



CABINET – 11TH MARCH 2020

SUBJECT: STORM DENNIS

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval for the funding of the financial assistance package announced at Council on the 20th February 2020.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The recent flooding events in the county borough as a consequence of Storm Dennis affected many properties and residents and businesses were left facing the devastating clean-up operation.
- 2.2 At the meeting of Council on the 20th February 2020 the Leader announced details of a financial assistance package for residents and businesses impacted by the floods. This consists of a one-off payment of £500 for qualifying households and £1,000 for businesses. Council was also informed that an initial sum of £250k would be set aside.
- 2.3 This report seeks Cabinet approval of a proposal to fund the £250k financial assistance package.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the £250k set aside for the financial assistance package is funded from a projected underspend in 2019/20 Capital Financing budgets.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure that sufficient funding is identified and approved by Cabinet.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 In response to the devastating flooding caused by Storm Dennis, the Leader announced to Council at its meeting on the 20th February 2020 that £250k would be set aside for a financial assistance package for residents and businesses impacted by the floods. This consists of a one-off payment of £500 for qualifying households and £1,000 for businesses.

- 5.2 The table below provides details of the latest position in respect of the properties that have been affected by the flooding: -

	Residential Properties	Commercial Properties	Total
Total properties affected	189	38	227
Number inspected to date	110	28	138
Financial assistance agreed	100	28	128
Financial assistance declined	10	0	10

- 5.3 The Welsh Government is also providing financial support to those affected by the recent floods through its Discretionary Assistance Fund (DAF). Where Caerphilly CBC has granted financial support under its scheme, the Council will also submit an application to the Welsh Government on behalf of householders where consent has been given to do so. This funding consists of £500 for households that are insured and £1,000 where no insurance cover is in place. At this stage residents are not able to apply directly to the Welsh Government as the Council needs to confirm eligibility.
- 5.4 The Council is also assisting households with the disposal of carpets and furniture damaged by the flood water and charges have been waived for the provision of this service.
- 5.5 In circumstances where properties are uninhabitable and vacant (i.e. unoccupied and substantially unfurnished), and everyone living in the property has moved out and is living elsewhere while repairs are carried out, claims for council tax exemption will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 5.6 The purpose of this report is to propose to Cabinet that the £250k set aside for the financial assistance package is funded from a projected underspend in 2019/20 Capital Financing budgets.

5.7 Conclusion

This report provides details of the financial support package available to qualifying households and businesses affected by flooding due to Storm Dennis along with a proposal to fund the £250k that has been set aside.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 It is assumed that the £250k that has been set aside will be sufficient to meet the total cost of the financial assistance package. In the event of this sum being exceeded a further report will be prepared for Cabinet consideration.

7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

7.1 Financial Regulations

The financial support package has been announced in accordance with paragraph 6.04.2 of the Council's Financial Regulations: -

Nothing in these Financial Regulations shall prevent the incurring of expenditure which is essential to meet any immediate needs created by a sudden emergency within the meaning of Section 138 of the Local Government Act 1972 which may be authorised by

the Head of Corporate Finance subject to the spending being reported to the Cabinet as soon as is practicable.

8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 8.1 The financial support package has been set aside to help alleviate the pressures faced by households who have been affected by flooding. The effects are likely to be financial and health related. The allocation of Council budget to directly support affected households will assist people to recover more quickly. In releasing budget the outcome will be to support the following well-being goals: -
- Prosperous Wales
 - Resilient Wales
 - Healthier Wales
 - A more equal Wales
 - A Wales of cohesive communities

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 This report is for a decision on the allocation of funds to assist flood relief. An equalities screening has shown a low impact on protected characteristic groups, with no disproportionate impact, the funding is allocated to affected households and businesses only. A full Equality Impact Assessment has not been applied.
- 9.2 Additional support is being provided by Social Services for people who are more vulnerable and require additional support in the recovery phases. This additional support does include older people and those with disabilities.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 It is proposed that the financial assistance package will be funded from a projected underspend in 2019/20 Capital Financing budgets.
- 10.2 An initial sum of £250k has been set aside. In the event of this sum being exceeded a further report will be prepared for Cabinet consideration.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

12. CONSULTATIONS

- 12.1 This report has been sent to the Consultees listed below and all comments received are reflected in this report.

13. STATUTORY POWER

- 13.1 Section 138 of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Consultees: Corporate Management Team
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Cllr Philippa Marsden, Leader
Cllr Eluned Stenner, Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Planning