

BFI Combined Elected Members Forum and Initiative Project Team

Monday 1st June 2026

Teams meeting 9.30am-11.00am

Via Teams

Present: Cllr Jan Davis (Chair), Amy Capon, Andrea Kelly, Andrew Marsh, Catherine Harries, Charles Krolik-Root, Dan Hoare, Daniel Wray, Ed Richardson, Fiona Hinds, Fiona Johnson, Giles Bloomfield, Julia Watson, Kellie Fisher, Kevin Hart, Matt Shardlow, Matthew Philpot, Milo Sumner, Peter Doktor, Philip Pearson, Rebecca Bromley, Rebecca Clark, Rob Rogers, Rob Wise, Robert Savage, Robert Young, Tony Grayling, Vanessa Gouldsmith, Wendy Brooks.

Apologies: Paul Wells, Harry Blathwayt

		Action
1	Apologies for absence and welcome, actions from the previous meeting	
	Cllr Jan Davis (JD) opened the meeting and welcomed attendees. Catherine Harries (CH) provided an update on actions arising from the 15 April meeting, particularly those identified during the workshop session. CH explained that further work had been undertaken to refine the representation of the 'do-nothing' scenario* within the modelling, particularly in relation to Internal Drainage Board pumps. It was noted that modelling pumps operating between flood events did not reflect a true do-nothing scenario, and discussions with economists were ongoing to address this, including consideration of a 'pumps off' approach and a potential 'do minimum' baseline. CH also summarised other key areas under review, including how to represent historic landfill sites such as Caister, the potential impact of increased water volumes entering the system, and the challenges of assigning economic value to navigation impacts and salinity effects. Engagement with economists, Anglian Water, and other partners was ongoing to explore these issues further, including the impact of saline flooding on sewage treatment works. Additional concerns were raised regarding potable water supply, noting the significant implications for areas such as the Trinity Broads under a do-nothing scenario, plus the complexities of defining a 'legal do minimum' approach, particularly in relation to functionally linked habitat and environmental legal obligations. CH confirmed that this remained under review with the Environment Agency's legal team. The importance of aligning modelling assumptions with the statutory purposes of the National Park was highlighted. <i>*'Do nothing' scenario – assumes that all flood risk actions including maintenance, ceases.</i>	

2	Your review of Product 35 – FRM Actions Pathways modelling report (first draft) (Amy)	
	Amy Capon (AC) introduced Product 35, explaining that this stage focused on modelling the effectiveness of flood risk management pathways, rather than assessing wider impacts, which would be addressed in Product 36. AC confirmed that the technical report had been circulated to members and requested written feedback within the following two weeks. Several concerns were raised regarding the report including references to legal frameworks, including Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA), were limited and that this weakened the report. The absence of modelling relating to water capture across the wider floodplain, including groundwater and pump management, and emphasised the importance of reflecting the full hydrological system. Peter Doktor (PD) acknowledged that the current modelling approach was relatively high-level and welcomed further comments for review. PD clarified that the current stage focused on hydrological modelling and that wider impacts would be explored at the next stage. Comments were made regarding the clarity of terminology, particularly Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP), and emphasised the need for clearer explanation within the report. PD confirmed that AEP represented the probability of an event occurring in any given year and agreed that definitions would be explained. It was highlighted that the report did not clearly demonstrate how adaptive pathways would operate in practice, particularly in relation to habitat creation prior to the implementation of 'accommodate' scenarios. Concerns were raised regarding the long-term implications of floodplain storage, including impacts on navigation, salinity, biodiversity, and tourism, and questions were raised as to how subsequent flood events were being modelled. There was a comment that the report presented pathways as standalone options, whereas in practice a combination of approaches would be more likely. Comments were made regarding the timing of wider engagement prior to completion of Product 36 and the need for clear messaging around the preliminary nature of the modelling was emphasised. AC confirmed that an updated version of Product 35 would be presented at the July meeting and that Product 36 would run through to summer 2027. It was acknowledged that engagement would need to proceed alongside ongoing analysis, with appropriate caveats.	

