

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
THURSDAY 26TH JULY 2007

FLOOD RECOVERY GRANT SCHEME

COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:	Safer Communities
CORPORATE PLAN THEME:	Enabling Community Wellbeing
CORPORATE PLAN KEY PRIORITY:	Emergency Planning
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor John Campion
HEAD OF SERVICE:	Head of Cultural, Leisure & Commercial Services
CONTACT OFFICER:	Andrew Dickens Extension 2901 andrew.dickens@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	None
OPEN	

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To note the receipt and to allocate within the Council's Budget, the Flood Recovery Grant which was received in relation to the flooding that took place within the District between 19th June and 1st July 2007.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet are asked to **DECIDE:**

- 2.1 To note the receipt of £50,000 Revenue and £50,000 Capital funding which was received as part of the Government's Flood Recovery Grant Scheme, in relation to the flooding that took place in the District between 19th June and 1st July 2007.
- 2.2 That the Head of Financial Services allocates these resources within the Council's Budget, to be used specifically for the support of flood alleviation works and community recovery.
- 2.3 That the Head of Cultural, Leisure & Commercial Services, in consultation with the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council, be given delegated powers to
- i) agree a package of support for the local community, following community meetings which are due to take place on 31st July and 1st August 2007. The allocation of the monies will be reported back to Cabinet in September.
 - ii) take any other appropriate action which may arise from the meeting of Leaders and Chief Executives on 26th July in respect of the floods on 20th July and onwards.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Severe weather conditions, particularly on the night of 19th June, caused surface water to enter a number of minor water courses throughout the District, that subsequently broke their banks and caused culvert failures, which led to the flooding of approximately 200 properties.
- 3.2 The Council dealt with the immediate response and two public meetings have already been held to provide advice and to investigate the best way of preventing such events happening in the future.
- 3.3 The main concerns of the community is that these minor water courses are properly managed and that culverts are inspected and maintained to ensure that they work within their designed capacities, which should reduce the incidents of flooding, except in extreme events such as those that have occurred over the past 10 days.
- 3.4 Where the water courses are of a non-critical nature and therefore not managed and maintained by the Environment Agency, the Council intends to put to the local community a scheme of management and improvement which will allocate a percentage of the Flood Recovery Grant. If these works were not undertaken this cost would fall to the riparian owners, who would have to fund the works for either surface drainage or culvert repairs where the watercourse runs across their property.
- 3.5 A scheme of immediate help for the most vulnerable has already been put in place by the Head of Planning, Health & Environment and the Head of Financial Services has been dealing with rate relief requests which will all be of further assistance to the local community.
- 3.6 It is also intended to work with other agencies to address some of the other key issues, such as the redesign of traffic calming and rerouting surface water drains, which will again help prevent flash flooding.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no additional financial implications to the Council's Budgets, as the £100,000 that has been received to date can be used for 100% funding of these schemes, subject to local community agreement.
- 4.2 The Council's direct costs in providing immediate and retrospective assistance to these communities will be the subject of a further assessment on a possible application for funding under the Government's Bellwin Scheme.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council has both emergency planning and land drainage responsibilities under primary legislation. Throughout these events they have been acting under the Council's Flood Plan and have used their emergency powers to carry out work to ensure the free flow of watercourses, particularly relating to the Dick Brook at Heightington.

6.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 In order to engage with the local community and obtain their support for the final scheme to be approved by the Head of Cultural, Leisure & Commercial Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, two local community meetings are due to be held next week. Should the community fail to agree on overall scheme with use of the Flood Recovery Grant then the Cabinet will have to reassess and allocate the funds in accordance with a risk assessment carried out by the Council.

CONSULTEES

CMT
Leader of the Council

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Letter from Teresa Vokes, Department for Communities & Local Government – 13th July 2007