures (if considered necessary) is developed. This action plan is signed off by our Chartered Engineers to ensure governance and technical assurance for our assets.

Repair Deadline

As part of the assurance process our below required condition asset is given a repair deadline date. This is the date by which we aim to repair the asset to prevent it deteriorating further. These are not linked to funding and therefore may alter.

Asset Management Board

As part of our internal governance, we have an Asset Management Governance Board. This addresses the risks our assets pose and provides a decision-making framework for asset issues. Any asset that is urgent or more challenging will be presented to the Board to highlight the risk and seek decisions.

BRC Targets

The Environment Agency have three Key Performance Indicators based on our Below Required Condition Assets, these are:

- Homes at risk from our below required condition assets
- No. of assets repaired before their agreed repair deadline date
- Overall number of below required condition assets (this target only covers Environment Agency High Consequence Flood Assets)

Funding

Three main funding streams:

- Resource Maintenance for inspections, asset maintenance and routine maintenance of watercourses
- Asset Reconditioning for bringing our Below Required Condition Assets back up to operational standard (<£500k)
- Capital Investment Programme – for new build schemes or for larger capital maintenance projects (>£500k)

All these funding streams are under pressure, there are always more bids than money allocated. We prioritise those assets that have been funded and try and maximise our allocation with innovation, seeking efficiencies or with internal delivery.

Delivery & Decommissioning

Some Below Required Condition assets are small in nature and are classified as 'Quick Fixes'. These are usually delivered by our internal workforce and we prioritise to ensure we have undertaken these works within prescribed deadlines. More complex or 'Significant Fixes' are delivered by our supply chain and may take more than 12 months to deliver or be part of a larger Capital replacement scheme within the current investment programme.

Assets that are classified as Below Required Condition but are no longer economic to fix or provide a flood defence benefit can be decommissioned. There is a process which includes discussions with landowners, but funding is extremely limited and therefore a number of assets remain logged as below required condition with limited options for decommission.

Third Party Assets

At third party assets we follow the same visual inspection process, however rather than including any repairs on our asset investment programme, we do issue landowners with a notice informing them of the problem and recommending they rectify.

You can designate flood assets on third party land under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 to prevent alteration or removal. It is not a simple process, and the landowner can challenge the designation, therefore it has a low success rate. It can be time consuming. Lead Local Flood Authorities and District Councils also have the power to designate flood risk assets.

Legal and responsibility

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 requires the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authorities, District and Borough Councils, Water and Sewerage Companies and Highway Authorities

to co-operate with each other, act in a manner that is consistent with the National Strategy and exchange information. They have the flexibility to form partnerships and to act on behalf of one another.

Riparian Responsibilities – owners must keep the bed and banks of watercourses clear, including trees, shrubs and debris to ensure natural flow is not impeded.

Asset Maintenance – if a structure (e.g. bridge, outfall, culvert) is within your landownership then it is the yours (landowners responsibility) to maintain to help prevent any blockages that might cause flooding.

Legal Liability – Landowners may be liable for damages if a failure to maintain their assets leads to flooding of neighbouring properties.



Figure 1 Platt Bridge Flooding New Year's Day 2025

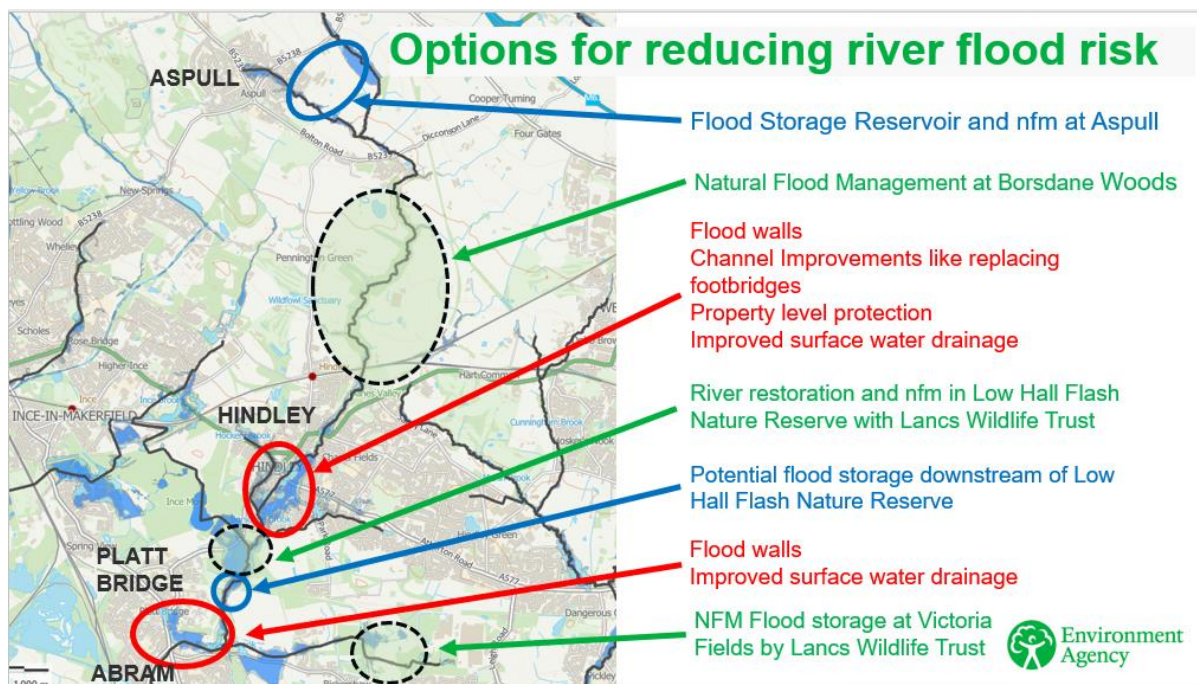
Introduction/Background

Provide background to the flooding problem, the location, and numbers of properties affected

The area around Hindley, Platt Bridge and Abram in Wigan has suffered frequent flooding from both river and surface water. The most significant floods were Boxing Day 2015 when 44 homes and businesses flooded and on New Year's Day 2025 when 56 properties flooded, mostly from the river.

Who are the key partners involved in finding a solution, e.g. local council, community groups etc.

The Environment Agency has been working closely with Wigan Council, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and United Utilities (UU) to develop an approach to managing flood risk from all sources in an integrated way, as part of the Greater Manchester Integrated Water Management plan (GMIWMP). Since the New Year's Day Flood of 2025, the partnership has been working in an unprecedented way and have, along with the local Flood Action Groups, developed an action plan which can be found here [Action Plan](#). This includes measures to improve flood warning, reduce flood risk from surface water and implement natural flood management (NFM) proposals. Delivering the EA led Hindley, Platt Bridge and Abram Flood Risk Scheme that will reduce the risk of river flooding is a key part of that plan.



Scheme Development Briefly describe the preferred option and key milestone dates for business case approval and when construction is currently programmed to start and finish. The EA flood risk scheme is in appraisal and will select a preferred option in summer 2026. The project is programmed to begin construction in 2030 and complete in 2034. We are considering a wide range of options which are shown above. The scheme is likely to consist of a large flood storage basin at Aspull, flood walls in Hindley and Platt Bridge and NFM where there is opportunity.
What are the estimated scheme benefits? The benefits of the overall scheme are likely to be around £100 million.
How many residential properties will benefit? Our modelling shows that there are 594 properties at risk from a flood with a 1 in 100 chance (1% Annual Exceedance probability). Most of these are homes. Are the properties in a deprived area? Platt Bridge is in the top 3% most deprived wards in England. Hindley is in the top 30% most deprived wards. Of the 594 properties at risk almost 70%, about 400 properties, are in the 40% most deprived wards in England.
Will the scheme benefit any non-residential properties, i.e. business, industry, critical infrastructure? Yes, several small local businesses and shops, the largest being Home Bargains and an Iceland store. There are many small businesses in the Hindley Business Centre. Several United Utilities pumping stations would also benefit from the main scheme along with some electricity substations.
Will the scheme benefit any properties/ non-residential properties against flood risk in 2040 ? Yes. We have modelled the impact of climate change and know how risk will change under climate change scenarios.
Are there any Environmental benefits? Yes, the scheme includes the NFM at Victoria Fields and Low Hall Flash that is being implemented this year with funding from the RFCC. The flood storage reservoir at Aspull presents an

opportunity to create some habitat and the landowner is keen to work with us on that, and of course we will have to deliver a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain.															
Will the scheme promote regeneration? Both Hindley and Platt Bridge town centres have been blighted by flood risk so reducing flood risk will help the towns to prosper.															
Set out key milestone dates for business case approval and when construction is currently programmed to start and finish. OBC approval 2027, FBC 2029, construction 2030-2034															
What's the expected impact if the Local Levy funding requested is not approved now? For example, would this prevent the scheme from proceeding in line with the current planned timescale? Consider a PESTLE analysis: Without Local Levy funding the scheme could not proceed. <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Factor</th><th>Impact</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Political</td><td>The Bickershaw Lane flood group is very active, and the Local MP, Josh Simons, and Andy Burnham have been supportive of us and the group in development of this scheme</td></tr> <tr> <td>Economic</td><td>Platt Bridge and Hindley are deprived areas whose town centres are blighted by flood risk.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Social</td><td>Recent floods have had a very negative effect on people's mental and physical health</td></tr> <tr> <td>Technological</td><td>None</td></tr> <tr> <td>Legal</td><td>None</td></tr> <tr> <td>Environmental</td><td>Opportunities for habitat creation lost.</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Factor	Impact	Political	The Bickershaw Lane flood group is very active, and the Local MP, Josh Simons, and Andy Burnham have been supportive of us and the group in development of this scheme	Economic	Platt Bridge and Hindley are deprived areas whose town centres are blighted by flood risk.	Social	Recent floods have had a very negative effect on people's mental and physical health	Technological	None	Legal	None	Environmental	Opportunities for habitat creation lost.
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Technological	None														
Legal	None														
Environmental	Opportunities for habitat creation lost.														

Funding and External Contributions
What is the estimated scheme cost? Current estimates are £30 to 50 million with our most likely estimate of £40 million. However, this depends on the economic appraisal and option selection which we are currently undertaking.
Explain how much FCRM GIA funding the scheme is currently able to attract under partnership funding rules and what work has been done to attract external contributions from beneficiaries. The extent to which other funding sources are still being pursued and any level of confidence attached to those needs to be made explicitly clear, providing an indication of the likelihood of the Levy contribution being required in full or in part. The scheme can attract 90% FDGIA for costs over £3 million, so for a £40 million scheme that would equate to £36.3 million. The Environment Agency has been working closely with Wigan Council and Greater Manchester Combined Authority to identify funding opportunities. Although it is too early to secure legally binding commitments, Wigan Council have provided a letter of intent to express their intent to contribute £3 million to the scheme. The exact figure and how this will be provided will depend on the option chosen. The EA will also be talking to other beneficiaries like UU, Home Bargains and Iceland to explore further contributions, but they are not expected to be very significant.
What is the current funding gap and how much local levy contribution is required. In what year will the levy funding be required? The new funding rules stipulate that we need a minimum contribution of 10%. For a £30 million scheme the £3m from Wigan would fill the funding gap, however, for a £50 million scheme, this would leave us £2 million short. We know that we may need to overfill the funding gap to be successful, so we are asking the RFCC to support us with a contribution of £2 million to be paid in 2031 to 2035. The reason for asking for the contribution now is that for the past few years we have not been

allocated FDGiA to develop the appraisal and so have had to rely on Local Levy and FDGiA underspend. This is because we had no evidence that anyone would fill the funding gap. We now have a commitment from Wigan Council and with an agreement in principle from the RFCC we can show the national allocation team that the funding gap will be filled, which would increase its priority nationally and its chances of being allocated FDGiA. Although Local Levy has been allocated to this project before we have never actually spent it as underspend in the FDGiA programme has been utilised instead. However, this type of funding makes it difficult to plan and develop the project efficiently.

