

Executive Board

24th May 2024

CARMARTHENSHIRE BUSINESS FLOOD RELIEF & INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

Recommendation / key decisions required:

Businesses in Carmarthenshire have continued to suffer from increasing occurrences of storm flooding, the most recent incident being as a result of Storm Christoph in January 2021. A report was therefore presented and approved at the Leader EBM meeting on the 17th March in order to approve the continuation of the original Business Flood Relief Fund to assist Carmarthenshire Businesses with recovery from damage to premises caused by flooding. The EBM report also approved the use of the remaining budget (£96k) from the original £200k set aside from CREF to deliver the Business Flood Relief Fund in 2018.

The approval also covered an amendment to original eligibility criteria to enable businesses who have suffered from flooding over the last three years to access funding support for proactive projects to protect their properties from future flood damage.

This report is to formally request approval of a further package of support to businesses recovering from Covid 19 and flooding by:

- Set aside £25k from existing Regeneration Capital Funds for the acquisition of a **stock** of de-humidifiers (estimated at £1,500 per item 16 units in total) to be held centrally and then loaned to support affected businesses with immediate flood damage mitigation.
- Continue to set aside the £96k remaining from the initial £200k allocation from Carmarthenshire Rural Enterprise Fund (as approved in Leader EBM 17th March 2021).
- Set aside £200k of existing Regeneration Capital funds to undertake pilot projects to undertake works in partnership with key stakeholder and affected businesses to bolster flood defences and mitigate against future who suffer from repeat flooding to undertake infrastructure improvement up to maximum of £50k per project.

Reasons:

To safeguard businesses in flood affected areas of the County

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted TBA

Exec. Board Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required YES

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. Emlyn Dole - Leader

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| Directorate: Name of Head of Service: Jason Jones Report Author: Mike Bull | Designations: Head of Regeneration Economic Development Area Manager | E Mail Address: JaJones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk MABull@carmarthenshire.gov.uk |
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

24th May, 2021

CARMARTHENSHIRE BUSINESS FLOOD RELIEF & INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

Background

Following widespread flooding across the county as a result of Storm Callum the authority established a £200k Carmarthenshire Business Flood Relief Fund to assist private & third sector enterprises to recover from flooding damage. The fund enabled affected enterprises to apply for a grant of up to £4999 towards a maximum project cost of £9999 to assist with: Construction Costs to rectify damage to buildings; Replacement or Repairs to equipment; Clean Up Costs. Having supported 30 businesses and exhausted enquiries under the fund at that time Executive Board in 2019 agreed to close the fund and transfer the remaining unused balance from the £200k back to the Carmarthenshire Rural Enterprise Fund.

Subsequently businesses have continued to suffer from increasing occurrences of storm flooding, the most recent incident being as a result of Storm Christoph in January 2021 and further flooding in February and to aid businesses who are attempting to recover from both the impact of Covid 19 and regular storm flooding it is proposed to review CCC's package of support to provide a mix of reactive and pro-active interventions. Whilst the impact of Storm Christoph and previous storms has re-iterated the need for the authority to continue to provide re-active support to affected businesses, the increasing frequency of the flooding events and the significant impact it is having of businesses in the worst affected areas such as Llangadog, Gwendraeth at Pontyates and Kidwelly, Carmarthen Quay, Abergwili, Nantgaredig, Llandovery, Pensarn etc would suggest that it may be prudent of the authority to provide a mix of re-active and proactive support.

Recommendations

To formally approve an overall package of support to businesses recovering from Covid 19 and flooding to compliment the Carmarthenshire Business Flood Relief Fund by:

- Setting aside £25k from existing Regeneration Capital Funds for the acquisition of a stock of de-humidifiers (estimated at £1,500 per item 16 units in total) to be held centrally and then loaned to support affected businesses with immediate flood damage mitigation.
- Continue to set aside the £96k remaining from the initial £200k allocation from the Carmarthenshire Rural Enterprise Fund (as approved in Leader EBM 17th March 2021).
- Set aside £200k of existing Regeneration Capital funds to undertake pilot projects to undertake works in partnership with key stakeholders and affected businesses to bolster flood defences and mitigate against future who suffer from repeat flooding to undertake infrastructure improvement up to maximum of £50k per project.
- Support be given to develop a project in Llangadog that benefits both the community and a major local employer in the town, initial discussions have taken place with NRW and Cambrian Pet Food in relation to a potential partnership project in Llangadog with each party funding a third of costs of a project to tackle repeated flooding in Llangadog that affects the highway, local business and residents alike and circa £50k to be allocated to this scheme.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

NO

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: Jason Jones Head of Regeneration

| Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities | Legal | Finance | ICT | Risk Management Issues | Staffing Implications | Physical Assets |
|---|-------|---------|------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| NONE | NONE | YES | NONE | NONE | NONE | YES |

1. Policy

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 gives a legally-binding common purpose – the seven well-being goals it details the ways in which specified public bodies must work together to improve the well-being of Wales. This project will pull together public bodies to work with stakeholders and take an integrated and collaborative approach to the effects of flooding in the County.

3. Finance

In order to secure the £325k required to deliver the three elements listed in the report the following adjustments are required to the Capital programme.

Continue to utilise the remaining budget (£96k) from the original £200k set aside to deliver the Business Flood Relief Fund in 2018 (as approved in Leader EBM 17th March 2021).

Having external funding from WG Valleys Task Force to assist with the delivery of Glanamman Workshops (Phase 2) project re-allocate £225k of CCC Capital Funds from this project to provide £25k to support purchase of dehumidifiers, £200k for pro-active infrastructure partnership projects in addition to the reallocated £96k for the Business Flood Relief Fund.

2. Physical Assets

There will be a storage requirement in respect of stock of centrally held dehumidifiers. Discussions have taken place with the Authorities Property Maintenance Manager and he has confirmed that the equipment can be stored centrally in Trostre and Cillefwr depots.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Jason Jones

Head of Regeneration

(Please specify the outcomes of consultations undertaken where they arise against the following headings)

1. Scrutiny Committee

N/A

2. Local Member(s)

N/A

3. Community / Town Council

N/A

4. Relevant Partners

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

N/A

**EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED**

YES

At Leader EBM on the 17th March 2021.

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE