

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

This is a record of a decision taken by the officers under delegated powers and where necessary taken in consultation with members and officers.

Delegated Power

Cabinet: 1 August 2017
Minute CAB41(4):

Delegated authority is given to the council's s151 officer, in consultation with the Leader of the council, to agree any non-domestic rate relief schemes where the eligibility criteria are specified by central government, and the cost is met in full by central government through a grant.

Decision Taken

To implement Round 2 of the Discretionary Grant Scheme Policy for businesses as detailed in Government Guidance of 13 May 2020 and 22 May 2020, and Frequently Asked Questions of 27 May 2020.

Reasons for the Decision

On 1 May 2020 the government announced it was allowing local authorities to develop policies to pay discretionary grants to local businesses and traders affected by Covid-19. These grants are to be paid from the limited amount of funding made available by central government.

Initial guidance was issued by central government on 13 May 2020, Version 2 was published on 22 May 2020 and a set of Frequently Asked Questions was published on 27 May 2020. Whilst local authorities are able to decide their own policies, government has asked that certain businesses are prioritised for the grant.

The council has been allocated **£1,931,750** for discretionary grants. We can pay a grant of £25,000, £10,000 or any amount up to £10,000. Government expects that grants of less than £10,000 will be appropriate in most cases, but this is at our discretion.

As funding is limited this policy is restricted to those businesses the government has specified are a priority in its guidance, plus certain local priorities. Should there be any remaining funding a policy update will be considered.

Round 1 of the Discretionary Grant application process closed on 3 July 2020 and new applications are no longer being accepted. **This report details Round 2 of the Discretionary Grant scheme and full details of eligible businesses and the eligibility criteria are included in the attached policy.** Round 2 will open on Wednesday 22 July 2020 and close at 9am on Wednesday 5 August 2020.

Options considered

The council can choose to support any businesses it deems as a local priority, within the limited amount of funding available. The original demand for the grants was unknown as we did not know how many of some types of business would claim. For this reason Round 1 of the Discretionary Grants policy was restricted to the businesses the government had specified as priority areas, plus local priorities identified from the Small Business Grant and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant applications and queries.

Of the £1.93m the council was allocated, £1.186m has been spent or is allocated for businesses under Round 1 of the policy. This leaves a balance of £745k and Round 2 of the policy is designed to spend a further £725k, leaving a small contingency fund.

Any declarations of interest and details of any dispensations granted in respect of interests.

None known

Authorisation

Signature



Michelle Drewery, s151 Officer

Date 20 JULY 2020

Consultation with members/officers

If the decision is taken following consultation with the members/officers, please give details:

Consultation with the Council Leader, Councillor Brian Long

Signed by Member as consulted:



Councillor Brian Long

Date 20/7/2020.

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk



Name of policy/service/function	Discretionary Grant Scheme Policy Round 2 July 2020				
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function?	New				
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service rigidly constrained by statutory obligations	The Discretionary Grant scheme will award a grant of £25,000, £10,000 or less than £10,000 to certain eligible businesses and traders in the council's area				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			√	
	Disability			√	
	Gender			√	
	Gender Re-assignment			√	
	Marriage/civil partnership			√	
	Pregnancy & maternity			√	
	Race			√	
	Religion or belief			√	
	Sexual orientation			√	
Other (eg low income)			√		
Question	Answer	Comments			
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	No				
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	No				
4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	No				
<p>5. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>	N/A	Actions:			
		Actions agreed by EWG member:TBC.....			
Assessment completed by: Name Joanne Stanton					
Job title Revenues and Benefits Manager	Date 17 July 2020				

**BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK
LOCAL AUTHORITY DISCRETIONARY GRANT POLICY**

ROUND 2

22 JULY 2020 TO 5 AUGUST 2020

On 1 May 2020 the government announced it was allowing local authorities to develop policies to pay discretionary grants to local businesses affected by Covid-19. These grants are to be paid from the limited amount of funding made available by central government.

Initial guidance was issued by central government on 13 May 2020, version 2 was published late on 22 May 2020 and a set of Frequently Asked Questions was published on 27 May 2020. Whilst local authorities are able to decide their own policies, government has asked that four specific types of businesses are prioritised for the grant, and has specified three mandatory criteria all applicants must meet in order to receive the grant.

As funding is limited this policy is restricted to those businesses the government has specified are a priority plus businesses the council consider to be local priorities.

Round 1 of the Discretionary Grant application process closed on 3 July 2020 and new applications are no longer being accepted. Round 2 opens on Wednesday 22 July 2020 and closes at 9am on Wednesday 5 August 2020.

Full details of eligible businesses and the eligibility criteria are below.

SECTION 1: GENERAL ELIGIBILITY

Government's Mandatory Criteria:

Any business or trader wishing to claim the grant must first meet the government's mandatory criteria:

1. They are not eligible to claim a grant (regardless of whether they have actually claimed a grant) under:
 - a. The Small Business Grant Fund
 - b. The Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund,
 - c. The Fisheries Response Fund,
 - d. The Domestic Seafood Supply Scheme,
 - e. The Zoos Support Fund, and/or
 - f. The Dairy Hardship Fund
2. They were trading on 11 March 2020 from the premises they are claiming the grant for, and
3. They were not in administration, insolvent or subject to a striking off notice either on, or since, 11 March 2020.

