



Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Cabinet

28th January 2021

Report of the Head of Finance – Huw Jones

Matter for: Decision

Grants to Households affected by Storm Christoph and Skewen Mine Water Floods

Wards Affected: All

Purpose of report

To enable the Council to make grant payments of £500 or £1,000 to households affected by Storm Christoph and Skewen mine water flooding. Costs incurred will be reimbursed in full from the Welsh Government's Hardship Fund.

Background

The Welsh Government have announced grant funding of £6.5m (via the Local Authority (LA) Hardship Fund) to Councils to manage their immediate response to floods and administer the payment of grants of £500 or £1,000 to households affected by Storm Christoph and Coal Authority emergency evacuations. In Neath Port this includes payments in relation to the Skewen mine water flooding.

Support will be available to households who meet the following criteria:

- a household which has been affected by flooding to their internal principal living space

or

- has been evacuated by the Council Coal Authority or other emergency service for more than 24 hours

- support of £500 to any householder meeting the above criteria
- support of a further £500 for householders who are uninsured

Prior to any payment being made the Council will be required to verify that a household does meet the above criteria. This will be done by cross referencing applications to a list of affected properties prepared by officers from the Environment Directorate.

In relation to the issue of insurance this will be for households to self-certify.

The Council is required to adopt the scheme and decide in each individual case when to pay the grant.

Qualifying Criteria

An extract from the WG grant scheme for the eligibility criteria for the grants is detailed in Appendix 1 to this report.

Financial Impact

Welsh Government will reimburse the Council for all expenditure including the grant payments set out in this report and other costs incurred during the immediate response to flooding and the Skewen incident. Claims to the Welsh Government Local Authority Hardship Fund must be made within 2 months of the incident.

In addition for those households that were flooded at Skewen the Council will provide the appropriate Council Tax exemption for the period that a resident is excluded from occupying their home up to a maximum of 12 months.

Integrated Impact Assessment

This report does not require an Integrated Impact Assessment.

Valleys Community Impacts

No impact anticipated.

Workforce impacts

There will be additional staff resource time required to review and process applications received and work on the Skewen mine water flooding.

Legal impact

No implications.

Risk management

There are no risk management implications associated with this scheme.

Consultation

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Members approve the making of grants to eligible household as set out in this report and in line with the guidance received from the Welsh Government.

Reason for proposed decision

To enable the Council to make payments to eligible households in line with the Welsh Government Scheme

Implementation of decision

The decision is proposed for immediate implementation.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Extract from WG Grant Scheme Guidance Notes

List of background papers

Local Government Finance Act 1988.

Welsh Government Grant Scheme Guidance

Officer contact

Mr Huw Jones – Head of Finance

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Extract from Welsh Government Guidance

Funding support for householders

Local authorities support for householders will be reimbursed under the following criteria:

- a household which has been affected by flooding to their internal principal living space

or

- has been evacuated by the Council Coal Authority or other emergency service for more than 24 hours
- support of £500 to any householder meeting the above criteria
- support of a further £500 for householders who are uninsured

Local authorities will need to validate that the householder does meet the criteria. In respect of insurance householders will need to be asked to self-certify that they have no insurance. Documentation or scripts should refer to the possible penalties of false declaration.

Council tax relief is not included in this scheme.

Claiming funding from Welsh Government LA Hardship Fund

Funding should be claimed in arrears through the monthly claim process for the hardship fund.