

# North Yorkshire Council

## Executive

31 March 2026

### North East Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme 2027-33

#### Report of the Corporate Director – Environment

##### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek approval from the Executive to apply for 100% grant funding of £7,147,000 + 10% contingency (£714,000) from Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGIA) administered by the Environment Agency to continue the Northeast Coastal Monitoring Programme into its 4th phase of delivery through the NYC-lead North East Coastal Observatory. To seek permission of the Executive to delegate acceptance of the grant if awarded, subject to acceptable terms and conditions being agreed, to the Corporate Director Resources, in consultation with the Corporate Director Environment, Executive Member for Finance (Deputy Leader) and the Executive Member for Highways and Transportation.
- 1.2 To notify the Council that this grant application forms part of joint national funding business case to be developed on behalf of the Coastal Groups of England and undertaken by the lead partners of the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes of England, of which NYC is one. The national business case combined value is c.£77million + (additional Risk allowance at the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile.

##### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 North Yorkshire Council in its role of Coast Protection Authority is responsible for carrying out coastal protection works and coastal erosion risk management activities. Coastal monitoring forms a key element of this directive providing the basis for sound decision making at a strategic level, which underpins the development of coastal strategies and schemes.
- 2.2 The North East Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme (NERCMP) forms part of the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes (NNRCMP) across England which is a long running programme with a track record of successful delivery. It was established in its current form in 2011 (Phase I, 2011-2016), (Phase 2, 2016-2021), (Phase 3, 2021-2027) but represents the evolution of regional coastal monitoring dating back to the 1950s.
- 2.3 As a collaborative programme, the NNRCMP comprises of six regional programmes led by either Local Risk Management Authorities or the Environment Agency. It replaces a legacy of ad-hoc monitoring, which lacked consistency in collection, quality, archiving and only met short-term local needs, but not the long-term national needs of strategic Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM). This regional network structure ensures consistency, maximises efficiency through economies of scale and balances this against the necessary local knowledge and contacts needed for effective operation and data dissemination.

- 2.4 North Yorkshire Council via the North East Coastal Observatory on behalf of its Client the North East Coastal Group leads the North East Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme's present phase; 2021-27 and aims to continue to lead the next phase covering 2027-33. It provides data, analysis and reports for the following Risk Management Authorities Partners, stretching between the Scottish Borders in the north and Flamborough Head in the South (c.300km of coastline). This includes Northumberland County Council, North Tyneside Council, South Tyneside Council, Durham County Council, Sunderland City Council, Hartlepool Borough Council and Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council. Assistance is also provided to The East Riding of Yorkshire Council.
- 2.5 The Environment Agency's Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) National Strategy sets out the vision for a nation that is ready for, and resilient to, flooding and coastal change today, tomorrow and to the year 2100. One of the long-term ambitions is a nation ready to respond and adapt to flooding and coastal change. Long term coastal monitoring and analysis undertaken by the national network of regional coastal monitoring programmes bolsters this. Coastal monitoring is identified as a high priority activity by the Environment Agency.

### **3.0 PROJECT SYNOPSIS**

- 3.1 The overarching aim of the NERCMP is to provide the appropriate evidence on which robust and efficient FCERM decisions, responses and investment can be based.
- 3.1.1 To meet this aim, the following objectives have been set:
- Assist in the definition of risk from coastal flooding and erosion,
  - Provide data to underpin re-evaluation of those risks under future change,
  - Provide a holistic overview of coastal defence, responding to national and local priorities
  - Improve understanding of coastal process behaviour.
- 3.2 The NERCMP will continue to provide the evidence base needed for flood and coastal erosion risk management (FCERM), ensuring a targeted, informed, standardised, efficient and freely available data source via the North East Coastal Observatory. This supports the Environment Agency (EA) and other maritime Risk Management Authorities (RMA) to plan, design and deliver coastal strategy, the coastal capital investment programme, strategic coastal management such as Shoreline Management Planning (SMPs), and incident management. It also provides the early evidence for consideration of future adaptation proposals where funding for conventional defence options isn't available.
- 3.3 Data is essential for the justification, design, performance and impact monitoring of any coastal intervention. This applies to traditional defence & protection works, and even more so to adaptive measures where communities require reassurance about coastal change. The dynamic nature of coastal environments and the complex linkages between environmental drivers, natural and manmade resources and flood and erosion risk require long-term and consistent monitoring.
- 3.4 The below data collection and analysis activities will be undertaken in-house, within the regions or sourced and procured from consultants and contractors to the specifications approved by the National Coastal Monitoring Strategic Board. Performance and monitoring of deliverables is highlighted in table 1.
- Topographic Surveys
  - Bathymetric Surveys
  - Aerial Photography
  - Hydrodynamics Services, including Wave buoys, Tide gauges and Met Stations.
  - LiDAR captures

- Terrestrial habitat & ecological mapping
- Sea Bed Mapping and sediment analysis
- Analytical services,
- Coastal defence Asset Inspections
- National and local data management and archiving
- Project Management
- Coastal Research nationally and internationally, sharing of best practise.

