

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN BY OFFICERS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

This is a record of a decision taken by an officers under delegated powers and where necessary taken in consultation with members and officers.

REPORT TITLE:	Flood Recovery Framework – Grant and Discount Policy
OPEN/EXEMPT	Open
LEAD OFFICER	Jade Kite and Jo Stanton
IS DECISION SUBJECT TO CALL IN?:	Urgent decision – the deadline for paying the grants is 25 January 2024. Grant eligibility is assessed in accordance with government guidance
DATE DECISION ADVERTISED:	
DATE OF DECISION:	24 January 2024
DEADLINE FOR CALL IN:	
PRE-SCREENING EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT COMPLETED:	Yes

Delegated Power

Specify the particular delegated power being exercised by reference to the Scheme of Delegation or the Council body minute and date.
Cabinet 8 February 2023 – Minute CAB131:

2.1.4

Authority be delegated to the Revenues and Benefits Manager, in consultation with the s151 Officer and Council Leader, to agree the criteria for government support schemes and discounts where they:

- Are part of a central government support initiative,
- Are funded by central government, and
- Will be administered by the Revenues and Benefits section

2.2.4

Delegated authority is given to the Revenues and Benefits Manager, in consultation with the s151 officer and Council Leader, to agree any non-domestic rate relief schemes where the eligibility criteria are specified by central government, and the cost is met in full by central government through a grant.

Decision Taken

Agreement of the policy (attached) for determining eligibility for Flood Recovery grants and discounts following Storm Babet.

Reasons for the Decision

Central government has invoked the Flood Recovery framework in response to flooding caused in October 2023 due to Storm Babet. The Flood Recovery grants must be defrayed by 25 January 2024 for the cost of the grants to be claimed back from central government.

Details of alternative options, if any, considered and rejected.

The eligibility criteria, grant and discount amounts are specified by central government and have been reflected in the policy.

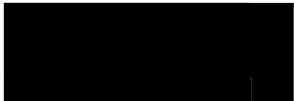
Any declarations of interest and details of any dispensations granted in respect of interests (in relation to officers and any Members consulted).

List of Background papers

Authorisation

Jo Stanton, Revenues and Benefits Manager

Signature



Date **23 January 2024**

Consultation with members/officers

If the decision is taken following consultation with the members/officers, please give details:

Name of officer consulted: Michelle Drewery, s151 Officer

Signed by officer as consulted:



Date **23 January 2024**

Name of Member consulted: Councillor Terry Parish, Council Leader

Signed by Member as consulted:



Date **24 January 2024**

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Name of policy/service/function	Flood Recovery Framework – Grant and Discount Policy				
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function?	New				
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service rigidly constrained by statutory obligations	Flood recovery framework one off grant payments and council tax discounts to residential properties internally flooded by Storm Babet. Flood recovery framework one off grant payments to businesses internally flooded or impacted by from Storm Babet.				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			X	
	Disability			X	
	Gender			X	
	Gender Re-assignment			X	
	Marriage/civil partnership			X	
	Pregnancy & maternity			X	
	Race			X	
	Religion or belief			X	
	Sexual orientation			X	
	Other (eg low income)			X	
Question	Answer	Comments			
<p>2. Is the proposed policy likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?</p>	Yes / No				
<p>3. Could this policy be perceived as impacting on communities differently?</p>	Yes / No	<p>Only residential properties or businesses which were flooded during Storm Babet (19th to 25th October 2023) who meet criteria set by central Government are eligible for grants available.</p> <p>Data collected by Norfolk County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (the authority for collecting data on flooding reports) has been used by the Borough Council to contact residents and businesses who reported</p>			

		<p>flooding to assess if they meet criteria for financial support available.</p> <p>Residential properties or businesses impacted by flooding outside of Storm Babet (19th to 25th October 2023) or who do not meet the criteria set by Central Government are not eligible for support available.</p> <p>There is an assumption that the data provided by Norfolk County Council has captured the full scale of flood reports from Storm Babet in West Norfolk. Further reports of property or business flooding from Storm Babet could be made Norfolk County Council following grant application closure on the 25th January 2024. This is something outside of our control.</p>
<p>4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?</p>	<p>Yes / No</p>	
<p>5. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions?</p> <p>If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>	<p>Yes / No</p>	<p>Actions:</p> <p>No actions can be undertaken by the Borough Council.</p> <p>Data collection of flooded properties is the responsibility of Norfolk County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority and criteria for grant eligibility and deadline for applications has been set by Central Government, both of which are outside of our control.</p> <p>Actions agreed by EWG member:</p> <p>Name: Alison Demonty</p>
<p>The Flood Recovery Framework is designed to provide financial support to residents and businesses impacted by flooding from Storm Babet (19th to 25th October 2023). The financial support will be provided via one-off grant payments, aimed at aiding recovery from flooding (£500 per residential property and £2,500 per business meeting criteria). 100% council tax discount for a minimum of three months is available to qualifying residential properties.</p> <p>The impacts for eligible residential properties and businesses are positive, giving financial support to residents and businesses to recover from the impacts of flooding.</p>		
<p>Assessment completed by: Jade Kite</p>		
<p>Job title: Flood and Water Management Officer</p>	<p>Date: 23.01.2024</p>	
<p>Please Note: If there are any positive or negative impacts identified in question 1, or there any 'yes' responses to questions 2 – 4 a full impact assessment will be required.</p>		

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK
FLOOD RECOVERY FRAMEWORK – GRANT AND DISCOUNT POLICY

JANUARY 2024

1. GUIDANCE SUMMARY

In October 2023 government ministers announced the activation of the Flood Recovery Framework in response to Storm Babet. This is applicable to everywhere in the country impacted by the storm (subject to eligibility criteria) and the government guidance is available [here](#). This Policy covers flooding as a direct result of Storm Babet between 19 and 25 October 2023.

Local authorities are responsible for confirming their Flood Recovery schemes and assessing whether households and businesses are eligible. This policy contains details of the discounts grants which are available for residential and business properties:

Residential Properties: Community Recovery Grant of £500
 Council Tax Discount of 100% for a minimum of three months

Business Properties Business Recovery Grant of £2,500
 Business Rates Relief of 100% for a minimum of three months

This policy does not include the Flood Recovery Grant which is available from Norfolk County Council.

2. GRANT CLOSING DATES

The closing dates for applications and final payments under the grant schemes is 25 January 2024.

Council tax discounts and business rates reliefs can be awarded for any day up to 31 March 2025.

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

COMMUNITY RECOVERY GRANT - £500 PER HOUSEHOLD

The property must have been either:

- Internally flooded, or
- Considered unliveable for 48 hours or more as a result of wider flooding in the area

‘Considered unliveable’ means there is either no access to the property, key services have been affected or there was damage meaning it was advisable to vacate the property all as a direct result of Storm Babet. It does not include flooding to gardens and garages.

The following are not eligible for the Community Recovery Grant:

- Second Homes
- Empty Properties

- Student properties

Only one grant will be paid for an eligible property which is a House In Multiple Occupation.

COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT – 100% FOR A MINIMUM OF THREE MONTHS

A council tax discount will be granted if a property was:

- Internally flooded, or
- Otherwise considered unliveable for 48 hours or more because of wider flooding in the area.

The eligibility criteria for the council tax discount are the same as for the Community Recovery Grant.

The council tax discount will be awarded for a minimum of three months, even if the property is occupied.

The council tax discount will continue to be awarded after three months if the property remains unoccupied because of the flood damage caused by Storm Babet.

100% council tax discount will also be awarded for any temporary accommodation the liable person for council tax for the flooded property is now occupying, providing:

- They are also liable for council tax for the temporary accommodation, and
- They are occupying the temporary accommodation as their main home as a direct result of being unable to return home due to the flooding.

BUSINESS RECOVERY GRANT - £2,500 PER BUSINESS

The business property must be in a flooded area and:

- Be directly impacted by the flood, for instance there is flood damage to the property, equipment and/or stock, or
- Be indirectly affected as there was no access to the property or restricted access customers / staff and the business directly suffered a loss of trade as a result.

BUSINESS RATES RELIEF – 100% RELIEF FOR A MINIMUM OF THREE MONTHS

Business Rates relief will be awarded to a hereditament with a rateable value under £10 million where:

- The business occupying the hereditament is directly impacted by flooding to the property, equipment or stock due to Storm Babet, or
- The business trading from the premises could not function due to a restricted or lack of access to premises, equipment and/or stock, and no alternative premises are available

The business activity using undertaken from the hereditament must be adversely affected, and very small or insignificant impacts are not considered eligible.

The Business Rates Relief will continue to be awarded after three months if the business is still unable to trade from the hereditament as a direct result if the flood damage caused by Storm Babet.

Business Rates Relief is also considered as assistance under Subsidy Control rules. More information is available [here](#).

4. APPLICATIONS AND EVIDENCE

An application form may be required. Grant payments will usually only be made by bank transfer to a validated bank account. We will require supporting evidence for any claims for the grants or discounts. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Photographs
- Insurance reports
- Reports from professionals attending the property such as the Fire Service
- Proof of temporary accommodation

Grants and discounts will only be awarded where sufficient supporting evidence is provided and we are satisfied that the eligibility criteria have been met.

5. FRAUD

We will not accept fraudulent applications for the grant and will carry out checks to ensure all applications for grant payments are accurate. We may refuse to pay a grant if we suspect an application is fraudulent for any reason. We will check information at the time of application and may also carry out spot checks at a later date.

We will recover any grants and remove any discounts found to have been claimed fraudulently. We will also share the information about applications and grant payments with other bodies as requested and allowed by law, including Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and any other government departments as required.