

Flood Risk Management Strategy 2022

Annex A Governance and Partnership Arrangements

This strategy was published under Cumbria County Council's administration as the single Lead Local Flood Authority in Cumbria prior to 1 April 2023.

Following the disaggregation of the former County Council as part of the Local Government Reorganisation in April 2023, Westmorland and Furness Council and Cumberland Council became the new Lead Local Flood Authorities in Cumbria. The contents of this strategy contain elements relevant to both new Authorities.

Annex A relates to the governance and partnership arrangements across Cumbria. Whilst some of the content of this Annex remain relevant, transitional arrangements are in place as a new Cumbria Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Partnership is developed. This Annex will be updated once new partnership arrangements have been finalised.

The 2022 Strategy is due to be updated in 2027, at which time the content relevant to Cumberland Council will be removed.

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Governance and Partnership arrangements

Introduction

Flood risk management and governance has changed markedly as a result of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010. The formation of Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) introduced unitary authorities and county councils into the established framework for flood risk management across England. The remit for the LLFA has been clearly established, but it does require them to incorporate themselves into existing and new partnerships in order to contribute to the successful management of flood risk from all sources. These partnership arrangements need to operate internally and externally. Input is required across technical and policy functions and can extend to emergency response and resilience. Westmorland and Furness Council LLFA has well established partnerships between existing flood Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) and, alongside Cumberland Council LLFA, has taken a lead role in these partnerships, working very closely and successfully with the EA. The Pitt Review (many of the recommendations of which were incorporated into the FWMA) made it clear that success in reducing the likelihood and impact of future floods will depend on greater coordination and cooperation between local partners. Following Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in April 2023, new governance arrangements have been established as shown in Figure 1 below.

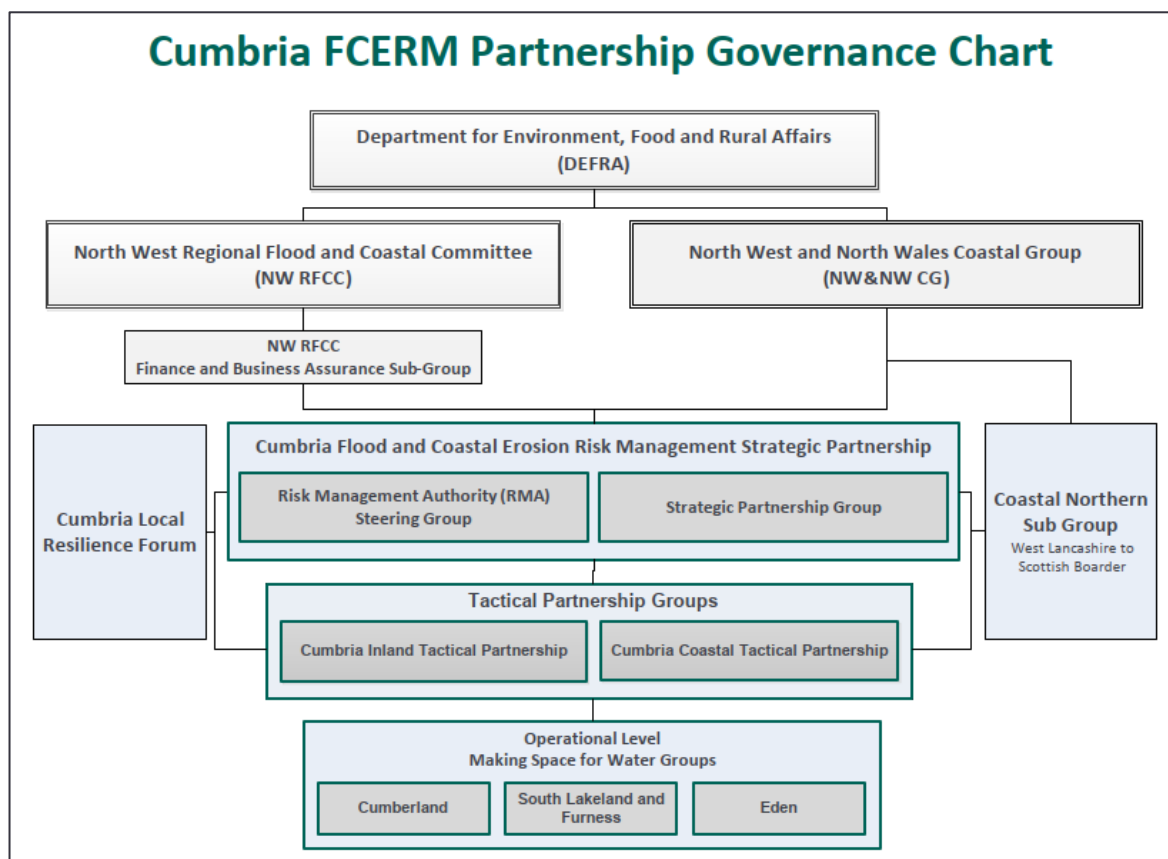


Figure 1 - Cumbria FCERM Partnership Governance

Cumbria Strategic Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Partnership

This section has been updated to reflect the current transitional partnership arrangements in place following LGR.

