North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee

23 October 2026

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Agenda Item 1

Welcome, Chair's Introduction and apologies for absence

Presented Liz Grey

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Voting members

(General RFCC business, excluding the Local Levy vote)

Elected members	Independent members
Cllr John Murray	Chris Findley
Cllr Ged Mirfin	Carolyn Otley
Cllr Jane Hugo	Aimee Brough
Cllr Joanne Williams	Amy Cooper
Cllr John Prince	Kate Morley
Cllr Mandie Shilton Godwin	Terri McMillan
Cllr Alan Quinn	
Cllr Phil Cusack	
Cllr Mark Goldsmith	
Matt Winnard	

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Agenda Item 2

Minutes of the RFCC meeting held on 10 July 2026 and matters arising

Presented Liz Grey

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Agenda Item 3

El Niño and Winter Preparedness

Presented Jason Harte

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

North West flooding incidents Q2

(~End June – end Sept) (Data reflects incidents reported and is currently unverified)

LA/EA reported

Partnership	Properties flooded	Further details
Cumbria	1 external	Langwathby (Westmorland & Furness)
Lancashire	40 internal 3 internal	Lancaster (Lancaster City Council) Ormskirk
Merseyside	31 internal / 16 external	Widespread across Wirral
Greater Manchester	None	
Cheshire Mid Mersey	None	

Sewer flooding (UU reported)

Strategic Partnership	Internal Hydraulic (not Severe weather)	External Hydraulic (not Severe weather)	Internal Hydraulic severe weather	External hydraulic severe weather
Cheshire	0	1	0	0
Merseyside	0	5	1	7
Greater Manchester	2	6	2	0
Lancashire	5	24	4	6
Cumbria	2	8	0	1

El Niño and the winter ahead

9th of October 2026, revising the 7th. Jason Harte, Senior Manager, Flood and Coastal Risk Management, Westmorland and Furness Council.

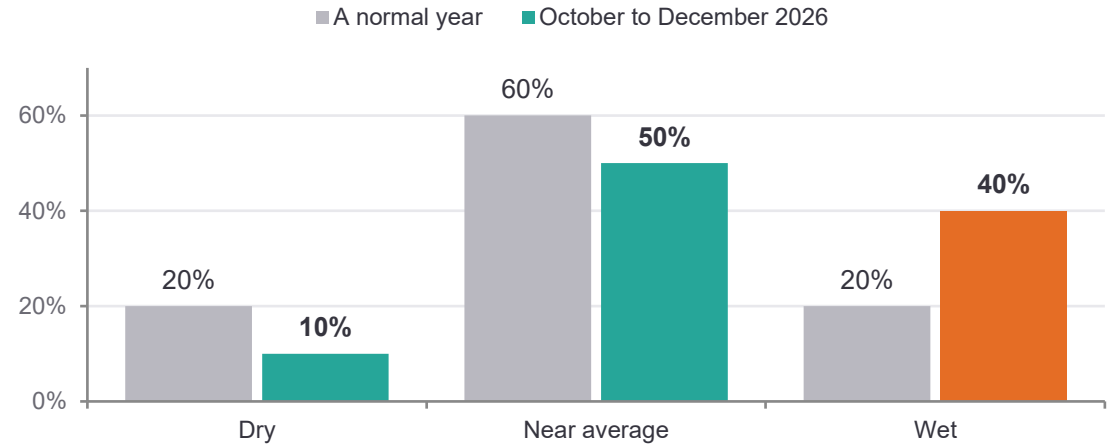
What is established

- A very strong El Niño is established and strengthening. NOAA, 8th of October: 83% chance of the strongest since 1950, up from 75%.
- Met Office, 28th of September: a 40% chance of a wet October to December for the UK, double the normal 20%.
- The lean is also to mild (30%) and slightly to windy (25%).
- North West rivers: normal now, normal to above normal by December.

What is not known

- Location and timing. A UK average, with no North West figure.
- Whether flooding occurs. Near average rainfall remains the most likely outcome (50%). The outlook is not a flood forecast.
- Late winter. A weaker polar vortex and cold spells are possible after the peak, but this is the **least certain element.**
- The behaviour of an event of this scale. No forecast system has been tested on an event this size.

Chance of a dry, average or wet October to December (UK)



Source: Met Office three month outlook, issued 28th of September 2026. UK average, not a regional forecast. Next issue 26th of October.

The North West starting point

50.8%

Reservoir storage, end of August (average 71.7%)

99%

Normal September rainfall, share of the long term average

Prolonged dry weather status, not drought. The twelve months to August were wetter than normal. Source: Environment Agency.

Implications for the North West, and the standing arrangements

Exposure in the North West

- 123,300 properties at high risk from surface water, 34,900 from rivers and the sea.
- December 2015 flooded Cumbria, Lancashire and Greater Manchester.
- The significance lies in exposure, not in a stronger signal.

Flood Forecasting Centre

- A partnership of the Met Office and the Environment Agency.
- Flood Guidance Statement every day by 11:00: five days ahead, county scale, all sources of flooding.
- Amber on 18 days and red on none in the year to March 2025.

Met Office

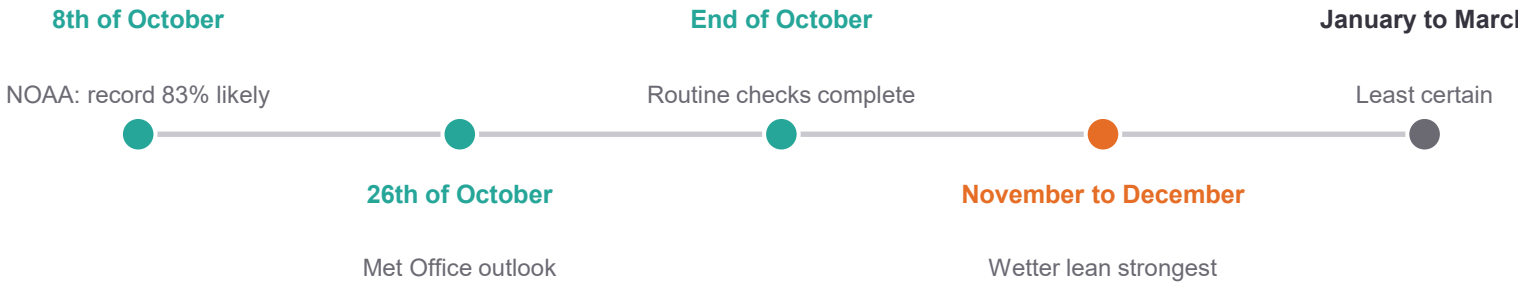
- Severe weather warnings as required.
- Three month outlook every month: a “watching brief only”, not for committing resources.
- Civil Contingencies Advisors support each Local Resilience Forum.

Local Resilience Forums

- Five in the North West, one for each police force area.
- Not a legal body and cannot direct its members. The duties sit with each responder.
- The forum plans. Coordinating groups, normally chaired by the police, direct the response.

Coastal: the lean towards windy conditions is slight (25% against a normal 20%), and El Niño gives no information on storms coinciding with high tides. Established practice applies.

The road to winter



Recommendations

1. Treat the seasonal outlook as a watching brief, and act on the daily forecast and warnings.
2. Complete normal winter readiness checks by the end of October.
3. Maintain measured public communication: wet weather is more likely, not certain.

Met Office, 5th of October: any polar vortex effect “would be at the end of the winter”, “shifts in probability rather than guarantees”.

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Agenda Item 4

Update from Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup meeting held on 9 October 2026

Top priorities for members

The decisions and assurance points to keep in view

£20m
forecast programme underspend

87%
property outcomes already delivered

£350k
Billington Local Levy request

£150.6m
2027/28 indicative GiA

- *Action:* To maximize 2026/27 delivery without weakening value for money or assurance.
- *Watch* concentration risk: 79% of forecast property outcomes come from Wyre Beach Management Scheme.
- *Recommend* the £350k Billington contribution, while recognising Levy balances reduce to about £4.95m by 2027/28.
- *Endorse* the 2027/28 indicative allocation and use Local Choices to shape priorities within the fixed funding envelope.

ASK: NOTE DELIVERY & RISKS • RECOMMEND BILLINGTON • ENDORSE 2027/28 INDICATIVE ALLOCATION

2026/27: delivery is strong, forecast spend is below allocation

Current forecast is £150.7m against c.£170m available

£170m
total funding available
(Total Project Expenditure)

£150.7m
forecast expenditure

11.8%
forecast underspend

£14m
forecast reduction since July



Forecast uses ~88% of available funding

- Material year-end underspend risk remains.
- Quarter 2 review has identified opportunities to increase expenditure and maximize Grant in Aid allocation.
- Close monitoring is needed across major schemes with low spend or revised delivery profiles.

Where the in-year risk sits

Four large schemes explain much of the pressure

Kendal FRM	**-£7.68m**	Service diversion delays before Aynam Road works
Preston & South Ribble	**-£5.94m**	Judicial review delays next phase
Millom & Haverigg	**-£5.23m**	Reprofile into future years; resourcing and timescales
Wyre Beach Management	**-£4.86m**	£5m GiA already claimed in prior year

ASSURANCE FOCUS: delivery realism, forecast accuracy and deployment to credible opportunities

2026-2027 Resource Maintenance Allocation and Spend

Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire
£1.84m spent of **£6.42m forecast**



29% complete
✅ On track

Cumbria & Lancashire
£2.13m spent of **£8.36m forecast**



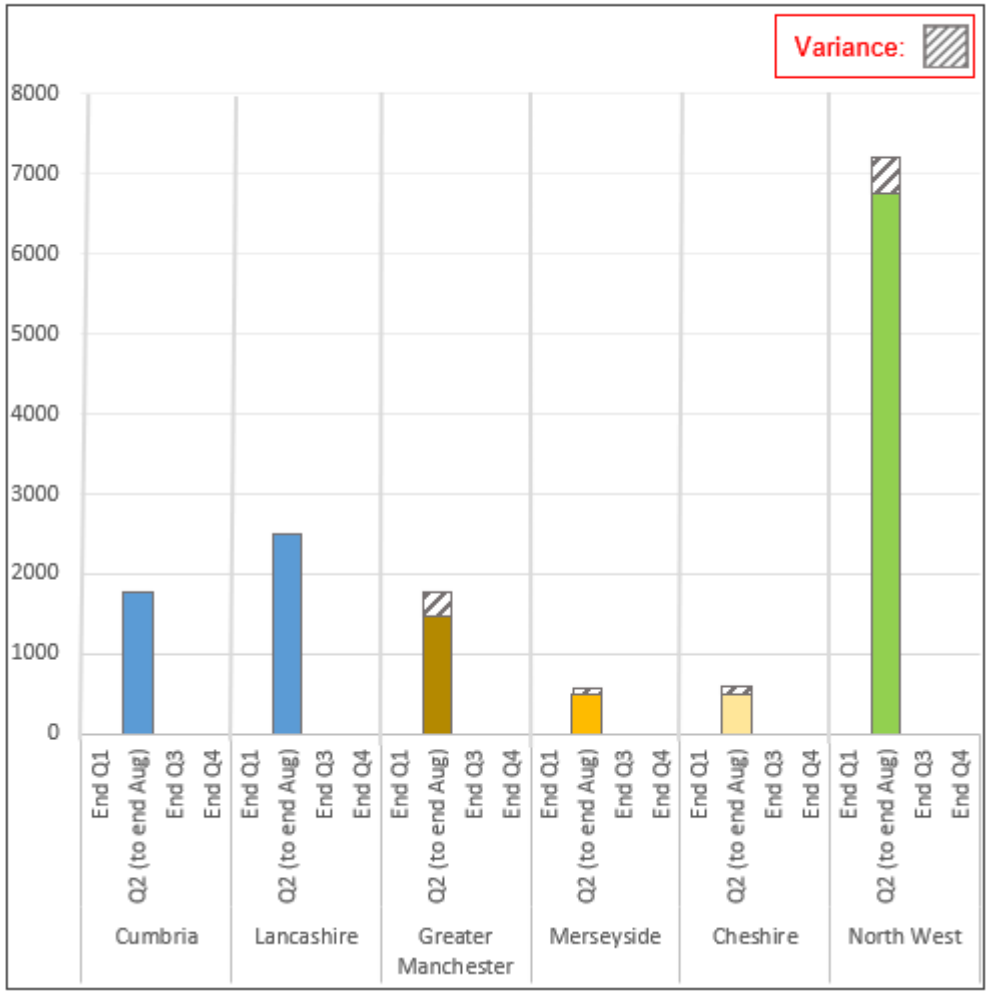
26% complete
✅ On track

Combined Position	
Measure	Value
Year-to-date spend	**£3.97m**
Forecast year-end spend	**£14.78m**
Progress against annual forecast	**27%**
Overall status	**On Track**

