

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP, CULTURE
AND TOURISM**

6 DECEMBER 2019

**Report of the Executive Director – Commissioning, Communities and
Policy**

**URGENT DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
COMMISSIONING, COMMUNITIES AND POLICY
DERBYSHIRE FLOODS HARDSHIP FUND FOR RESIDENTS AND
DERBYSHIRE FLOODS BUSINESS HARDSHIP FUND**

1 Purpose of the Report

To note the urgent decisions taken by the Executive Director of Commissioning, Communities and Policy in accordance with the Council's constitution to:

- Establish a Hardship Fund to support residents in financial hardship as a result of the floods experienced in early November 2019;
- Establish a Hardship Fund to support small businesses in Derbyshire affected by the flooding in experienced in early November 2019.

2 Information and Analysis

Significant rainfall on 7 November 2019 resulted in major flooding to regions of the county, in particular along the valley of the River Derwent. To ensure those affected by the floods and in financial hardship did not suffer further financial difficulties, it was necessary for the Council to put in place support mechanisms for those at greatest risk.

Due to the urgency of the support required by both residents and local small businesses, an urgent decisions was sought from the Executive Director of Commissioning, Communities and Policy for permission to use the existing Derbyshire Discretionary Fund to establish Hardship Fund for local residents. A further urgent decision, to establish a Hardship Fund for small businesses was also sought. Together, both funds provided a package of support for those affected.

The conditions of the Hardship Fund for Businesses were subject to a further urgent decision approved by the Director of Economy, Transport and

Environment on 11 November 2019. Copies of the urgent decisions are shown in Appendix One.

3 Financial Considerations

The additional costs of topping up the Derbyshire Discretionary Fund to establish the Hardship Funds for both residents and local businesses are estimated to be no more than £100,000. The costs will be met from General Reserves.

4 Legal Considerations

The Council's Constitution provides that "notwithstanding any other provision of the Constitution Executive Directors shall have the power, after discussion, if practicable, with the Leader of the Council or the relevant Cabinet Member or Chair, to take such actions deemed to be necessary and expedient in matters requiring urgent consideration and which, because of the timescale involved, or the need to safeguard the interests of the County Council, cannot be dealt by submission to the next meeting of the Council, Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Committee".

5 Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property, transport and social value considerations.

6 Background Papers

No.

7 Key Decision

No.

8 Is it necessary to waive the call-in period?

No.

9 Officer's Recommendation

That the report be noted.

EMMA ALEXANDER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – COMMISSIONING,
COMMUNITIES AND POLICY

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

8 November 2019

URGENT DECISION

**Report to the Executive Director - Commissioning,
Communities and Policy**

DERBYSHIRE FLOODS BUSINESS HARDSHIP FUND

1. Purpose of the Report

To seek approval to establish a hardship fund to support the local businesses of Derbyshire affected by the financial consequences of evacuations as a result of the recent flooding in Derbyshire during early November 2019.

2. Information and Analysis

Significant rainfall on 7 November 2019 has resulted in major flooding to regions of the county, in particular the north east of the county and the Derwent Valley.

Alongside the Council's current efforts to support affected households, it is recommended the County Council establishes a hardship fund to assist small and micro enterprises coping with the immediate, short term loss of income and resulting impacts on cashflow.

It is proposed this is a flexible fund of £80,000 is set up to support emergency relief to address cashflow. It is possible that over the coming weeks, additional elements of support may be required. In all cases, businesses are expected to ensure they have utilised any existing insurance policies they have in place.

The 'Business Emergency Support Fund' which would involve the creation of a fast track application process for emergency payments of £300 per business.

Eligible businesses will be:

- Those located within the evacuation postcode areas
- Small or micro businesses

Assessment of eligibility will be based on proof of business identity and evidence of hardship through a simple application form.