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 created the role of Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFA) to take on the responsibility for leading on the coordination of flood risk management activities. Section 3 of this Act requires flood risk management authorities work in partnership and cooperate to help holistically manage flood and coastal erosion risks.

As a collective the partnership guides, steers and leads the delivery of the management of local flood risk at strategic, tactical and operational levels through the following groups:

RMA Steering Group

The Risk Management Authorities (RMA) Steering Group is formed of the RMAs defined in FWMA 2010 that must work together to deliver an integrated and collaborative approach to manage flood risk.

****In Cumbria plays a pivotal role in addressing the challenges of flood and coastal erosion risk management within the region, especially considering the shared responsibilities with Cumberland. This group, along with the strategic partnership group, stands out as key collaborative platforms for overseeing and guiding flood and coastal risk management efforts. Their operation within the constraints of finance, resources, service delivery, and continuity is critical for several reasons:

Strategic Direction and Joint Working

By providing strategic direction, the RMA Steering Group ensures a comprehensive and holistic approach to managing flood and coastal erosion risks. This includes considering the diverse and interconnected factors that influence risk and response strategies, from geographical and environmental conditions to socio-economic factors.

The group facilitates coordination among various RMAs, including Lead Local Flood, Coastal protection, Highways authorities, the Environment Agency, and United Utilities. This collaborative effort is crucial for effective risk management across administrative boundaries, ensuring that actions in one area do not adversely affect another.

Management of Constraints

With limited budgets and increasing demands on resources, the group prioritises investments in flood and coastal erosion infrastructure, projects, and maintenance activities. It assesses the cost-effectiveness and potential impact of various

interventions, striving to maximise the return on investment in terms of risk reduction and community resilience.

Ensuring continuity and quality of service delivery in the face of flood and coastal erosion risks is a key concern. The group works to maintain essential services during and after flood events, minimising disruptions to communities and economic activities.

The RMA Steering Group is involved in continuity planning to ensure that critical functions and services can be maintained during and after flood events. This involves identifying vulnerabilities and implementing strategies to mitigate the impacts of flooding on infrastructure, services, and communities.

Shared Responsibility with Cumberland

The shared officer groups between Westmorland and Furness and Cumberland underscore the importance of cross-border cooperation in managing flood and coastal erosion risks. This arrangement facilitates;

Shared Knowledge and Best Practices: Leveraging collective experiences and lessons learned enhances the capacity of both regions to respond to flood and coastal erosion challenges effectively.

Integrated Planning: Joint planning efforts ensure that strategies and actions are aligned, promoting a consistent approach to risk management across the region.

Efficient Use of Resources: Sharing resources, including expertise and funding, allows for more efficient and effective management of flood and coastal erosion risks.

In summary, the RMA Steering Group's role in providing strategic direction within the context of Cumbria, and is essential for effective, efficient, and coordinated flood and coastal erosion risk management. This collaborative approach enables both regions to address the complex challenges of managing flood and coastal risks in a way that is sustainable, resilient, and sensitive to the constraints they face.

Strategic Partnership group

The Strategic Partnership Group, consisting of Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) along with a wider array of organisations such as river trusts, Network Rail, special interest groups, and catchment partnerships, plays a multifaceted role in flood and coastal erosion risk management. This group is instrumental in fostering an integrated approach to managing these risks, leveraging the strengths and capabilities of various stakeholders. The functions of the Strategic Partnership Group can be summarised as follows;

Integrated Catchment Management

The group adopts a holistic approach to water management, considering the entire catchment area rather than focusing solely on specific points of interest. This ensures that strategies and actions take into account the interconnectedness of water systems, land use, and human activities across the catchment.

By including a diverse range of stakeholders, the group facilitates collaborative planning and coordination of flood risk and water quality management initiatives. This collaboration ensures that efforts are complementary and that resources are pooled for maximum impact.

Stakeholder Engagement and Partnership Building

The inclusion of wider organisations extends the reach and scope of the group's activities. It enables the engagement of stakeholders who may not traditionally be involved in flood risk management but have a vested interest in the health and resilience of water bodies and catchments.