The new funding policy means there are lots of projects that now just need 10% funding, but there is not enough money to fund all of them. Projects will be funded by the size of their Benefit divided by the FDGiA cost, so overfilling the gap will increase that Benefit Cost Ratio and so increase the chances of being funded. With the contribution from Wigan Council and Local Levy totalling £5 million, we can fill the gap for a £50 million scheme and for schemes of lower cost we can increase the BCR and so increase the chances of being allocated FDGiA.

The figures below show the potential spend profile. It shows that the contribution can be spread over a number of years so the ask in any one year does not overstretch the budget. The figures are indicative and with construction being a long way off they will change. We will engage with the RFCC as the business case develops with more cost certainty.

Funder	Previous years	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34	34-35	Future	Total
FDGiA	£ 1,700	£ 500	£ 2,500	£ 650	£ 250	£ 7,200	£ 15,450	£ 8,800			£ 37,050
Local Levy						£ 600	£ 800	£ 400	£ 200		£ 2,000
Wigan				£ 100	£ 250	£ 500	£ 750	£ 750	£ 150	£ 500	£ 3,000
Others							£ 100	£ 100			£ 200
Total	£ 1,700	£ 500	£ 2,500	£ 750	£ 500	£ 8,300	£ 17,100	£ 10,050	£ 350	£ 500	£ 42,250

Recommendation

We are asking for £2million Local Levy to be allocated to this project in years 2031-32 to 2034-35. Together with a contribution of £3 million from Wigan Council and other smaller contributions yet to be secured, we think this will form a compelling case for about £35 million FDGiA to reduce flood risk to over 500 homes and businesses in Hindley, Platt Bridge and Abram.

Appendix J	RFCC BUSINESS PLAN – PROJECT SUMMARIES
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More details on all the projects and their outputs are available on the [RFCC SharePoint site](#).

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Total investment (2022 – 2026) (£K)	2025/26 Allocation (£K)	2025/26 Actual (£K)	2026/27 Allocation (£K)	2026/27 Forecast (£K)
ACCESSING INVESTMENT AND FUNDING								
ID1	Investment mapping project	Complete	This project 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. Outputs have been shared, and recommendations are being explored for making the spatial data readily accessible and easy to use.	45	0	0	0	0
ID2.1	Wyre NFM Project (Investment in the dev't of innovative green finance mechs)	Green	Installation of NFM measures by the project was completed on target. A key objective of the project is to trial an innovative green finance vehicle. The RFCC agreed to be a 'buyer' of the ecosystem services (flood risk reduction) being provided by the NFM interventions and is contracted to make annual payments until 2030.	120	52	53	55	55
BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE								
ID5	The Flood Hub	Green	The Flood Hub website remains live and continues to act as an important information resource for the public and communities while new contractual arrangements are established, expected to be by end of July 2026. The costs will be lower for 2026/27 than in previous years due to the break in service.	435	119	120	122	93

AGENDA ITEMS 3, 4, 5, and 6

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Total investment (2022 – 2026) (£K)	2025/26 Allocation (£K)	2025/26 Actual (£K)	2026/27 Allocation (£K)	2026/27 Forecast (£K)
ID5A	The Flood Hub – Expansion trial	Amber	We are conducting a limited trial with South West RFCC to test extending the use of the website to another RFCC. Their progress is also dependent on the NW tender process completing and is therefore behind schedule. There is a possibility that the trial may not progress if they cannot achieve use of the site early enough for their purposes and funding availability.	0	0	0	0	0
ID6	Supporting community engagement on adapting to coastal change	Amber	There will be a break in service from 1 April until the new contract is in place (estimated July 2026). The costs will be lower for 2026/27 than in previous years due to the break in service.	40	10	10	11	6
ID7	Action campaign – Flood resilience	Amber	There is currently a break in this service from 1 April until the new contract is in place (estimated July 2026). The costs will be lower for 2026/27 than in previous years due to the break in service.	493	128	128	132	75
ID8	Flood Poverty Project	Complete	Led by Rochdale Borough Council and the National Flood Forum, this project has provided better understanding of the factors affecting ‘flood poverty’ and their impact. It carried out a neighbourhood scale review and programme to test, share and recommend practical approaches to addressing ‘flood poverty’ issues and achieving more sustainable property level resilience outside of post flood event recovery schemes.	73.2	0	0	0	0

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Total investment (2022 – 2026) (£K)	2025/26 Allocation (£K)	2025/26 Actual (£K)	2026/27 Allocation (£K)	2026/27 Forecast (£K)
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.	16.6	0	0	0	0
ID9A	NFM Technical Appraisal and Delivery Manager 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. The variance of actual to allocation for 2025/26 is due to the payments for 2024/25 and 2025/26 both falling in 2025/26. An extension for another four years was approved by the RFCC in January 2026.	108.8	35	67	39	39
ID23	Peatland restoration funding development	Green	Different approaches to planning and delivering peatland restoration are required across the three peat partnerships in Cumbria, Lancashire and in the south Pennines. Procurement/contractual arrangements are being worked through with some delays due to changes in procurement legislation and Defra procedures which are outside NW control.	0	0	0	150	150

AGENDA ITEMS 3, 4, 5, and 6

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Total investment (2022 – 2026) (£K)	2025/26 Allocation (£K)	2025/26 Actual (£K)	2026/27 Allocation (£K)	2026/27 Forecast (£K)
ID19	NFM project delivery	Complete	Forest Hills (£30K) was completed in 2022/23. Smithy Brook (£9K) project completed in August 23.	39	0	0	0	0
ID20	Land management engagement	Complete	The Cumbria partnership in conjunction with the CiFR project designed and led the 'Landscape in a Changing Climate' conference held in Kendal on 9 October 2025. An agreed action will take forward recommendations as business as usual activity.	0	12	0	0	0
ID22	NFM Pipeline Development (Cumbria)	Amber	Project has been re-scoped in light of developments around the country and the revised national investment policy. To maximise opportunities, it is the intention to use the Environment Agency's research framework and combine Local Levy with CiFR funding, which would allow more flexibility and support research outputs. Procurement and financial arrangements are still being worked through. Work will commence in 2026/27.	0	60	0	130	130
ID24	Upper Irwell Integrated Water Mgt (and NBS) Strategy	Green	Ongoing multi-partner project to enable and support landowner engagement in the Upper Irwell to develop NFM opportunities and secure funding.	0	0	0	75	75

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Total investment (2022 – 2026) (£K)	2025/26 Allocation (£K)	2025/26 Actual (£K)	2026/27 Allocation (£K)	2026/27 Forecast (£K)
ACHIEVING CLIMATE RESILIENT PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE								
ID10	Evidence gathering – Climate resilience within planning & dev't	Complete	Liverpool University student projects carried out projects gathering evidence on planning and flood risk across the North West in 2022/23 and 2023/24. Project came to a natural conclusion and the RFCC lost its direct link into Liverpool University due to a change in RFCC membership. A summary presentation was provided to the RFCC meeting in October 2025.	0	0	0	0	0
ID12	Unpave the Way	Green	LA webpage template has been out for consultation and is being finalised in preparation for roll-out. The Householder SuDS Guide is now out for consultation.	201	79	67	65	75
ID4/13	Data sharing and mapping of flood risk and drainage assets	Complete	Phase 3 and the final report made a series of potentially significant and substantial recommendations around better data sharing between partners, and the focus of work has now moved to exploring the feasibility of these between the partners.	197	0	0	0	0
ID21	Highways SuDS Design Guide	Complete	A technical guide to support the delivery of more SuDS in complex urban environments that are buildable, adoptable, maintainable and value for money, both as retrofit (street improvement schemes) and as part of new developments. Guide has now been published and is available on the RFCC SharePoint site.	20	0	0	0	0

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Total investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	2025/26 Allocation (£K)	2025/26 Actual (£K)	2026/27 Allocation (£K)	2026/27 Forecast (£K)
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 building programme	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 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. Currently an increased need due to significant changes to investment policy but much is being provided by EA nationally. No Levy funding has been required to support this project to date. A small amount of funding is earmarked should needs not be able to met through other funding or mechanisms.	0	15	0	15	0

ID	Project title	Progress (RAG) rating	Update	Total investment (2022 – 2025) (£K)	2025/26 Allocation (£K)	2025/26 Actual (£K)	2026/27 Allocation (£K)	2026/27 Forecast (£K)
ID16	Additional capacity (to support the RFCC, partnerships and RMAs)	Green	Partnership Co-ordinators – all five roles filled and ongoing. LA Project Advisers – one vacancy in GMMC Area since June. Capital Programme Co-ordinator – role filled and ongoing. Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator – role filled, ongoing. Part contribution for RFCC Business Plan implementation management resource ongoing. All funding approved until March 2027. A review is commencing now to consider updated needs in light of new funding policy.	2263	682	617	696	666
ID17	NW Coastal Centre of Excellence - Develop business case	Complete / Proposed for closure	Partner engagement carried out through 2025. Using a series of pilot projects (inc Morecambe Bay Study/strategy to further develop and test the CoCE concept. Now named 'Future Coast North West'. As this develops, further work and funding will be needed to scope opportunities, delivery, and test the impact/ value of the CoCE. Final project phase report produced.	0	25	25	0	0
ID18	RFCC SharePoint site	Complete	Site now established. The Investment Programme section of the site needs review to reflect government investment reforms.	0	0	0	0	0
ID25	RFCC workshops/ conferences	Green	Earmarked funding to enable RFCC-wide additional workshops or conferences. May be required to help fund July 2026 workshop.	0	0	0	5	5

North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee



July 2026 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 2nd April 2026 to the 22nd June 2026. 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	3	0	0
Merseyside	0	0	0	0
Greater Manchester	1	6	0	0
Lancashire	0	1	0	0
Cumbria	0	2	0	0

3. Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) update

In May, we published our Strategic Context document. This marks the first step of our DWMP28 journey, setting out how we will develop the plan and our strategic ambitions for the next 25 years. Stakeholder input and strategic priorities have played a key role in shaping this document. You can read the document here: [DWMP-strategic-context-document.pdf](#)

We have been busy engaging with stakeholders both internally and externally throughout May and June to develop the suite of potential options that could be used to address current or future risk across all aspects of drainage and wastewater – this will form our Options Toolkit. We have engaged with over 60 stakeholders through the North West DWMP Stakeholder Group, Catchment Partnerships, and Strategic Flood and Coastal Risk Partnerships, who have provided us with more than 70 options, almost half of which focused on nature-based solutions and sustainable drainage systems. If you or your organisation are aware of options that you could deliver, or we could deliver in partnership, to address risks such as surface water flooding and water quality deterioration, we'd love to hear from you at DWMP@uuplc.co.uk.

4. Integrated Water Management

4.1 Cumbria

The Carlisle Integrated Water Management approach continues to make progress with partners working collaboratively, following the identification of the priority areas and the four key workstreams.

Workstream-focused sessions, bringing together key organisations, took place in April and organisations explored challenges, risks and opportunities resulting in workstream action plans. The next workstream sessions are planned for July.

To support the Carlisle IWM approach we have established a governance structure, comprising of convening a steering group with representatives from each organisation. The first steering group meeting was held in April with the next scheduled in for September.

As part of the AMP8 period (2025-2030), we have secured investment to develop a Net Zero Catchment Strategy for the St. Cuthberts Garden Village in Carlisle. The final deliverable will be a sustainable water and wastewater masterplan that is developed in collaboration with a wide range of partners and places Net Zero at the heart of development planning to balance investment needs with minimising long term impacts. Initial engagement has been completed across UU and key external stakeholders, including Eden Rivers Trust, Cumberland Council and the Environment Agency. Stakeholders and alignment opportunities have been mapped; delivery partners will now develop a long list of options which will be shortlisted using a carbon focused multi criteria analysis, including wider ecosystem benefits to identify the preferred solution.

