

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

FLOODING RELIEF FUND

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To approve the creation of a £100k scheme to provide £300 financial assistance to each household affected by the flooding which occurred on the 5 and 6 December 2013.
- 1.2 This decision is urgent so that support can be provided as soon as possible to those households affected.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1. On the 5 and 6 December 2013 a tidal surge caused extensive flooding to around 250 homes in 11 North Lincolnshire villages.
- 2.2. The affected households are likely to suffer significant disruption with a resultant financial impact.
- 2.3. Following the June 2007 floods the council provided £150 payments to those affected. These payments were funded from a grant provided by Central Government.
- 2.4. In addition a Council Tax discount of 25% was granted to certain properties that did not qualify for fully exempt status.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1. Under section 138 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council has the power, in the event of an emergency, to “make grants or loans to other persons or bodies on conditions determined by the Council in respect of any such action taken by those persons or bodies”.
- 3.2. The act therefore allows the council to setup a loan scheme to assist those affected and provide assistance in the form of a grant.
- 3.3. The council has made £100,000 of funding available to support those affected. It is proposed to pay £300 to each household affected by flooding, a cost of £75,000.

- 3.4. A further £25,000 is available which could be used for granting additional council tax relief. This could include an extension to the empty property relief from council tax for the affected properties. In 2007 a discount was also provided to those households affected by the flooding but which did not qualify for empty property relief.
- 3.5. The council also has a Community Grant Scheme, introduced as part of recent welfare reforms. This is intended to provide assistance in a crisis such as flooding. Applications can be made to this fund in the normal way.
- 3.6. If the Community Support Grant Scheme is not able to provide sufficient assistance in cases where householders have been unable to obtain insurance against flooding, an interest free loan of £1,000 could be provided in addition, repayable over 5 years commencing 6 months after the loan is made.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1. A lump sum payment to all those households affected could be made in the form of a £300 grant. This would provide immediate financial assistance to those in need.
- 4.2. The loan scheme provides further support to those households without flood insurance. However this does present some risk that funding may not be repaid.
- 4.3. Further consideration of granting additional council tax relief to those affected, can follow the initial response when the needs of those affected can be better assessed.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1. Financial

It is estimated that around 250 homes were affected by the floods. If each householder received £300 the cost of this scheme would be approximately £75,000. This sum can be met from the Contingency provision within the existing reserve budget.

6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

- 6.1. None.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

- 7.1. None.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1. That financial support is provided in the form of a grant of £300 to each household within North Lincolnshire affected by the flooding on the 5 and 6 December 2013.
- 8.2. That further support is provided through the Community Support Grant process, supplemented by an interest free loan of £1,000 in cases where householders have been unable to obtain flood insurance.

- 8.3. That a further report is written to consider additional relief from council tax to the affected households.

DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND RESOURCES

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report - None