

Flooding – Transfer from Acute to Recovery & Current Position

Introduction

A Strategic Recovery Coordinating Group (SRCG) had already been established, 14 December 2015 following the impacts from Storm Desmond. Discussions took place and it was agreed to combine recovery for both storms and official handover from response to recovery for Storm Eva took place on 01 January 2016.

As the flooding had affected more than one local authority, Lancashire County Council (LCC) took the chair of the Strategic Recovery Coordinating Group (SRCG). All twelve of the Lancashire districts and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council were affected.

Overview of Groups and current position

Strategic Recovery Coordinating Group
 Chair (up to 29/02/2016): George Graham, Director - LCC Pension Fund
 Chair (from 29/02/2016): Mike Kirby , Director of Commissioning
 Support: Emergency Planning and Resilience Service

Membership: SRCG subgroup chairs, LCC Emergency Planning and Resilience, LCC Flood Risk Management, LCC District Authorities, Environment Agency, Lancashire Community Foundation, Regenerate Pennine Lancashire (BOOST), BIS (Cities and Local Growth) and Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Objectives:

- To maintain a strategic overview of the recovery response within Lancashire;
- To co-ordinate any overarching issues; and
- Establish a sub groups to provide overarching support and leadership to the affected districts' Recovery Groups.

A number of important areas of recovery work were identified and the following subgroups were established to address these:

- Business and Economy;
- Communications;
- Community Resilience;
- Finance and Legal; and
- Infrastructure.

Ministerial Recovery Group and Bilateral teleconferences

The SRCG chair or nominated representative dials into the weekly Government Ministerial Recovery Group (MRG) chaired by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Greg Clark, MP.

Standing MRG agenda items include:

- Property Level Flood Resilience Grant;
- Community Grant (£500 household payment);
- Business Support Grant; and
- Update of local infrastructure recovery programmes.

Other recent agenda items have included updates on the impact on the tourism, communications and a Mystery Shopper Exercise.

The Lancashire Bilateral teleconferences chaired by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) and Flood Envoy, Rory Stewart MP generally focus on the top 10 local infrastructure recovery programmes and the funding and support required to address these more rapidly.

More recently the emphasis has started to move towards tourism and business recovery with a focus on the funding grants and other schemes available and the reasons for the slow uptake.

SRCG Subgroups

Business and Economy

Chair: Martin Kelly, Director of Economic Development

Membership: LCC Business and Economy, LCC Emergency Planning and Resilience, District Authorities, Regenerate Pennine Lancashire (BOOST), BIS (Cities and Local Growth) and Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Objectives:

- To maintain an overview of the impacts on local businesses and wider economy and the issues and support required for those businesses; and
- Provision of information for Central Government on progress on recovery and the uptake of the various flood recovery schemes made available to assist business.

Current Position

Flooded and Affected Businesses

In total, local authorities reported 539 businesses as being flooded and an additional 32 affected as a direct result of the floods.

Flood Recovery Grant Scheme

Boost Business Lancashire LEP Growth Hub were appointed by LCC to administer the Flood Recovery Grant Scheme which is funded by the Department for Business Innovation & Skills.

As at 04 March 16, 243 applications had been received, of which 139 were eligible, equating to £437,455 in approved grants. To-date 131 businesses have received a share of £415,465. A further 89 applications are pending and 15 have been rejected or withdrawn.

LCC and district authorities continue to work closely with affected businesses to offer advice and signpost to the various grants available to them.

Communications

Chair: Tim Seamans, Head of Service Communications

Membership: LCC Communications, District Authorities, Public Health England, Environment Agency, and Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Objectives:

- to ensure co-ordinated, consistent communications around the recovery process
- To keep the Strategic Recovery Co-ordinating Group informed about communications activities
- To ensure the visibility of agencies through the recovery process

Current Position

The Communication subgroup continues to provide the mechanism for ensuring consistent messages are provided to the affected communities. Key messages have included:

- How to apply for the household and business funding made available by government www.lancsfloodappeal.org.uk for households and <http://www.boostbusinesslancashire.co.uk> for businesses, and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-the-farming-recovery-fund-frf> for farming businesses.
- Updates on the work of Individual organisations who are working on 'flood recovery' work – taking measures to repair damage, minimise flood levels and investigate all measures which might reduce the likelihood of future flooding to property and reduce the damage that might occur if flooding does still happen.

Community Resilience

Chair: Alan Wilton, Head of Service Emergency Planning And Resilience

Membership: LCC Emergency Planning And Resilience, LCC Trading Standards, LCC Flood Risk Management, Communication subgroup Chair, District Authorities, Environment Agency, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, Lancashire Community Foundation, HSE

Objectives:

The purpose of the group is to engage with communities throughout Lancashire and to coordinate the resources that are available to them.

Current Position

A list of the different community flood groups across Lancashire has been created. Ten multiagency roadshows were held across Lancashire to provide a drop-in resource for information to affected communities and businesses. Attendance typically included: District Authority, Environment Agency, LCC Trading Standards, LCC Emergency Planning And Resilience Service, Flood Advisory Service, LF&RS Community Fire Safety Practitioner and Newground.