4.2 Lancashire

We continue to explore potential geographic areas which would benefit from an IWM approach across Lancashire and continue to support collaborative working particularly across the Fylde Coast.

We continue to work internally to assess opportunities we received following a data share activity held with catchment partnerships to encourage identification of potential partnership opportunities. They have all now been reviewed internally and we have allocated a status to them. Targeted follow up conversations are underway with key stakeholders to discuss and explore potential partnership opportunities.

4.3 Greater Manchester

Hindley IWMP activity is ongoing. An [updated action plan](#) was published in February 2026 on the Wigan Council website reporting on progress over the last six months, and a further update will be published later this year. Further modelling work by Jacobs on permanent solutions to alleviate surface water flooding in Keats Way is near completion with final report and write up due in July 2026. The collaborative team presented a well-attended workshop at Flood & Coast 2026 called 'Collaborating to create resilience' highlighting what was done as part of the 2025 sprint, lessons learnt and applying the readiness matrix developed after the sprint to assess participants' readiness to undertake collaboration at pace.

UUW has been part of the development of the Stockport Integrated Drainage Strategy (IDS) and remains a key partner in the development of phase 2 which is now well underway. The IDS outlines a coordinated, place-based approach to managing surface water and flood risk in the town centre through measures like watercourse creation, SuDS, and nature-based solutions. 'Phase 2' is about turning the strategy into a delivery plan, with prioritised ranking of solutions and potential funding streams identified.

UU has supported and attended the local authority 'roadshow' sessions being run by GM IWMP to engage the local authorities on risk mapping and priority areas for flood risk.

4.4 Merseyside

The Merseyside trilateral partnership continues to focus on the development of the Integrated Water Management Plan (IWMP) and the practical arrangements needed to deliver it effectively. A draft governance structure, core team membership, and an IWMP delivery roadmap have now been developed and workshops are underway to develop strategic actions and programmes of work that will address key enabling areas in the IWMP.

The Vision Mersey Integrated Water Management Investigations programme has continued to mature, with preliminary typology outputs being produced and forming the basis of ongoing optioneering processes.

A core focus of the team has been engaging with Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and Local Authorities and having targeted discussions around upcoming Transport for City Regions funded programmes of work (like active travel schemes) and identifying how UU can work with these stakeholders to integrate the UU IWMI required works into their programmes of work. Work continues to formalise engagement formats and mature these working relationships to identify consistent routes for integrating LA priorities, datasets, and growth plans into the UU ways of working.

4.5 Cheshire

Activity across Cheshire has continued to evolve in the context of emerging devolution arrangements and the opportunity to shape integrated water management at both county-wide and hyper-local scales. Over the last six months, the team has progressed early foundational discussions around a post-devolution Cheshire-wide IWMP, while also developing place-based opportunities (notably Crewe) and monitoring strategic growth proposals that may influence long-term water management needs.

Continued involvement in the development of the Weaver Gowy Nature Based Solutions (NbS) feasibility study has built a greater understanding on catchment scale ecological drivers in the region and is generating opportunities for proliferation of NbS.

5. Rainwater Management

5.1 Partnership funding opportunity

UU is still offering funding to partners who are designing and delivering projects which are reducing or slowing the grey area draining to the combined sewer. The most successful projects so far have been growth and active travel projects in local authorities. These projects are often reducing the amount of grey area draining to the combined sewer network by disconnections or slowing the flow by installing sustainable drainage.

However, directly related to flood risk management, LLFA and EA led projects reducing flood risk could also be eligible if criteria are met and the project is disconnecting or attenuating surface water using sustainable drainage. This does include NFM as well as SuDS and straight disconnections; UU contributed to the recent Warrington flood risk management project as this criterion was met. Warrington Council blended funds from UU, EA and Warrington Council to make the scheme successful; it is an example of

how other flood risk management projects could become viable with UU funding provided hard standing area is being removed, or slowed, from entering the combined sewer system.

Where projects have not proposed SuDS or funding is not allowing the installation of SuDS, UU can support with funding for drainage features which will reduce flows to the combined sewer (subject to terms and conditions).

If you have projects you would like to discuss **please email** sharma.jencitis@uuplc.co.uk.

5.2 Liverpool City Centre

UU sponsored Flood and Coast 2026 in Liverpool. We used the opportunity to show work we have been doing around Liverpool City Centre, and how we plan to expand this through £30 million of investment to create a 'spongier city' in Liverpool over the next 4 years.

This will include the creation of a long-term plan for the Liverpool City Region which will reduce rainwater entering the combined sewer system by holding flows where they fall through SuDS and, where possible, identifying innovative ways of draining directly to watercourses. Although a UU led plan, success will not be possible without working with our partners and their programmes. We will be arranging partnership steering groups in due course.

RFCCs | Environment Agency FCERM Update

June 2026

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Weather events

Weather outlook

The latest Flood Outlook from the Flood Forecasting Centre published on 29 May 2026 shows significant or severe flooding is considered unlikely throughout this period, although surface water flooding remains possible at times.

The [latest 3 month outlook](#) by the Met Office, published on 1 June 2026 shows the chances of a wet season are slightly higher than normal, however near average rainfall remains the most likely outcome. In addition, the chance of a hot summer is higher than normal, which brings an increased risk of heatwaves and heat-related impacts.

**FLOOD
FORECASTING
CENTRE**

Met Office

Looking at dry weather and drought, we entered spring with our water resources in a strong position following a wet winter, but conditions have been consistently dry since mid-March 2026. April rainfall was just 38% of the long-term average, with parts of eastern England much lower. There are no drought areas currently, but river flows are declining and pressures are building. Groundwater remains relatively healthy in some areas, helping to moderate impacts for now.

The situation could evolve quickly so we're preparing early including with enhanced monitoring and incident readiness; and engaging with water companies and others. The National Drought

Customer service line 03708 506 506

Floodline 0345 988 1188

Incident hotline 0800 80 70 60

Page 1 of 8

Group (NDG) met on 18 June 2026 to strengthen cross-sector preparedness. You can read more about how drought is managed in England [here](#).

FCRM investment programme update

Previous programme ends, new programme begins

The flood and coastal erosion risk management (FCERM) investment programme, investing £2.65 billion from 2024 to 2026, ended on 31 March 2026.



On 15 April 2026 we [announced](#) that the total number of properties better protected through flood defences over this period was 61,898, exceeding our original target of 52,000, with over 250 additional projects completed. Of these, over 20,000 properties were from schemes led by other Risk Management Authorities (inc. local councils, internal drainage boards, and water companies).

A new 3-year £4.2 billion FCRM Investment Programme and asset maintenance started on 1 April 2026, allocating investment where flood and coastal risk and vulnerability are greatest, using government's new funding policy.

We will start reporting against the new metric of Properties Benefitting. The new metric includes all properties within an area of land that would benefit from FCERM investment.

Events

Flood and Coast conference and announcements

The [annual Flood and Coast conference](#) took place at the Exhibition Centre, Liverpool from 9 to 11 June 2026. The event was a huge success in its new location, attracting thousands of delegates, stakeholders and speakers across the 3 days.

The conference programme was designed to address priorities such as: flood and coast policy and the strategic landscape; skills and workforce; innovation in delivery; water, nature and climate resilience; and community resilience and social value.



As well as the Environment Agency stand at the conference, for the first time we supported a Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) pod. This was designed to showcase some of the great work of RFCCs.

Emma Causer, Chief Executive Officer of CIWEM opened the conference, followed by a keynote speech by the Environment Agency's Chief Executive Officer, Philip Duffy, and a virtual address by Minister Hardy.



During her address, Minister Hardy [announced](#) the Somerset Flood Resilience Fund of £50m over 2 years. This fund was announced to enable Somerset Council to take targeted action to protect the homes, farms and businesses most vulnerable to our changing climate. This follows

the exceptionally wet winter in Somerset, which recorded the second wettest January and February on record, with more than double the average rainfall. Somerset Council will oversee the fund with an aim to improve local flood resilience in Somerset. It will convene and lead a group of local partners to identify and implement local actions in Somerset to achieve this.

We also confirmed that we had exceeded our target for maintaining vital flood infrastructure in 2025/26, with 93% of flood defences now meeting their required standard against a target of 92%. This follows a £72 million reprioritisation in 2025 to repair and restore critical flood assets across England.

Additionally, we also launched a new National Flood Forecasting and Warning Service. The 170-strong team brings together flood forecasting, modelling, and warning functions into a single, unified national operation, to deliver a faster, more consistent response to flooding events.

The [Environment Agency's Flood and Coast Excellence Awards 2026](#) were held at the conference on 10 June 2026. The winners in each category were:

- 🏆 Climate Resilient Asset Management & Engineering – Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme (Phase Two), BAM
- 🏆 Community Action – Project Groundwater Innovation Fund, Project Groundwork London and South
- 🏆 Digital Excellence – Bridgwater Tidal Barrier - Detailed Design Phase, AtkinsRealis
- 🏆 Early Career Professional – Rebekah Alford, JBA Consulting
- 🏆 Innovation in Climate Resilience – Canvey Island Southern Shoreline (Team 2100), Balfour Beatty (Part of Team 2100 with Jacobs and Environment Agency)
- 🏆 Resilience in Action – The PFR England Home Insurance Survey, Rochdale Borough Council and JBA Consulting
- 🏆 Surface Water Management – Action for Silk Stream, Barnet Council
- 🏆 Working with Nature – Beetham, Bullgill, and Brock Eel Passage Projects, Lancashire and Cumbria, A E Yates LTD

Coastal Practitioners conference

The 2026 Coastal Practitioners conference took place between 12 and 14 May 2026 at The Grand Pier in Weston-super-Mare.

It was hosted by the Environment Agency's Wessex Coastal team, working in partnership with the Severn Estuary and South West Coastal Groups and North Somerset Council. The conference was also sponsored by Balfour Beatty, Moffatt & Nichol and Coastsense.

The conference brought together over 200 coastal practitioners from a range of organisations to consider the theme of “our coastal legacy”. Presentations and site visits explored the legacy of coastal Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management, reflecting on where we have come from and what legacy we want to leave behind.



Working with FCERM stakeholders

FCERM Strategy refresh

The current [National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management \(FCERM\) Strategy for England](#) was published in 2020 and sets out a long-term vision for “a nation ready for, and resilient to, flooding and coastal change – today, tomorrow and to the year 2100.”



The Strategy is a legal requirement under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and sets the direction for our work and that of other Risk Management Authorities. We made a commitment in the current Strategy to review it in 2026.

At the end of April 2026, Minister Hardy wrote to Environment Agency Chair Alan Lovell to confirm her priorities for the FCERM Strategy refresh. This letter was [published on GOV.UK](#) and a [Written Ministerial Statement](#) was put before Parliament on 20 May 2026.

On 8 May 2026, a webinar was held to introduce the National FCERM Strategy refresh to external stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement to explore the key themes for the refresh has begun and will continue over the coming months. This includes topics such as coastal adaptation, lowland and rural resilience, infrastructure, community resilience, insurance and finance, surface water and groundwater.

We are keeping stakeholders and the public updated on the progress of the refresh using an [external engagement website](#). A Strategy Advisory Group has been established to help guide the Strategy refresh. This group met for the first time on 30 April 2026 and is made up of representatives from Risk Management Authorities and other organisations such as infrastructure providers, environmental groups and community resilience representatives.

RFCC Chairs are represented on the Strategy Advisory Group by portfolio holder Jocelyn Manners-Armstrong, supported by Paul Learoyd. We plan to consult on the refreshed Strategy during autumn 2026. The refreshed Strategy will be laid in Parliament and then published in 2027.

Floods Resilience Taskforce

On 8 June 2026, the [Floods Resilience Taskforce](#) held its 7th meeting at the Met Office in Exeter. The taskforce discussed items on: Social and behavioural science in inclusive warning and informing, the new Environment Agency’s National Flood Warning and Forecasting Service, and progress on the Flood Ready Review.

An item to formalise a Skills and Training for Resilience, Empowerment and Adaptation in flood Risk Management (STREAM) Implementation Group was also discussed, sponsored by Paula Hewitt and Adrian Lythgo (RFCCs Chairs).

There were also updates on the Communications and Community Engagement Action Group, the Maintenance Action Sub-Group, and the FCERM Strategy Refresh. Outstanding actions from previous taskforces were also raised. The next Taskforce is due to be held in September 2026.

Relaunch of the Commercial Business Support Team

The Environment Agency has relaunched its Commercial Business Support Team to strengthen the support available to Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) and partners in accessing and utilising Environment Agency frameworks. The team is currently supporting a significant portfolio of 180 projects, delivering, and enabling 9,558 properties to benefit from flood risk improvements, including 141 completed, 1,874 in delivery, 5,711 in pipeline, and 1,832 in development.

The team's focus is to provide practical commercial support and clear guidance throughout the procurement process, helping RMAs navigate compliant routes to market and make effective use of existing frameworks. Working closely with delivery teams, suppliers, and partners, with engagement already established across 201 RMAs, the team is helping to remove barriers, improve consistency, and strengthen commercial assurance. This is enabling projects to move more confidently and efficiently from concept through to delivery.

For RFCC Chairs, this relaunch provides greater visibility and assurance over how frameworks are being used to support local priorities. It offers a more joined-up and accessible approach to commercial support, helping to accelerate project mobilisation and maximise outcomes from investment. Chairs are encouraged to promote engagement with the team across their regions to ensure RMAs are making full use of the support available.

If you would like further advice or support, please contact CBST@environment-agency.gov.uk - our team is always happy to help.

TEAM2100 close out and newly formed Thames Programme Delivery Department

After 10 years of delivery, the Thames Estuary Asset Management 2100 Programme (TEAM2100) officially closed in March 2025. Following the closure it was revealed this year that all projects within the programme were substantially completed with Outcomes Measures achieved on schedule.



The TEAM2100 Programme better protected over 34,000 properties from flooding and achieved efficiency savings exceeding its target, totalling £111m.

A newly formed Thames Programme Delivery Department, led by FCRM Director Cath Bremner, brings together 2 major delivery programmes, the River Thames Scheme and Thames Estuary 2100. This incorporates:

- The River Thames Scheme, which is planning to manage fluvial flood risk to over 11,000 homes between Egham and Teddington. This scheme, which has been in a period of reset, will be recommissioned over the next few months and progress towards Outline Business Case approval.
- The Thames Estuary Phase 2 (TEP2), which will manage tidal flood risk to 1.51m people between Teddington and the sea. The immediate priority is scoping and progressing the Options Reappraisal, which will indicate the future direction of the strategy and scale of delivery during TEP2.
- The department also includes delivery of the wider TE2100 strategy including recommending a leading option for the future of the Thames Barrier, as well as other key studies, projects and enabling work. The initial priorities for the department are progressing project business cases, developing the legislative and consenting approaches, and determining the preferred funding and financing models. We are progressing discussions with Defra and cross-government to support this work.



FCERM publications and announcements

Flood and Coastal Risk Management Commercial Frameworks

In April 2026 the Environment Agency and Defra Group Commercial worked with the Government Commercial Agency (GCA) to incorporate our specific requirements for flood management into a GCA framework. The framework provides the technical, environmental and commercial services that will support the delivery of our FCRM investment programme.



On 21 April 2026 the Environment Agency awarded the £1.2 billion Beach Management Framework (BMF). This framework delivers specialist services for the movement of sand and shingle to maintain beach profile helping to reduce flood risk, and work on associated coastal assets to maintain flood protection for coastal communities. This framework is open for use by other Risk Management Authorities.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies

The Environment Agency have produced an [animation](#) to explore how Local Nature Recovery Strategies can drive action to reverse nature's decline. In particular the animation focuses on how the actions within the strategies to restore and create habitats will improve the water environment and support species recovery.



Those actions will also deliver wider environmental benefits helping people and wildlife adapt to climate change and reduce its impacts including flooding, drought, sea level rise and coastal erosion.

From restoring damaged peatlands to enhancing rivers, estuaries and coastal habitats, Local Nature Recovery Strategies identify the best actions to take, in the best locations, to deliver locally agreed environmental priorities. Blocking drains on peatlands, re meandering rivers, removing obstructions, reconnecting rivers with their floodplains, restoring rare habitats such as chalk streams, the return of beavers, and planting the right trees in the right places all provide nature based solutions to the challenges that face our environment.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies are in place across England. The priorities and actions are clear. Now it's time to act together to restore nature and create resilient, thriving places that enhance people's lives and contribute to economic growth.

Net Zero Carbon for Infrastructure (NZC4i) award

The Net Zero Carbon for Infrastructure (NZC4i) programme enables the Environment Agency and its partners to cut carbon across our infrastructure. It targets a 45% reduction in emissions from construction and pumping by 2030, rising to 90% by 2050, underpinning the Environment Agency's net zero ambition.



In March 2026 the Institute of Civil Engineers (ICE) notified us that the NZC4i programme was being awarded the ICE Brunel Medal for exceptional engineering excellence and societal impact.

Current & Innovation Flood & Coast special edition

The June 2026 edition of [Current Magazine](#) looks ahead to a rapidly changing world and the growing role asset management plays in shaping sustainable and resilient communities now and in the future.

The magazine features articles including on: asset management and the Bridgwater tidal scheme and Canvey Island; enabling climate resilience case studies; decarbonisation through technology; upcoming delivery frameworks shaping future projects; community focused approaches to flood protection; skills & careers focus; and the Flood and Coast Excellence Awards.



The June 2026 [Innovation Supplement](#) looks at how innovation is transforming the future of flood and coastal engineering in this latest issue.

The magazine features articles including on: developing Artificial Intelligence (AI) debris screen systems and exploring AI asset inspection systems; assessing self-rising flood barriers; phasing out diesel in construction; saving carbon in coastal defences; and reducing carbon in flood infrastructure.



Flood scheme openings and updates

Torcross coastal defence project - urgent works

Severe storms in winter 2025–26 caused extensive damage along the Slapton Line in Dorset, including to the A379 road and the Torcross sea defences, placing lives, homes, businesses and key transport links at risk.



Commissioned in March 2026, the Torcross coastal defence project, commissioned by the Environment Agency, has progressed rapidly, with the procurement strategy approved in April 2026, enabling a £12.3m contract award to Kier on 26 May 2026. We are working with the Marine Management Organisation and Natural England to progress applications for key licences to enable works to start before the winter.

Preston and South Ribble Flood Risk Management Scheme

The final section of Phase 1 flood defences for the Preston and South Ribble scheme has now been completed, providing improved flood protection to over 3,000 homes and businesses, including more than 700 in some of the country's most deprived communities. Planning permission for Phase two has been secured, with construction due to start shortly to protect a further 1,200 properties.



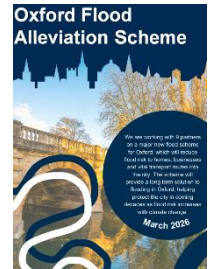
Flood resilience project completed in Stafford

Over 30 properties close to Sandyford Brook in Stafford have [benefitted](#) from the installation of flood resilience measures, including flood doors and pumps. By equipping properties with these measures, the scheme aims to give residents greater peace of mind and reduce the long term impacts of flooding on homes, livelihoods, and wellbeing.



Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme

On 25 February 2026 the Full Business Case for this scheme was presented to Defra's Investment Committee and gained their support. This nature-based solution achieves £1.8 billion in flood damages avoided and is a key supporting element that unlocks a £3.5 billion University of Oxford redevelopment as part of the Oxford to Cambridge growth corridor. It will reduce the risk of flooding for 2,195 properties from the River Thames. The Department of Transport are contributing £72 million to replace the Kennington Railway Bridge, which is in poor condition, and is vital to support the completion of the project.



Other work completed

[Hurst Spit and Lymington draft coastal strategy unveiled - GOV.UK](#)

[Vital annual beach work reduces flood risk on Lincolnshire coast - GOV.UK](#)

[Romsey flood alleviation scheme strengthened with new defences - GOV.UK](#)

[Work begins on Severn Stoke flood scheme - GOV.UK](#)

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Environment Agency

National FCRM Stakeholder Management Team

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June 2026

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE MEETING**10 JULY 2026****ENVIRONMENT AGENCY AURORA TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME****Recommendations**

This briefing note is for information. RFCC Chairs and their officers are asked to:

1. Note the changes to programme, portfolio and project management being delivered through the Aurora Transformation Programme.
2. Note there will be some adjustments to ways of working, processes, and/or points of contact with the Environment Agency (EA).

How will changes under the Aurora Transformation Programme affect RFCCs**Regional Flood & Coast Committee (RFCC) role and the Aurora Transformation Programme**

The changes delivered by the Aurora Transformation Programme will influence how the Environment Agency delivers the flood investment programme more efficiently and effectively. Key to this is supporting the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (RFCCs) to perform their critical role in flood and coastal erosion risk management. RFCCs will continue to set local priorities, consent programmes of work, and raise funding through local levy, ensuring that investment is targeted effectively. The changes being delivered will support local Environment Agency Area teams to strengthen their collaboration with Risk Management Authorities (RMAs), and to continue leading engagement with communities, RFCCs, Mayoral Authorities, MPs, eNGOs, and business, and to continue providing secretariat support to RFCCs.

Key messages – why are we delivering the Aurora Transformation Programme?

- To prepare and enable the Environment Agency (EA) to deliver the new flood investment programme.
- To transform the way we plan, manage, and deliver the Environment Agency's asset management activities in line with the ambitions of its Asset Management Strategy 2023.

What high level benefits does the Aurora Programme aim to achieve?

- Strengthening and standardising the EA's approach to project, programme, and portfolio management.
- Alignment with government project delivery standards and strengthened RFCC/Risk Management Authority (RMA) collaboration.
- Greater national consistency with a continued local focus in investment delivery.
- To address programme delays, delivery inefficiencies and some of the causes of historic overspend on projects.

- To ensure the investment programme is more effective and efficient, increasing 'on the ground' investment outcomes and delivering more at a greater pace.
- Enabling the development of multi-year programmes which give greater stability and delivery confidence for communities. This will also improve our commercial pipeline and resourcing plans, supporting more efficient and effective delivery.
- To strengthen support and oversight for other RMAs to ensure they can proactively navigate and capitalise on the new funding policy. This will be achieved through clear guidance, practical tools, and dedicated resource to actively engage and drive uptake of new opportunities. To better share good practice and innovation across all RMAs.
- To clarify accountability for making decisions on project delivery working within a changed governance framework.

Table 1 below provides an overview of the key Environment Agency services to and interactions with Regional Flood and Coastal Committees. It summarises where the Aurora Transformation Programme will deliver changes to these, and where services and interactions will remain the same, including any changes relevant to Risk Management Authorities (RMAs).

Table 1: What change is the Aurora Transformation Programme introducing?

What?	Is it changing?	If yes – why?	RMA related changes
National allocation process	No – allocations to RFCCs have always been and will continue to be managed centrally via Portfolio Management, Assurance and Commercial (PMAC), within FCRM Directorate.		
RFCC 'local choices'	No – RFCCs will still be able to make local choices within indicative allocations in line with the agreed allocation principles and prioritisation (which we have recently consulted RFCCs on) and the new pipeline. However, RFCCs will have additional early influence upstream of the local choices process to support multi-year pipeline development, as described in the project pipeline section below.		
Project pipeline	Yes (although not previously done), this is an area where RFCCs will have additional early influence.	We haven't had a pipeline previously. Working with local stakeholders RFCCs perform an important role in encouraging new project opportunities to be put forward onto the programme. To support this, we provided RFCCs with tailored	RMAs will submit new project opportunities through the new pipeline approach described in this section, using the new simplified funding guidance and best available evidence.