The group fosters partnerships among different sectors, including public, private, and non-profit entities. These partnerships are crucial for leveraging expertise, securing funding, and implementing innovative solutions to manage flood risk and enhance water quality.

Resource Leveraging and Project Implementation

By working together, members of the Strategic Partnership Group can more effectively mobilise resources, including funding, technical expertise, and local knowledge. This is essential for the successful implementation of large-scale and high-impact projects.

The group plays a key role in overseeing the implementation of projects and initiatives aimed at reducing flood risk, improving water quality, and enhancing habitat connectivity. This includes monitoring progress, evaluating outcomes, and adapting strategies as needed.

Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Building

The Strategic Partnership Group serves as a platform for sharing best practices, innovative approaches, and lessons learned among its members and with the broader community. This exchange of knowledge is vital for advancing the effectiveness of flood risk and water quality management strategies.

Through workshops, training sessions, and collaborative projects, the group helps to build the capacity of its members and local communities. This includes enhancing their understanding of flood risk, water management, and conservation practices, as well as their ability to respond to and recover from flood events.

In essence, the Strategic Partnership Group's function is to ensure a coordinated, inclusive, and effective approach to managing flood and coastal erosion risks and improving water quality across catchments. By leveraging the diverse expertise and resources of its members, the group aims to enhance the resilience of communities

and ecosystems to the challenges posed by climate change, development pressures, and other environmental stressors.

Tactical Partnership Group (TPG)

The Tactical Partnership Group within Westmorland and Furness, chaired by the Service Lead of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and Coastal Protection Authority (CPA), serves as a crucial intermediary layer in the governance and operational structure for flood and coastal erosion risk management. Positioned between the strategic oversight provided by the RMA Steering Group and the more focused, implementation-oriented Making Space for Water Group, the Tactical Partnership Group fulfills several key functions:

Coordination and Delivery of Strategic Actions

The group is responsible for the practical delivery of actions and initiatives set forth by the Strategic Partnership Group. By consisting of technical leads from various RMAs and related organisations, the Tactical Partnership Group ensures that strategic visions and objectives are translated into actionable plans that can be effectively executed on the ground. This involves coordinating the efforts of different agencies and stakeholders to avoid duplication, maximize resource efficiency, and ensure cohesive action across the region.

Reporting and Communication

Lead officers within the Tactical Partnership Group report on issues, successes, and progress regarding the management of flood and coastal erosion risks. This reporting mechanism provides an essential feedback loop to the Strategic Partnership Group, enabling adjustments to strategies and actions based on real-world experiences and outcomes. It also facilitates transparent communication between different levels of governance and among stakeholders, ensuring that all parties are informed and engaged in the decision-making process.

Coordination of Delivery and Resource Sharing

The group identifies opportunities for coordination in the delivery of flood and coastal erosion risk management projects. By sharing skills, knowledge, and resources among its members, the Tactical Partnership Group enhances the collective capability to address complex challenges associated with flood and coastal risk management. This collaborative approach leverages the specialised expertise of each member organisation, leading to more innovative and effective solutions.

Implementation of Decisions

The Tactical Partnership Group plays a key role in implementing decisions made by the Strategic Partnership Group. This includes turning strategic directives into practical projects and initiatives, ensuring that policies and plans are realised in a manner that aligns with overall goals and objectives. The group oversees the

detailed planning and execution phases of projects, managing timelines, budgets, and resource allocations to achieve desired outcomes.

Continuous Improvement

A significant function of the Tactical Partnership Group is to foster a culture of continuous improvement in the management of flooding and coastal erosion risks. By regularly reviewing practices, outcomes, and challenges, the group identifies areas for enhancement, encouraging innovation and the adoption of best practices. This iterative process ensures that flood and coastal erosion risk management strategies remain effective, adaptive, and responsive to changing conditions and emerging insights.

In summary, the Tactical Partnership Group acts as a critical bridge between high-level strategic planning and ground-level implementation, ensuring that the overarching goals of flood and coastal erosion risk management are translated into effective, coordinated actions. Its focus on technical leadership, operational delivery, and continuous improvement supports a dynamic and proactive approach to managing the complexities of flood and coastal erosion risks in Westmorland and Furness.

