West Yorkshire Combined Authority | Tracy Brabin Mayor of West Yorkshire

Our Reference: 3644

06/05/2026

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Enquiry: Hebden Bridge Flood Alleviation Scheme

Thank you for contacting West Yorkshire Combined Authority ('the Combined Authority') with your request for information, which was received on 28/04/2026.

Your request was:
According to publicly available WYCA documentation, the scheme was approved at an estimated value of approximately £27.2 million, with the stated purpose of delivering comprehensive flood risk reduction to Hebden Bridge. Supporting materials at that time, including the Outline Business Case and consultation documentation, indicate that the scheme included mitigation of multiple flood sources, including fluvial flooding (River Calder and Hebden Water), surface water flooding, and associated drainage infrastructure.
However, the scheme that has now progressed through planning approval in 2025 appears to differ materially from the scheme originally presented and funded. In particular:
- *Surface water mitigation measures, including previously proposed pumping and drainage infrastructure, have been removed from the scheme and deferred to a potential future phase;*
- *The current scheme is described as predominantly fluvial in nature, addressing river flooding only;*
- *The total projected cost of the scheme has increased significantly (reported publicly as approximately £81 million), despite the removal of key elements of the original scope.*

Based on the above, I request formal clarification on the following points:
1. Confirmation of Scope Alignment
Please confirm whether the scheme as currently approved through planning (2025) is considered by WYCA to be materially consistent with the scheme approved for funding in 2020.
2. Approval of Scope Changes
If the scheme has changed in scope, please provide:
- *The date(s) on which these changes were approved;*
- *The body or committee responsible for approving the changes;*
- *Any formal decision records, minutes, or delegated authority documents relating to these changes.*

3. Business Case Revisions

Please provide copies of:

- *Any revised Outline Business Case (OBC) or Full Business Case (FBC);*
- *Change logs or appraisal updates reflecting the removal of surface water mitigation measures;*
- *Any updated value-for-money assessments following the change in scope and increase in cost.*

4. Funding Validation

Please confirm whether WYCA has formally re-approved funding for the revised scheme, including:

- *Any additional funding approvals or amendments;*
- *Any conditions attached to funding in relation to scope delivery.*

5. Consultation and Public Accountability

Please confirm whether WYCA assessed the need for further public consultation in light of the material change in scheme scope, particularly the removal of surface water mitigation measures.

Given the scale of public investment and the significance of this infrastructure project to the Hebden Bridge community, transparency in decision-making and alignment between approved funding and delivered scope is essential.

If no formal approval or re-appraisal process has been undertaken in relation to the changes outlined above, please confirm this explicitly.

This request is being handled under Freedom of Information Act 2000.

We have completed our searches and I can confirm that the Combined Authority holds some information covered by your request.

The Combined Authority's role was limited to funding early development work. No further approvals, reappraisals, or business case submissions have been made to the Combined Authority.

1. In February 2020, the Combined Authority's Investment Committee approved £1.9 million to support the early development of a proposed £27.2 million flood alleviation scheme in Hebden Bridge, led by the Environment Agency. This funding was solely for initial design and preparatory work to inform a potential future funding proposal to the Combined Authority. A total of £1.425 million of this allocation was spent.

During the design stage, it was identified that construction costs could be met from alternative funding sources, and no funding proposal was subsequently submitted to the Combined Authority. The Combined Authority did not fund, approve, or determine the final design taken forward to planning in 2025.

2. The Combined Authority did not approve any changes to the scope of the scheme. The Combined Authority's involvement was limited to funding early design work. Any subsequent changes to the scheme were made by the Environment Agency as the lead delivery body and did not require approval from the Combined Authority.

3. No revised business case documentation were submitted for this scheme to the Combined Authority.

4. As noted above, the Combined Authority did not approve the final scheme and has not approved any amendments, additional funding, or conditions relating to its delivery. No re-approval or re-appraisal process has taken place by the Combined Authority.

5. The scheme is led by the Environment Agency. While the Combined Authority was aware that public consultation would be undertaken, it was not involved in the consultation process and did not have a role in determining whether further consultation was required following changes to the scheme.

If you believe that your request for information has not been handled properly, you can ask for an internal review of our decision. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113
Website: www.ico.gov.uk

For your information, there is no charge for making an appeal.
Yours sincerely,
Information Governance Officer
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