Below Required Condition Assets: T98 Inspections

Environment Agency Asset T98 Inspections

Area	Quarter	Planned	Complete	Variance
Cumbria	End Q1			
	Q2 (to end Aug)	1779	1779	0
	End Q3			0
	End Q4			0
Lancashire	End Q1			
	Q2 (to end Aug)	2496	2496	0
	End Q3			0
	End Q4			0
Greater Manchester	End Q1			
	Q2 (to end Aug)	1785	1464	321
	End Q3			0
	End Q4			0
Merseyside	End Q1			
	Q2 (to end Aug)	564	497	67
	End Q3			0
	End Q4			0
Cheshire	End Q1			
	Q2 (to end Aug)	590	507	83
	End Q3			0
	End Q4			0
North West	End Q1			
	Q2 (to end Aug)	7214	6743	471
	End Q3			
	End Q4			



Environment Agency

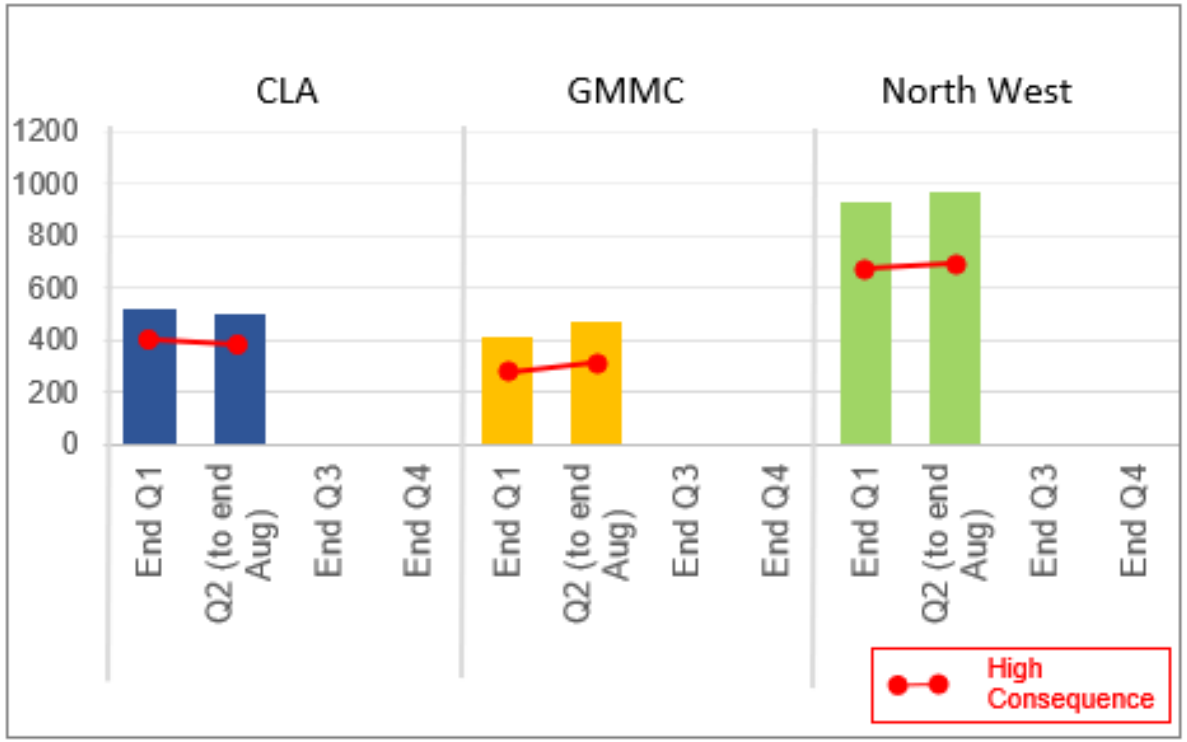
Below Required Condition Assets

The Northwest position as a whole shows an increase in assets that are BRC of 4.5%, with a 3% increase in High Consequence Systems

Although C&L have shown a decrease in the number of assets that are BRC, GMMC has seen an increase with 45 assets designated below required condition in the first two quarters of the year already.

[Area & North West] All BRC Assets

Area	Quarter	Below Required Condition	High Consequence
Cumbria & Lancashire	End Q1	518	397
	Q2 (to end Aug)	498	382
	End Q3		
	End Q4		
Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire	End Q1	411	276
	Q2 (to end Aug)	474	310
	End Q3		
	End Q4		
North West	End Q1	929	673
	Q2 (to end Aug)	972	692
	End Q3		
	End Q4		



Environment Agency

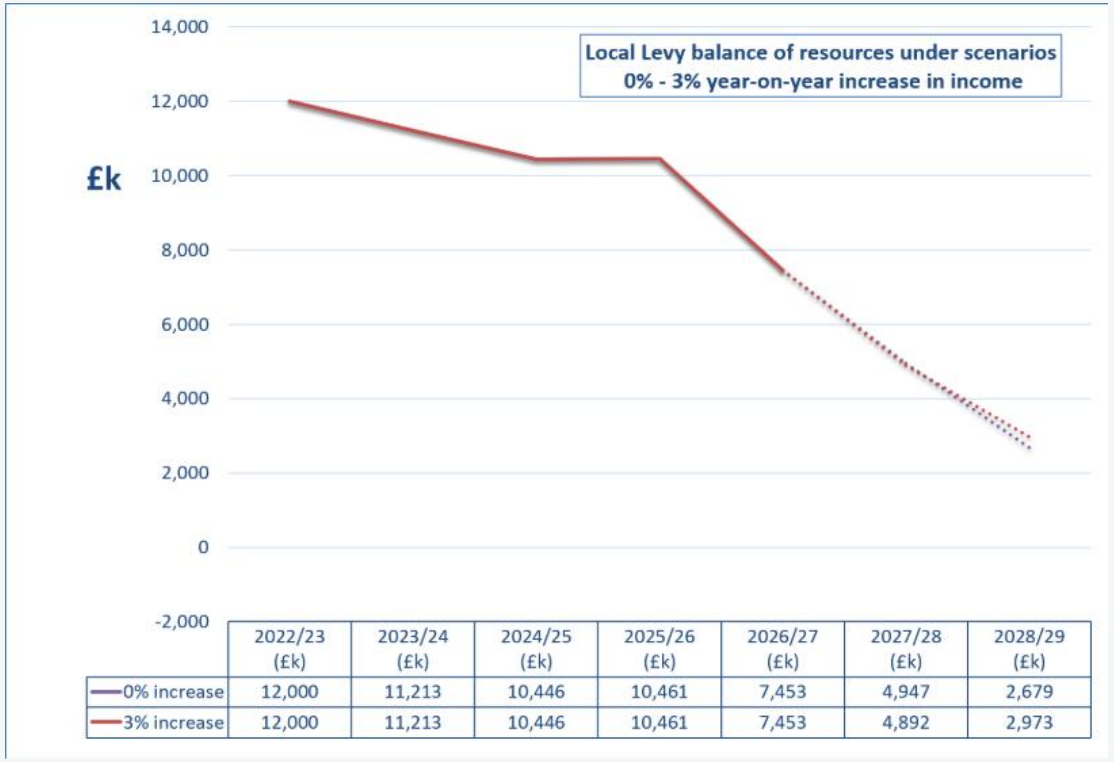
2026-2027 Resource Maintenance Indicative Allocation

27/28 Indicative Allocation				
	Scheduled Maintenance	Reactive Allocation	Asset Management Projects + Decommissioning	Totals
C&L	7,825	500	278	8,602
GMMC	5,409	467	436	6,312
Totals	13,234	967	714	14,914
26/27 Allocation for Comparison				
	Scheduled Maintenance	Reactive Allocation	Asset Management Projects + Decommissioning	Totals
C&L	7,314	283	1,005	8,602
GMMC	5,447	185	680	6,312
Totals	12,761	468	1,685	14,914

Environment Agency

Local Levy Income and Expenditure

Local Levy income and allocation summary (£ million)	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28 (indicative)
Cash balance at start of year	10.446	10.461	7.453
Local Levy income	4.681	4.821	4.821*
Interest earned	0.400	0.200	0.200*
Total available balance	15.521	**15.482**	12.474
Total Actuals/Forecast	5.066	8.029	7.526
Remaining cash balance at year end	**10.461**	7.453	**4.947**



	2022/23 (£k)	2023/24 (£k)	2024/25 (£k)	2025/26 (£k)	2026/27 (£k)	2027/28 (£k)	2028/29 (£k)
0% increase	12,000	11,213	10,446	10,461	7,453	4,947	2,679
3% increase	12,000	11,213	10,446	10,461	7,453	4,892	2,973

Billington Flood Risk Management Scheme (FRMS)

Committee Funding Decision

Why is this Scheme Needed?

- Repeated flooding has affected homes and businesses.
- Properties remain vulnerable without intervention.

What Will Be Delivered?

✓ Reduced flood risk
✓ Better protection for businesses
✓ Improved resilience
✓ Long-term community benefits

Funding Overview

Total Scheme Cost: ~£3.0m | Government Funding: Majority of cost
Local Levy Requested: £350,000 | Timing: 2028/29 (flexible)

Why Support the Request?

- Helps unlock larger national funding
- Demonstrates local commitment
- Helps manage future cost increases
- Enables the project to progress
- Unused levy funding would be returned

DECISION REQUIRED
Approve an indicative Local Levy allocation of £350,000 to support delivery of the Billington FRMS and maximise the opportunity to secure external funding.

KEY MESSAGE: A £350k local contribution could unlock millions of pounds of external investment and provide long-term flood protection.

