

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Customer and Digital)	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	22 March 2018

FLOOD POSITION STATEMENT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To inform Members of the he current position of the Chorley Council Flood Relief Scheme, including volumes of applications and amounts of monies pending and already paid out.
2. To give an overview of wider flooding issues in the borough and the action taken to address these.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

3. That the position statement for the Flood Relief Scheme is noted.
4. That the action being taken to address wider flooding issues in the borough is noted.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	✓	A strong local economy	✓
Clean, safe and healthy homes and communities	✓	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	✓

BACKGROUND

6. A total of 426 properties in the borough were confirmed as flooded as a result of Storm Eva on 26 December 2015.
7. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (MHCLG (previously the DCLG)) guidance was issued as to the types of financial help that would be made available to those affected and the qualifying criteria that would apply.
8. These measures included direct financial help and relief from council tax and business rates payments.
9. Lancashire County Council, as the accountable body, also issued guidance based on that received from the DCLG.
10. The council was required to devise its own Flood Relief Scheme based upon this guidance and criteria.

CHORLEY COUNCIL FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME

11. Chorley Council's scheme was made up of a number of different elements based upon the guidance. The council tax discount and the business rates relief elements of the scheme

were matters for the district councils to determine but the recommendation was that all districts take a similar approach.

12. The table at Appendix 1 is a summary of the financial support that was made available by Chorley.
13. There was also a local discretionary relief fund, The Lancashire Flood Appeal. This was administered by the Community Foundation for Lancashire and raised money for those affected by the flooding. A total of 22 grants were made in the Chorley area, totalling £70,250.
14. The table below summarises the numbers of properties affected and the numbers of grants and discounts awarded:

	Number of Properties Awarded	Amount Awarded	Amount Received	Amount Outstanding	
Domestic properties confirmed as flooded	386	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Community grants of £500 paid	386	£193,000	£193,000	n/a	Final claim to be made to LCC in early September
Businesses confirmed flooded	32	n/a	n/a	n/a	Includes charitable organisations, church buildings and nursing homes
Business grants of £2,500 paid	22	£75,083	n/a	n/a	Delivered by BOOST Business Lancashire
Council tax flood discount	431	£195,672	£125,433	£70,239	Includes parallel properties
Business rates relief	10	£17,528	£16,198	£1,330	Relief only awarded as a 'top-up'

PROPERTY LEVEL RESILIENCE GRANTS

15. The purpose of this funding was to help homeowners and businesses fund measures that would make their properties more resilient to future flooding. A grant of up to £5,000 was available to each eligible property.
16. A MHCLG portal is completed each month to inform them of the latest position. Interim claims are then made to LCC for reimbursement of the monies paid out.

CLOSURE DATE FOR THE PLRG

17. The council closed its scheme to new applications on 30 November 2017. There are currently 28 outstanding applications. There have been some lengthy delays in work being completed due to the fact that many flood doors and barriers are bespoke and as such have a long lead time for manufacture.
18. Recent information has indicated that the MHCLG are intending to close the scheme on 31 March 2018 with final payments for reimbursement to the council being made in June 2018. We are seeking confirmation that any grants paid out after this time will still be reimbursed.
19. The table below summarises the number of grant applications made and paid out:

Number of applications received	Number of grants approved	Amount of grant funding approved	Number of grants paid out	Amount of grant funding paid out	Amount reimbursed
216 (Borough wide)	211	£933,654	182	£809,900	£617,823
170 (Croston	170	£819,126	0	0	0

unclaimed)					
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20. These totals include unclaimed grants for properties in Croston where a grant application has not been made by the owner despite a number of reminders being issued. The council made a significant financial contribution of £1M to the Croston Flood Risk Management Scheme which is vital in reducing the risk of flooding to the community.
21. The council is endeavouring to secure grant funding which the government has already earmarked for the protection of the community of Croston and has been in correspondence with ministers over a number of months regarding this.
22. The Government's response has been that the funding was made available for flood resilience measures at a property level and may not be put towards a capital scheme.
23. The council has the support of Lindsay Hoyle MP and Seema Kennedy MP and continues to petition the government.

