



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

To: Chief Executive, Storm Henk Flood Recovery
Framework eligible Local Authorities

By email

Jo Gillespie
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Directorate*

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Email: REDRecovery@levellingup.gov.uk

16 January 2024

Dear Chief Executive

**STORM HENK: FLOOD RECOVERY FRAMEWORK FUNDING:
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING: DLUHC SCHEMES**

The Flood Recovery Framework was triggered on 06 January 2024 in response to the severe flooding events that occurred as a result of Storm Henk.

Once signed, this letter will constitute a memorandum of understanding (MOU) covering the three schemes administrated by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities namely:

1. Community Recovery Grant
2. Council Tax Discounts
3. Business Rate Relief.

Additional letters covering the schemes administrated by the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) will follow directly from those organisations.

This letter establishes the responsibilities of the Parties and the principles for their co-operation. Parties sign this MOU intending to honour their obligations set out in it. This MOU should be read alongside the accompanying schemes operational guidance document which provides further context, including definitions of terms, detail on the schemes and indicative timelines for reporting and payments. Separate documentation covering DBT and Defra schemes will follow.

Eligibility:

- Eligible areas: for this activation eligible areas are those upper and lower tier authority areas:
 - Reporting over 50 internally flooded properties (any combination of households and businesses) at their Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) level. NB: The initial identification of eligible areas is based on data provided by the Environment Agency on 06 January 2024; and
 - With properties flooded as a direct result of Storm Henk; and
 - With properties flooded between the dates of 02 January 2024 and 12 January 2024.
- All three of the above must apply.

- Claims for eligible costs will be paid to cover the periods 02 January 2024 to 31 March 2024 and 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. Costs incurred after 31 March 2025 will not be refunded via these schemes.

Reporting: (see paragraphs 2-4 and 6-11 of the operational guidance document):

- Affected Local Authorities will have until 12 April 2024 to investigate, verify and report flood impacts to Government via the DELTA reporting system. After this date flood impact data will be “locked”, and no additions to the flood impact data will be accepted.
- Information supplied via DELTA by 12 April 2024 should be a true and accurate assessment of the impacts of Storm Henk between 02 and 12 January 2024. DELTA returns should be certified and signed off by the Chief Financial (s151) Officer.
- In two-tier areas, county councils / unitary authorities and their lower-tier district councils should coordinate to determine overall flood impacts in the entire LLFA area, ensuring that flooded property data reported is not duplicated.
- Local authorities will provide weekly updates on verified flooded property numbers until 12 April 2024.
- Reporting requirements after that point will be clarified under separate correspondence.
- DBT and Defra schemes will have additional data requirements for assurance, these will be detailed under separate cover and captured outside of the DELTA system.

Overclaims, monitoring and records:

- If, post payment, an LA or LLFA subsequently discovers that reported flood impact numbers are lower than those provided the following actions will apply based on the revised number:
 - if the LA / LLFA still meets the eligibility threshold, and where grant has been paid, authorities will be required to repay any additional grant they have received, based on the difference between the actual and claimed flood impact numbers; or
 - if the LLFA no longer meets the eligibility threshold, and where grant has been paid, the authorities concerned will be required to repay all grant they have received.
- The authority must keep records in support of any claim and make these available for audit or review upon request.
- Authorities are also expected to have in place systems to determine local eligibility, verify compliance with scheme requirements and to monitor delivery.
- Authorities are expected to co-operate across their LLFA area to ensure that scheme eligibility requirements are met and that risk of duplication and fraud etc are managed appropriately.

Community Recovery Grant

- Authorities will receive funding equivalent to £500 per household that has either been internally flooded or deemed to be “unliveable” for a period greater than 48 hours.
- It is for the authority to assess the eligibility of individual households and to decide how to allocate the grant to meet local needs, but it is the Government’s expectation that the grant should be passed directly to eligible households (as outlined in para 3.2 of the Framework).

Council Tax Discount

- The Government will reimburse authorities for the cost of a 100% council tax discount for a minimum of three months if flood water entered the domestic property, or the domestic property was otherwise considered Unliveable for a period greater than 48 hours.
- The Government will also reimburse authorities for the cost of a 100% council tax discount on temporary accommodation for any household unable to return to their home.

- Local authorities will be expected to verify that households are still eligible before claims are made in year two.

Business Rates Relief

- The Government will reimburse authorities for the cost of providing businesses 100% relief from business rates for a minimum of three months if flood water entered the property, or the flooding seriously impacted upon the businesses' ability to trade from the property.
- The relief provided will be subject to the UK subsidy control regime and will only be available to properties with a rateable value less than £10 million.
- Local authorities will be expected to verify that businesses are still eligible before claims are made in year two.

Claims timelines: indicative payments timelines are as follows:

- A single claim for Community Recovery Grant will be made, based on data provided by 12 April 2024, this will be paid by the end of the 2023/24 financial year via Section 31 grant.
- Council Tax Discounts will be reimbursed in two claims:
 - Year 1: costs to end March 2024: return submitted at end May 2024, payment via Section 31 grant by end July 2024
 - Year 2: costs to end March 2025: return submitted at end May 2025, payment via Section 31 grant by end July 2025.
- Business Rates Relief will be re-imbursed on the basis of data submitted via the NNDR3 process in two claims:
 - Year 1: costs to end March 2024: return at end May 2025, payment via Section 31 grant by end July 2025
 - Year 2: costs to end March 2025: return at end May 2026, payment via Section 31 grant by end July 2026.

Evaluation

- With each claim recipient authorities will be asked to answer two evaluation questions. These are:
 1. What were the impacts and benefits that Flood Recovery Framework grant delivered in your area? Please give details by scheme and as a whole and provide case studies to illustrate.
 2. Do you have any other feedback on the operation and administration of the Framework by central Government?

Branding

- The Grant Recipient shall at all times during and following the end of the Funding Period:
 - comply with requirements of the Branding Manual in relation to the Funded Activities; and
 - cease use of the Funded by UK Government logo on demand if directed to do so by the Minister of State.
- **Branding Manual** means the HM Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 'Funded by UK Government branding manual' first published by the Cabinet Office in November 2022 and is available at <https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/marketing/branding-guidelines/> including any subsequent updates from time to time].

Any questions about the Framework and these DLUHC administrated schemes should be directed to the RED Recovery Team at REDRecovery@levellingup.gov.uk.

Please complete and sign the section below, and return to the email address above by 02 February 2024, to indicate that you understand the requirements of both this activation and these schemes and will adhere to them. No payment will be made until this is completed.

Yours sincerely,



Jo Gillespie

Deputy Director, Resilience and Recovery Directorate

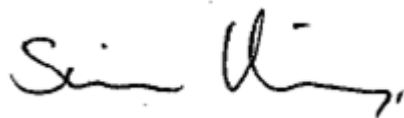
Flood Recovery Framework: Activated as a result of Storm Henk for impacts between 02 January and 12 January 2024.

MOU for DLUHC administrated schemes:

- 1. Community Recovery Grant**
- 2. Council Tax Discounts**
- 3. Business Rate Relief.**

For and on behalf of the Vale of White Horse District Council Local Authority, I agree to the terms laid out in this document.

Signed:



Name: SIMON HEWINGS

Title: Section 151 Officer

Local Authority: Vale of White Horse District Council

Date: 9 February 2024