Recommendation

- Support the request for an indicative Local Levy contribution of £350k to be made in FY 28/29, with the year of delivery being flexible depending on national programme and funding availability.
- This Levy bid will be made on the basis that any un-spent Levy monies will be returned to the NW RFCC
- This will enable the project team to continue with greater confidence in the knowledge that funding will be available when required to complete the scheme and provide much needed flood protection to 40+ properties in a frequently flooded community,

Vote / Recommendation from the Subgroup

- Approve an allocation of £350k Local Levy funding for Billington in 2028/29

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Planning and Allocation Process for 2027/28

2027/28: £150.6m indicative GiA for the North West

Largest regional allocation nationally; first allocation under the new prioritisation approach

£150.6m
North West indicative GiA

£769.8m
national investment programme

10%
planned over-programme

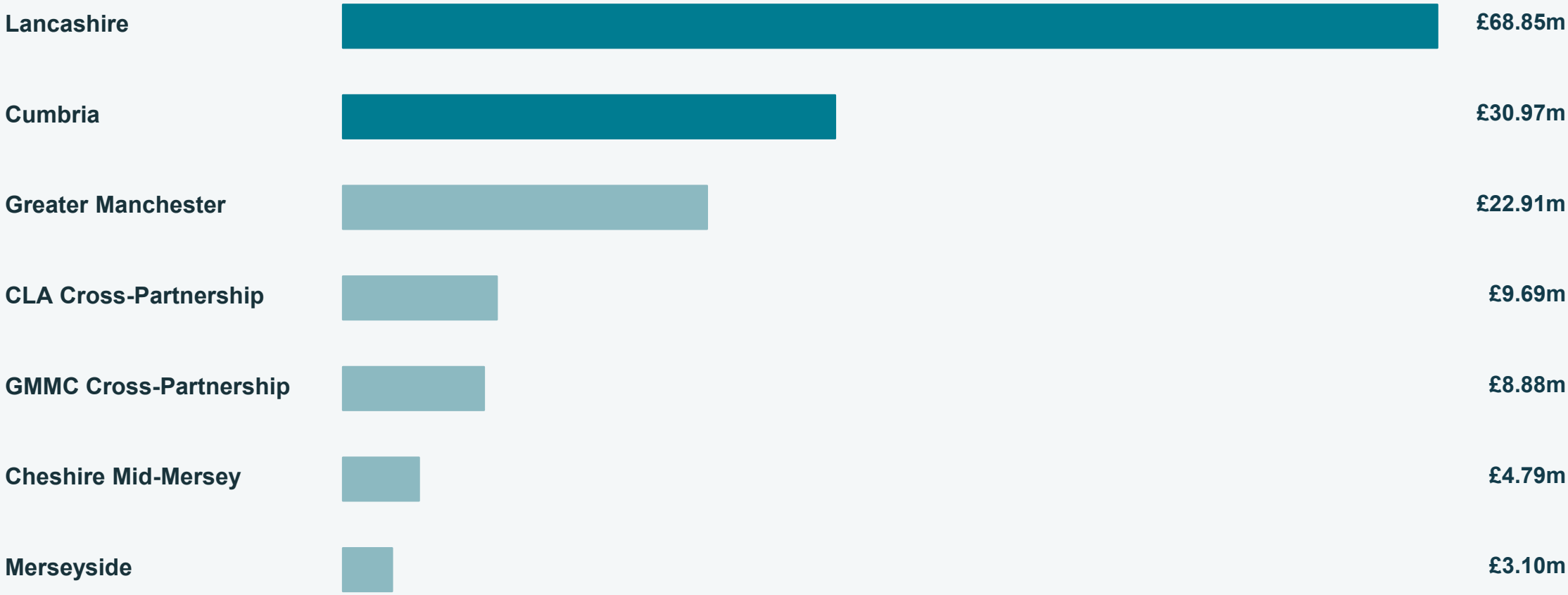
2 years
indicative planning visibility

- Core approach: legal obligations first, schemes already in delivery, then value for money and strategic outcomes.
- Two-year visibility improves planning, but does not guarantee funding for every project.
- 2027/28 is the year for formal consent; 2028/29 is visible for planning.
- Local Choices can shape priorities, but changes must stay within the indicative envelope and protect expected outcomes.

MEMBER ROLE: ENDORSE THE INDICATIVE ALLOCATION AND SHAPE LOCAL CHOICES

Indicative allocation: where the funding is concentrated

Components 1 and 2.1 total about £149.2m before enabling and support allocations



Indicative totals shown combine Component 1 and Component 2.1 allocations from the report.

Local Choices: what members need to know

Prioritise within the fixed allocation, protect outcomes, and keep project data current.

LOCAL CHOICES WINDOW

18 Sep – 30 Oct 2026

PROCESS

1. **START WITH** — Nationally prioritised over-programme
2. **LOCAL CHOICE** — RFCC identifies local priorities
3. **CONFIRM** — Project teams refresh forecast + outcomes
4. **BRING IN** — If selected, move into investment programme

8 projects

£5.80m 2027/28 bids

NON-NEGOTIABLE GiA stays within the indicative allocation • allocation cannot increase • expected programme outcomes must not reduce

2027/28 NORTH WEST OVER-PROGRAMME

Nationally prioritised list | bid value shown

01	**Poise Brook – Offerton Green and Hazel Grove**	GMMC	**£1.247m**
02	Harwood Culverts Rehabilitation Scheme	GMMC	**£0.050m**
03	Property Flood Resilience GMMC EA	GMMC	**£0.210m**
04	Altmouth Pumping Station – asset replacement / refurbishment	C&L	**£0.485m**
05	Glasson Dock Gate	C&L	**£0.848m**
06	CLA Bretherton Outfalls Platform Refurb	C&L	**£1.500m**
07	Burrow Beck Conveyance Improvements	C&L	**£1.357m**
08	Wyre Catchment Readiness Project	C&L	**£0.102m**

GMMC = Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire | C&L = Cumbria & Lancashire

Component 3 – *brand new projects* and Natural Flood Management (NFM)

Update on progress and what to expect at the November Finance and Business Assurance meeting

1 **Component 3**

The EA Strategy and Adaptation team took the lead in a new pipeline process – screening potential new candidate schemes that align with the new Flood Funding Policy

2 **NFM**

CLA Area - **~22 bids** were submitted in CLA: 8 in Lancashire and 14 in Cumbria. Approximate bid value **£7.5m**

GMMC Area - We understand that **16 projects** worth **£1.4m** were submitted from GMMC

20 November – Additional RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Sub-Meeting – Request to delegate responsibility to the sub-group

This extraordinary meeting will be used to review and assess screened new project opportunities that meet the eligibility criteria, discuss their suitability, and agree any actions or recommendations.

Vote / Recommendation from the Subgroup

- **Endorse** the **£150.6m indicative allocation** with a view to include the prioritised over-programme
- **Delegate authority** to the **Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup** for the additional November meeting

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Property Flood Resilience (PFR) Year 2 Funding

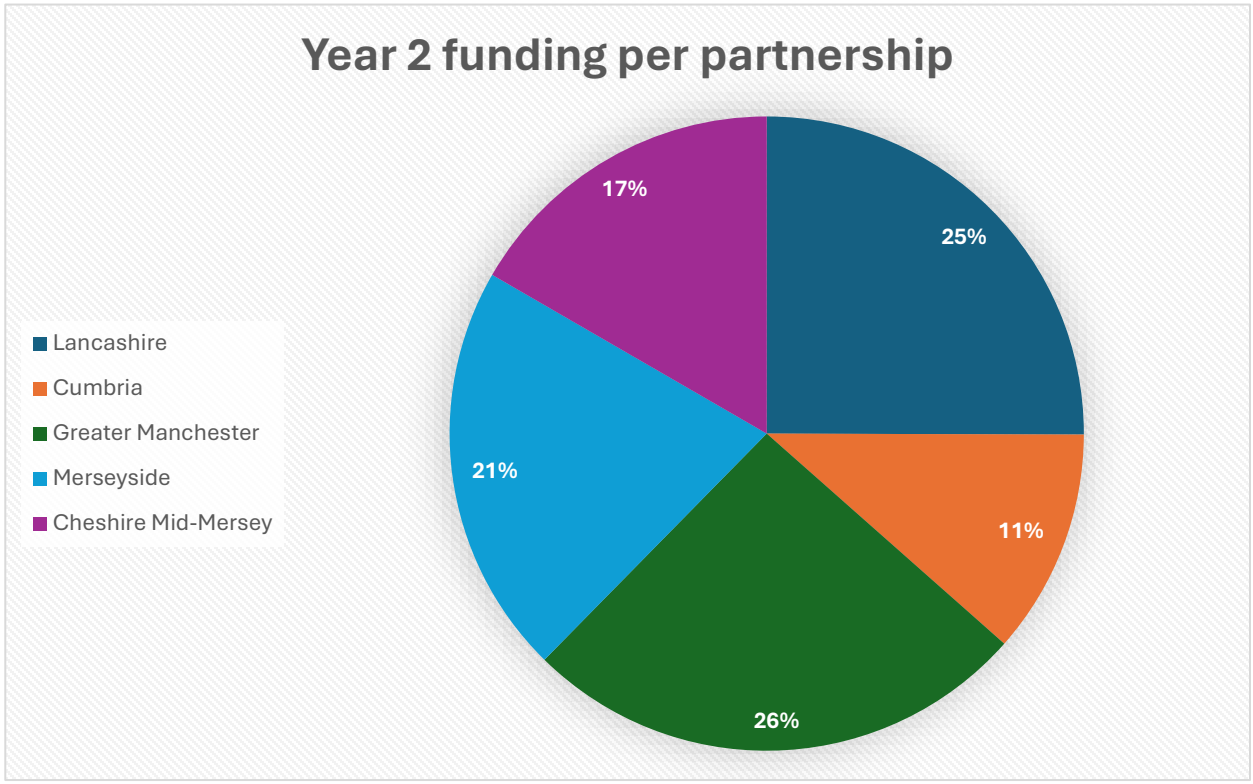
Overview

- In July 2025, the Northwest RFCC approved £2.7 million of Local Levy funding over three years to support Property Flood Resilience (PFR) projects:
- **2026/27:** £675,000
- **2027/28:** £900,000
- **2028/29:** £1,125,000

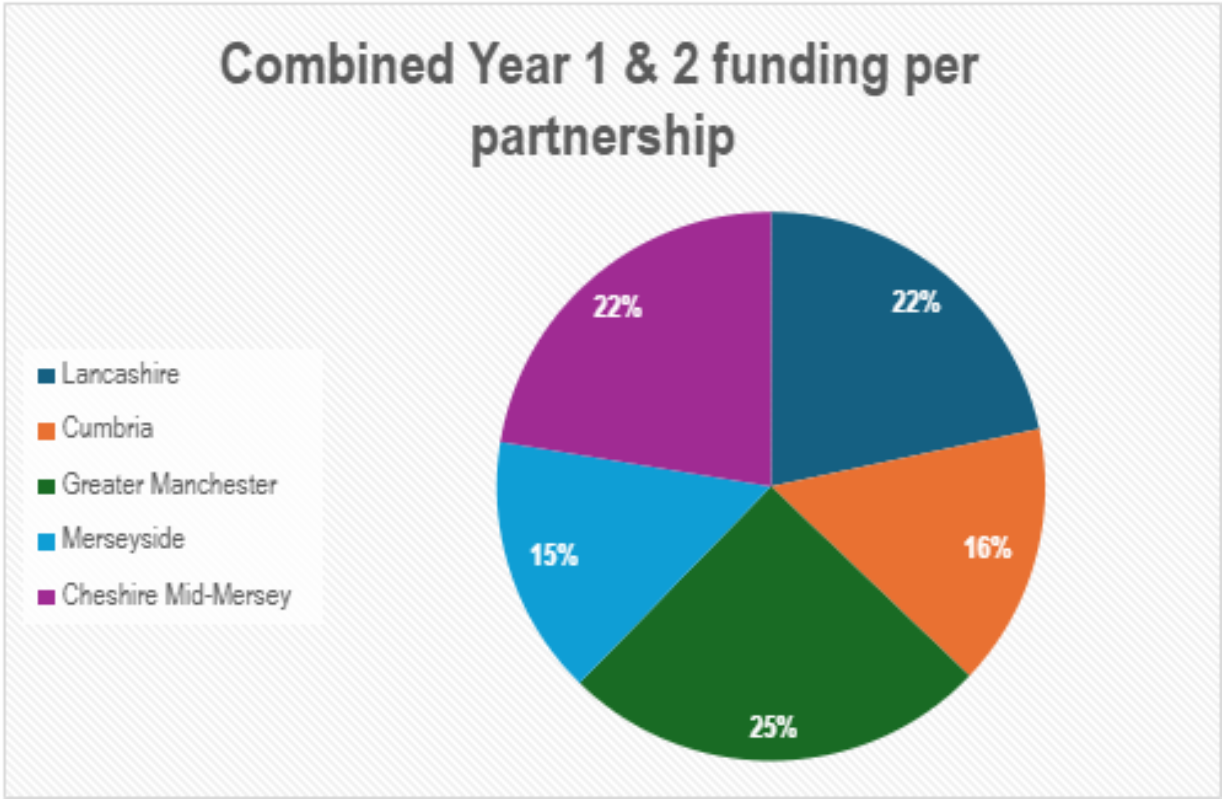
Proposed Year 2 funding

Partnership	Delivery RMA	Project Name	Weighted Score	Property Numbers	Cost	Total Cost
Cumbria	EA	Lowther Valley (Westmorland and Furness Council)	2.95	25	£27.5k (Lot 1 only)	£87,500
	EA	Wigton (Cumberland Council)	2.95	50	£60k (Lot 1 only)	
Lancashire	EA	Stacksteads, (Rossendale Council)	3.05	8	£116k (Lot 2 only)	£191,000
	Wyre Council	Wyre (Multiple Communities)	2.95	50	£75k (Lot 1 only)	
Greater Manchester	Wigan Council	Bickershaw Lane	3.15	14	£21k (Lot 1 only)	£197,000
	Manchester City Council	Baguley Brook	2.75	11	£176k	
Merseyside	Sefton Council	Sefton	2.65	10	£160k	£160,000
Cheshire Mid-Mersey	Warrington Council	Farnworth Road	2.65	7	£112k	£127,000
	St Helens	West End Road	3.35	10	£15k (Lot 1 only)	
Total Allocation					£762.5k	

Year 2 funding per partnership



Combined Year 1 & 2 funding per partnership



Recommendations

The Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup is asked to:

- **Recommendation 1:** Approve the allocation of £762,500 from the Local Levy Property Flood Resilience Programme to the projects listed in this paper for delivery during 2027/28.
- **Recommendation 2:** Approve the use of any uncommitted contingency funding, subject to programme risks remaining within acceptable limits, to support additional Lot 1 project development activities during 2027/28.
- **Recommendation 3:** Endorse the principle that the Year 3 Local Levy PFR allocation should primarily be used to support Lot 1 project development, helping to build a future pipeline of schemes and improve their readiness for Grant in Aid and other funding opportunities.