What?	Is it changing?	If yes – why?	RMA related changes
		guidance (issued on 3 June 2026) so that their programmes begin to reflect the desired outcomes from the new funding policy. Through new simplified funding guidance and using the best available evidence (including NaFRA2, NCERM, SMPs and EA asset information), along with local knowledge/input, EA, other RMAs (Risk Management Authority) and non-RMAs (for Natural Flood Management only) are putting forward new project opportunities. These will focus on the locations at greatest flood and coastal erosion risk and achieve the best value for money. RFCCs will be provided with a long list of eligible projects that provide viable flood risk solutions. They will have the opportunity to remove projects based on local knowledge and identify funding contributions to meet funding gaps. RFCCs can continue to use their local choice to fund projects using local levy, adding these to the long list. RFCCs will not be able to add projects which are not funded by local levy.	
Local levy	No – local levy will still be voted on by RFCC Members, collected by EA centrally and then spent in accordance with direction from the local RFCC. Local levy funded posts that have been approved by RFCCs will remain in local area teams to deliver the work they're intended to. This work will be delivered on behalf of RFCCs and directed by RFCC priorities.		

What?	Is it changing?	If yes – why?	RMA related changes
Programme management	Yes	The long list of eligible project opportunities is prioritised by Portfolio Management, Assurance and Commercial (PMAC) using the agreed prioritisation principles and developed into a multi-year investment programme. RFCCs will continue to consent the programme and have the opportunity to shape it to reflect local priorities, including the decision on where to utilise Local Levy. The RMA programme will be managed by PMAC within the new RMA Programme Office & Grant Allocation team. This new team will work closely with Area teams to support RMAs. The majority of EA programme management activities will be delivered nationally and at a hub level by PMAC and Project and Programme Delivery (PPD). This change will improve and standardise our programme management, align with Government standards and help to address some of the issues around historic overspend, programme delays and inefficiencies.	There is a newly formed RMA Programme Management Office and Grant Allocations Team within the Portfolio Management and Assurance (PMAC) department. The team is currently undergoing design as part of the changes being introduced by the Aurora programme. We will share more about the roles, accountabilities and responsibilities of this new PMO soon. One of the intentions behind creation of the new RMA Programme Management Office is to enable a better balance of allocations between RMA and EA projects.
Physical movement of EA Area Programming staff	No - whilst the majority of programme management activity will be delivered at a hub and national level, and our programme expertise will be working within that new structure, our staff will not physically move offices, and they will retain local knowledge and relationships.		
RFCC committee support	No – RFCCs will continue to be supported by their local area team including their secretariat who will remain within the local area.		

What?	Is it changing?	If yes – why?	RMA related changes
Project delivery	Yes	Project and Programme Delivery (PPD) teams will continue to deliver EA projects, working closely with Area teams, and RMA projects will continue to be managed and delivered by RMAs. PPD teams will continue to be brigaded in three geographical hubs as they are now, and team members will continue to be based locally across England. For EA projects, PPD will make final decisions on projects including project scopes and spend. They will do this working closely with Area teams as now. We are making changes to the accountability and governance frameworks that Environment Agency project delivery teams operate within. There are some small projects that will be delivered differently.	
Community engagement	No – community relationships will continue to be led and managed locally.		
Championing of projects in the local geography	No – this will still be managed locally.		
Natural Flood Management Projects	Yes	Natural Flood Management (NFM) projects are now mainstreamed into the investment programme and will be reviewed against all other new project opportunities. The long list of new project opportunities that RFCCs will review will include NFM projects alongside all other project types.	3 % of the total flood investment programme will be spent on NFM, which is made up of projects delivered by RMAs, non-RMAs and the EA.

What?	Is it changing?	If yes – why?	RMA related changes
		We are committed to spending 3% of the FCRM Investment Programme on NFM, which will be enabled through the allocation process.	
Major Projects	Yes	We are reviewing the way we deliver EA major projects, aligning with government standards and further professionalising our approach to reduce overspends we have seen on major projects in the past. Area teams will continue to lead local relationships and will work closely with major project teams to ensure this is effective.	
Asset Ownership	No - while Project and Programme Delivery teams will be accountable for the delivery of new and refurbished assets, area teams will continue to be the asset owners.		Asset ownership arrangements will remain the same for RMAs.
Engagement with partners, Risk Management Authorities, Mayoral Authorities, eNGOs, MPs, local business.	No - area teams will continue lead these local relationships.		
Securing third party funding	No - area teams will continue to be responsible for this. However, it should be noted that some strategic national partnership opportunities are – and will continue – to be explored and obtained by national teams as well.		
EA engagement with RFCCs	Yes	Area teams will continue to lead on relationships with RFCC Chairs and Members	

What?	Is it changing?	If yes – why?	RMA related changes
and attendance at Committee meetings		and will attend RFCC meetings. PMAC and PPD will continue to engage with RFCCs via the contribution of national papers and items to committee meetings, and direct engagement with RFCC Chairs. PPD Programme Directors will attend RFCCs as relevant to the agenda e.g. for items related to EA FCRM Investment Programme projects or performance where this is led by PPD. PMAC colleagues may attend where relevant on RMA programme items.	

Paper by: Joe Cuthbertson, Deputy Director, Aurora Transformation Programme

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE MEETING**10 JULY 2026****NEW PROJECT OPPORTUNITY SCREENING PROCESS AND RFCC ROLE****Recommendations**

The committee is asked to:

1. Note the updated process and timelines for RFCC review of new eligible project opportunities before they are considered for funding
2. Understand the new role of RFCCs to review the long list of new eligible project opportunities
3. Review the RFCC Tailored guidance including NFM heatmaps to support the development of new project opportunities that align to the government's new floods funding policy
4. Understand the programme wide screening approach to improve initial strategic investment decisions

1.0 New Funding Policy and changes in approach

- 1.1 Defra published their new [Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management \(FCERM\) funding policy](#) on Monday 14 October 2025.
- 1.2 Defra's new funding policy makes significant changes to the FCERM Grant in Aid (GiA) eligibility of projects. It also allows non-risk management authorities (non-RMAs) to apply for funding for natural flood management (NFM) projects only.
- 1.3 There is a greater emphasis on asset management for all risk management authorities (RMAs), making it simpler to fund capital asset refurbishment projects. It also makes it easier to fund resilience actions including NFM, property flood resilience measures (PFR) and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). The new FCERM GiA funding rules are:
 - 100% GiA refurbishing existing RMA FCERM assets
 - for new defences or improving the standard of existing assets
 - 100% eligibility for the first £3m of project cost
 - 90% eligibility over the first £3m of project cost
- 1.4 Defra's new floods funding policy contains the following strategic objectives:
 - value for money
 - reducing flood and coastal erosion risk
 - focussing on deprived areas - at least 20% of FCERM investment will be directed to the most deprived quintile, and at least 40% to the 2 lowest quintiles combined, over both the next 3-year and 10-year periods
 - increasing investment in natural flood management (NFM) - at least 3% of FCERM investment over the next 3 years, and 4% of FCERM investment over the next 10 years is directed to Natural Flood Management (NFM)

- prioritising projects with contributions from others
- 1.5 The new funding policy enhances the role of RFCCs by providing a greater choice of interventions for communities. The strategic objective on additional contributions also enables RFCCs to strategically prioritise projects through encouraging contributions from partners.
 - 1.6 [Guidance](#) has been published to help the Environment Agency (EA), other Risk Management Authorities (oRMAs) and non-RMAs (for NFM only) to apply the new funding policy for new project opportunities. This guidance describes the basic data and information required to determine if a project is eligible for FCERM funding and if it should be put forward for the FCERM investment programme. It explains how to submit project data and information to the Environment Agency.
 - 1.7 A technical support package for colleagues in all RMAs and non-RMAs is being rolled out. This includes short explainer videos for:
 - different stages of project development
 - NFM
 - explaining the new programme metrics
 - understanding how economic benefits for projects are calculated

There have also been question and answer sessions where positive feedback has been received. All support is being published on [Supporting Flood and Coast Projects SharePoint](#) and [Engagement HQ for non-RMAs](#) to access.

- 1.8 We are continuing to convene an RMA Advisory Group which provides updates whilst also giving the opportunity to provide feedback and escalate any concerns.

2.0 RFCC meeting overview and expectations

- 2.1 A significant proportion of the available FCERM GiA funding in the initial years of the investment programme will need to be allocated to projects already in construction. There is also a need to bring on the projects that are well developed so that they can enter construction in the future. RFCCs will continue to review and consent these components of the investment programme through the established routine of meetings. In the early years of the FCERM investment programme, there will be more projects that are eligible for investment than funding available. Projects will need to be prioritised to meet government targets and achieve best value for money.
- 2.2 From the 1 July 2026 all RMAs and non-RMAs (for NFM only) will be able to submit new project opportunities. Each of these opportunities will be screened by the Environment Agency to ensure they have provided all the data and information needed to assess value for money, which will allow project opportunities to be checked against the government's strategic objectives. This will ensure that all new project opportunities are considered equally. New project opportunities will be screened to ensure:
 - the project is eligible for FCERM GiA under the new funding policy
 - there is sufficient data quality to be assessed for the FCERM investment programme
 - there is evidenced, consistent economic benefit and properties benefitting numbers to support prioritisation

- 2.3 After the screening process a long list of new eligible project opportunities will be shared with EA area teams for input. Their understanding of local flood and coastal erosion risk, local priorities, and relationships with oRMAs will help support informed place-based decision-making. This input will ensure initial decisions on early project development account for information not easily obtainable from data sets. For example, growth opportunities, time limited opportunities and linkages to other infrastructure investment. It also ensures that concerns or unintended consequences are highlighted early.
- 2.4 In November 2026, after the screening, there will be an additional RFCC meeting. This is a new stage and ensures that RFCCs have greater involvement in early project development, before any funding allocations for development or commitments are made. RFCCs must follow the new Floods Funding Policy and best available flood and coastal risk evidence when reviewing new eligible project opportunities. Alongside this, they should:
- remove unviable opportunities based on local knowledge
 - identify funding contributions to meet funding gaps (e.g. local levy via local choices)
 - provide additional information related to local prioritisation that could be considered alongside value for money such as opportunities that are time limited

It is important to note that this stage is before new eligible project opportunities go into the planning and allocation process. RFCCs cannot add new project opportunities at this stage unless they are fully local levy funded. Proportionate feedback will be provided to all projects that are either removed through screening or following the RFCC meetings.

3.0 RFCC Tailored Guidance

- 3.1 The RFCC Tailored Guidance (Annex A) provides RFCCs with a strategic overview for the shape of their programme, for all sources of flood risk (except groundwater) and coastal erosion over the next 10-year period based on the new floods funding policy and best available evidence. This evidence includes:
- National Flood Risk Assessment (NAFRA) [New national flood and coastal erosion risk information - GOV.UK](#)
 - National Coastal Erosion Risk Map (NCERM) [New national flood and coastal erosion risk information - GOV.UK](#)
 - Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) [Home | Shoreline Management Plans](#)
 - Environment Agency Asset Data (AIMS:AMP)
 - NFM heat maps [Natural Flood Management \(NFM\) Heat Maps](#)
- 3.2 The aim of the tailored guidance is to:
- allow RFCCs to have an informed overview to develop longer term programmes with stakeholders that align with the new funding policy
 - improve RFCC discussion and decision making in local choices, including the new step of providing steer before a new project opportunity is invested in

- 3.3 The RFCC Tailored Guidance provides a strategic steer – it is not designed to tell RFCCs what types of project to invest in or when to deliver projects. RFCCs are still free to choose how they use local levy through local choices.
- 3.4 The RFCC tailored guidance will evolve on feedback from RFCCs, as projects complete and as our understanding of different risk sources or asset condition changes.

