



Report Reference Number: C/21/21

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**To:** Council  
**Date:** 19 April 2021  
**Status:** Council  
**Ward(s) Affected:** Tadcaster  
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**Lead Officer:** Janet Waggott, Chief Executive

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**Title: Reporting of Urgent Decision: Tadcaster Business Flood Grant Scheme**

**Summary:**

This report sets out the reasons for the urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive to vire Programme For Growth budget to deliver flood recovery fund grants through a scheme to provide financial assistance to Tadcaster town centre businesses suffering hardship due to the flooding caused by Storm Franklin in February 2022.

**Recommendation:**

**That Council note the urgent decision of the Chief Executive that:**

- 1. £100,000 unallocated Programme for Growth funding and £22,500 of 'Growing Enterprise' Programme for Growth Funding be vired to establish a Tadcaster Business Flood Grant Scheme and;**
- 2. that authority be delegated to the Director of Corporate Services and Commissioning to enter into an agreement with an external provider to deliver the grant scheme, subject to appropriate conditions.**

**Reasons for recommendation:**

To offer immediate assistance to Tadcaster town centre businesses significantly affected by Storm Franklin. To provide an effective delivery mechanism for grant funding.

**1. Report**

- 1.1** In February 2022, the Selby District area was again affected by heavy wind and storms bringing damage and flooding to the area. Unfortunately, the risk of such flooding has once again disproportionately impacted on the Tadcaster business community through the impact of Storm Franklin. The storm brought the second time in 6 years that Tadcaster town centre's high street has flooded, bringing significant and further economic difficulty for the area. The town centre has experienced unprecedented hardship over this period. Major incidents such as

the 2015 flooding of the same area and loss of the bridge for over a year forced an extended recovery period and caused consumer habits to look out of the town; a loss of ability to insure property because of the continued flood risk and delays to installing flood defence systems is increasing financial pressure to the point of loss of businesses; and the impact of Covid on businesses through forced lock down changes again, consumer behaviour.

- 1.2 Recent town centre survey work<sup>1</sup> (2021) had indicated that prior to both the recent flood and the pandemic, the Tadcaster town centre had a commercial vacancy rate of 18% which is significantly higher than national benchmarks (9%). Placing the above in the context of this, identifies the ongoing economic hardship of Tadcaster businesses in the town centre.
- 1.3 Previous major incidents of flooding in 2015 and the Coronavirus pandemic had brought Government relief funding and it is acknowledged the positive impact that such relief funding can have for the local economy. At this time, there is no indication from the Government that relief funding will be made available for the recent areas in the country who have been affected by Storm Franklin.

## **2. Implications**

### **2.1 Legal Implications**

The decision is outside the Budget & Policy Framework and is therefore ordinarily reserved to Full Council and not within Executive delegation. Due to the urgent nature, the decision was taken by the Chief Executive using their urgency powers following consultation with the Leader and with the agreement of the Chair of Policy Review Committee that the decision may reasonably be regarded as urgent. It must now be reported to Council for information.

### **2.2 Financial Implications**

The financial implications are set out in the body of the report.

### **2.3 Policy and Risk Implications**

The urgent decision after consultation with the Chair of Policy Review Committee was taken to ensure that the Council can release funding in order to provide immediate financial support to Tadcaster town centre businesses who have adversely affected by recent floods. The purpose of providing grant relief would be to ensure Tadcaster town centre has support to regenerate the local economy.

### **2.4 Corporate Plan Implications**

The proposal directly supports the Tadcaster town centre small business community to recover in line with the Council Plan 2020-2030 priority to support the regeneration of the district's market towns.

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<sup>1</sup> People & Places 2021 'Tadcaster – the Heart of the Town Report'; Selby District Council

## **2.5 Resource Implications**

Funds secured for allocation of the grants and to provide an effective delivery mechanism for grant funding.

## **2.6 Other Implications**

None.

## **2.7 Equalities Impact Assessment**

An equalities impact screening was completed and identified positive impacts particularly in relation to supporting businesses to reopen which provides local access to services for all age groups, disability groups, and with additional socio economic and skills impacts.

## **3. Conclusion**

The urgent decision enables the grant funding to be allocated for the scheme to assist Tadcaster town centre businesses significantly affected by Storm Franklin.

## **4. Background Documents**

None.

## **5. Appendices**

**Appendix A** – Report Urgent Decision: Tadcaster Business Flood Grant Scheme & Officer Decision Record

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