It is possible there may still be a need to support some businesses beyond the initial payment and therefore businesses will be able to apply for further financial support once the emergency payment has been made. Details of the nature, level and eligibility of this support will be developed over the coming weeks and will be subject to due diligence in the setting up of appropriate governance

arrangements. This will include maximum limits to the number of applications/ financial support and appeal processes as appropriate.

The County Council will have discussions with district councils about any business rates that may be due.

The application for emergency financial relief will be made available on the Derbyshire County Council website and will be administered through the Economy and Regeneration Service, with the support of colleagues from Corporate Finance. Publicity for the emergency fund will be issued via the DCC website. Applications for payments will commence on 11 November 2019 at 10.00a.m.

The fund follows the same principles as those used for the Whaley Bridge Hardship Fund.

As noted above, any additional aspects of financial support required as part of the hardship fund may be developed and assessed on a case by case basis.

3. Financial Considerations

The £80,000 cost of the hardship fund will be met from existing reserves and will be paid to applicants in accordance with the verified details provided through the application process, the Director of Finance & ICT will determine the source of funding. Any additional or unexpected costs will be subject to a Cabinet report.

4. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered; legal, prevention of crime and disorder, environmental, human resources, health, property and transport considerations.

10. Officer's Recommendations

It is recommended that the Executive Director for Commissioning, Communities and Policy makes an urgent decision to:

1. Approve the use of an existing reserve to create a hardship fund to support Business Emergency Support Fund in line with the approach set out above
2. Confirm the use of the Derbyshire County Council website as the most appropriate on-line application process.

3. Receive further reports to confirm governance processes for any additional financial support as appropriate.

Emma Alexander
Executive Director for Commissioning, Communities and Policy

Signature: 

Emma Alexander

Date: 8/11/19

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DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

8 November 2019

URGENT DECISION

Report to the Executive Director - Commissioning,
Communities and Policy

DERBYSHIRE FLOODS HARDSHIP FUND FOR RESIDENTS

1. Purpose of the Report

To seek approval to establish a Derbyshire Floods Hardship Fund affected by evacuations and in financial hardship, as a result of the recent flooding in Derbyshire during early November 2019.

2. Information and Analysis

Significant rainfall on 7 November 2019 has resulted in major flooding to regions of the county, in particular the north east of the county and the Derwent Valley.

Alongside existing efforts and to support affected households experiencing financial difficulties, it is recommended that the County Council use the existing Derbyshire Discretionary Fund (DDF) to establish a Hardship Fund for Derbyshire residents. This would involve the creation of a fast track application process accessed via the existing Call Derbyshire DDF helpline and a one off emergency payment of up to £104 per household for those experiencing financial hardship in the affected area.

The fund follows the same principles as those used for the Whaley Bridge Hardship Fund.

Applications for payments will commence on 11 November 2019 at 10.00a.m.

3. Financial Considerations

The additional costs of topping up the Derbyshire Discretionary Fund (DDF) to establish the Derbyshire Floods Hardship Fund are estimated to be no more than £20,000 and can be met from General Reserves. Additional support would be made available if required.

4. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered; legal, prevention of crime and disorder, environmental, human resources, health, property and transport considerations.

10. Officer's Recommendations

It is recommended that the Executive Director for Commissioning, Communities and Policy makes an urgent decision to:

1. Approve the use of the existing Derbyshire Discretionary Fund to establish a Hardship Fund to support residents affected by evacuations in Derbyshire in financial hardship through a one off emergency payment of up to £104 per household.

Emma Alexander
Executive Director for Commissioning, Communities and Policy

Signature:

Date:


8/11/19

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

11 November 2019

URGENT DECISION

Report to the Executive Director - Economy, Transport and Environment

DERBYSHIRE FLOODS BUSINESS HARDSHIP FUND

1. Purpose of the Report

To seek approval to establish a hardship fund to support those Derbyshire businesses affected by the financial consequences of the recent flooding events in the county during early November 2019.