4.0 Recommendations

The committee is asked to:

1. Note the updated process and timelines for RFCC review of new eligible project opportunities before they are considered for funding
2. Understand the new role of RFCCs to review the long list of new eligible project opportunities
3. Review the RFCC Tailored guidance including NFM heatmaps to support the development of new project opportunities that align to the government's new floods funding policy
4. Understand the programme wide screening approach to improve initial strategic investment decisions

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Date: June 2026

Appendix A RFCC Tailored guidance



RFCC Tailored Guidance

2026/27



North West RFCC

Supporting RFCC investment choices

May 2026

Strategy and Adaptation

We are the Environment Agency. We protect and improve the environment.

We help people and wildlife adapt to climate change and reduce its impacts, including flooding, drought, sea level rise and coastal erosion.

We improve the quality of our water, land and air by tackling pollution. We work with businesses to help them comply with environmental regulations. A healthy and diverse environment enhances people's lives and contributes to economic growth.

We can't do this alone. We work as part of the Defra group (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs), with the rest of government, local councils, businesses, civil society groups and local communities to create a better place for people and wildlife.

Published by:

Environment Agency
Horizon House, Deanery Road,
Bristol BS1 5AH

www.gov.uk/environment-agency

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Overview

The RFCC Tailored Guidance empowers RFCCs to work closely with stakeholders to develop ambitious medium-term programmes of work that align with the Government's new funding guidance and the best available evidence on flood and coastal erosion risk. It also introduces a new stage in which RFCCs review new eligible project opportunities before funding is allocated and projects are developed. This gives RFCCs a stronger and more influential role at an earlier stage, enabling them to help shape programmes of work that reflect local priorities, knowledge, and long-term strategic ambitions.

Background

Defra published their new [Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management \(FCERM\) funding policy](#) in October 2025. The government's funding policy and strategic objectives are:

- value for money
- reducing flood and coastal erosion risk
- focussing on deprived areas - at least 20% of FCERM investment will be directed to the most deprived quintile, and at least 40% to the 2 lowest quintiles combined, over both the next 3-year and 10-year periods
- increasing investment in natural flood management (NFM) - at least 3% of FCERM investment over the next 3 years, and 4% of FCERM investment over the next 10 years is directed to Natural Flood Management (NFM)- H
- prioritising projects with contributions from others

[Guidance](#) has also been published to help the Environment Agency, other Risk Management Authorities (oRMAs) and non-RMAs to apply the new policy for new project opportunities. This guidance describes the data and information required to determine if a project is eligible for FCERM funding and if it should be put forward for the FCERM investment programme. It explains how to submit project data and information to the Environment Agency. Funding under the new policy is open to all RMAs and now includes the ability for non-RMAs to bid for funding for NFM only.

In the early years of the FCERM investment programme, there will be more projects that are eligible for investment than funding available. Projects will need to be prioritised to meet government targets and achieve best value for money.

RFCCs have an important role in ensuring that delivery is aligned with government objectives and delivers local improvements in protection and resilience for people and communities at risk of flooding. They realise this role in 3 ways:

1. Encourage risk management authorities and non-risk management authorities (for NFM only) to put forward projects using local knowledge
2. Review all new eligible project opportunities before they go into development
3. Consent their local delivery programme

New project opportunities and timescales

This document refers to new eligible project opportunities only. It does not cover projects that are already in construction or in development.

From the 1 July 2026 all RMAs and non-RMAs (for NFM only) will be able to submit new project opportunities. Each of these opportunities will be screened by the Environment Agency to ensure they have provided all the data and information needed to assess value for money, which will allow project opportunities to be checked against the government's strategic objectives.

This stage will include a feedback mechanism to ensure that valuable local and place-based intelligence is fully considered alongside the national evidence base. The screening process will also draw on input from Environment Agency area teams, whose strong understanding of local flood and coastal erosion risk, local priorities, and relationships with other risk management authorities will help support more informed decision-making.

Following the completed screening process these new eligible project opportunities will be shared with each RFCC in November 2026 through a bespoke meeting. This is a new stage and ensures that RFCCs have greater involvement in early project development before any funding allocations or commitments are made. RFCCs must comply with the Flood Funding Policy and national flood and coastal risk evidence when advising on short listing new eligible project opportunities. Alongside this, they should:

- Remove unviable opportunities based on local knowledge
- Identify funding contributions to meet funding gaps (e.g. local levy via local choices)
- Provide additional information related to local prioritisation that could be considered alongside value for money such as opportunities that are time limited

RFCCs can continue to use their local choice to fund projects using local levy, adding these to the long list. RFCCs will not be able to add projects which are not funded by local levy.

The new eligible project opportunities will then be formally agreed at the January 2027 RFCC committee rounds. FCERM Grant in Aid (GiA) funding may not be immediately available due to funding commitments already agreed with RFCCs for existing in-flight projects. GiA for new eligible projects will be allocated when funding becomes available and to meet the government's longer-term policy and strategic objectives for the FCERM investment programme.

Table 1 summarises the key dates associated with component 3 – new eligible project opportunities.

Table 1: Key dates for new project opportunities over 2026/27

Date	Activity
1st July	Our project systems are being updated to align with the new funding policy. This is a complex IT process across a large number of projects. The majority of improvements will be completed in time to support the Planning and allocation process, but some work will need longer to complete. As such transition elements are in place to support NFM opportunities. Environment Agency teams will submit all new project opportunities, except standalone NFM projects via AIMS:PD Other RMAs will submit all new project opportunities, except standalone NFM projects via PAFS. All RMAs and non-RMAs will submit standalone NFM project opportunities via a form that can be accessed by e-mailing NFMProjectOpportunities@environment-agency.gov.uk
7th September	AIMS PD, PAFS and NFM form close for all new project opportunities. Projects submitted after this date will still be accepted and considered in future years programme, however they will not be considered by RFCCs in their November 2026 meetings.
8th September - 31st October	Screening of new project opportunities by the Environment Agency to ensure GiA eligibility. Working closely with local EA teams, generate long list of new eligible project opportunities for each RFCC
November	RFCCs provide local information, levy funding or remove unviable new eligible project opportunities to generate an agreed short-list
January	RFCC support a short-list of new eligible project opportunities that will then be prioritised for early project development when funding becomes available

RFCC Tailored Guidance

We recognise that RFCCs play a key role in encouraging projects to come forward. We want to avoid RMAs and non-RMAs spending time and effort putting forward projects that are unlikely to meet government policy objectives. To assist RFCCs with ensuring that new project opportunities align with government policy and achieve best value for money we have produced specific tailored guidance for each RFCC.

This tailored guidance uses the best available evidence and information held by the Environment Agency (developed with local partners) to provide RFCCs with a steer on the shape of their programme over the next 10-year period. This evidence includes:

- National Flood Risk Assessment (NAFRA) [New national flood and coastal erosion risk information - GOV.UK](#)
- National Coastal Erosion Risk Map (NCERM) [New national flood and coastal erosion risk information - GOV.UK](#)
- Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) [Home | Shoreline Management Plans](#)
- Environment Agency Asset Data (AIMS:AMP)
- NFM heat maps [Natural Flood Management \(NFM\) Heat Maps](#)

The steer reflects the different sources of risk in each RFCC and the broad project types that are best placed to manage these risks. RFCCs should use the tailored guidance with the view of developing a medium term pipeline over the next 10 years. This reflects the reality that there is very limited new funding for 27/28.

In the new Floods Funding Policy the government committed to investing at least £300m in standalone NFM between 2026 and 2036. This is a significant step change compared to previous NFM investment. To help achieve this RFCCs should actively encourage and support investment in NFM using the Environment Agency's [Natural Flood Management \(NFM\) Heat Maps](#). The heat maps indicate areas where NFM, addressing flood risk from rivers and surface water, is most likely to deliver the highest economic flood risk reduction benefits. We recognise that the opportunities for NFM vary by each of RFCC, this is reflected in the tailored guidance. We also recognise that other locations not captured on the heat maps may also be suitable for NFM and local mapping and intelligence can help identify these.

We have also developed the new [surface water investment model \(SWIM\)](#) approach to help practitioners streamline and package Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) that manage surface water risk. The guidance sets out when and how to package surface water projects so that business cases are simplified and funding is made available over multiple years. This new approach should have a significant benefit to RMAs putting forward schemes that manage surface water flood risk.

Projection of future investment need

The new floods funding policy will drive a shift in the shape of the investment programme with more capital maintenance of existing assets through refurbishment and replacement activities, as well as resilience measures such as NFM, SuDS and Property Flood Resilience (PFR) in the future. There is evidence the anticipated shift is already underway, with the proportion of investment in both capital maintenance of existing assets and surface water doubling in the 2026-2029 programme compared to past programmes.

This tailored guidance shows what the shape of the RFCC programme has been historically, what it looks like now, and what we would anticipate it to look like as we transition to the new funding policy over the medium term. The initial years of the investment programme will be focussed on projects that are already in construction. RFCCs should therefore use this tailored guidance to review new eligible project opportunities with a medium term 10-year view in mind.

North West RFCC

This tailored guidance is based on the best available national data from across the EA which is updated regularly to reflect the latest understanding of risk as those datasets evolve. **The analysis highlights opportunities to further strengthen the programme through the following changes in North West RFCC over a 10 year period:**

- Doubling the percentage of investment in asset maintenance through refurbishment and replacement activities on existing assets - these activities should constitute the majority of the investment programme.
- Doubling the percentage of investment in projects that seek to mitigate surface water risk.
- Reducing the focus on new engineered projects, to the point that these constitute less than a quarter of the investment programme.
- Increasing the take up of NFM. Our [NFM heat maps](#) show that 13% of the total land within the RFCC falls within NFM hot spot locations. These hotspots indicate areas where NFM, addressing flood risk from rivers and surface water, is most likely to deliver the highest economic flood risk reduction benefits. This compares to the national average of 9%.

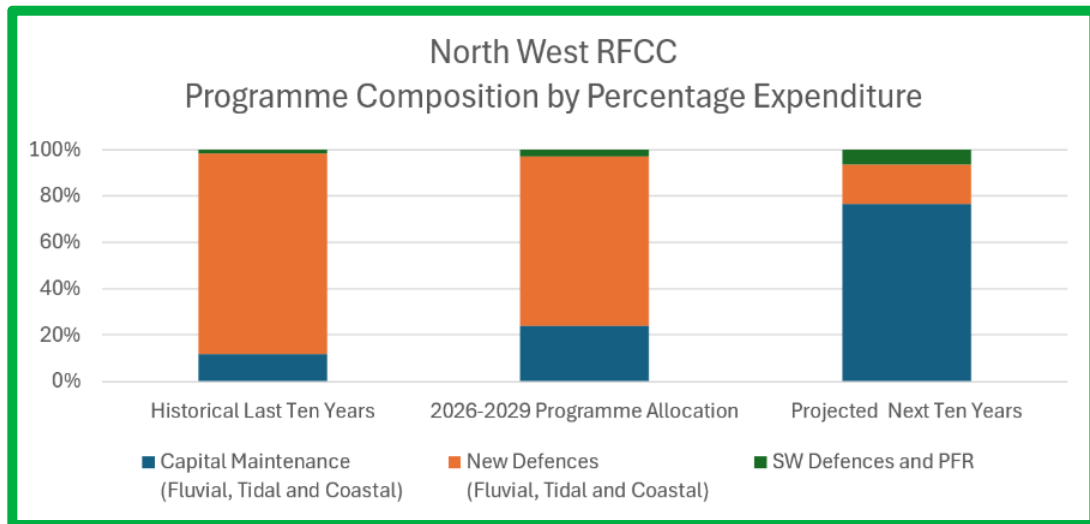


Figure 1 - A comparison of ten years of historical delivery, the 2026-2029 allocation, and the projected next 10 years programme for North West RFCC (NFM not shown)

