



# Title of report: Herefordshire Flood Risk Mitigation

**Decision maker: Cabinet member local engagement and community resilience**

**Report by: Corporate Director – Economy & Environment Cabinet member local engagement and community resilience**

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

## **Key**

This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function concerned. A threshold of £500,000 is regarded as significant.

This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected. Notice has been served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in Connection with Key Decisions) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards);

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to set out how the £2,055,000 of additional flood risk mitigation investment is proposed to be spent and to seek the necessary approvals to do so.

## **Recommendation(s)**

### **That:**

- a) approval is given to draw down the £2,055,000 additional budget allocated in the Capital Programme for flood risk mitigation across 2025/26 and 2026/27; and
- b) delegated authority is given to the Chief Operating Officer Resident Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Local Engagement and Community

**Resilience, to take all operational decisions over the lifetime of the project, to deliver the investment set out in recommendation (a).**

### Alternative options

1. Not to invest £2,055,000 on flood risk mitigation as set out above, this is not recommended as this would be contrary to the council resolution on [7 February 2025](#).

### Key considerations

2. Herefordshire Council recognises the severe and widespread disruption that flooding causes across the county. Beyond the immediate impact on transport infrastructure, such as road closures and restricted travel, flooding also results in significant damage to residential properties, commercial premises, and vital community facilities. The consequences are not only physical but also emotional and economic, affecting families, businesses, and local services. In 2024 alone, more than 400 properties across Herefordshire experienced internal flooding, highlighting the urgent need for additional investment.
3. The council's investment of £2,055,000 on its Flood Response Programme seeks to reduce both the likelihood and the impact of flooding across Herefordshire. It aims to support communities by enhancing their resilience to flood events and by enabling the delivery of targeted schemes that offer better protection for homes, businesses, and critical infrastructure. Through a combination of scheme delivery, scheme development, community support and technology, the programme seeks to better to manage flood risk and minimising disruption from future flood events.
4. Work is currently underway to complete a number of outstanding section 19 formal flood investigations under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and to identify opportunities for flood management schemes in areas previously affected by flooding. Given the widespread nature of flood impacts across Herefordshire, the council will prioritise locations where the consequences have been most severe or extensive. As the designated Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), the council is committed to supporting communities in managing local flood risk. However, it is important to clarify that the LLFA is not responsible for resolving all flooding issues, nor is it legally required to do so. Its statutory duties focus specifically on local sources of flooding, such as surface water, groundwater, and ordinary watercourses, which will remain the primary focus of its efforts.
5. It is therefore proposed that the £2,055,000 of funding for 2025/26 and 2026/27 is allocated in accordance with the principles set out in Herefordshire's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. This is broadly as follows, with the understanding that individual amounts may be subject to slight adjustments as the programme develops.
  - a. Scheme delivery £1,580,000:
    - i. Engineered schemes – enabling the council to fully fund delivery of works that offer longer-term and where possible provide multi-benefit in respect of reducing the impacts of flooding.
    - ii. Nature based schemes – allowing the council to support delivery of Natural Flood Management (NFM) measures outside of the seven catchments currently funded through DEFRA.
    - iii. Partnership funding contributions – in its role as LLFA, the council is able to apply to the Environment Agency for Flood Defence Grant in Aid funding as part of DEFRA's Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management programme to help

better protect properties from flooding. As part of the process, partnership contributions are required, which this funding could help provide.

b. Scheme development £300,000 – progress key locations to a level of design development such that they can be costed and funding identified.

c. Community support £75,000:

i. Community Flood Signage Scheme – continue to support the roll out of this initiative in other areas across the county, including the use of advisory signage as well as closures.

ii. Allocate funding which can be used at the discretion of the Flood Risk Management & Drainage team to support communities to be resilient to future flood events.

d. Technology £100,000:

i. Implementation of monitoring systems and sensors in vulnerable locations that send real time alerts to council officers and communities about potential flooding. This may allow early actions and help to reduce the impact of flooding across the county.

ii. Funding will support the use of specialist software which allows for simulation of flood scenarios. This will enhance our ability to plan, prioritise interventions, and communicate risk effectively with stakeholders.

## Community impact

9. The £2,055,000 of additional investment into the Flood Response Programme contributes to the County Plan ambitions, increasing flood resilience.

10. The additional investment will be allocated across the county, prioritising those areas where flood impacts have been most severe or widespread.

11. The Flood Response Programme seeks to deliver the council's environmental policy commitments and aligns to the following success measures in the Council Plan 2024-2028: Increase flood resilience and reduce levels of phosphate pollution in the county's river. Furthermore, the Delivery Plan 2025-2026 sets out that the council will 'Invest in a flood risk management programme to reduce the likelihood and impact of flooding for residents and communities'.

12. Herefordshire Council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire's outstanding natural environment.

13. The environmental impact of this proposal has been considered through the service specification and includes appropriate requirements on the contractor/delivery partner to minimise waste, reduce energy and carbon emissions and to consider opportunities to enhance biodiversity. This will be managed and reported through the ongoing contract management.

## Equality duty

14. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

15. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. Our providers will be made aware of their contractual requirements in regards to equality legislation.

16. The Flood Response Programme seeks to reduce the impacts of flooding on communities, in turn benefitting the most vulnerable members of the community. Through its work with flood groups across the county, officers will explore opportunities to address the impacts of flooding on groups with protected characteristics.

## Resource implications

17. The project will be managed by the council's Flood Risk Management & Drainage team.

18. A unique project code will be allocated so that the relevant project manager can monitor and review progress to enable reporting to the relevant capital programme boards. Procurement will be undertaken in accordance with the council's Contract Procedure Rules to ensure value for money.

19. The £2,055,000 additional investment was approved at Council in February 2025 to be funded from capital receipts and corporate borrowing.

20. There are no implications to revenue funding as any future maintenance is managed within the existing programme and budget, however, capital investment should ease the revenue budget. The interest for borrowing was approved at full council from the corporate revenue budget during budget setting.

Capital Project	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£000	£000	£000
Herefordshire Flood Risk Mitigation	1,055.0	1,000.0	2,055.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,055.0</b>	<b>1,000.0</b>	<b>2,055.0</b>

Funding streams	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£000	£000	£000
Capital Receipts	1,000.0		1,000.0
Corporate Funded Borrowing	55.0	1,000.0	1,055.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,055.0</b>	<b>1,000.0</b>	<b>2,055.0</b>

## Legal implications

21. This council is designated as the Local Lead Flood Authority under s9 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. As the LLFA the council is required to adopt a strategy to manage flood risk from surface runoff, groundwater and watercourses. This decision will deliver as to the priorities in the strategy and associated Action Plan.

## Risk management

22. The £2,055,000 additional investment for flood risk mitigation will enable the delivery of schemes that better protect properties and infrastructure across the county and will reduce the overall flood risk
23. The £2,055,000 additional investment for flood risk mitigation was approved at Full Council, 7 February 2025 and will be delivered over a two year period.
24. Any risks will be managed at service level and escalated in accordance with the Risk Management Plan.

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Outputs from formal investigations will take time to become available.	Opportunity to deliver community and technology aspects in the first instance.
Demand identified as a result of findings from formal investigations and available resources.	Will need to prioritise those areas most greatly impacted.
Flooding has significant impacts on health and wellbeing which occur both acutely and over the long-term.	Opportunity to reduce the risk and effects of flooding will help reduce such impacts.

25. Assurance Statement – The strategic risks associated with the Flood Response Programme have been reviewed and are being managed in accordance with the council's Risk Management Strategy. The identified risks and corresponding mitigations are proportionate and appropriate to the objectives of the programme. Oversight of these risks will continue through the council's established governance and assurance frameworks, ensuring they are effectively monitored, escalated, and addressed as part of the council's commitment to robust risk management.

## Consultees

26. As part of the revised consultation process for key decisions, a Political Group Consultation (PGC) was held on 4 September. During the session, officers presented proposals for allocating the additional £2,055,000 investment in flood risk mitigation. It was confirmed that this funding will be prioritised for areas most severely or widely affected by flooding. While it was acknowledged that further funding would always be beneficial, the delivery of this programme is scheduled to take place over the current and next financial year. Officers will provide timely updates to members as this programme progresses. During the PGC, questions were also raised regarding other flooding issues. Officers committed to responding directly to Ward Members on the specific points raised.

## Appendices

None.

## Background papers

None.

## Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Please note this section must be completed before the report can be published		
Governance	John Coleman	Date 13/08/2025
Finance	Karen Morris	Date 08/08/2025
Legal	Sean O'Connor	Date 06/08/2025
Communications	Michala Lee	Date 21/08/2025
Equality Duty	Harriet Yellin	Date 06/08/2025
Procurement	Nena Beric	Date 11/08/2025
Risk	Paige McInerney	Date 26/08/2025
Approved by Ross Cook Date 08/09/2025		

[Note: Please remember to overwrite or delete the guidance highlighted in grey]

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**