Deliverable	Performance	Monitoring & Reporting Mechanisms
Collection of survey data	A programme of survey will be established set-out at the beginning of the phase.	Progress Monitored by Project Team, and reported through the Coordination Group.
Data management and quality control	Generalised specification, briefs and quality control documents exist for all of the survey and data types used within the programme.	Reported through Coordination Group, reviewed at Strategic Board.
Data dissemination	All data and reports will be made available for free under open government license from <a href="http://www.coastalmonitoring.org">www.coastalmonitoring.org</a> .  Wider dissemination will follow the communications strategy	Downloads from website are logged and reviewed by the Coordination Group.  Dissemination Working Group established to review and coordinate updates and changes.  Engagement assessed through communications Log.
Analysis and reporting on data	This includes development of annual reporting, regional GIS, close liaison and representation with the coastal groups, sharing of technical best practice through the coordination group.	Reported through the Coordination Group, reviewed by the Strategic Board.
Integration of the data to national objectives	Data collection targeted	Reviewed by the Strategic Board.
Performance review	Data use and downloads from the website are recorded, reporting is coordinated with the coastal groups, EA and Defra, internal review mechanisms have been established through the governance system, stakeholder analysis/engagement activities have been undertaken.	Progress reports prepared by Project teams quarterly and monitored by the Coordination Group and reviewed by the Strategic Board.  Mid Phase review at end of year III undertaken by Strategic Board.  Once 10 years of data is available, the survey regime is reviewed at the regional level by the Project Team, under the guidance of the coordination group.

(Table 1, Performance, monitoring & Deliverables).

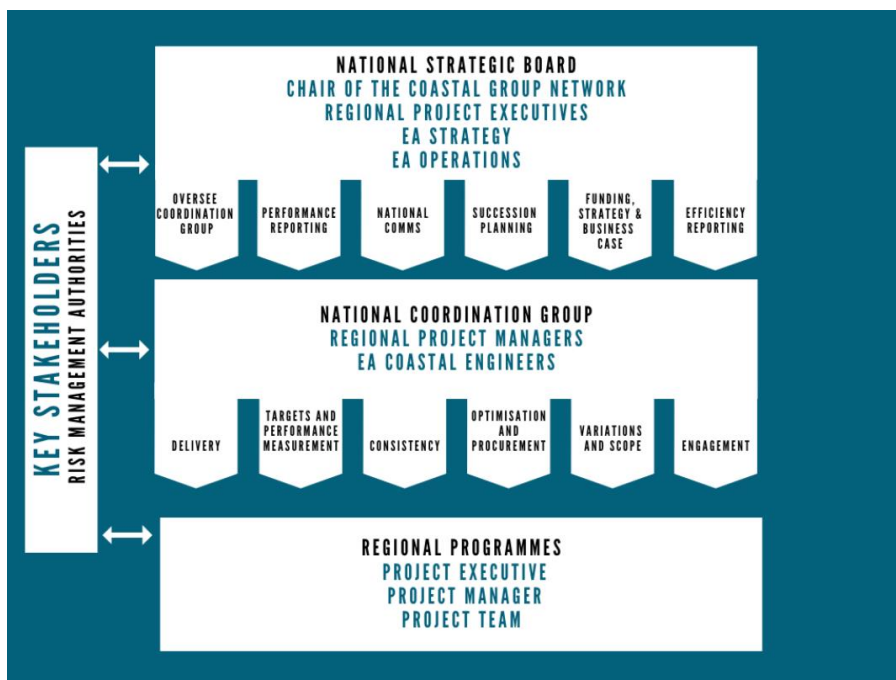
### 3.5 Direct benefits:

- Underpins the FCERM capital programme and high-level strategic FCERM initiatives.
- Reduces cost of FCERM capital and maintenance programmes.
- Ensures consistency of data collection and management, including length of useable datasets.
- Provides data for modelling and forecasting.
- Informs Incident Response, planning and management.
- Supports the identification and management of Adaptive Pathways and Climate Resilience.
- Supports Risk Management Authorities to meet their statutory requirements.

#### 3.5.1 Wider benefits:

- Collaborative working between programme partners, pan-government programmes and initiatives.
- Rapid and wide dissemination (Open Government License, collect once – use many times).
- Promoting multiple uses of data and avoiding duplication of effort.
- Underpins planning and infrastructure projects at the coast.
- Informs and influences research and educational communities.