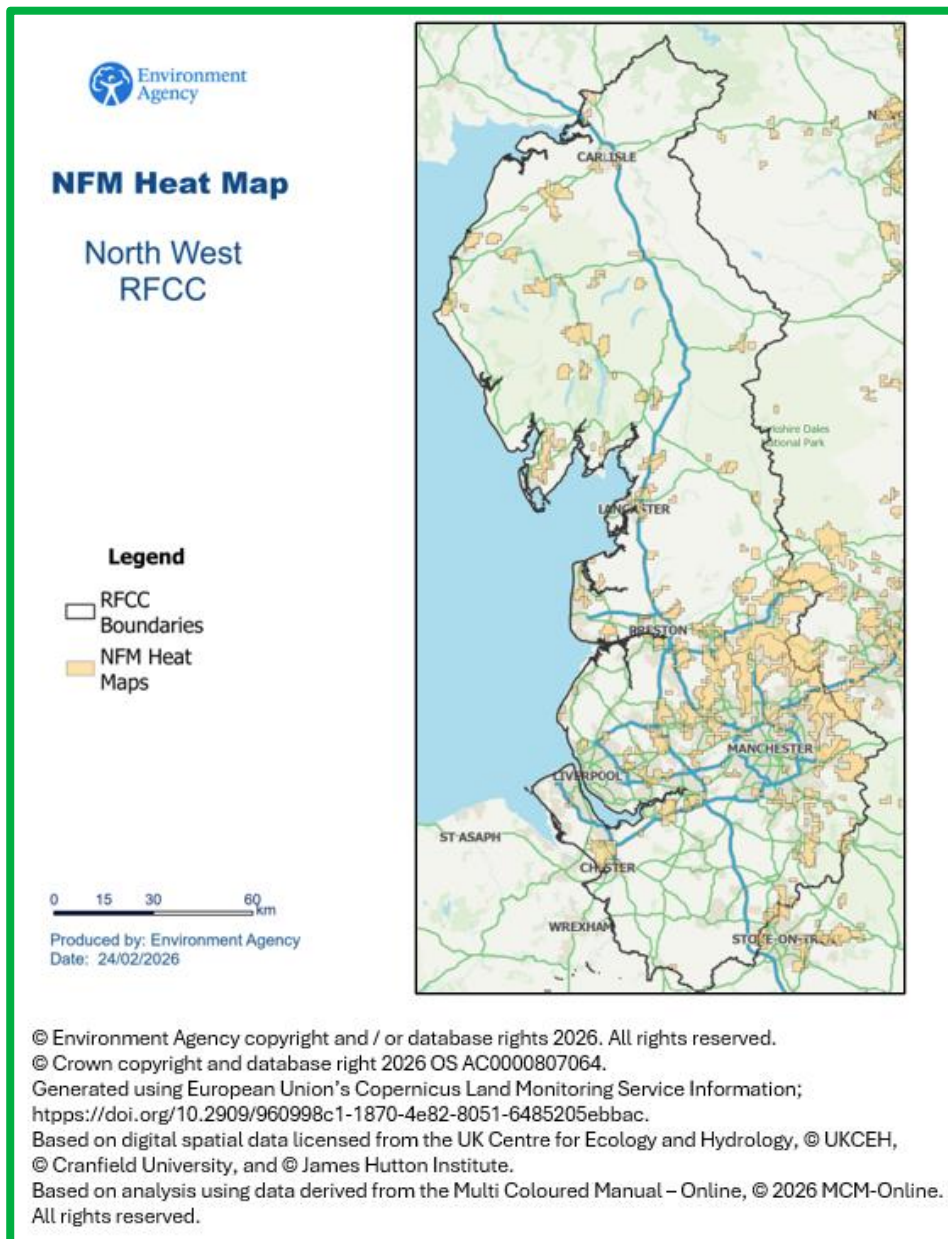


Figure 2 - NFM Heatmap of North West RFCC

Pdfs of NFM heat maps can be found [here](#).

Notes for all RFCCs

- The tailored guidance only shows FCERM need based on risk. It does not assess whether delivery is realistic or how that delivery should be structured.
- This analysis provides direction on the composition of programme required in North West RFCC, however this does not guarantee an allocation of funding.
- The NFM heat maps give an indication of where NFM addressing flood risk from rivers and surface water, is most likely to deliver the highest economic flood risk reduction. Proposals for NFM opportunities in other locations can still be submitted, where applicants are able to demonstrate suitability and cost beneficial.
- The RFCC tailored guidance will be updated annually by the Environment Agency.

RFCC Tailored Guidance: Frequently asked Questions for RFCCs

The Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) Tailored Guidance empowers RFCCs to work closely with stakeholders to develop ambitious medium-term programmes of work that align with the Government's new funding guidance and the best available evidence on flood and coastal erosion risk. It also introduces a new stage in which RFCCs review new eligible project opportunities before funding is allocated and projects are developed. This gives RFCCs a stronger and more influential role at an earlier stage, enabling them to help shape programmes of work that reflect local priorities, knowledge, and long-term strategic ambitions.

Below are some frequently asked questions and answers that support the application of the RFCC Tailored Guidance.

Do RFCCs have to stick to the investment projections suggested in the RFCC Tailored Guidance?

The RFCC Tailored Guidance is intended to provide an indication of what a medium-term RFCC programme may look like as the new flood funding policy is implemented. It draws on the best available evidence on flood and coastal erosion risk, supported by asset information. Over time, the composition of each RFCC's programme should broadly align with the projected 10-year programme set out in the guidance, while recognising that variations may occur between annual funding cycles.

RFCCs can influence the shape of their local programmes through supporting the further development of key sources of data and evidence, unlocking additional funding and championing development of project opportunities. The Tailored Guidance will be continually updated to reflect both changes in risk but also the delivery of projects.

Does the new approach of RFCCs reviewing new eligible project opportunities give greater 'local choice'?

Yes. The new approach gives RFCCs greater local choice and influence over future investment decisions. RFCCs will be able to help shape which project opportunities move into development before funding allocations are made, ensuring that programmes are better aligned with local priorities, knowledge, and strategic needs. Over time, this will support the development of stronger, more locally informed programmes of work across each RFCC area.

In addition, RFCCs can provide wider local context to strengthen project development and help maximise opportunities to secure funding. By supporting the inclusion of additional non-GiA contributions, RFCCs can enhance the overall value for money of projects and help bring forward a broader range of investment opportunities.

Can RFCCs put forward new project opportunities at the review stage?

At the review stage, RFCCs will have an important role in helping to shape strong and deliverable programmes of work. RFCCs will be able to support new eligible project opportunities, for example through local financial contributions that strengthen prioritisation and improve the likelihood of projects progressing. They will also be able to identify and remove project opportunities that are known to be unviable locally.

The RFCC Tailored Guidance should also help influence stakeholders to bring forward project opportunities that deliver the greatest value for money and align with local flood and coastal erosion risk from the outset.

RFCCs will continue to have the flexibility to use Local Levy funding to support additional local priorities, and projects funded in this way can be added to the long list. Projects that are not supported through Local Levy cannot be added directly by RFCCs.

Will new project opportunities be able to account for local information or evidence?

This tailored guidance draws on the best available evidence and information held by the Environment Agency, developed in collaboration with local partners. New project opportunities can also be strengthened by additional local evidence and intelligence, helping to ensure that programmes reflect local priorities and opportunities.

For example, projects may demonstrate how they support local growth ambitions, respond to community or political priorities, or make use of more detailed local Natural Flood Management (NFM) mapping that complements the national NFM Heat Map. This additional local information will be considered as part of the screening process and will help inform prioritisation and funding allocation decisions.

Will Environment Agency Area teams review new project opportunities before they go to RFCCs?

Environment Agency Area teams will continue to support new project bids and review opportunities from all Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) to ensure a local strategic overview is maintained. The screening process will draw on input from Environment Agency Area teams, whose strong understanding of local flood and coastal erosion risk, local priorities, and relationships with other risk management authorities will help support more informed decision-making. They will undertake this role after new project opportunities have been submitted but before they are presented at the RFCC November meeting.

Will RFCCs be able to directly prioritise new project opportunities?

The overall Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) programme will continue to be nationally prioritised by the Environment Agency to ensure investment

delivers value for money and supports Government funding policy objectives. This national approach and the existing prioritisation arrangements remain unchanged.

What is new is that RFCCs will have a stronger role earlier in the process, helping to shape eligible project opportunities before they enter development. This will give RFCCs greater opportunity to reflect local priorities and knowledge within the established national funding and prioritisation framework.

What happens to project opportunities that don't pass the Environment Agency's screening or are removed by the RFCC?

New project opportunities that do not pass the screening process will be passed back to project submitters with a reason for failure, allowing resubmission at a later date. Similarly, any new eligible project opportunities that RFCCs choose to remove from the list will not pass into the allocation and will be shared back with submitters for them to address any concerns.

Through this process, all new project opportunities will need to pass both the screening process and RFCC review. However, where a project is not progressed at either stage, this does not prevent it from being reconsidered in future. Projects can be resubmitted with strengthened evidence, updated local information, or an improved case for investment and delivery.

NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD AND COASTAL COMMITTEE MEETING

10 JULY 2026

FCRM INVESTMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

Recommendations

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

1. Note the latest position of the FCRM Investment Programme and the new metrics.
2. Note that the final set of allocation principles and prioritisation are awaiting final approval by the Environment Agency (EA) Board.
3. Note the planning and allocation process for 2026/27.

Headline messages:

- Over the past two years (2024/25 and 2025/26) the EA and oRMAs have collectively better protected 61,898 properties, exceeding the target of 52,000 properties better protected.
- We are moving to a new reporting metric of properties benefitting, in line with the updated Defra Funding Policy announced in October 2025.
- On 9 June, Minister Hardy announced a target of 70,000 properties benefiting from flood risk management interventions between April 2026 and March 2027.
- Thank you to Committees for giving feedback on the proposed updated FCRM allocation principles and prioritisation approach. These representations have been taken into account and in advance of the Portfolio Management team finalising the new approach ahead of EA Board review on 13 July.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This paper provides an update on the latest position of the FCRM Investment Programme, the new metrics, and the allocation principles and prioritisation approach.

2. FCRM Programme – Latest Position

- 2.1. Over the past two years (2024/25 and 2025/26), we have exceeded our target of better protecting 52,000 properties. We have better protected 61,898 properties over that period, with EA projects better protecting 41,560 properties and other Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) better protecting 20,338 properties. We would like to thank RFCCs for their important role in achieving this and recognise that this has been delivered by all RMAs.

- 2.2. Further benefits of the FCRM Investment Programme are outlined in Appendix A.

- 2.3. A business case for the FCRM Investment Programme (2026-2029) has been developed and has now completed assurance and approvals. It was formally approved by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 8 April 2026.
- 2.4. Early indications of forecast for 2027/28 and 2028/29 are looking above our available budget and therefore we will need collectively to prioritise allocation and manage spend.
- 2.5. On 9 June, Minister Hardy announced a target of 70,000 properties benefiting from flood risk management interventions by the end of March 2027.

3. Properties Benefitting Metric

- 3.1. The new FCRM Investment Programme commenced 1 April 2026, and we will start reporting against the new metric of properties benefitting that is referenced in the Defra Funding Policy, announced in October 2025. Programme totals for properties benefitting will include both projects continuing under the old policy and those moving to the new policy.
- 3.2. The new properties benefitting metric is broader than the former ‘properties better protected’. The former metric required the level of risk reduction to be sufficient to change the risk band of a property. The new metric includes all properties for which there is any measurable reduction of the probability of flooding or risk of coastal erosion, or properties where the existing level of protection is sustained by investment.
- 3.3. There will be a period of transition to the new metric. The EA has put in place centralised support to estimate the new properties benefitting metric for projects completing this financial year. The priority of this work is to ensure quarterly actuals are recorded under the new metric. This information will be shared with RFCCs as it is developed. In the meantime, the former metric, properties better protected will continue to be referred to in RFCC reporting.
- 3.4. A full list of metrics can be found in Appendix B.

