

GM Planning and Housing Commission

Date: **31st October 2023**

Subject: **Greater Manchester Flood and Water Management Governance, Strengthening Links to the North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC).**

Report of: **GMCA Planning and Housing Team**

Purpose of Report

To propose recommendations to strengthen connectivity to the NW RFCC, support GM RFCC members and agree how to make PHC work as GM's Strategic Group for Flood and Water Management.

Recommendations:

Members are requested to:

1. Note the contents of the report.
2. Consider and agree the recommendations in section 3.

Contact Officers

Jill Holden, Flood and Water Management Programme Manager

(jill.holden@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

Anne Morgan, head of Planning Strategy (anne.morgan@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

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1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 12 Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (RFCC) were established through the Flood & Water Management Act 2010. They agree investment priorities and approve the flood and coastal investment programme. Greater Manchester is one of the 5 partnerships that is represented at the North West RFCC by 3 GM political members.
- 1.2 GM Flood and Water Management Board (FWMB) was established in 2012 to provide a strategic forum, that would give direction and make decisions in respect to the delivery of flood risk management, including endorsement of GM's flood risk management programme, submitted for Grant in Aid and or Local Levy funding to the NW RFCC.
- 1.3 GM FWMB was an officer led group and therefore did not provide the opportunity to engage politically with all districts making it difficult to gauge GM's collective political views or strategic priorities. A stronger political buy-in was required to ensure maximum influence around GM's investment in flood and water management.
- 1.4 PHC provides a platform to engage politically with all 10 districts and it was agreed that GM RFCC members are invited to the group to support them in their role and to strengthen connectivity to the NW RFCC.
- 1.5 PHC has a wider focus than flood and water management, meetings are sometimes moved or cancelled and do not always align with timings of RFCC meetings, concerns have been raised that this arrangement is not working.
- 1.6 A more appropriate arrangement is needed to allow for more detailed local discussions around flood and water management that feed into the strategic RFCC agenda e.g. FCERM GiA programme, Local Levy funding, governance and resource.

1.7 This paper provides recommendations on how we can make PHC work as GM's Strategic Group to support GM RFCC members and provide direction for Flood and Water Management.

2.0 North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (NW RFCC) Greater Manchester members.

2.1 The North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee and brings together, with an independent Chair, the principle authorities responsible for managing flood and coastal erosion risk in their region:

- Environment Agency
- County and Unitary Authorities, in their capacity as Lead Local Flood Authorities and Highways Authorities
- Water and Sewerage Companies

2.2 The work of the Committee is underpinned by sub regional strategic partnerships covering Cheshire Mid Mersey, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, and Merseyside. Ten local authority Councillors, who are members of both the Committee and their sub-regional flood partnership, provide local democracy and scrutiny.

2.3 The Committee takes an overview of flood and coastal erosion risk management, seeks to promote investment in flood resilience and encourage innovation which is good value for money and benefits communities.

2.4 A large proportion of the funding comes from central government, which is prioritised nationally, but the Committee advises on the national funding programme and can exercise some local choice. It also raises a Local Levy on Lead Local Flood Authorities which provides an invaluable resource to help fund local flood and coast priorities, often enabling them to attract other funding.

- 2.5 The NW RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup provides a forum to collectively consider, discuss and shape investment (of money and resource) in flood and coastal erosion risk management in the North West, as a basis for making recommendations and providing assurance to the full Committee.
- 2.6 The remit of the Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup covers the:
- RFCC's business plan¹ and the resulting investment of Local Levy in resource capacity to tackle some of the barriers and challenges to achieving effective partnership approaches to flood and coastal erosion risk management.
 - Capital investment programme funded from multiple sources including FCERM Grant-in-Aid (Annex A Grant in Aid allocation process), partnership contributions, and the RFCC's Local Levy.
 - Main River revenue maintenance programme carried out by the Environment Agency.
- 2.7 Greater Manchester is allocated three places on the NW RFCC and Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup. The role of the Local Authority members is to:
- represent their group of authorities (in this instance issues at the Greater Manchester scale);
 - have a key role in ensuring that the needs of local flood risk management are met;
 - provide local democratic input;
 - participate in the local levy vote;
 - provide scrutiny and support for specific schemes;
 - champion local flood risk management back to their LLFAs.