- 3.6 Interfaces / stakeholders:  
The programmes principal stakeholders are Defra, the Environment Agency, the Coastal Groups, RFCCs (Regional Flood & Coastal Defence Committees) and Coastal Local Authorities in the North East. Wider end users include government groups, coastal managers and user groups, academic/research groups, universities and schools.
- 3.7 The programmes communication strategy includes the involvement of key stakeholders in programme governance, representation on and direct reporting to the coastal groups, regular regional partners meetings, representation on national and regional coastal management/research/interest groups, conference attendance, and wider stakeholder group representation. This ensures awareness of the programme and its outputs and provides a feedback mechanism for stakeholders. The programme is designed with enough flexibility that it can respond to changes in dynamic monitoring needs.
- 3.8 Quarterly progress reports will be provided by project team to the Coordination Group and reviewed at the national strategic board level. A mid-phase review will be carried out at the strategic board level halfway through the phase. Coastal Group meetings are used to report progress to the Coastal Groups and stakeholders.
- 3.9 A systematic framework provides over-arching governance of the programme (figure 1), it also is used as a way to steer delivery of the programme to optimise efficiencies, ensure consistency and engage stakeholders.



(Figure 1, National Project Governance)

#### 4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 There are no feasible alternative options to consider other than to apply for the 100% grant funding or not as the lead partner for the NE Region. This is nationally strategic and important priority project that will be delivered with or without NYC involvement, subject to funding.

- 4.2 North Yorkshire Council is the current lead Authority for the delivery of the North East Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme through the inhouse North East Coastal Observatory. Due to the specialised skills, knowledge and understanding of the North East Coastal Observatory team, NYC remains the lead Authority within the new National Monitoring Programme business case. Being the lead Authority allows us to shape and steer the monitoring programme to deliver the data required by local and regional coastal managers, responsible bodies and our communities.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 If the bid is successful, it will secure 100% capital funding of £7,147,000 (plus £714,000 contingency, which will be held and administered by the Environment Agency) to undertake the delivery of the 4<sup>th</sup> phase of the NE coastal monitoring Programme, covering six years of data collection and analysis between 2027-33. The Programme costs, including NYC Officer time within the Northeast Coastal Observatory team, will be fully funded along with all survey and analysis activities. No match funding would be required from NYC.
- 5.2 If successful, grant will be claimed and drawn down from the Environment Agency on an annual basis, in line with current practise.
- 5.3 Should the bid be unsuccessful; the Council would need to consider internal funding for local monitoring activities along the North Yorkshire frontage. It should be noted however, that this monitoring programme has been successful in attracting external funding since 2008.

## **6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 If the bid is successful, The Environment Agency will provide the Council with an approval letter, from which Grant in Aid can be drawn down. Legal Services will review any terms and conditions of the grant and if any of the terms present an unacceptable risk to the Council, then the grant offer will be declined.
- 6.2 Any expenditure of the grant will be in accordance with the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules and, to the extent applicable, the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, the Procurement Act 2023 and the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

## **7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no equalities implications arising as a result of submitting the bid. An Initial equality impact assessment screening report has been completed and has found not implications (Appendix A).

## **8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The proposed funding bid, if successful will lead to the collection of data that provides key information to monitor some of the effects of climate change. Hydrodynamic data for example provides key information on waves heights, frequency and storm intensity. Increased storminess is a known effect of climate change and something the programme has been monitoring for nearly 20 years. As consistent monitoring is undertaken on a national scale it contributes to national policy and feeds into state of the nation reports by Government.

8.2 Where possible key avoidance action will be undertaken to reduce the programmes carbon footprint. An example of this under the current programme involved commissioning inshore Bathymetric surveys with a vessel running off biofuels instead of diesel, therefore being an almost carbon neutral survey capture. As part of the national programme and a requirement of the Environment Agency a Carbon log is produced at the end of the phase of monitoring. (See Appendix B)

## 9.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 As a 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. Undertaking the role of lead Authority for the North East monitoring region allows the Council to do this.

9.2 Being the Lead Authority allows the Council to steer and shape the monitoring programme to collect and analyse data that creates the greatest benefits and outcomes to meet local demand both along the North Yorkshire frontage and wider North East region.

9.3 The project is 100% grant aid funded and recommended by the adopted Shoreline Management Plan and local coastal strategies. The National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes is a long established and is a priority project programme for the funder the Environment Agency, DEFRA and the client, the North East Coastal Group. Should approval be given, and grant awarded, North Yorkshire Council will continue to a leader in its field and a centre of excellence of coastal management and monitoring both nationally and internationally.

## 10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 It is recommended that Executive:

- i. agrees to the Council submitting a bid for £7,147,000 + 10% contingency of £714,000 for Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) administered by the Environment Agency to continue the delivery of the North East Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme into its 4th phase through the North East Coastal Observatory
- ii. delegate acceptance of the grant if awarded, subject to acceptable terms and conditions, to the Corporate Director Resources in consultation with the Corporate Director - Environment, Executive Member for Finance (Deputy Leader) and the Executive Member for Highways and Transportation.

### APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Environment Impact Assessment Screening Form

Appendix B – Climate Change Impact Assessment Form

### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

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19 March 2026

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