4. Allocation Principles and the planning and allocation process

- 4.1. We have received feedback on the allocation principles from RFCCs. Thank you to RFCCs for providing this, the feedback has been reviewed and taken into consideration. Across the feedback received, several common themes have emerged including balancing investment across strategic goals, geography and priorities, assessment of benefits through value for money approach, role of local decision-making, catchment and strategic approach and local levy under the new funding policy. We have strengthened local choice, local priorities and use of local levy within the principles. We have also added balancing of investment in the development of projects and new projects to create a more stable and longer-term investment programme.
- 4.2. The allocation principles form part of a broader process, where the new Defra funding policy is implemented and how FCRM Grant in Aid (GiA) allocations are

OFFICIAL – paper for discussion

prioritised. We have shared feedback that relate to the broader process, along with specific comments and questions, with the relevant parts of the FCRM Directorate for consideration and, where appropriate, action. RFCCs play a key role in identifying local priorities and making decisions on local levy investment. RFCCs will review local choices at committee meetings in October, and screened investment opportunities at the November meetings.

- 4.3. A summary of all the feedback received from the Committees on the proposed updated FCRM allocation principles and prioritisation approach was previously shared with and discussed at the EA Board on 7 May. However, following feedback from RFCCs on timing, the EA Board agreed to defer approval to their July meeting to ensure sufficient time is given to fully consider the feedback. The final principles will be shared via future papers.
- 4.4. Appendix C shows the forecast of FCRM grant in aid (GiA) investment over the next 10 years, showing the transition from projects in construction under the previous funding policy (2020) to new projects adhering to the latest funding policy (2025).
- 4.5. Appendix D shows the latest timetable for this year's planning and allocation process, highlighting the key involvement points for RFCCs.

5. Recommendations

5.1 RFCC Committees are asked to:

1. Note the latest position of the FCRM Investment Programme and the new metrics.
2. Note that the final set of allocation principles and prioritisation are awaiting final approval by the Environment Agency (EA) Board.
3. Note the planning and allocation process for 2026/27.

Author: Niamh O'Brien, Advisor, Portfolio Management Office

Reviewer: Stuart Allen, Deputy Director, Portfolio Management Office (Interim) & Grant Allocation & Programme Management (RMA)

Sponsor: John Russon, Director Portfolio Management Assurance & Commercial (PMAC) and Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) of the FCRM Investment Programme.

Appendix A: Key Metrics for the FCRM Investment Programme April 2021–March 2026

Appendix B: List of metrics for the new FCRM Investment Programme

Appendix C: FCRM grant in aid (GiA) investment in projects over the next 10 years

Appendix D: 2026/27 planning and allocation process

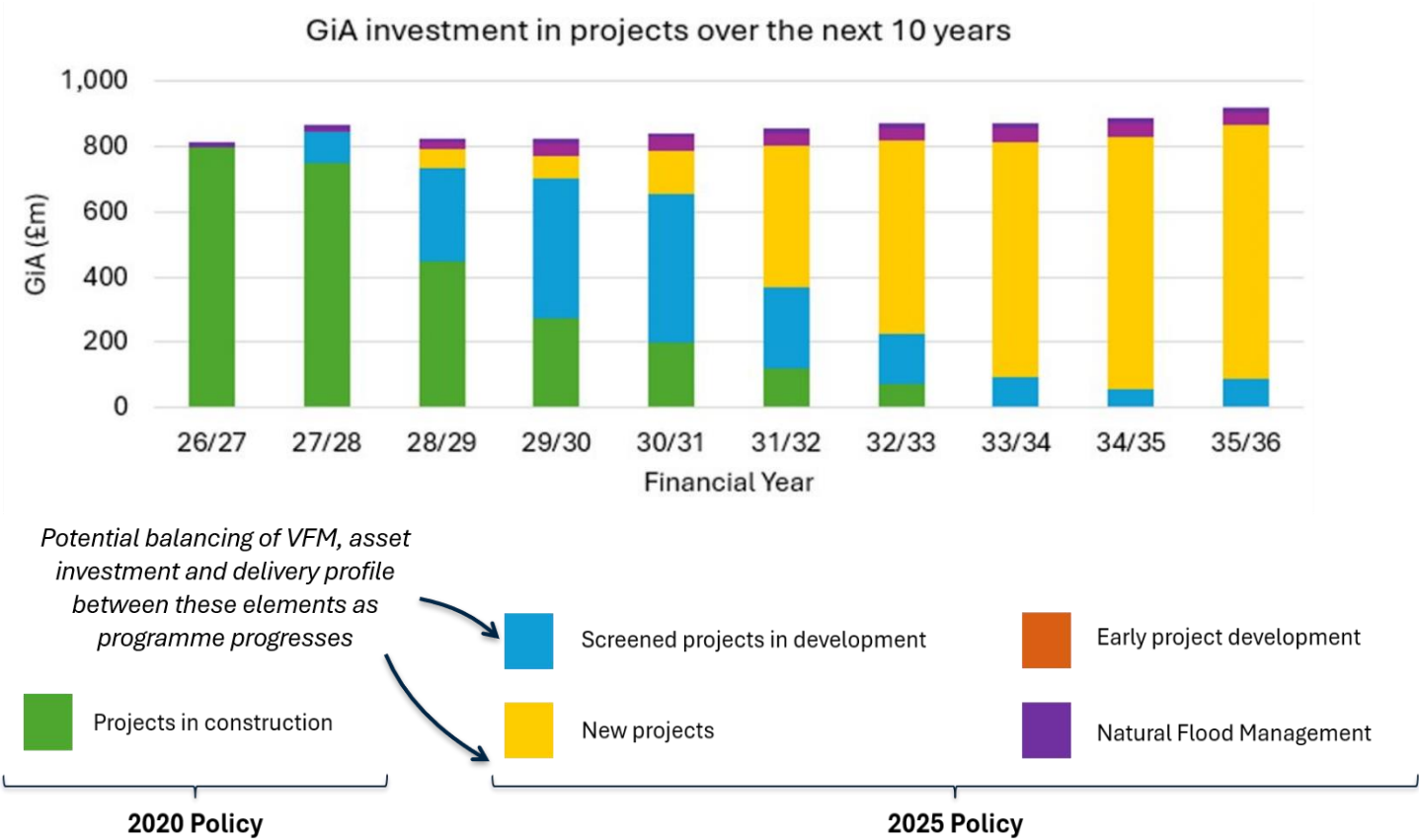
Appendix A: Key Metrics for the FCRM Investment Programme April 2021–March 2026

Metric	5 Year National Totals (2021-2026)
Total properties better protected	150,170
Total properties better protected in 0-20% most deprived areas	36,641
Total properties better protected in 20-40% most deprived areas	48,805
Partnership funding (spent/secured)	£619 million
Capital efficiencies (total and % of spend)	£206 million
	5%
Benefit cost ratio of projects completed	8.0 : 1
Primary flood risk source (number of projects) – river/sea flooding	310
Primary flood risk source (number of projects) – coastal erosion	17
Primary flood risk source (number of projects) – surface water flooding	171
Environmental outcomes: area of habitat created or improved	5,210 ha
Environmental outcomes: length of rivers enhanced	787 km
Agricultural land better protected	174,000 ha
Length of road and railways benefitting	5,020 km
Number of Natural Flood Management projects	195
Cost of Natural Flood Management projects	£67 million

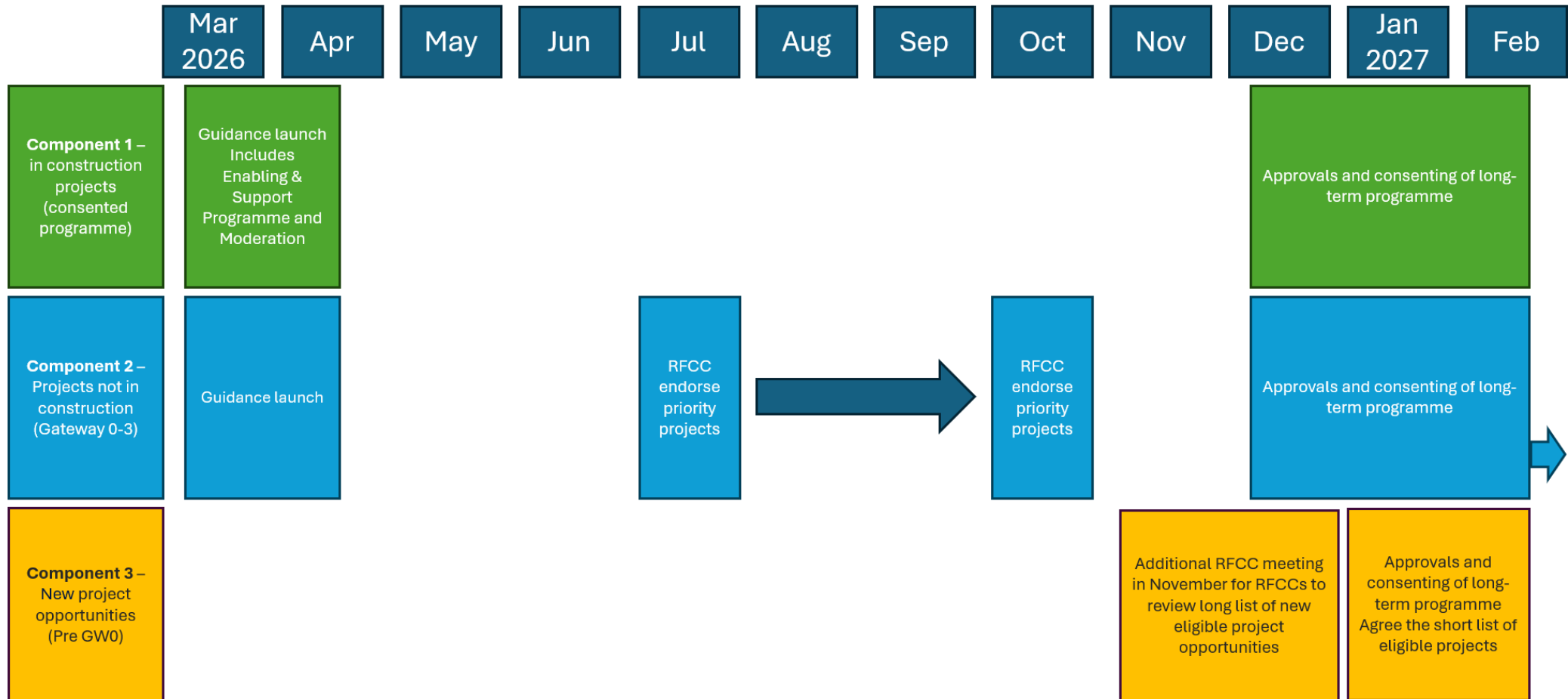
Appendix B: List of metrics for the new FCRM Investment Programme

ID	Metric	Unit
FIP-01	Total economic benefits	£
FIP-02	Benefit cost ratio	-
FIP-03	Net present social value	£
FIP-04	Properties benefitting	#
FIP-05	Properties Better Protected (<i>1st year only</i>)	#
FIP-06	Risk to properties (<i>in development</i>)	#
FIP-07	Area of agricultural land with reduced risk	ha
FIP-08	Length of road with reduced risk	km
FIP-09	Length of railway with reduced risk	km
FIP-10	Environment Agency assets at target condition	#
FIP-11	Third party assets at target condition.	#
FIP-12	Government Investment	£
FIP-13	% of government investment within 0-40% most deprived areas	%
FIP-14	% of investment on natural flood management	%
FIP-15	External contributions	£

Appendix C: FCRM grant in aid (GiA) investment in projects over the next 10 years



Appendix D: 2026/27 planning and allocation process



Above shows key stages for RFCC involvement