WORK ON WIDER FLOODING ISSUES

24. Since the extensive flooding in December, there has been work taking place in a number of specific areas where flooding is a known issue. The main areas are as follows:
 - a. The Common, Adlington where the council has worked with United Utilities and LCC on an ongoing investigation into the causes and some remedial actions have been completed. This is currently with LCC Flood Risk Management Team to investigate the local drainage network and capacity issues.
 - b. Town Lane and Waterhouse Green, Whittle-le-Woods where the council completed some remedial actions and met with a community group about local resilience measures that the council can support. The council has installed a community sandbag store including equipment to enable residents to minimise the impact of localised flooding. A local resident's flood action group has been formed and it is understood they now have a flood action plan in place.
 - c. Hurst Brook, Coppull where a site inspection took place to make an assessment. The planning enforcement team have not identified any planning breaches as a result of development in the area. Residents have taken advantage of the property level resilience grant scheme.
 - d. Clematis Close Euxton where the council met with residents and has worked with LCC to provide a short to medium term solution. LCC have installed a new enhanced trash screen that is easier to clear debris from and residents have also benefited from works to prevent bank erosion and a new flood barrier scheme along the banking of Euxton Brook.
 - e. Weldbank Lane, Chorley where a site visit with United Utilities and LCC has taken place. LCC have taken this forward to deal with.

MAKING SPACE FOR WATER

25. This is a multi-agency group that features representatives of Chorley Council, Lancashire County Council, United Utilities and the Environment Agency. The group meets quarterly to discuss drainage and flooding problems and determine what actions can be taken. The LCC Flood Risk Management team chairs the meeting and maintains a list of flooding 'hotspots'. These will include localised issues where they have an impact upon the highway network.

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL SECTION 19 INVESTIGATION

26. As the lead flood authority, LCC has a role in co-ordinating flood risk activities and collaborative works and ensuring information is communicated.
27. Owing to the severity of the December 2015 floods, LCC has completed a Section 19 investigation to ensure that their legal obligations are met and that affected communities are identified and appropriate prioritised actions are put in place. Croston remains a designated high flood risk area.

28. District level reports have been published by LCC which will be updated quarterly. These provide communities with information about what the relevant authorities are doing in their areas and also information about what residents and businesses can do to protect their own premises in future.
29. There are also recommended County-wide, District-wide and Community actions in the reports. As the report is a living document, the actions in the report are updated as they are completed. The Making Space for Water group is a forum for discussion of actions.
30. The emphasis is on a collaborative approach and all risk management authorities working together. The actions are focussed on investigation and managing flood risk. A preliminary review was carried out for all areas flooded in December 2015 and some examples of specific actions are as follows:

Adlington	Site inspection at Crawford Avenue followed by pipe replacement and high pressure jetting
	Gullies cleared on Market Street
Bretherton	Gullies cleared and root cutting carried out at Pompian Brow
	Funding secured for improved highways drainage on South Road
Coppull	Gullies cleaned at Coppull Moor Lane
	Trash screen installed and gullies cleaned at Chapel Lane
Eccleston	Environment Agency to conduct an initial assessment of flood reduction measures
Whittle le Woods	Gullies cleaned in Carr Brook area. Chorley Council working with the Environment Agency and householders to find a community flood wall solution

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

31. Following a letter to parish councils asking if the council could support them with managing flood risks and assisting with a local response, expressions of interest were received from Eccleston and Whittle-le-Woods Parish Councils and Adlington Town Council.
32. We have liaised with these councils and community flood groups, and have set up community sandbag and equipment storage for local communities to readily access when flooding occurs in at-risk areas.
33. We have liaised with relevant parish councils and residents and set up community sandbag storage at Drapers Avenue Eccleston, Lodge Bank Brinscall and Town Lane Whittle-le-Woods.

Croston Flood Risk Management Scheme

34. The Croston Flood Risk Management Scheme which is now complete. This scheme decreases the river level through Croston during a flood event by restricting the amount of water flowing through the new structure and embankment, holding back the water in a flood storage basin upstream. The defences were put into operation for the first time over the weekend of 21 and 22 October 2017, successfully protecting the residents and the community.
35. It is expected the likelihood and severity of flooding will be significantly reduced. There may still be some issues with surface water flooding which will be duly considered and investigated once we have a heavy rainfall event.

Chorley Council Flood Plan

36. The plan sets out the actions to be taken by the council following notification of a flooding incident or possible flooding or severe weather event in the Borough. It includes site specific information for Croston.

37. A revision of the council's flood plan is currently underway and is due to be completed by the end of the month. Members may wish for the new, updated plan to be presented to a meeting at a later date.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

38. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	✓	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	✓	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

39. The MHCLG has previously stated that there will be a reconciliation exercise based on outturn figures to ensure that authorities receive no more and no less than their actual costs. The table below shows a summary of the total grants awarded by the Council and the grants received to date.

	Grant Awarded £	Grant Received £	Grant Due £
Community Grants	193,000	193,000	-
Council Tax Discount	195,672	125,433	70,239
Business Rates Relief	17,528	16,198	1,330
PLRG	809,900	617,823	192,077
TOTAL	1,216,100	952,454	263,646

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

40. There are no comments

ASIM KHAN
DIRECTOR (CUSTOMER AND DIGITAL)

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Helen Sutton	515449	March 18	Flood position statement