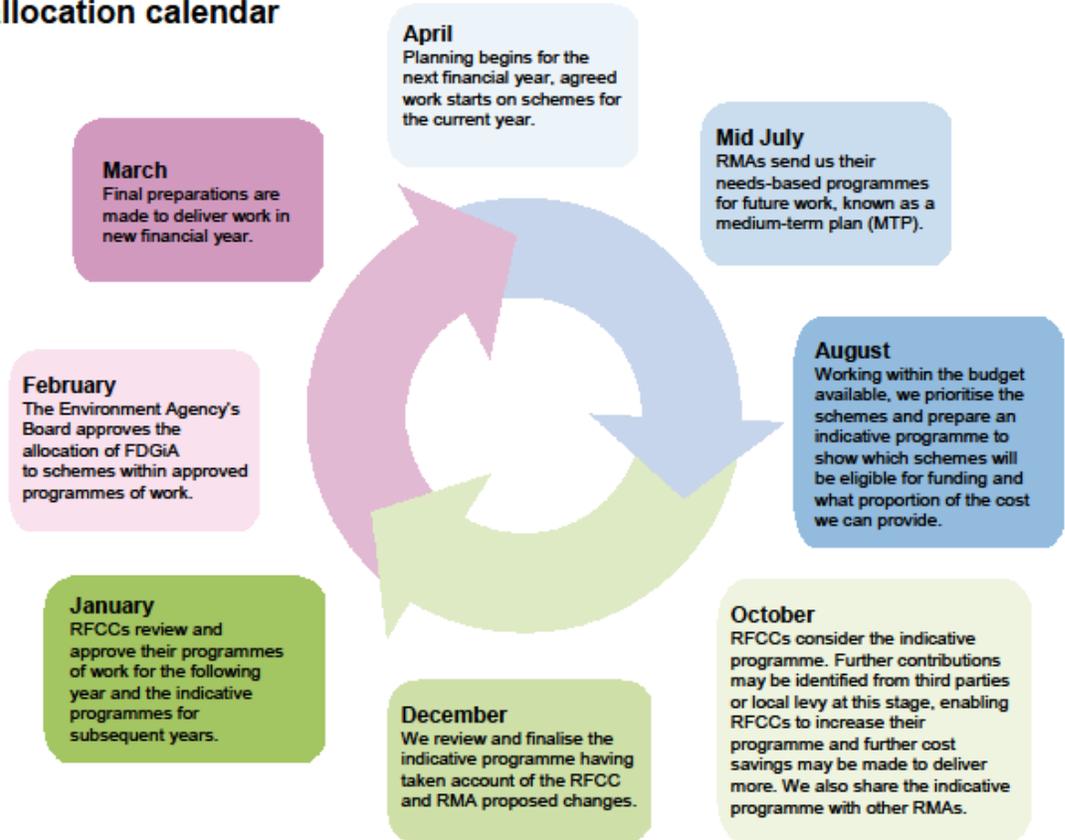
3.0 Recommendations

3.1 The following recommendations have been proposed so PHC can work more effectively as GM's Strategic Group for Flood and Water Management, to provide a way to engage politically across GM to support GM RFCC members and strengthen connectivity to the NW RFCC:

- All items for approval at the NW RFCC will be brought to PHC for consideration, to agree GM's position.
- Flood and Water Management session will follow PHC for RFCC members/PHC Exec. members (core members only), to help engage specifically with RFCC members (they will only have to attend this portion of the meeting if they choose to).
- Where the timing of PHC does not provide the opportunity for the GM RFCC members and PHC Exec. members to meet in advance of the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup a Flood and Water Management session will be held separately.
- Where appropriate the RFCC Chair, PHC Chair and GM RFCC members will meet quarterly outside of PHC in advance of the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup.
- 2024/25 nominations, PHC to appoint the GM NW RFCC members from its membership. Currently RFCC Members are invited to PHC and are not PHC Exec. members, this will provide a stronger forum to facilitate strategic engagement.

Annex A

Grant in aid allocation calendar



Abbreviations:

RMAs – Risk Management Authorities

RFCC – Regional Flood and Coastal Committee