Roadshow locations

District / location	Date	Venue
Pendle – Earby	Thursday, 21 st January	New Road Community Centre New Rd, Earby, Barnoldswick, BB18 6XA
West Lancashire – Parbold	Monday, 25 th January	Parbold Village Hall 2 The Green, Parbold, Wigan, WN8 7DN
Lancaster – City Centre	Tuesday, 26 th January	Our Lady's Catholic College Morecambe Rd, Lancaster, LA1 2RX

Wyre – St Michaels and Churchtown	Wednesday, 27 th January	The Grapes Public House, Garstang Road, St Michaels, PR3 0TJ
Chorley – Croston	Thursday, 28 th January	Chorley Town Hall, Lancastrian Suite Market Street, Chorley, PR7 1DP
West Lancashire – Ormskirk	Monday, 1 st February	Fiveways Pub, County Road, Ormskirk, L39 1NN
South Ribble – Leyland	Tuesday, 2 nd February	Civic Centre, West Paddock; Leyland; PR25 1DH
Burnley - Padiham	Wednesday, 3 rd February	St Leonard's Primary School, Moor Lane, Padiham, Burnley, Lancashire, BB12 8HT
Ribble Valley – Whalley/Billington Ribchester	Wednesday, 10 th February	Whalley Village Hall Accrington Road BB7 9TD
Rossendale – Irwell Vale	Wednesday, 10 th February	Irwell Vale Nursery, Milne Street, Irwell Vale, Rossendale BL0 0QP

Next steps are to build on the momentum of the community resilience work already underway in response to the floods and to develop greater community resilience and cohesion. Group has agreed to hand over to LRF wide group to develop Community Resilience (wider remit than flooding) across communities in Lancashire.

Finance and Legal

Chair: Damon Lawrenson, Interim Director Of Financial Resources

Membership: LCC Head Of Service Exchequer Services, District Authorities.

Objectives:

- To maintain an overview of the financial aspects of recovery; and
- To provide advice and guidance to the district authorities on the application of the various financial grant schemes.

Current Position

As of the 16 February 16 1,970 households and 539 businesses were reported as being flooded.

Property Level Flood Resilience Grant (PLFRG)

Individual districts authorities are responsible for administering the Property Level Flood Resilience Grant (PLFRG) set up to fund measures which improve a property's resilience or resistance to damage from flooding, over and above repairs that would normally be covered by insurance. This grant is available to both eligible

households and businesses.

Government Ministers are particularly interested on increasing the uptake of the PLFRG. Discussions have taken place at the weekly MRG to establish the exact issues that District Councils have in relation to resources required to deliver the schemes. The national guidance has now been updated to allow district authorities to charge the cost of surveys, including aborted ones, against the grant. As of the 29th February, 157 applications had been received and only 3 payments awarded.

Community Support Payments (£500 householder grant)

Under the Communities and Business Recovery Scheme the Government provided local authorities with funding worth over £500 for every household flooded by the storms. This funding is intended to help with recovery costs, such as clean up and temporary accommodation. These are administered directly by the district authorities. Of the 1,969 households eligible on the 16th February to receive the payment, 1,961 have received payments totalling £812,900 and 3 have declined the grant.

Council tax and business rate relief

Other schemes are in place such as the suspension of council tax and business rate relief for eligible households and those business flooded or indirectly affected where a loss of business can be directly attributed to the storms. These are administered directly by the district authorities.

Bellwin Scheme

All districts have been advised to register for the Bellwin Scheme.

Infrastructure

Chair: Mike Kirby, Director Corporate Commissioning

Membership: LCC Highways Asset Management, LCC Emergency Planning And Resilience, District Authorities, Environment Agency, and Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Objectives:

- The purpose of the group is to capture the full picture throughout the county and to coordinate actions by all agencies.

Current Position

A large number of bridges, highways and river embankments were affected by the severe weather. A list of damaged infrastructure has been produced in conjunction with LCC Highways Asset Management, district authorities and the Environment Agency. This list includes information on damage to minor roads, bridges, public rights of way, footpaths, school premises and countryside.

Ministers requested a top 10 priority list to detail that infrastructure (highways, bridges and breaches), deemed to have the most significant impact on the communities. The Department of Transport have provided £5m funding to assist in

the recovery.

Other areas of work

Commonly Recognised Information Picture (CRIP)

The LCC Emergency Planning and Resilience service provides support to deliver weekly data and information updates into the Commonly Recognised Information Picture (CRIP) that the Cabinet Office use to provide Ministers and Whitehall departments with the data impacts and progress. At the start of the recovery process, this was achieved by obtaining and collating information from district authorities on a daily basis.

The long awaited DCLG Flood Recovery and Funding Portal finally went live on the 08 February 16, this allows the district to enter and submit their information directly to DCLG. The Emergency Planning and Resilience service continues to share updates on the Flood Recovery Grant Scheme and Community Flood Appeal, detailed below.

The Community Flood Appeal

The Community Foundation for Lancashire is administering the Community Flood Appeal on behalf of Lancashire County Council. This scheme offers eligible individuals and families in greater need to access further financial support.

Position as at 04 March 2016:

Funding received	Totals
Lancashire County Council	£123,500
General donations	£469,247
Government match funding	£100,000
Total Funds	£692,747
Costs deducted	£43,962
Number of grants approved	212
Value of grants approved	£438,206
Balance available	£210,579

Donations

Information on a number of individual and corporate donations were received into LCC Emergency Planning and Resilience service. Donations included household cleaning products and small domestic appliances from YPO, and a quantity of LEGO items, toys, PJs and water bottles from LEGO. These were kindly housed by the depot at Cuerden until they could be distributed.

Recommendation

Item for Management team information – no action required