Vote / Recommendations from the Subgroup

- Approve the allocation of £762,500 from the Local Levy Property Flood Resilience Programme to the projects listed in this paper for delivery during 2027/28.

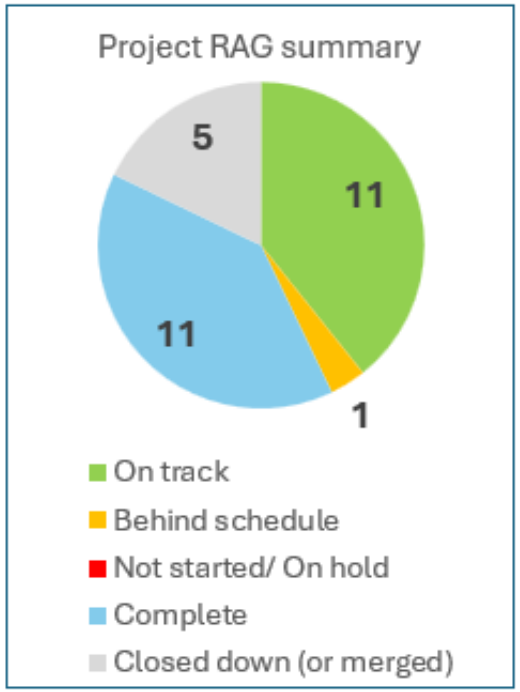
- Endorse the use of any uncommitted contingency funding, subject to programme risks remaining within acceptable limits, to support additional Lot 1 project development activities during 2027/28.

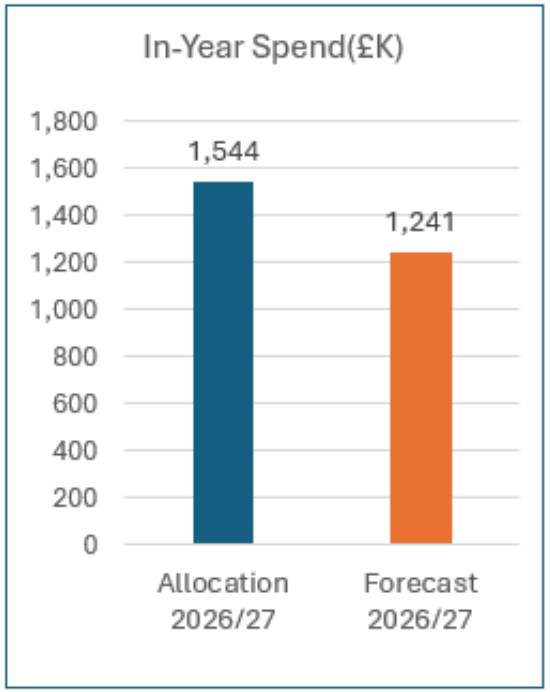
- Endorse the principle that the Year 3 Local Levy PFR allocation should primarily be used to support Lot 1 project development, helping to build a future pipeline of schemes and improve their readiness for Grant in Aid and other funding opportunities.

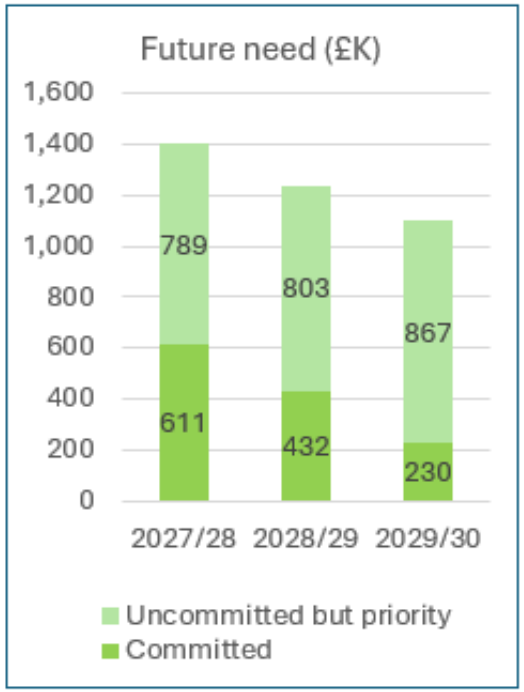
RFCC Business Plan – Progress overview

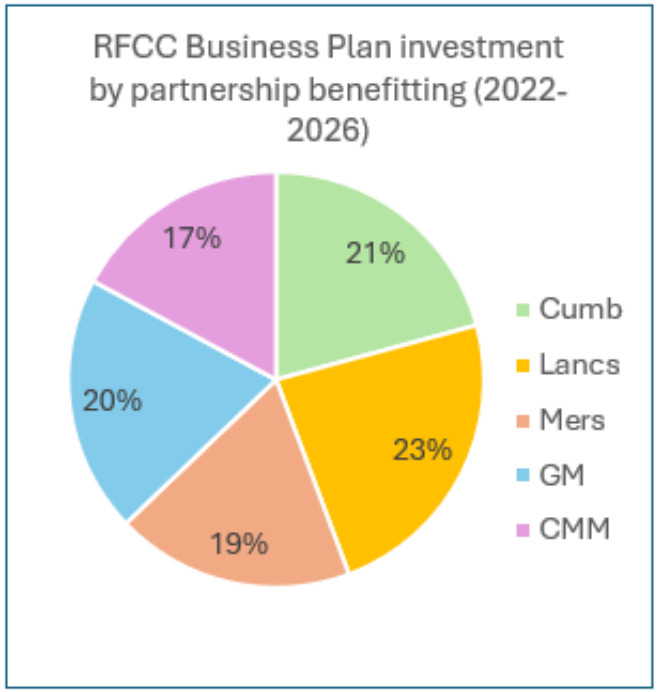
North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Dashboard





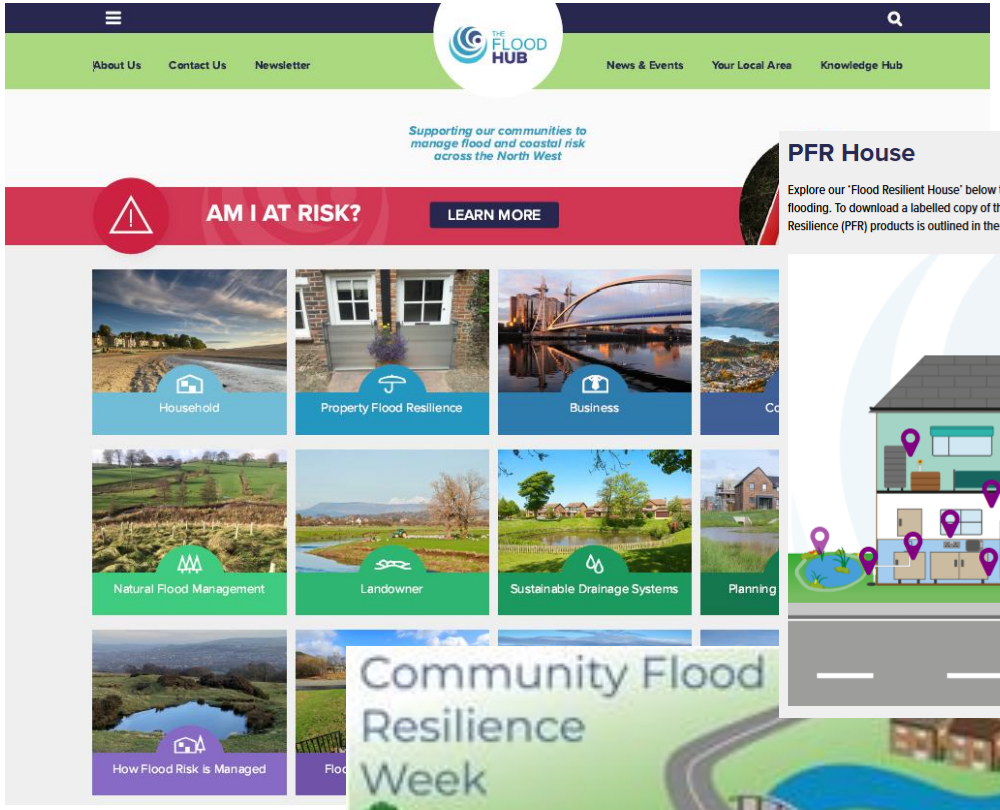




Highlights

- North West community engagement support (including The Flood Hub website) - Tender process led by GMCA now complete, Newground CIC confirmed as ongoing supplier and contract in place from September. Immediate resumption of service. Three projects moved from Amber to Green status.

Community Engagement Support Service - Additional Local Levy funding request











Key messages

- Service highly valued and well established across the North West.
- Three years of Local Levy funding already approved (January 2026) based on cost estimates.
- Tender process has now confirmed costs and delivery arrangements.
- Total contract cost remains in line with estimates previously approved by the RFCC.
- Additional Local Levy requirement arises from a revised funding split between FCERM GiA and Local Levy.

Vote / Recommendation from the Subgroup

- Approve additional Local Levy funding of £56.3K (in 2029/30).