Making Space for Water (MSfW)

Each of the three Localities within Westmorland and Furness has a Making Space for Water Group (MSfWG). These are led by a representative from the LLFA, and membership is made up of officers from:

- EA
- LLFA representatives
- Highways and partners
- Water Companies
- Major infrastructure providers – i.e. Highways Agency; design, build, fund and operate contractors

The groups are guided as appropriate by the Tactical Partnership Group and meet quarterly in each district with the purpose of working in partnership, in order to:

- provide accurate assessments of the risk, nature and scale of local flooding
- identify and bring forward solutions to reduce the risk of flooding from local sources
- record, investigate and mitigate the effects of flooding incidents (hotspots)

Their role is to:

- Seek and create opportunities for more effective integrated water management, as directed by the TPG, in line with the national and local flood risk management strategies prepared by the EA and LLFA respectively.
- Ensure good communication, knowledge sharing, problem solving and operational working between partners
- Create a common understanding of the roles, responsibilities and limitations of organisations
- Review and respond appropriately to the UK MSfWG strategy
- Review and respond appropriately to the EU Water Framework Directive 2000
- Review and respond appropriately to the development and implementation of strategic flood management plans (Catchment Flood Risk Management Plans, Shoreline Management Plans and Strategic Flood Risk Assessments.)

Each MSfWG also prepares reports for the TPG, which provide:

- assurances that liaison is working and that partners are fulfilling commitments;
- recommendations for action
- requests for support on sticking points, support from other partners, or resources to invest in improvements.

Community Action Groups

There are many Community Action Groups set up by the EA across Westmorland and Furness, focussed on Fluvial flooding and some 4 or 5 community action groups that have formed because of risks other than flooding affecting communities. They are led by individuals from the affected communities, and they are often supported by county councillors, town councils and parish councils. MSfWs have formed links to the groups to facilitate collaboration at a local level.

Cumbria Resilience Forum Flood Planning Standing Sub-Group

The Cumbria Resilience Forum (CRF) was set up following The Civil Contingencies Act 2004, which established a clear set of roles and responsibilities for those involved in emergency preparation and response at the local level. The resilience forum has a Flooding Sub-Group that meets regularly to discuss significant flooding issues and how to respond to them. The membership of the Flooding Sub-Group includes the following organisations:

- EA
- Local Authority engineers
- Westmorland and Furness Council
 - Highways Authority
 - Lead Local Flood Authority
 - Coastal Protection Authority
- Water Companies
- Cumbria Constabulary
- Cumbria Fire and Rescue
- North West Ambulance Service
- RAF
- Network Rail
- Met Office

Cumbria LLFA contributes to the group by reporting MSfWG activities, including what the FCERM GiA bids put forward as flood defence schemes in Cumbria. The meetings involve discussing new advances in flood response, forecasting and risk assessment. This sub-group will be consulted on actions within this strategy proposed to reduce the risk of flooding and the possible need for an emergency response. The Sub-Group meets 3 times a year and has ownership of a Multi-Agency Flood Plan.

North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee

This committee approves the work of the EA and the LLFA in the north-west region. It is also a forum to share the work and progress of the EA in the region with local partners and to ensure that partnership work is happening with the LLFA, districts and communities. All LLFAs in the region have representation on the committee and Westmorland and Furness, along with Cumberland, is represented as Cumbria as a whole.

The North West RFCC covers Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire. Cumbria has one member on the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee from a total membership of 10. There are also eight technical appointees on the committee, who do not have voting rights. The Cumbria LLFA representative for Westmorland and Furness is Cllr. Giles Archibald, for Cumberland it is Cllr. Denise Rollo.

The RFCC is responsible for administering the flood defence capital programme in the North West funded by DEFRA. This includes expenditure (capital) and funding for the EA, LLFAs and coastal authorities for new or improved defences and major refurbishment, as well as other expenditure (revenue) on assets, plant and equipment related to managing flood and coastal erosion risks.

The Committee is also responsible for administering the local levy, which is a fund paid into by each authority in the region according to the number of Band D properties in the authority.

Northern Coastal Sub-Group

Alongside the RFCC, sits the North West England and North Wales Coastal Group. It meets twice a year and is attended by the RFCC Chair. It has two sub-groups: the Northern Sub-Group covering the Ribble Estuary to the Solway Firth, and the Liverpool Bay Sub-Group covering the Ribble Estuary to Great Orme.

As Westmorland and Furness carrying coastal responsibilities as CPA, the CPA attends the Northern Coastal Sub-Group, which meets 3 times a year. The group brings together coastal managers and planners from coastal local authorities, the EA and other maritime operating organisations to deliver co-ordinated strategic management of the shoreline between the Ribble Estuary and the Solway Firth. The North West England and North Wales Coastal Group co-ordinates the preparation of the Shoreline Management Plans for this stretch of coast. Shoreline Management Plan 2 looks at the policy agreed with all for:

- 'Defend the Line'; or
- no active intervention or
- managed realignment

For each section of the coast throughout Cumbria, policy covers 0-20 year, 20-50 year and 50-100 year timeframes.