

Report of: The Area Leader - West North West (Citizens and Communities)

Report to: The Inner West Community Committee (Armley, Bramley & Stanningley and Kirkstall)

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For noting

Update on the Storm Eva Flooding

Purpose of report

1. This report provides the Community Committee with context on the work undertaken within the Inner West area, as part of the city's response to the Storm Eva Flooding.
2. It also provides an introduction to the more detailed report that went to the Executive Board meeting held on 9th March 2016, which gives an overview of recovery activity that the city has undertaken since the recent floods.

Main issues

3. Following the events of Storm Eva on the 26th and 27th December 2015, Leeds City Council, working together with local communities, volunteers, and partners, has been responding to a range of recovery actions in affected areas.
4. These floods had a major impact on parts of Inner West Leeds, particularly within Kirkstall ward.
5. In contrast to other parts of the city, although some residential properties were affected, the vast majority of flooded properties were businesses along the Kirkstall Valley.

Kirkstall Flood Clean Up

6. In direct response to the Kirkstall flooding a new community led group was formed and they coordinated the volunteer response locally to Storm Eva. This group coordinated hundreds of volunteers, received and allocated high volumes of donations and are now seeking to recruit volunteer tradespeople to commit to slivers of time/ time banking to continue the ongoing repairs. They continue to liaise with local council services to offer guidance and support.
7. Kirkstall Flood Clean Up have received financial, material and in kind service donations from a range of individuals and organisations. Companies like Marks & Spencer and Jet2 have provided financial contributions; Asda, Tesco and Morrison's have all provided donations of goods including cleaning materials and equipment; local construction companies have provided advice and skills support. There were also a large volume of other smaller contributions from other organisations and individuals. Some of the donations were aimed at those suffering domestic flooding and given that the nature of the flooding in Kirkstall was largely businesses, these were distributed to other flood areas with greater need.
8. Kirkstall Flood Clean Up are now planning a Volunteer Thank You event to recognise the generous contributions of the many hundreds of people who gave their spare time to help with the clean-up effort.
9. Leeds City Council and the Communities Team – West North West continue to liaise with Kirkstall Flood Clean Up, in order to provide ongoing support through the recovery process.

Local Engagement

10. A post floods engagement event was held in January with local businesses at Viva Cuba. This was attended by representatives of Leeds City Council, the Environment Agency, Yorkshire Water, the LEP and insurers' representatives. The meeting was very well attended. This meeting was followed up by a second at the end of February and from these, it has been decided to try and establish a Business Forum for the area.
11. Leeds City Council has also attempted to visit all businesses identified as affected by flooding in the area. This has provided both help and advice, as well as promoting the available grant schemes.

Grants

12. There have been a range of grants made available to properties affected by the flooding. These schemes fall broadly into two categories: those available to residential properties; those available to businesses.
13. The grant funding received from Government has been used to provide households affected by flooding with a £500 cash payment to help with recovery costs and a £5000

grant scheme for householders to make their properties more resilient to future flooding events. In addition to these cash grant schemes, those householders who have been subject to internal flooding will be entitled to claim/receive council tax for a minimum of three months or longer if needed.

14. A grant of approximately £2,500 is available to businesses affected to help with recovery, as well as an ability to apply for a £5,000 property resilience grant. In addition to these cash grant schemes, those businesses that have had significant impact will be entitled to claim/receive business rate relief for a minimum of three months or longer if needed.
15. A separate grant scheme has been established and publicised by the LEP to assist businesses with grants being available for between £5,000 and £100,000. This is being administered by Leeds City Council on behalf of the LEP as part of our ongoing arrangements delivering the Business Growth Programme.

Corporate

16. There are a range of corporate considerations that are linked to the post flooding response and these are detailed as part of the full Executive Board report attached. However, of particular note to Inner West Community Committee is:
17. **a. Consultation and engagement** – A post floods engagement event, with local businesses, was held in January at Viva Cuba. This was followed up by a second meeting at the end of February. From these meetings, it has been agreed to establish a Business Forum for the Kirkstall Valley area.

Conclusion

18. This only provides an introduction to some of the work being undertaken within the Inner West as part of the post floods clean up. However, taken in conjunction with the Executive Board report, this should give an understanding of the broad range of activities, both locally and citywide, that are taking place as part of the post flooding response.

Recommendations

19. To note the content of this report and the activity undertaken within the Inner West, in response to the Storm Eva Floods.
20. To note the content of the Executive Board report, particularly those parts pertinent to the post flooding response within the Inner West area.

Background information

- None