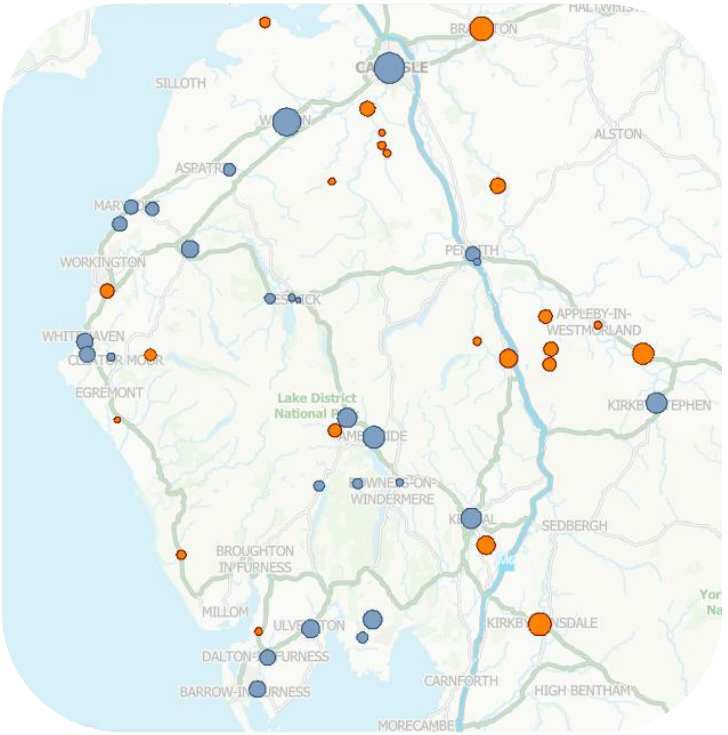
North West FCRIP project legacy

National FCRIP funding ends March 2027

FCRIP project		Legacy proposal
Cumbria Innovative Flood Resilience (CiFR)	→	Cumbria Farmer Engagement
Resilient Roch	→	Resilient Roch – Developing approaches to holistic property level protection and its aftercare in the North West
Our Future Coast	→	Future Coast North West

Cumbria Innovative Flood Resilience:
Local Levy ask to ensure legacy

CiFR Legacy – the ask



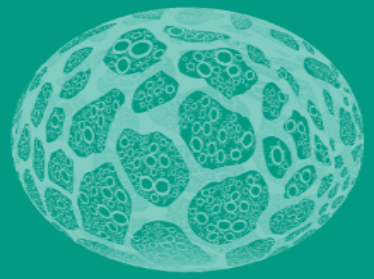
3 Years funding for:

- 1 FTE Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer
  - Employed by Natural England
  - £66-69k pa (inc on costs and inflation)
- Funding pot for NFM “quick wins”
  - To maintain landowner support whilst main FCERM funding bid developed
  - £32k pa (inc management costs)
- Share NFM learning from CiFR across the North West

Total Ask: £298,295

Westmorland and Furness Council will manage the funding

ROCHDALE
BOROUGH COUNCIL



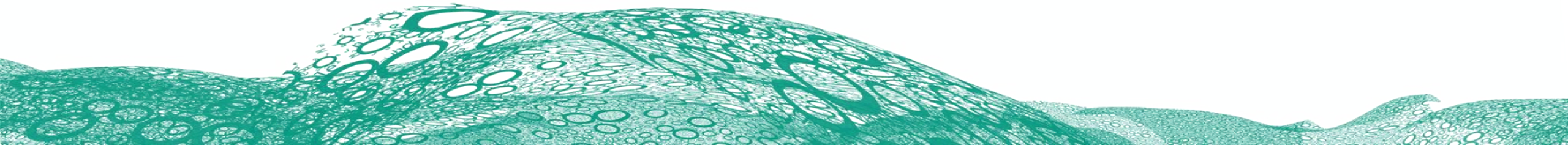


Resilient Roch – Developing approaches to holistic property level protection and its aftercare in the North West

Our proposal

Utilising our established team and cross sectoral partners:

- Deliver a bespoke programme of work aligned to the Council's PFR aftercare support programme
- Learn about the sustainability of PFR in situ in disadvantaged communities, test approaches to build capacity & capabilities and support sustainable flood resilience
- Work with the finance sector to deliver new approaches to insurance provision and take up
- Capture and disseminate the learning for the benefit of the region and the NWRFCC Business Plan
- Develop a training and engagement model to support behavioural change and upskill property owners and tenants, RMAs, and maintenance contractors
- Support the NWRFCC PFR programme and GIA bids through training, workshops, mentoring and development of case studies



Breakdown of Local Levy proposal

National Flood Forum engagement programme including 1FTE	55
Financial resilience – training, dissemination and piloting cross sectoral approaches	20
Evaluation and dissemination	10
Events and activities	10
Total per annum	95
TOTAL SPEND OVER 3 YEARS	285

Aligned funding and in-kind support

- £250k 5-year PFR aftercare programme
- RBC Flood resilience team support (in kind)



Why investment is needed to support long-term SMP Delivery in the North West

9 October 2026

North West & North Wales Coastline
a partnership for coastal defence management

The Long Term Vision - A Shared Regional Solution



The North West has built strong foundations

- Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme
- SMP Maintenance
- Our Future Coast testing new approaches and partnerships

The North West now needs:

- Capacity and expertise to deliver
- A pipeline of projects and funding opportunities
- Regional coordination across organisations
- Investment to unlock opportunities
- Long-term delivery capability

What are we asking for?

Local Levy Request

£320,000 over 2 years (2027/28 - 2028/29)

Investment Area	Funding	Outcome
Regional Development Capacity	£200,000	Develop regional project pipeline and business cases.
CAP Match Funding	£100,000	Unlock ~£1.6m of adaptation funding.
Strategic Engagement	£20,000	Coordinate strategic partners, maintain momentum and build support for delivery.
Total	**£320,000**	**Capacity to deliver SMPs**

A £320,000 investment will help unlock:

- Approximately £1.6m of CAP funding
- A regional pipeline of coastal resilience projects
- Stronger funding bids and business cases
- Increased external investment into the North West
- Better delivery of complex SMP policies
- Long-term benefits for coastal communities

Recommendations

- **Recognise** the need for additional regional capacity to support coastal adaptation and SMP delivery across the North West.
- **Support** the development of **Future Coast North West** as a collaborative regional approach to addressing shared coastal challenges and accelerating delivery.
- **Approve** a Local Levy contribution of **£320,000 over two years (2027/28 to 2028/29)** to:
    - Develop a regional pipeline of coastal resilience and adaptation opportunities.
    - Provide match funding to unlock approximately **£1.6m of Coastal Adaptation Programme funding**.
    - Support strategic engagement and partnership development.
    - Establish the foundations for Future Coast North West.

Vote / Recommendations from the Subgroup

To approve the allocation of Local Levy funding for the:

Cumbria Farmer Engagement project:

£298.9K over three years (2027/8 – 2029/30)

Vote / Recommendations from the Subgroup

To approve the allocation of Local Levy funding for the

Developing approaches to holistic property level protection and its aftercare in the North West project:

£285K over three years (2027/8 – 2029/30)

Vote / Recommendations from the Subgroup

- (No Subgroup vote) To **recognise** the need for **additional regional capacity** to support **coastal adaptation and SMP delivery** across the North West.

- (No Subgroup vote) To **support** the development of **Future Coast North West** as a collaborative regional approach to addressing shared coastal challenges and accelerating delivery.

- **(As recommended by the Subgroup)** To **approve a Local Levy contribution of £320,000 over two years (2027/28 to 2028/29)** to:
  - Develop a regional pipeline of coastal resilience and adaptation opportunities.
  - Provide match funding to unlock approximately **£1.6m of Coastal Adaptation Programme funding**.
  - Support strategic engagement and partnership development.
  - Establish the foundations for Future Coast North West.

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

RFCC Review of Local Levy Funded Resource Roles

Presented by Terri McMillan / Richard Knight

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Resource roles reviewed

Partnership Co-ordinator (x5)	Local authority hosted In place since 2012 Half funded from Local Levy, half from LLFAs in partnership
Shoreline Management Plan Co-ordinator (x1)	Local authority hosted In place since 2016 Fully Local Levy funded
Local Authority project support resources - Project Advisers (x5), coordinated and supported by Programme Coordinator (x1)	Environment Agency-hosted In place since 2017 Fully Local Levy funded
RFCC Business Plan Programme Manager (x1)	Environment Agency-hosted In place since 2022 ~40% Local Levy funding, remainder from EA
Total current cost to Local Levy (2026/27): £696K per year **Local Levy funding for all roles is currently approved to April 2027**	

Survey of service users - Themes

Consistent recognition that the resources provide essential capacity, expertise, coordination and leadership that would otherwise be unavailable within existing resources

- Strong support for continuing all roles.
- Local authority capacity remains extremely constrained.
- Recent funding policy changes increase demand for specialist support.
- Greater focus is needed on pipeline development and future investment opportunities.
- Increased training and capability building are required.
- Some role profiles would benefit from review and greater consistency.
- Longer-term funding commitments would improve stability and retention.

Costs - General

- Provision for 3.5% annual inflationary increases in role costs (inflationary pay awards only, no current roles/postholders qualify for career progression increases)
- Costs cover all basic on-costs (National Insurance, employer's pension contributions, Apprenticeship Levy) plus a moderate allowance for travel and subsistence, training, management overheads etc.
- Cost profiles
  - Fully funded Levy roles – funding would increase annually in line with inflationary increases
  - Part funded Levy roles (contributions) – flat funding, building in provision for inflationary increases, for ease of administration
- Annual £5K partnership allowance – Proposed for continuation at current level

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Costs

Role	2026/27 cost/ funding (£k)	2027/28 Funding need (£K)	2028/29 Funding need (£K)	2029/30 Funding need (£K)	2030/31 Funding need (£K)	2031/32 Funding need (£K)	Total funding approval sought (£K)
Partnership Coordinator (5) (LA hosted)							
Per role	37	41	41	41	41	41	205
Total for all 5 roles	185	205	205	205	205	205	**1,025**
Shoreline Management Plan Coordinator (1) (LA hosted)							
Total for 1 role	55	58.0	59.9	61.9	63.9	66.0	**309.8**
EA-hosted resource pool (6)							
Per Advisor role (EA Grade 5) (x5)	64	64.6	66.9	69.2	71.6	74.1	346.5
Programme Coordinator (EA Grade 6) (x1)	81	82.1	84.9	87.9	91.0	94.2	440.0
Total for resources	401	405.1	419.3	434.0	449.2	464.9	**2,172.5**
RFCC Business Plan Programme Manager (1) (EA hosted)							
Total for 1 role	30	33	33	33	33	33	**165**
Supplementary allowance to support effective functioning of partnerships							
Per partnership	5	5	5	5	5	5	25
Total for all 5 partnerships	25	25	25	25	25	25	**125**
Total funding	696	**726.1**	**742.2**	**758.9**	**776.1**	**793.9**	**3,797.2**

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Vote / Recommendations from the Subgroup

- **Approve continued Local Levy funding** totalling **£3,797.2K** for **all existing resource roles** for a further **five years** (April 2027 to March 2032)
  - **Commission a further phase of work** running into 2027 to **review, refresh and evolve role profiles**, in particular for the **Partnership Coordinator** and **Local Authority Project Adviser/ Programme Coordinator roles** to reflect:
    - the new national funding policy;
    - emerging investment programme requirements;
    - future pipeline development needs;
    - adaptation and resilience priorities;
    - consistency and clarity of roles and expectations
    - feedback received through this review.
  - Request **annual reporting** on outcomes, impacts and benefits delivered through the Local Levy funded resource model.

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Collaborative Asset Management Project – Update on potential next steps

Presented by Jill Holden and Sarah Wardle

Survey of asset management organisations

(LLFAs, the Environment Agency and United Utilities)

Purpose

- Understand the current state of asset registers.
- Identify barriers to effective asset management.
- Test appetite for greater collaboration.
- Explore potential for a shared regional asset management system.

Main findings

Partners identified common challenges:

- Incomplete asset information.
- Gaps in ownership and condition records.
- Limited inspection and maintenance capacity.
- Resource constraints affecting asset data quality.
- Revenue funding pressures and competing priorities.

Key conclusion

The primary challenge is not the absence of a shared system, but the quality of asset information and the capacity needed to improve and maintain it.

What Does This Mean?

Shared platform not the current priority

Feedback from partners

✅ Support for improving asset knowledge and evidence

❌ Limited support for developing a shared regional asset management platform at this stage

Why?

Authorities feel the priority is:

1. Improving asset data quality
2. Resolving ownership gaps
3. Better understanding asset condition and performance
4. Building organisational capacity to maintain asset records

New Opportunity - Asset Evidence & Funding Readiness Pilot

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Why now?

Recent FCERM funding reforms are expected to place greater emphasis on evidence supporting:

- Asset ownership.
- Asset condition.
- Asset performance.
- Maintenance requirements.

