

North Yorkshire Council

Corporate Director of Community Development

27 February 2026

Permission to apply for funding to support Harrogate H₂O: Past, Present, Future in Flow from Local Authority High Street Fund

Report of the Head of Regeneration

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for the submission of an application to support Harrogate H₂O: Past, Present, Future in Flow to the Local Authority High Street Fund for funding of £200,000 from the Director Community Development in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer sub-delegated to the Assistant Director- Resources.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report recommends that North Yorkshire Council apply for grant funding of £200,000 from the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority (YNYCA) to support Harrogate H₂O: Past, Present, Future in Flow from the Local Authority High Street Fund, a fund set up to support projects emerging from the Town Investment Plans programme.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 06 May 2025 the North Yorkshire Executive committee made the decision to accept funding from YNYCA for The Town Investment Plan (TIP) programme which will develop tailored investment plans for 32 towns and key service centres across North Yorkshire. These plans will provide a strategic, co-ordinated approach to regeneration and investment at a place-based level. They will help the Council and its partners to understand investment priorities and provide a structured focus for future business cases and investment decisions.
- 3.2 As part of YNYCA commitment to the programme, a fund has been created to support capital projects emerging from the TIP programme. The Local Authorities of North Yorkshire and York are eligible to bid for funding. The project list for the Local Authority High Street fund was considered by the Growth Board on 18 Dec 2025 who supported the applications going forward, subject to development and approvals.
- 3.3 Regeneration and Localities Officers have reviewed evidence and carried out community consultation in Harrogate. This highlighted the heritage and celebrating the town's identity as an investment priority for the town. Officers worked with stakeholders and relevant council services to develop a project proposal for Harrogate H₂O: Past, Present, Future in Flow to meet this aspiration

4.0 HARROGATE H₂O: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE IN FLOW

4.1 The Harrogate H₂O project is an integrated public realm and heritage activation scheme that celebrates Harrogate's unique identity as a historic spa town while delivering modern sustainability and community wellbeing benefits. The project comprises four interconnected elements:

- Heritage Mural (iconic centrepiece): Large-scale public art installation featuring Harrogate's spa history, natural environment, and climate resilience themes
- Wayfinding & Signage System: Spa-inspired signage creating "Ripple Routes"—walking trails connecting heritage sites, gardens, and water features
- Rain Gardens & Street Furniture: Sustainable drainage interventions doubled as decorative planting, integrating climate action into everyday town experience
- Hydration Stations: Modern water refill points branded with H₂O, promoting sustainable tourism and reducing plastic waste

4.3 The total project value is £213,000 of which amount that will be applied for from LA High Street Fund is £200,000 and will be used to fund the capital works. £13,000 revenue for the rain garden maintenance has been applied for from Rivers Trust partnership. If the maintain liabilities are not resolved, then this element will not proceed.

4.4 Community volunteers will also be used to help deliver the project, including new signage and rain garden.

4.5 Once completed each asset will be transferred to the following, who will take on the on-going maintenance and revenue liabilities.

Element	Asset ownership
Heritage mural	Property freeholder – Network Rail
Signage	NYC Highways
Rain gardens	NYC Highways (ongoing conversation with community partner to adapt planting)
Water stations	Yorkshire Water

5.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

5.1 As part of the project development Internally consultation took place with Planning, Culture and Highway services. The project is supported by all services, subject to further details being agreed at the later stage.

5.2. Legal have assigned a main contact in relation to the grant application process.

5.3 Community and business engagement has been undertaken as part of the TIP programme and demonstrated support for the type of intervention that this project will address. The project received support from Harrogate BID, Harrogate Town Council and Yorkshire Dales River Trust.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Ongoing revenue implications have been considered as part of the project development. After completion the asset will be the liability of relevant partner, who will take on all maintenance and on-going revenue implications, as indicated below.

Element	Asset ownership
Heritage mural	Property freeholder – Network Rail
Signage	NYC Highways
Rain gardens	NYC Highways (ongoing conversation with community partner to adapt planting)
Water stations	Yorkshire Water

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Grant terms and conditions are not available at the present time but will be reviewed by Legal Services when released, should the bid be successful. If any of the grant terms and conditions present unacceptable risk for the Council then the grant offer would be declined.

8.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no Equalities implications from submitting the application. Equalities implications will be re-appraised if the application is successful as part of the acceptance procedure

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no Climate Change implications from submitting the application. Climate and sustainability implications will be reappraised if the application is successful as part of the acceptance procedure

10.0 CONCLUSIONS

10.1 That the Council makes an application to the Local Authority High Street to cover the costs of delivering Harrogate H₂O: Past, Present, Future in Flow

11.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 The funding will contribute towards a need identified as part of the Town Investment Plan programme. The relevant council services have been consulted, and revenue implications have been considered.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION

12.1 That the Corporate Director Community Development in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer sub-delegated to the Assistant Director – Resources approve the submission of the grant of £200,000 for Harrogate H₂O: Past, Present, Future in Flow

Appendices – None

Background Documents - None

Helen Jackson
Head of Regeneration
25 February 2026

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.