

Title: North East LRAP Grant Funding to TWFRS
Portfolio: A North East We Are Proud to Call Home
Responsible Director: Phil Witcherley, Director of Economic Growth and Innovation
Report Author: Gwen Smith, Programme Manager, Cladding Remediation

Report Summary North East LRAP Grant Funding to TWFRS

The purpose of this report is to approve the issue of grant funding of up to £138,768.60 to Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service to fund a Fire Service Technical Officer Lead role for the period of April 2026 to March 2028, in support of the delivery of the North East Local Remediation Acceleration Plan.

Recommendations

The Director of Economic Growth and Innovation is recommended to:

1. Approve grant funding of up to £138,768.60 to Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service to fund a Fire Service Technical Officer Lead role for the period of April 2026 to March 2028 to support delivery of the North East Local Remediation Acceleration Plan; and
2. Approve entry into a grant funding agreement with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service setting out the terms on which the funding will be provided.

Executive Summary

On 9 December 2025, Cabinet approved the North East Local Remediation Acceleration Plan which aims to support national plans to remediate unsafe cladding to the external walls of residential high-rise and mid-rise buildings in government funded cladding remediation programmes by the end of 2029.

To support the North East MSA in delivery of the North East Local Remediation Acceleration Plan, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has provided a minimum grant funding commitment of £270,600 for 2026/27 and £216,480 for 2027/28. MHCLG has confirmed that the funding may be used to support local regulator capacity where this contributes to delivery of Local Remediation Acceleration Plans. The funding expectations include strengthening local regulator capability and capacity, supporting prioritisation, partnership working, assurance, monitoring and reporting.

A. Context

1. Background

It is recognised nationally that remediation of unsafe cladding on residential buildings needs to be accelerated to reduce cost, risk and uncertainty for affected residents. The North East Local Remediation Acceleration Plan sets out a coordinated regional approach to support this aim. Developed in partnership with North East local authorities and fire and rescue services, the plan focuses on accelerating remediation of unsafe external cladding systems in residential high rise and mid-rise buildings.

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service has appointed a 1 Full-Time Equivalent Fire Service Technical Officer Lead to support delivery of the North East Local Remediation Acceleration Plan. Fire and Rescue Services have statutory responsibilities for fire safety enforcement, including powers to assess risk and take action where necessary. This role provides dedicated capacity to support the effective use of these powers in relation to cladding related risks. It will also provide specialist fire safety and cladding expertise, support

local authorities to assess and prioritise buildings, and ensure consistent technical advice and regulatory approaches. This will help to reduce delays and progress remediation on higher risk buildings where cases are complex and coordinated action is required.

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service has requested grant funding to support this post from April 2026 to March 2029. The request funding for 2026/27 is £67,692. Funding for 2027/28 will be provided up to a maximum 5% increase on the 2026/27 amount, subject to the annual pay award and confirmation that the post continues to support delivery of the North East Local Remediation Acceleration Plan. Funding for future years will be reviewed at a later date, subject to confirmation of future grant funding being awarded to the North East MSA.

An agreement will be entered into with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service setting out the purpose of the funding, the activities and outputs expected from the post, reporting arrangements, and conditions relating to use of the grant. This will provide assurance that the funding directly supports delivery of the North East Local Remediation Acceleration Plan.

B. Impact on North East Mayoral Strategic Authority Objectives

The North East Local Remediation Acceleration Plan supports the mission to deliver a North East we are proud to call home and the provision of high quality housing. Through partnership working, the North East MSA can use its convening role to strengthen collaboration between local authorities, fire and rescue services and other partners. Although the North East MSA has no formal statutory powers or responsibilities for building safety, it has an important regional coordination role in supporting partners to address barriers, improve oversight and accelerate remediation of unsafe cladding.

C. Key risks

The National Remediation Acceleration Plan places clear expectations on Mayoral Authorities to drive delivery through Local Remediation Acceleration Plans. Failure to support dedicated Fire and Rescue Service capacity could weaken the ability of the Mayoral Strategic Authority to meet these expectations and reduce the effectiveness of regional coordination and oversight and case progression.

D. Corporate Implications

D1. Financial and other resources implications

MHCLG has confirmed an allocation of grant funding to support the development of the Plan, programme management and team capacity for the period 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2028. Funding for subsequent years is still to be confirmed. The funding requested for the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service post forms part of the wider MHCLG grant allocation.

The remaining MHCLG grant funding is being used to support wider LRAP delivery. Spend against the grant is at an early stage; a business case has been developed outlining the wider use of the funding. Other funding requests are being considered separately, either through delegated decision reports or through internal approval routes for expenditure below £50,000. Further requests will be considered against LRAP priorities, available funding and the relevant approval routes.

D2. Legal implications

The representative of the Monitoring Officer has been consulted regarding this report.

D3. Equalities implications

The North East MSA is committed to complying with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty and to fulfilling its statutory duties towards its employees and residents with regards to equality and inclusion, including when developing schemes.

The Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service will be expected to comply with relevant equality requirements as part of the grant funding agreement and delivery of the funded activity.

D4. Consultation and engagement

Consultation with regional Local Authorities and Fire and Rescue Services took place as part of North East Local Remediation Acceleration Plan development.

Regular engagement takes place between the North East MSA and Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service as part of the North East Local Remediation Acceleration Plan delivery, and ongoing engagement will take place in relation to expectations and delivery objectives of this grant funding.

E. Appendices

None

F. Background papers

<https://northeast-ca.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s870/North%20East%20Local%20Remediation%20Acceleration%20Plan.pdf>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/accelerating-remediation-a-plan-for-increasing-the-pace-of-remediation-of-buildings-with-unsafe-cladding-in-england/remediation-acceleration-plan>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/remediation-acceleration-plan-update-july-2025/remediation-acceleration-plan-update-july-2025>

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H. Glossary

North East MSA - North East Mayoral Strategic Authority

NE LRAP – North East Local Remediation Acceleration Plan

TWFRS – Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service