Proposed next phase

Develop an **Asset Evidence and Funding Readiness Pilot** to:

- Improve asset records.
- Address ownership gaps.
- Strengthen condition data.
- Improve asset management maturity.
- Prepare authorities for future refurbishment funding opportunities.

Recommendation

The RFCC FBA Subgroup is asked to:

- Note the survey findings.
- Support the decision not to progress a shared platform currently.
- Endorse development of a future Asset Evidence & Funding Readiness Pilot.
- Receive a future costed proposal for consideration.

Agenda Item 5

Local Levy vote

Presented by Liz Grey

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Local Levy vote

RFCC Members eligible to vote on the Local Levy:

Cumbria partnership	Cllr John Murray
Lancashire partnership	Cllr Ged Mirfin Cllr Jane Hugo
Merseyside partnership	Cllr Joanne Williams Cllr John Prince
Greater Manchester partnership	Cllr Mandie Shilton Godwin Cllr Alan Quinn Cllr Phil Cusack
Cheshire Mid Mersey partnership	Cllr Mark Goldsmith Matt Winnard

Agenda Item 6

Unpave the Way update

Presented by Crystal Orton

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Unpave the Way Project Updates October 2026

UNPAVE THE WAY











Unpave the Way Garden
RHS Tatton Flower Show 2024

Introduction to Unpave the Way

Addresses a growing national trend of householders paving over front gardens with impermeable surfacing for driveway creation.

The RHS State of Gardening Report (2025) stated that 54% (89,000 ha) of the total area of front gardens in Great Britain (162,624 ha) had been paved over.

This loss of permeable green front gardens increases surface water runoff, contributing to flooding, placing pressure on sewer networks, triggering combined sewer overflows (CSOs), and impacting river water quality.

The project influences various stakeholders to promote and incorporate sustainable drainage (SuDS), rainwater harvesting, and permeable paving within front gardens.

With the aim to provide multiple benefits in relation to flood resilience and surface water management, water quality, biodiversity, and urban cooling.

Why Unpave the Way is important for local authorities

Impermeable driveways contribute to property and highway flooding.

When heavy rain falls onto a double driveway made of impermeable surfacing, it causes **1,170 litres** of surface water runoff – equal to **8** bathtubs of water.

Multiply this by 100 impermeable driveways and **117,000** litres of floodwater is generated – equal to **780** bathtubs.



Resource impacts:

- Adds pressure to highway drainage.
- Staff time and resources to pump highway flooding/close roads.
- Staff time to respond to reports of garden flooding.
- Excess surface water on highways contributes to the creation of potholes.

Driveways and Gardens Design Handbook – Now Available

- Permeable paving options.
- Small scale SuDS for gardens.
- Infiltration testing instructions.
- Permeable paving maintenance requirements.
- Cost comparison for permeable paving.
- Low maintenance climate resilient planting list.
- DIY SuDS guidance - inspired by the Unpave the Way Garden.



Download here: Driveway and Garden Design Handbook for Download | The Flood Hub

Unpave the Way Comms

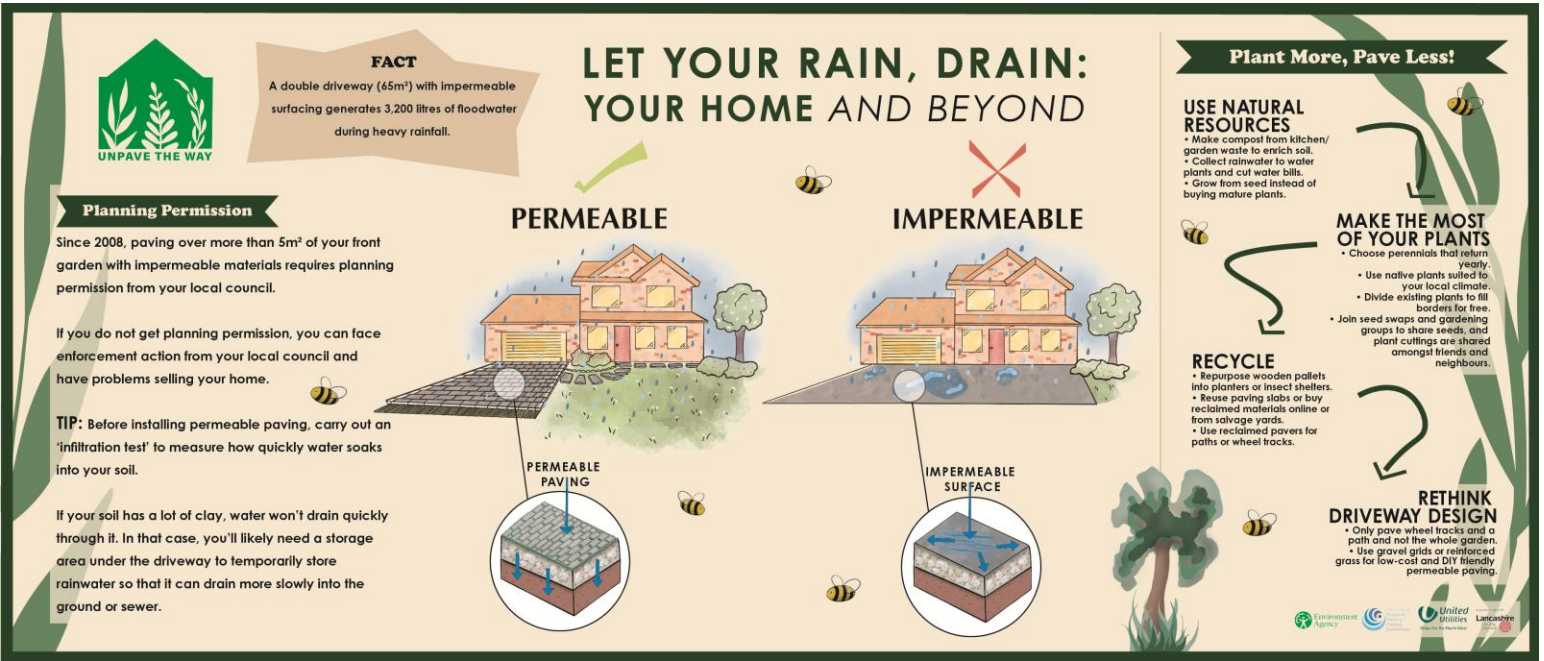
- First social media campaign to promote the handbook took place w/c 28th Sept - supported by Flood Hub, EA, UU and local authorities.
- Comms plan and content sent to local authorities to publicise the handbook to staff and householders.
- To be repeated during Spring 2027.
- Handbook is currently being shared with related industries to further its reach e.g. British Association of Landscape Institutes (BALI), Society of Garden Designers.
- Plans for Lunch and Learn Webinar with Local Planning Authority to share how the handbook can be used by planning officers and promoted to householders.

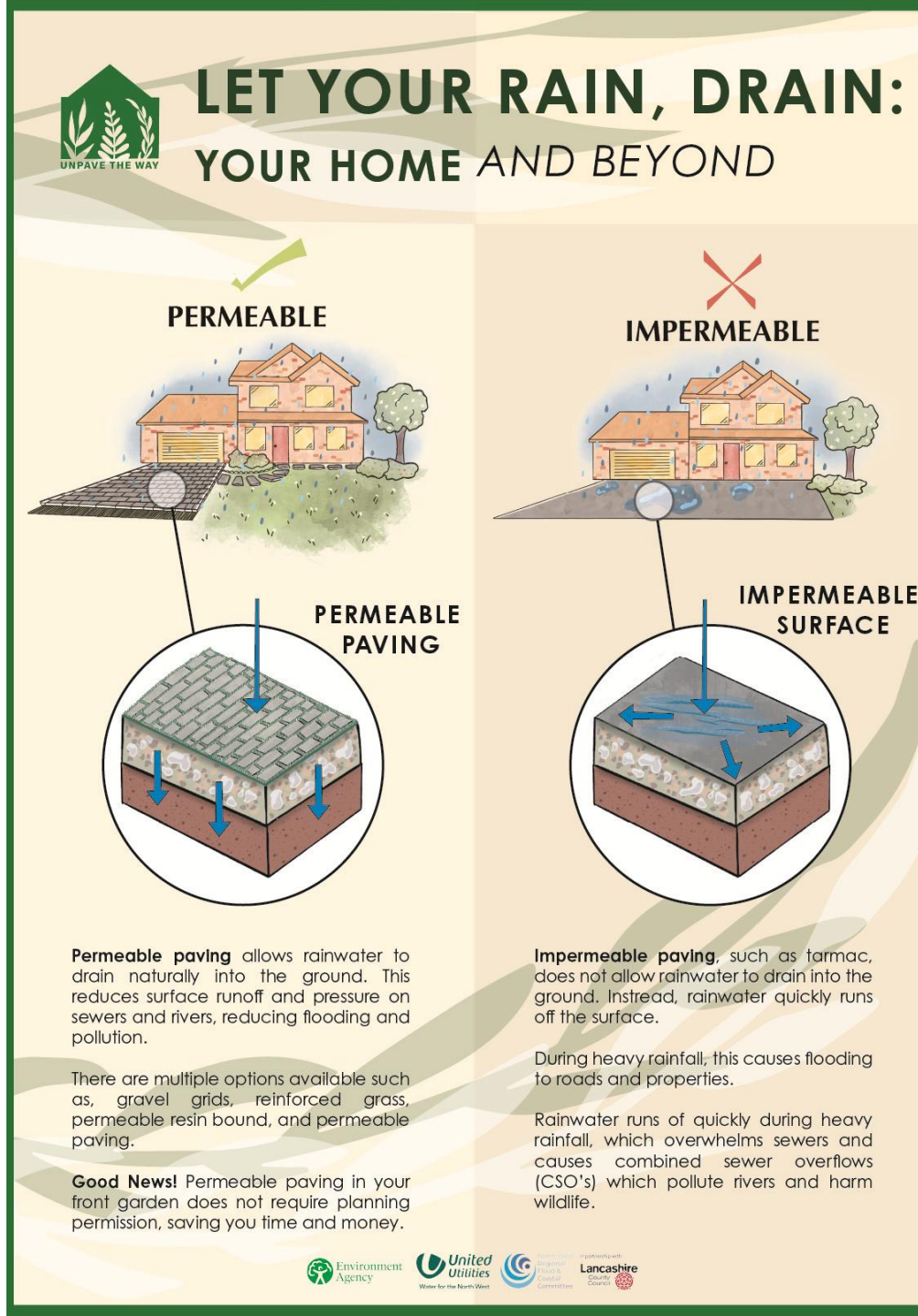


Social media posts received 5,181 views during the initial campaign week.

Collaboration with Liverpool Hope Uni

- Worked with two graphic design students to create the ‘Let Your Rain, Drain’ infographic.
- Contains important information for householders when considering a new driveway.
- Promotes permeable paving and a reduction in paving overall i.e. only paving the area you need to accommodate a car(s) versus paving over your whole front garden.





Local Authority Webpage Template

- For upload onto local authority websites for consistent messaging across the northwest.
- Encourages householders to create greener permeable front gardens/driveways to better manage rainwater and reduce surface water flooding.
- Raises awareness of the 5 m^2 planning permission requirement for impermeable front gardens.
- Link to existing Planning, LLFA and Highway Dropped Kerb webpages.

Two options available:

Full version – preferred option to support the project's objectives.

Signposting version - for local authorities that have content size restrictions.

Can be amended by local authorities to suit their individual branding and messaging.

Download via the NW RFCC SharePoint site: North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee - NW RFCC Business Plan - Finalised templates - All Documents

Collaboration with UU Rainwater Management Team

1. Downspout planters and water butts

- Unpave the Way has inspired United Utilities' downspout planter and water butt initiatives for householders and community gardens, with designs from the Unpave the Way Garden incorporated into the schemes.

- Free planters and water butts have been installed at hundreds of homes in selected areas where combined sewers are under significant pressure.