2. Information and Analysis

Significant rainfall on 7 November 2019 has resulted in major flooding to parts of the county, in particular along the valley of the River Derwent, although not exclusively.

Alongside the Council's current efforts to support affected households, it is recommended the County Council establishes a hardship fund to assist small and micro enterprises, of up to 50 employees, directly affected by flooding in coping with the immediate, short term loss of income and resulting impacts on cashflow to aid recovery whilst appropriate insurance claims are completed.

It is proposed that a flexible fund of £80,000 be set up to provide emergency relief (grant) to businesses. In essence, the fund will follow the same principles as those used for the Whaley Bridge Hardship Fund.

Applications for funding will be required to meet agreed criteria (see below) and applications for support will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In any event, businesses are expected to ensure they have utilised any existing insurance policies they have in place.

Applications will be made via a simple 'grant form' accompanied with relevant supporting information (see attached grant application form). Assessment of applications will be undertaken by a minimum of two officers from the Economy and Regeneration Service to ensure objectivity and transparency. In addition, the Council's finance officers will ensure appropriate processes for signing off grant applications are in place.

Having regard to medium term weather forecasts, it is possible that the impact of flooding and severe weather may increase and additional elements of business support may be required. Relevant programmes will be worked up

in conjunction with district councils who have been invited to provide additional financial contributions over and above the £80,000 fund from DCC.

The Floods Hardship Fund

The 'Derbyshire Floods Business Hardship Fund requires the creation of a fast track application process for emergency payments of £300 per business. It is proposed that eligible businesses are:

- Those which have been directly affected by flooding (in the occurrence of early November) and the ingress of water to the property and
- Small or micro businesses of 50 employees or less

Assessment of eligibility will be based on proof of business identity and evidence of hardship accompanying the application form.

Having regard to medium term weather forecasts, it is possible that the impact of flooding and severe weather may increase and additional elements of business support may be required. Relevant programmes will be worked up in conjunction with district councils, the D2N2 Growth Hub, the Derbyshire Economic Partnership (DEP) and Chamber of Commerce to ensure appropriate and proportionate responses to aid recovery and support future business resilience.

Despite this, it is proposed the emergency relief element of the fund (£300 grant per business) will be available until the end of November.

Details of the nature, level and eligibility of this wider support programme will be developed over the coming weeks and will be subject to due diligence in the setting up of appropriate governance arrangements. This will include maximum limits to the number of applications/ financial support available and any appeal processes that may be considered appropriate.

The County Council will undertake discussions with district councils about any business rates that may be due.

The application for emergency financial relief will be made available on the Derbyshire County Council website and will be administered through the Economy and Regeneration Service, with the support of colleagues from Corporate Finance. Wider publicity of the fund will be issued via the district council, Growth Hub and Chamber of Commerce websites. The grant application process is proposed to be made 'live' on 11 November 2019.

As noted above, any additional aspects of financial support required as part of the hardship fund may be developed and assessed on a case by case basis.

3. Financial Considerations

The £80,000 cost of the hardship fund will be met from existing reserves and will be paid to applicants in accordance with the verified details provided through the application process; the Director of Finance & ICT will determine

the source of funding. Any additional or unexpected costs will be subject to a Cabinet report.

4. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered; legal, prevention of crime and disorder, environmental, human resources, health, property and transport considerations.

5. Officer's Recommendations

It is recommended that the Executive Director for Commissioning, Communities and Policy makes an urgent decision to:

1. Approve the use of an existing reserve to create a fund to support the Derbyshire Floods Business Hardship Fund in line with the approach set out above, notably the establishment of a £300/ business emergency (available until 30 November) relief fund and a wider programme of business support.
2. Confirm the use of the Derbyshire County Council website as the most appropriate on-line application process.
3. Receive further reports to confirm governance processes for any additional financial support as appropriate.

Mike Ashworth
Executive Director for Economy, Transport and Environment

Signature:

Mike Ashworth

Date: