

# North Yorkshire Council

## Assistant Director Resources (Environment)

27 February 2026

### Permission to accept Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Local Levy grant for a Nature Based Solutions project.

#### Report of the Assistant Director – Regulatory Services and Harbours

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval from the Corporate Director Resources (sub-delegated to the Assistant Director Resources), to accept the grant of £97,000 from the Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Local Levy to design a nature-based solution pilot scheme to mitigate coastal erosion.

#### 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 This project will develop and pilot an innovative nature-based solution, supporting a proactive and sustainable approach to managing coastal change. The work will focus on building a detailed understanding of coastal processes at this location and using this evidence to design interventions that work alongside natural systems to enhance long-term resilience. The pilot will explore landscape-led and environmentally sensitive design options, including habitat creation, improved sediment management and nature-based engineering approaches. These measures are intended to help manage erosion pressures while delivering wider environmental benefits, such as enhanced biodiversity and positive outcomes for the upstream catchment. The project will produce a robust design, supported by evidence and learning, which will inform longer-term coastal management planning. By testing and refining approaches at this stage, the scheme will help identify future investment opportunities and support well-planned, value-for-money decision-making for the benefit of the area and its communities.

#### 3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 North Yorkshire Council has assumed the role of Coast Protection Authority, previously undertaken by Scarborough Borough Council. In this capacity, the Council is responsible for overseeing coastal protection activities and the long-term management of coastal change.
- 3.2 Since 2008, an established programme of coastal monitoring has been in place along Scarborough's shoreline. This work provides a detailed understanding of how the coast and cliffs respond to natural processes over time, helping the Council to track long-term trends and inform future planning.
- 3.3 As part of good asset and risk management practice, the Council periodically reviews existing data to ensure its understanding remains current to support longer-term planning and identify opportunities to manage coastal change in a sustainable and proportionate way.
- 3.4 The Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) operates as a regional partnership overseeing flood and coastal erosion risk management. It promotes investment in projects that provide value for money and deliver benefits to local communities. The RFCC raises a Local Levy from Lead Local Flood Authorities, including North Yorkshire Council, which can be used to support locally important flood and coastal projects.

- 3.5 The Environment Agency's Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) National Strategy sets out a long-term vision for adapting to flooding and coastal change through forward planning and resilience. A key ambition of the strategy is to support communities in preparing for and responding to coastal change in a managed and sustainable way.
- 3.6 An initial allocation of Yorkshire RFCC Local Levy funding has been offered to support the design of a . During the design phase, a comprehensive funding strategy will be developed to identify and progress appropriate sources of funding for delivery. This will ensure that, on completion of the design, the project is well-positioned to move forward with clear governance, funding pathways and delivery arrangements. A subsequent Local Levy bid will be submitted following completion of the design to seek funding for construction in line with this strategy.

#### **4.0 DETAILED PRESENTATION OF THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE**

- 4.1 At present, there are locations where no formal engineered slope management measures in are in place. There are areas that benefit from existing grassed buffers between the cliff edge and nearby residential properties, which play an important role in accommodating natural coastal processes over time and reducing the likelihood of any direct impact on properties.
- 4.2 Previous technical assessments have highlighted that, in the absence of managed intervention, long-term coastal change could gradually alter slope profiles under certain future climate scenarios. For this reason, the Council is taking a proactive approach by exploring options that would help manage these processes in a planned and proportionate way, supporting the continued resilience of the cliff-top area.
- 4.3 Technical reviews have identified erosion at the base of the slope as an important factor influencing how the slope behaves over time. This erosion is linked to elevated water levels in the beck during periods of high river flow and storm conditions. Site inspections have confirmed localised bank erosion in this area, indicating that targeted measures at the slope toe could provide long-term benefits.
- 4.4 As part of a proposed scheme, a slope toe protection design will be developed. The aim is to manage erosion in this area, support natural ground conditions and encourage the establishment of vegetation, all of which contribute to improving the long-term stability and resilience of the slope.
- 4.5 Design options will include environmentally sustainable, nature-based solutions that make use of vegetative materials. These approaches not only help manage coastal change but also provide wider environmental benefits, including carbon capture, Biodiversity Net Gain and ecological enhancement.
- 4.6 Ahead of completing the detailed design, further work will be undertaken to confirm the operation of existing drainage outfalls and to carry out the necessary ecological surveys to inform the final proposals.
- 4.7 Ongoing engagement with residents will form an important part of the project. The Council will continue to encourage residents to share local knowledge and observations of the coastal slopes, which can provide valuable insight to complement monitoring data. This collaborative approach supports effective management of the site and helps ensure that information, advice and future proposals are clearly communicated.

## **5.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES**

- 5.1 Relevant stakeholders have been engaged throughout the development of the project to ensure the proposals are technically robust and aligned with regulatory and operational requirements. Early engagement has taken place with the Environment Agency, focusing on flood risk management, regulatory considerations, and integration with wider catchment priorities. Discussions with Yorkshire Water have examined asset interactions, drainage implications and opportunities for coordinated working. The Scarborough SEA LIFE Centre has also been consulted to understand any potential implications for marine life, visitor experience and the local coastal environment. Engagement has additionally been undertaken with local councillors to ensure awareness of the project, understand local sensitivities and support effective communication as the scheme advances.
- 5.2 At this stage, engagement with residents has not yet been undertaken, as this will commence once funding is secured, and the design phase begins. A full programme of public engagement will be developed at that point.
- 5.3 Internally, the project team has engaged with the Council's Parks service, who have recently secured approximately £31,000 of external funding to work in partnership with Yorkshire Water on proposals to designate the area as a Local Nature Reserve. Throughout the design phase, we will collaborate closely with the Parks team and Yorkshire Water to ensure that our work aligns with and supports their ambitions. This integrated approach will maximise environmental outcomes, avoid duplication, and strengthen the collective case for investment. By coordinating our respective programmes, the project will demonstrate clear, joined-up thinking and deliver a more coherent, place-based solution for the site.

## **6.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 6.1 Under the Do-Nothing option, awareness of the coastal erosion risk amongst residents may remain low. There would be no forward planning for managing the consequences of coastal erosion. Residents would be unprepared for the loss of properties creating difficulties for the Risk Management Authority to manage the process when the time comes for residents to have to leave. Significant mental health burden for residents becoming suddenly aware of the risks in an emergency situation, and with no forward plan for dealing with the risks residents may be left feeling unsupported and isolated. Whilst the cost of this option is zero in the present day, it may increase the costs to the Risk Management Authorities for dealing with the issue as the properties become at imminent risk of loss.
- 6.2 North Yorkshire Council is the lead Authority of the Environment Agency funded Cell 1 Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme. Under the option of Do-Minimum, North Yorkshire Council will continue to capture aerial photography and LiDAR data through the ongoing Cell 1 Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme to support understanding of coastal change and inform the likely remaining life span of the properties. As this data collection is already funded, the cost of this option would be minimal requiring only RMA staff time to consider timescales. However, this option poses the same risks as the Do-Nothing option in terms of community preparedness, and increased costs to the RMAs for dealing with the issue as the properties become at imminent risk of loss.

## **7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 A bid for grant from the Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Local Levy has been successful, securing £97,000 of capital -based solution to help mitigate coastal erosion and slope instability. This funding will support project costs, including consultant fees and NYC staff time. funding to undertake the design of a nature based solution to help mitigate coastal erosion and slope instability. This funding will support project costs, including consultant fees and NYC staff time. No match funding from the Council is required.

- 7.2 The precise cost of any future construction works cannot be confirmed until the design stage is complete. At this stage, costs remain indicative only. A second funding bid will seek to secure funding for delivery through the Local Levy and/or other available sources. Any future funding requirements and construction proposals will be subject to a further report.

## **8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 It is expected that the Council will be required to enter into a grant agreement as part of accepting the funding, but these terms have not yet been received. Once received, Legal Services will review the terms and conditions in full to ensure they are appropriate and manageable. Should any clause present an unacceptable level of risk, the Council retains the option not to proceed with the agreement.
- 8.2 All expenditure of the grant will be managed in accordance with the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules and, where applicable, the Procurement Act 2023 and the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Existing monitoring arrangements, including regular budget reporting and audit oversight, will ensure full compliance with funder requirements and provide assurance that the grant is being used appropriately.

## **9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no significant equalities implications arising from this report (Appendix A).

## **10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The proposed funding bid, if successful will lead to adaptation to climate change. A key avoidance action will be to produce a design that mitigates the coastal erosion risk to several properties at Scalby Ness. The project will contribute to the reestablishment of the gravel riverbed habitat which is crucial breeding ground for the local rare brown trout species which is at risk of loss due to climate change (Appendix B).
- 10.2 The Scalby Ness coastal erosion NBS project will directly support the goals set out in North Yorkshire Council's Nature Recovery Strategy. It will achieve this by enhancing coastal biodiversity, providing natural flood and erosion protection, and supporting carbon sequestration.

## **11.0 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 The proposal has been reviewed under North Yorkshire Council's corporate risk framework and presents a low and manageable level of risk. Financial risk is reduced through secured external grant funding and the preparation of a clear funding strategy for future stages. Commissioning a specialist consultant ensures technical compliance and minimises risks associated with design quality, cost variation and procurement challenge. Delivery risks including programme delays, environmental constraints and stakeholder concerns, will be managed through established project governance and early engagement with statutory bodies and local stakeholders. Reputational risk is limited and will be mitigated through transparent decision-making and clear communication. Overall, the project aligns with statutory coastal management duties and can be delivered within existing controls.

## **12.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 12.1 As Risk Management Authority, North Yorkshire Council, under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, is required to act in a manner that is consistent with the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England and work collaboratively with other RMAs.

## **13.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 13.1 The Assistant Director Resources accepts the grant of £97,000 from the Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Local Levy to design a nature-based solution pilot scheme to mitigate coastal erosion, subject to acceptable terms and conditions being received.

### **APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – EIA Screening Form

Appendix B - Climate Change Implications

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:** <https://www.northeastcoastalobservatory.org.uk/data/Reports/>

Callum McKeon  
Assistant Director – Regulatory Services and Harbours  
County Hall  
Northallerton  
10 February 2026

Report Author – Victoria Thompson – Project Officer  
Presenter of Report – Chris Bourne, Engineering and Coastal Manager