3	Following up on the workshop activity from 15 April meeting (Catherine)	
	CH summarised feedback received during the April workshop, particularly in relation to mapping of potential flood risk management interventions. CH noted general support for exploring water storage opportunities at locations including Haddiscoe, Trinity Broads, Halvergate and Breydon, and across the wider system. Members also emphasised the need to better align proposals with the Land Use Framework and Local Nature Recovery Strategy and to consider environmental constraints, particularly designated sites such as Catfield Fen. CH highlighted that partners had raised opportunities for collaboration and emphasised the need to consider infrastructure, including pumps and Mutford Lock. Engagement with partners, and other relevant organisations had continued since April, including one-to-one discussions and work to clarify land ownership. CH confirmed that further work was underway to explore opportunities for landowners, including potential income from agri-environment schemes and links with water resource planning. A query was raised about which organisations had been consulted regarding agri-environment schemes. CH confirmed that discussions had taken place with internal teams and Natural England. A point was made about the need to consider combinations of pathways and concerns raised regarding how these would be reflected in modelling and engagement messaging. Kellie Fisher (KF) responded that while pathways were presented separately for clarity, in practice delivery would likely involve a combination of approaches shaped by opportunity.	
4	'Sustain standard of service' for FRM assets – discussion on how we reach partnership agreement on what's achievable and seeking funding (Catherine)	
	CH introduced the challenges associated with maintaining the current standard of service for flood risk management assets. It was noted that there was currently a funding shortfall of approximately £2 million per year for maintenance. A comment was made about the importance of defining what constitutes a 'true sustain' scenario before considering funding constraints and cautioned against allowing funding limitations to shape the baseline assumptions. KF responded that the purpose of the discussion was to begin exploring future funding options and acknowledged that central government funding was unlikely to meet all requirements.	

	Comments were made about the need to clearly define and cost a true sustain scenario, including both revenue and capital funding requirements. Plus, not relying on a tourism tax as a funding source, noting its challenges and uncertainty. A query was made about whether maintenance funding was being bid for appropriately under legal obligations. CH confirmed that bids were submitted through the current system but had not been fully funded in recent years. It was mentioned that we need to engage potential investors, including Anglian Water, Network Rail, and others, and it was suggested that mapping and modelling should be aligned to demonstrate specific benefits to those stakeholders. CH confirmed that a funding strategy continues to be developed as part of BFI, and that partnership contributions would be essential. It was noted that Local Government Reorganisation could impact the timing and ability of local authorities to commit funding in the short term.	
5	Landscape-scale NFM pilot opportunity – partners’ feedback from the EA webinar and if/how we take this forward (Catherine, Kellie)	
	CH introduced the opportunity for a landscape-scale Natural Flood Management (NFM) pilot, with funding available from the Environment Agency. KF highlighted that this could represent a significant opportunity for the Broads and encouraged partners to consider potential involvement, noting that BFI modelling provided a strong evidence base. Norfolk County Council commented that they would raise the opportunity through the Norfolk Water Strategy Programme. A query was raised whether the funding was suitable for strategic planning or delivery, plus alignment with long-term BFI objectives and highlighted potential challenges relating to appraisal requirements. KF clarified the distinction between landscape-scale pilots and smaller NFM schemes and confirmed that the pilot would focus on delivery at scale. RSPB confirmed that any potential project would involve engagement with neighbouring landowners.	
6	Update on progress: Product 34 – Baselines modelling (Peter, Charles)	
	Due to time constraints, Peter Doktor (PD) proposed that members review offline the slides updating on Product 34 progress and provide any comments directly.	

7	Post-May's council elections (Rob)	
	Rob Rogers (RR) confirmed that following the May elections, updates to elected member representation on the EMF would be required. New representatives would be appointed by respective councils in due course. JD confirmed that he would follow up with councils to ensure appropriate representation.	
8	Any other business and next meeting	
	Next meeting 7 th July 2026	