

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

2020/21
Decision No.
2181

Record of Decision by Executive Portfolio for Policy & Resources

Tuesday, 2 June 2020

Portfolio	Policy & Resources
Subject:	Discretionary Business Grant Scheme
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Corporate Priority:	Maintain and extend prosperity

Purpose:

To approve the Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund Scheme for Fareham Borough Council.

On 01 May the government announced a further support package for businesses struggling due to the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown; this was followed up with more detailed guidance on 12 May.

The Scheme is aimed at small and micro businesses in the borough who are incurring property related costs and who have not been eligible for other government support packages such as the Small Business and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants Fund.

Local authorities have been tasked with creating a local scheme which meets the government requirements. Local authorities are expected to exercise their local knowledge and discretion about the economic need in their area when designing the scheme. However, the government have specified the following 4 types of business which they would like to see given some priority under the scheme:

- Small businesses in shared offices or other flexible workspaces
- Regular market traders with fixed building costs
- Bed and Breakfasts which pay council tax
- Charity properties who received charitable business rate relief which would otherwise have been eligible for Small Business Rates Relief.

The Council has been in discussion with other local authorities in Hampshire to establish some consistency in the schemes across the region. A review of the types of business in the borough as also been carried out to identify those businesses within the Fareham area which have not been eligible under other grants and reliefs schemes.

The resulting Scheme proposed is attached as Appendix 1. Key features of the Scheme are:

- (a) The value of the grant awarded to eligible businesses will be calculated against a sliding scale based solely on their monthly property related overheads; the scale is capped at a maximum of £10,000 per business.

- (b) This is not a first come, first served Scheme in that grants will not be awarded until the window of opportunity to apply has closed. Where there is insufficient funding to make a payment to all eligible businesses, a set of priority criteria, as defined in the Scheme, will be used to determine who will receive the grants.

Options Considered:

It is recommended that the Executive Member for Policy and Resources agrees that:

- (a) the Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund Scheme attached as Appendix 1 is approved for adoption in Fareham;
- (b) authority is delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive Officer to:
- i. approve grants up to and including £5,000 to those businesses who apply for the support and meet the eligibility criteria set out in the Scheme;
 - ii. approve interim payments up to and including £5,000 to those businesses who apply for the support and meet the eligibility criteria set out in the Scheme and who will be recommended for a higher value grant; and where it is evident that this is necessary to protect the continued operation of the business;
- (c) the Executive Member for Policy and Resources approves grants over £5,000 to those businesses who apply for the support and meet the eligibility criteria set out in the Scheme; and is provided with details of grants paid out under delegated authority; and
- (d) a request is made to the government to allow local authorities to reallocate any unused funding received for the Small Business and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund Scheme, to this Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund Scheme.

The Executive Member for Policy and Resources was also advised of the following information:

- That a full list of businesses receiving a grant, along with the amount of the grant award, will be provided for information to all Members.
- Also, in line with the Transparency Code, and when the General Data Protection Regulations are not contravened, the Council will publish the list of grants awarded, as part of the Executive report which will consider the grants, later in the month. Exceptions to this will be grants awarded to sole traders, unless the individual gives their consent.
- When the awards are granted, the Council communications will focus on the aggregated benefit being provided, rather than the detailed schedule, and a number of testimonial statements will be obtained from grant recipients, to support this.

Decision:

RESOLVED that the Executive Member for Policy and Resources agrees that:-

- (a) the Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund Scheme attached as Appendix 1 is approved for adoption in Fareham;
- (b) authority is delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive Officer to:
- i. approve grants up to and including £5,000 to those businesses who apply for the support and meet the eligibility criteria set out in the Scheme;
 - ii. approve interim payments up to and including £5,000 to those businesses

who apply for the support and meet the eligibility criteria set out in the Scheme and who will be recommended for a higher value grant; and where it is evident that this is necessary to protect the continued operation of the business;

(c) the Executive Member for Policy and Resources approves grants over £5,000 to those businesses who apply for the support and meet the eligibility criteria set out in the Scheme; and is provided with details of grants paid out under delegated authority; and

(d) a request is made to the government to allow local authorities to reallocate any unused funding received for the Small Business and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants Fund Scheme, to this Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund Scheme.

Reason:

This Scheme complies with the government intentions for this grant funding scheme and is consistent with the majority of schemes being adopted by other Councils in Hampshire.

Confirmed as a true record:

Executive Member for Policy & Resources (Councillor Seán Woodward)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Seán Woodward". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Tuesday, 2 June 2020