Additional Eligibility Criteria:

In addition to the mandatory criteria, any business or trader wishing to claim the grant must also pass the council's initial eligibility checks:

4. They are operating or trading within the boundaries of the Borough Council's area,
5. They have fixed, ongoing, property related costs,

6. They can demonstrate they have suffered a significant fall in income due to the Covid-19 crisis which has impacted their business, and
7. They are not a Precepting Authority of any local authority

Any business or trader failing to meet the criteria above is not eligible to claim a Discretionary Grant.

Only one grant is payable per business / trader under this policy.

SECTION 2: ELIGIBLE BUSINESSES – LOCAL PRIORITIES – ROUND 2

Part 1: Children and Young People's Care and Support Organisations

A grant is payable to organisations who provide care and support to children and young people in a location other than a domestic dwelling. The organisation must either operate from their own commercial premises, or have a permanent presence in a commercial space which they have exclusive use of and are liable to pay rent for, for example a pre-school based in a village hall.

Criteria

In addition to the general eligibility criteria at section 1, on 11 March 2020 the organisation must:

- Be using the premises directly for the provision of care and support to children and/or young people up to the age of 18,
- Have their own commercial premises, or have a permanent presence within a commercial premises which they are liable to pay rent for

Exclusions

- Any premises used for ancillary purposes such as storage and offices
- Any organisation who does not have a permanent presence in a premises, for example ad-hoc playgroups, baby groups
- Childminders working from domestic properties

Grant Payment

Only one grant will be payable per property per organisation

Grant Amount

£10,000

Part 2: Church Halls, Chapel Halls and similar buildings exempt from the Rating List

Church Halls and similar buildings which are used in connection with a place of religious worship are exempt from the Business Rates list. This means they are unable to access the Small Business Grant or Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant. They can now claim a Discretionary Grant under this policy if they meet the criteria.

Criteria

In addition to the general eligibility criteria at section 1, on 11 March 2020 the Hall must:

- Be a Church Hall, Chapel Hall or similar,
- Be used in connection with, and by, the same organisation occupying the place of religious worship,
- Be in regular use and classed as occupied, and
- Would normally be shown in the Business Rates list if not exempt as a Place of Religious Worship under paragraph 11 of schedule 5 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988

Exclusions

Any building which does not meet the criteria to be exempt from the Business Rates list under paragraph 11 of schedule 5 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

Grant Payment

Only one grant will be payable per hall.

Grant Amount

£10,000

Part 3: Direct Suppliers of Wedding goods and services to the public

A grant is payable to certain eligible businesses wholly involved in the wedding industry who directly supply the public with leisure goods or services specifically for the purposes of weddings, and who have fixed property costs because they rent a commercial space under a formal agreement from a landlord for storage of goods and equipment directly linked to their business.

Eligibility

In addition to the general eligibility criteria at section 1, on 11 March 2020 the business must:

- Be directly involved in the wedding industry,
- Be supplying leisure goods or services directly to members of the public for the purpose of weddings,
- Be liable to pay rent on a commercial basis for a commercial property to a landlord for a purpose directly linked to their business,
- Be able to supply rental agreements and bank statements showing liability to pay rent, and actual payments of rent being made before 11 March 2020,

Exclusions

Third party suppliers who do not deal directly with members of the public.

Suppliers not occupying a separate commercial space directly linked to their business (as they do not have fixed property costs).

Businesses who have already received a grant under the Discretionary Grant policy Round 1 or Round 2.

Grant Payment

Only one grant will be payable per business, regardless of the number of premises they occupy.

Grant Payment

£10,000

Part 4: Day Nursery Premises

Day Nurseries are included in Section 3, Part 4 of the Round 1 policy. The Round 1 policy awards a grant of £5,000.

The Round 2 policy tops up this grant by £5,000 to £10,000 in line with other childcare providers as at Part 1. This is only available to organisations who have already received a grant under Round 1.

Part 5: Pubs and Hotels

Pubs and Hotels are included in Section 3, Parts 2 and 3 of the Round 1 policy. The Round 1 policy awards a flat rate grant of £10,000.

The Round 2 policy tops up this grant by £15,000 to £25,000 in line with government's Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant for larger pubs and hotels.

This is only available to organisations who have already received a grant under Round 1.

Part 6: Member Discretion

This policy allows Members to consider applications for grants from businesses, organisations and traders in exceptional circumstances wishing to claim the grant who do not meet the council's own criteria .

The business, organisation or trader must still meet the government's Mandatory Eligibility Criteria and the Additional Eligibility Criteria as detailed in Section 1 of this policy. The other provisions of Section 1 also apply.

Under this section Members may also specify a category or class of business or organisation to receive the grant, the eligibility criteria and the amount of the grant.

Awards under this section of the policy will be on an exceptional basis, and wholly at the discretion of Members. Awards will be made on a recommendation basis by the Revenues and Benefits Manager, to be agreed by the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Business Development.