2. Permeable Driveways

- The project is aligning with UU's new permeable driveway incentive scheme for householders.
- Focuses on SuDS retrofit - encouraging residents to replace existing impermeable driveways with permeable paving by providing a financial incentive.
- Will be launched in selected locations in 2027.



How the committee can support

1. Liaise with your webpage team to get the new template uploaded.

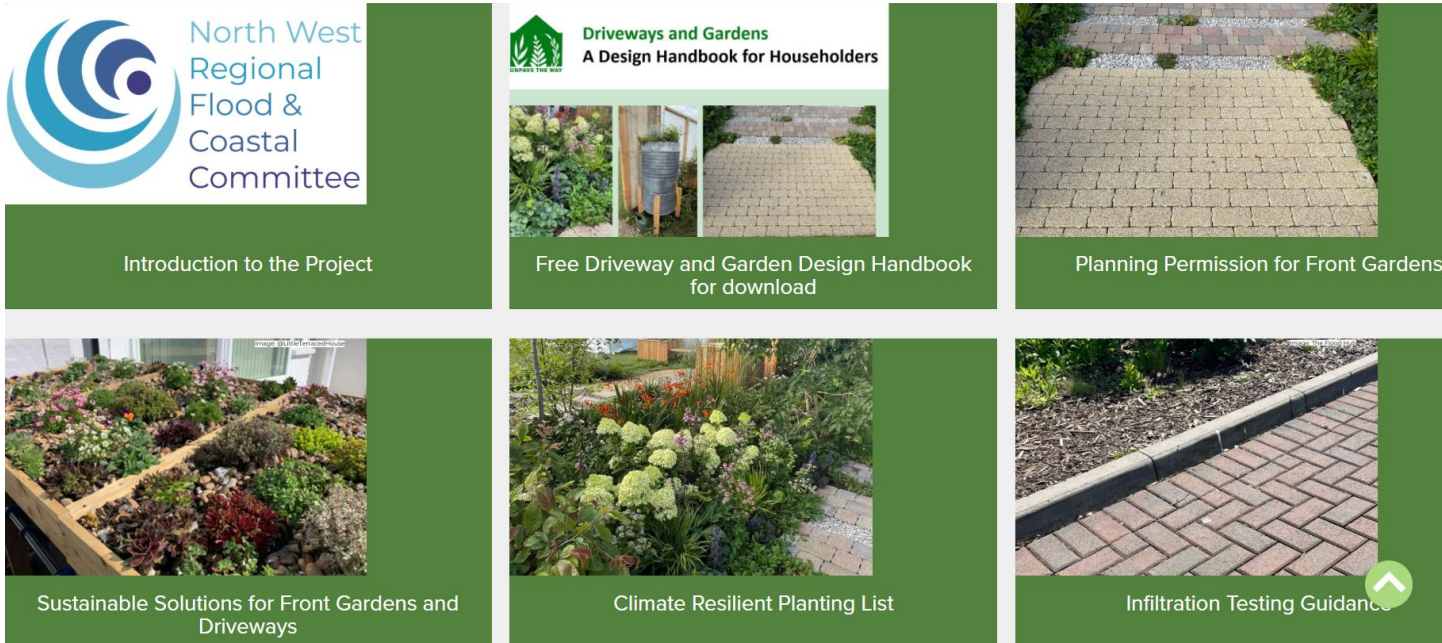
2. Include a link to the handbook on your local authority's website.

3. Share the handbook with colleagues, communities, friends and family.

4. Reshare social media posts to promote the handbook to householders.

5. Share surface water flooding hotspot locations to help inform project deliverables.

6. Promote greener permeable front gardens/ driveways in Local Plans.



A Forward Look - 2027



Ongoing promotion of the Driveways and Gardens Design Handbook.



Support implementation of new Local Authority webpage.



Assist with comms and engagement for new United Utilities householder initiatives.



Focused engagement with contractor/supplier industries and retailers.

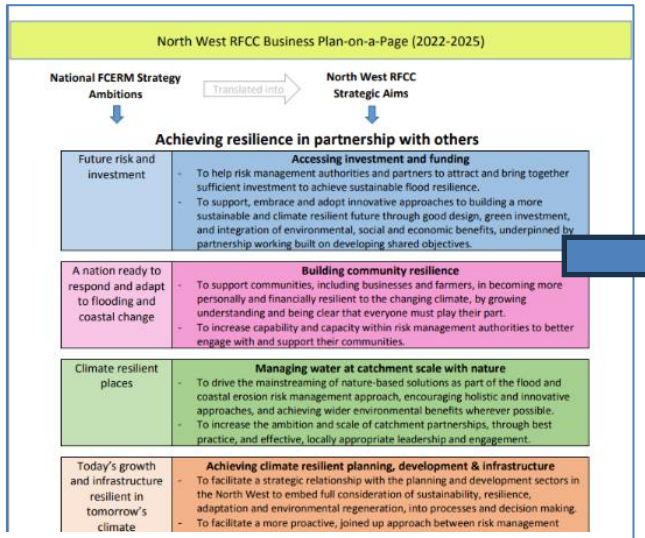

Unpave the Way Garden
Whitaker Park, Rossendale
Thank you for listening!
Any questions?

Agenda Item 7

RFCC Business Plan and Local Levy Strategy reviews

Presented by Sally Whiting

RFCC strategic framework

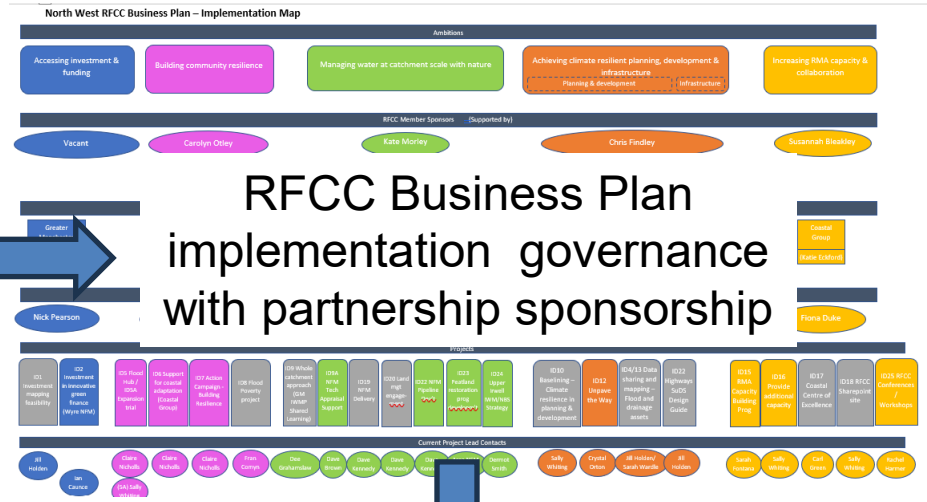

North West RFCC Business Plan-on-a-Page (2022-2025)

National FCERM Strategy Ambitions — Translated into — North West RFCC Strategic Aims

Achieving resilience in partnership with others

Future risk and investment	**Accessing investment and funding** - To help risk management authorities and partners to attract and bring together sufficient investment to achieve sustainable flood resilience. - To support, embrace and adopt innovative approaches to building a more sustainable and climate resilient future through good design, green investment, and integration of environmental, social and economic benefits, underpinned by partnership working built on developing shared objectives.
A nation ready to respond and adapt to flooding and coastal change	**Building community resilience** - To support communities, including businesses and farmers, in becoming more personally and financially resilient to the changing climate, by growing understanding and being clear that everyone must play their part. - To increase capability and capacity within risk management authorities to better engage with and support their communities.
Climate resilient places	**Managing water at catchment scale with nature** - To drive the mainstreaming of nature-based solutions as part of the flood and coastal erosion risk management approach, encouraging holistic and innovative approaches, and achieving wider environmental benefits wherever possible. - To increase the ambition and scale of catchment partnerships, through best practice, and effective, locally appropriate leadership and engagement.
Today's growth and infrastructure resilient in tomorrow's climate	**Achieving climate resilient planning, development & infrastructure** - To facilitate a strategic relationship with the planning and development sectors in the North West to embed full consideration of sustainability, resilience, adaptation and environmental regeneration, into processes and decision making. - To facilitate a more proactive, joined up approach between risk management

RFCC Business Plan document set out high level ambitions, linked to National FCERM Strategy, through a North West lens, with strategic aims for RFCC


North West RFCC Business Plan – Implementation Map

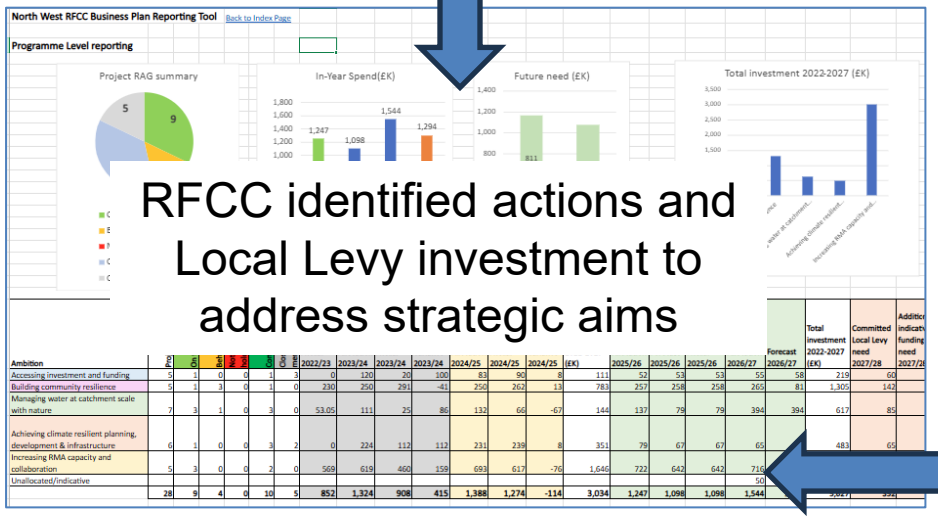
Ambitions: Accessing investment & funding; Building community resilience; Managing water at catchment scale with nature; Achieving climate resilient planning, development & infrastructure (Planning & development; Infrastructure); Increasing RMA capacity & collaboration

RFCC Member Sponsors (Supported by): Vacant; Carolyn Otley; Kate Morley; Chris Findley; Susanna Bleakley; Nick Pearson; Fiona Duke

Projects

Current Project Lead Contacts

RFCC Business Plan implementation governance with partnership sponsorship


North West RFCC Business Plan Reporting Tool — Back to Index Page

Programme Level reporting

Project RAG summary; In-Year Spend(£K); Future need (£K); Total investment 2022-2027 (£K)

Ambition	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	(£K)	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2026/27	Forecast 2026/27	Total investment 2022-2027 (£K)	Committed Local Levy need 2027/28
Accessing investment and funding	0	120	20	100	83	90	8	111	52	53	53	55	58	219	60
Building community resilience	230	250	291	-41	256	262	13	783	257	258	258	265	81	1,305	142
Managing water at catchment scale with nature	53.05	111	25	86	132	66	-67	144	137	79	79	394	394	617	85
Achieving climate resilient planning, development & infrastructure	0	224	112	112	231	239	8	351	79	67	67	65		483	65
Increasing RMA capacity and collaboration	569	619	460	159	693	617	-76	1,646	722	642	642	716			
Unallocated/indicative												50			
	852	1,324	908	415	1,388	1,274	-114	3,034	1,247	1,098	1,098	1,544			

RFCC identified actions and Local Levy investment to address strategic aims


North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC)

Local Levy Strategy

April 2024

This Strategy sets out the key principles and commitments the North West RFCC will apply to make the most of its Local Levy funding and to further its Business Plan goals.

The Strategy will be reviewed again after 2 years.

Contents

Foreword 2

General principles 3

Local Levy Strategy provides principles and guidelines for the RFCC when allocating Local Levy funding, both

to the main investment programme (FCERM schemes), to Quick Win funding

and to Business Plan projects

What is driving the reviews now?

- New national FCERM funding policy creates significant opportunities for the North West. Funding is becoming available for a wider range of measures.
- Review of National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy
  - Retained ambitions but review of strategic objectives
  - Themes likely to be strengthened:
    - Surface water flooding
    - Supporting deprived communities
    - Coastal adaptation
    - Property Flood Resilience
    - Place-based approaches
    - Rural and lowland water management
- Feedback from partnerships indicates that project development capacity is now becoming a bigger constraint than funding availability.

What we're hearing from the partnerships –

Summary of feedback from 10 July RFCC workshop

Biggest opportunities for funding

- Surface water flooding
- Natural Flood Management
- Property flood resilience
- Asset refurbishment
- Adaptation and resilience
- Support for deprived communities

Biggest constraints

- Staff capacity
- Specialist skills
- Project development resource
- Business case preparation
- Stakeholder engagement
- Revenue funding

Key message: national funding may be more available; developing fundable projects is the challenge.

What the new funding policy might mean for Local Levy funding

- Potential large asks to help meet 10% contribution requirement (if GiA available)?
- Some schemes with Local Levy contributions already approved may not secure GiA and may not go ahead?
- Potential asks for up to 100% Local Levy funding for local priorities where GiA not available?
- Expected ongoing need for partnership funding contributions to secure GiA funding (return on government investment) – extent currently unknown
- Without enhanced Levy spend on pipeline development the North West may lose out on national GIA investment?

Potential direction of travel for the RFCC and its us of Local Levy funding

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Evolving the RFCC's strategic role

Continue providing an optimum level of funding for projects to help secure national funding...

...whilst placing greater emphasis on:

- Capacity building
- Project incubation and pipeline development
- Partnership coordination
- Skills and capability development

Suggested approach

A **transitional 2-3 year shift** in emphasis, with ongoing review once the impacts of the new national funding policy become clearer.

Emerging Strategic Questions

- Does the current approach to Local Levy investment provide the right support for the emerging funding environment?
- Is sufficient emphasis being placed on project development, partnership working and capability?
- Should Local Levy be used differently in future to maximise access to national funding?

Specific consideration - Strategic document structure

Current name		Possible future name/role
RFCC Business Plan (Strategic ambitions and aims)	→	RFCC Strategy
RFCC Business Plan project programme	→	RFCC Business Plan
Local Levy Strategy	→	Local Levy Guidelines (As an Annexe to RFCC Strategy)

Question – Would this suggested restructuring of the RFCC's strategic documents result in a clearer and more understandable strategic framework?

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Specific consideration - Funding allocation process/cycle

Questions

- Is the current approach to allocating Local Levy funding still appropriate?
- What considerations should be given to changing the Levy allocation cycle to an annual process enabling multiple proposals to be considered at the same time?
- To what extent would Members support greater focus on value for money of projects requesting Local Levy, to enable this to be balanced with local priorities?

Next steps

- Development of draft revised strategic documents
- Further engagement with partnerships and RFCC members
- Consideration of future Local Levy funding priorities
- Presentation of draft proposals to the RFCC in January
- Final approval anticipated in April 2027

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Agenda Item 8

EA organisational change update

Presented by Mary-Rose Muncaster

Aurora Transformation Programme

Preparing the Environment Agency for the future

- **Modernising how assets are managed**

  Making information and processes clearer and more consistent.

- **Improving how investment is planned and delivered**

  Helping direct funding to the places and outcomes where it can make the biggest difference.

- **Supporting better decisions**

  Giving people the tools and ways of working they need to act with confidence.

- **Protecting what matters**

  Helping protect people, homes and habitats now and in the future.



What this means

A more joined-up approach to managing assets and investing in resilient places.

better information, clearer choices and investment focused on real-world outcomes.

Aurora: a simpler way to deliver flood resilience

A 15-month programme to prepare for the next flood investment programme and improve how flood and coastal assets are managed.

01

Why it matters

- Keep flood and coastal assets working reliably
- Strengthen resilience to current and future risk

02

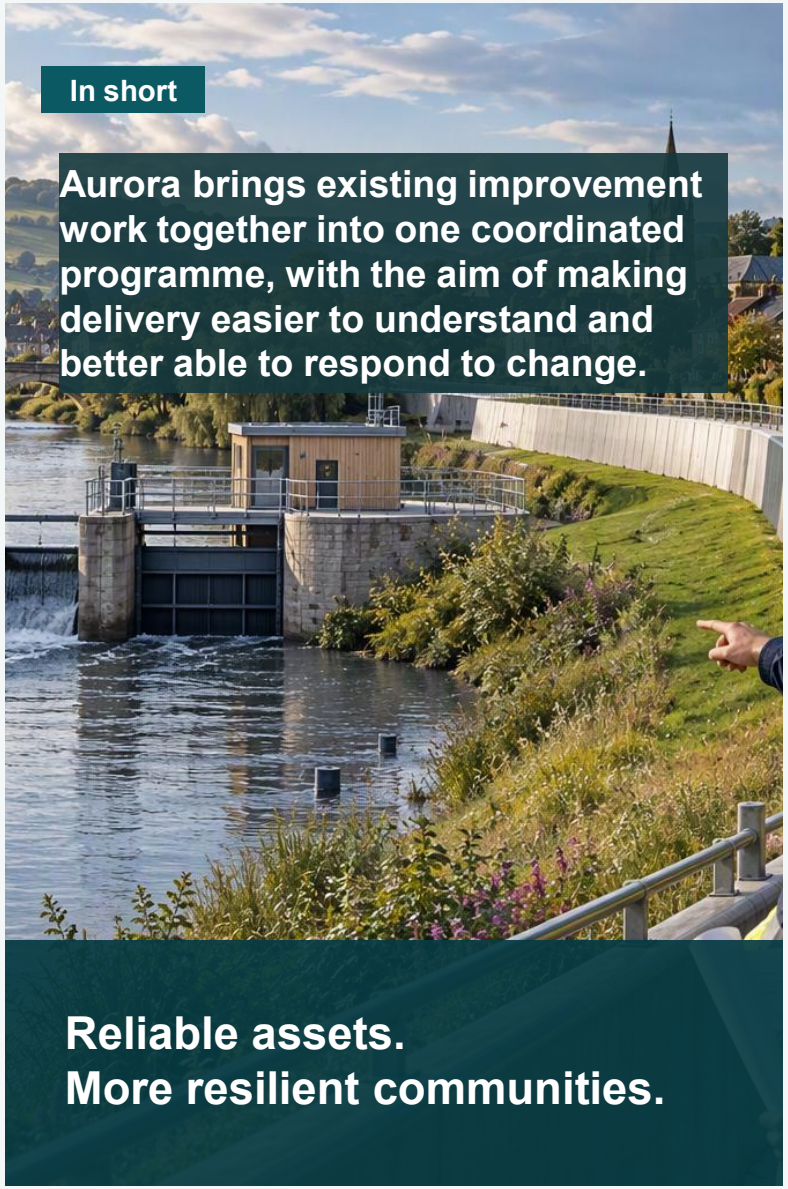
What will change

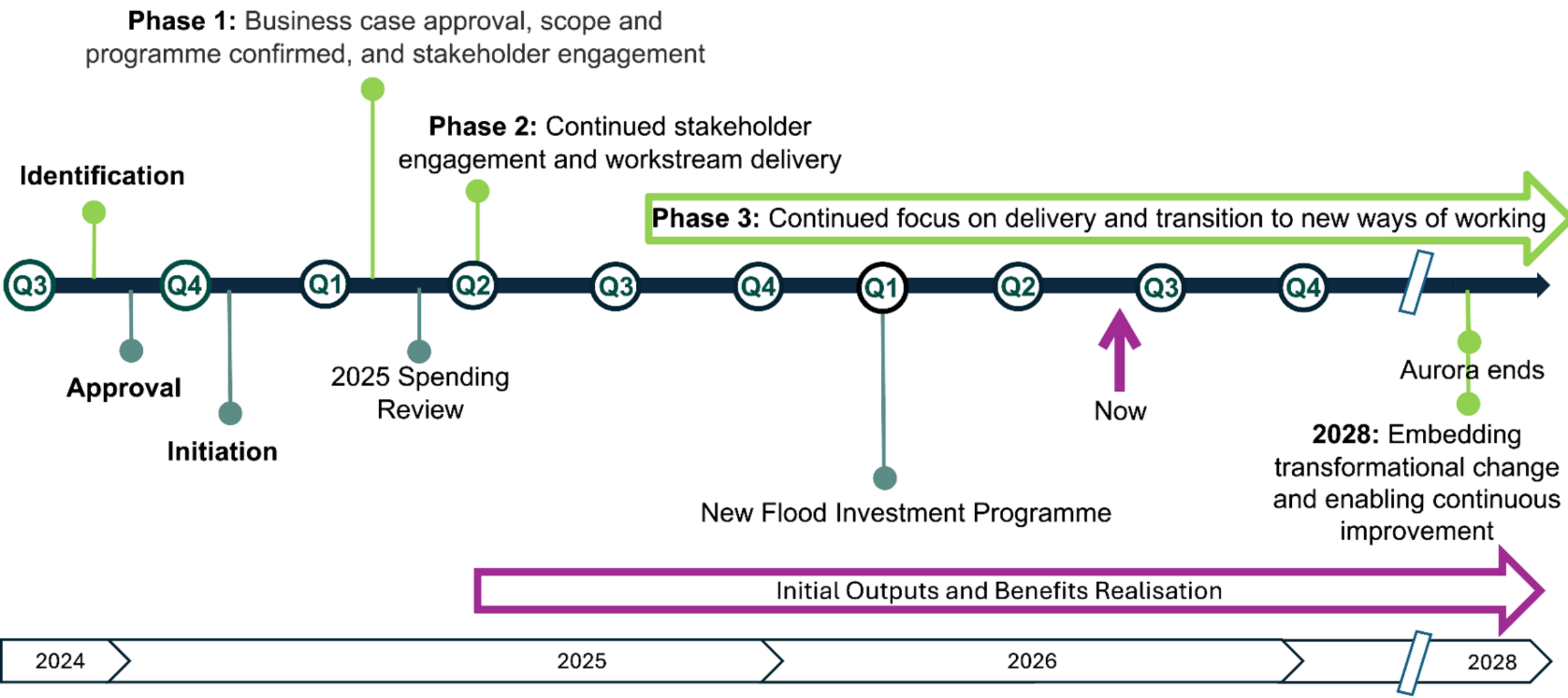
- A simpler, joined-up way to plan and deliver work
- Governance, assurance and resources matched to the size and complexity of each project

03

What stakeholders should expect

- Faster adaptation when circumstances change
- Clearer processes, more efficient delivery and a stronger focus on value for money




Phase 1: Business case approval, scope and programme confirmed, and stakeholder engagement
Phase 2: Continued stakeholder engagement and workstream delivery
Phase 3: Continued focus on delivery and transition to new ways of working
Identification
Approval
Initiation
2025 Spending Review
New Flood Investment Programme
Now
Aurora ends
2028: Embedding transformational change and enabling continuous improvement
Q3
Q4
Q1
Q2
Q3
Q4
Q1
Q2
Q3
Q4
Initial Outputs and Benefits Realisation
2024
2025
2026
2028

Aurora: what this means for the North West RFCC

The key changes are about who presents information and how it is grouped.

1

Who you will see at meetings

- You will start to see some new people presenting at RFCC meetings.
- Area Programme teams will no longer exist after December.
- Programme and Project Delivery (PPD) will present schemes delivered by the Environment Agency.

2

How investment information will be shown

- Investment information will be grouped into three clear categories:
- Environment Agency delivered schemes
- Other Risk Management Authority (RMA) delivered schemes
- Environment Agency area-led schemes

3

What will and will not change

- The overall budget will not change. Only the way the information is presented will change.
- “Properties Better Protected” will become “Properties Benefiting” to match the new measures.

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

Agenda Item 9

Any Other Business

Presented by Liz Grey