

Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Item 8

Update on Business Support

Government support for High Streets



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Phase 1: Re-opening High Streets Safely

Summer 2020

£103,270

Projects aligned to safety
measures in our high streets

Project ends June 2021

We have used this funding to:

- Install signs, posters and hand sanitisers through the Town Centre
- Promote local businesses on new website
- Launch the ‘Shop Local Shop Safe’ campaign with West Street banners and signs on key roundabouts in Borough
- Run webinars on Covid-19 safety measures and how to take your business online.

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Phase 2: Welcome Back Fund

Summer 2021

£168,270

(more as includes coastal
area allocation)

Boost the look and feel of high
streets and builds on the (RHSS)
fund

Spend by March 2022

Funding to prepare for the safe return (and welcome) of residents and visitors, including in town and district centres, coastal areas and open spaces.

Similar in scope to RHSS but two additional areas of scope

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Activities out of scope

The funding **cannot** be used by councils to:

1. Activity that provides no additionality e.g. already committed expenditure (contracts let/POs raised).
2. Capital expenditure
3. Grants to businesses

Approved list of activities

| | Total Estimate £ |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Communications campaigns, including social media, to promote a safe re-opening to town and district centres | £30,000 |
| A programme of summer events within high streets and open spaces across the Borough, including at Westbury Manor Museum Christmas lights switch on and special finale performance | £45,000 |
| Physical improvements to town and district centre such as <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One off 'spring clean' to improve the look and feel of some areas of the Borough's high streets• Public toilet upgrades at foreshore and district centre locations• Tree planting schemes• Provision of additional litter bins and extra litter picking equipment | £86,540 |
| Project administration support | £6,730 |
| Total | £168,270 |

Additional Restrictions Grant

- Wider Business Support Scheme (WBSS)

Background

Executive December 2020

ARG Principles

| Part of Scheme | Time period | % of Funding Allocated | Value of Funding |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| First Tranche of Grants to Businesses | Dec 20 - Feb 21 | 40% | £929,864 |
| Second Tranche of Grants to Businesses | Jan 21 - Mar 21 | 40% | £929,864 |
| Wider Support Schemes | Apr 21 - Mar 22 | 20% | £464,932 |
| | | | £2,324,660 |

Focus on key principles of:

- Businesses not forced to close but were affected by restrictions
- Businesses in key sectors of marine, aviation, aerospace, advanced manufacturing and engineering
- Types of support to include e-commerce, marketing and diversification

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Business Consultation Survey early 2021

Structured Interviews first

Local Businesses Covid Response Survey

Introduction

Fareham Borough Council has received Government funding through the Additional Restrictions Grants Scheme to support local businesses and the economy which have been impacted as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The following short survey asks businesses directly what support they would find most useful to survive the pandemic and recover afterwards.

The information you provide will help the Council decide how best to use the funding to assist businesses.

You have until 11.59pm on the 16th January 2021 to complete the survey.

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Scheme Designed:

Main Scheme – Framework of training providers

Voucher scheme – legal/ financial advice from a provider of your choice (ish)

Types of support needed:

- E-commerce support / How to move business online
- Marketing online including social media
- Facilitating online deliveries through 'click and collect'
- Advice on how to diversify business including new start up
- Access to overall business advice
- Mentoring schemes
- Local companies 'meet and greet' though a peer to peer online programme
- Financial advice
- Legal advice

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Main Scheme - Framework contract

Establishes a framework for business trainers and support providers

It is up to them to secure sufficient businesses who want support

Then approach the Council for us to check eligibility (e.g. a business operating in Fareham, not in administration)

Only following that 'gateway procedure' would the Council make a financial commitment

Allows us to manage the budgets across the Lots, and in the face of ARG funding uncertainty.

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Tender submissions

Open Tender

14 companies across five lots

45 submissions in total

Evaluated in line with scoring mechanism specified in the tender documentation: Combined cost (30%) and quality (70%)

Framework contract approved at June Executive meeting.

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Framework Contract Approved

| Lot | Type of Support |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Digital Support |
| 2 | Support for businesses that want to scale up or diversify |
| 3 | Town Centre Vibrancy (retail, hospitality, leisure and arts) |
| 4 | Key Sectors business advice - Aviation, Aerospace, Engineering, and Advanced Manufacturing |
| 5 | General business advice |

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Voucher scheme

- Two further areas of business support: legal and financial support.
- Recognising that many businesses may have established relationships with solicitors and accountants
- Applications invited for a voucher to the value of the support requested.
- Same eligibility checks apply plus “validation of provider”.

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Next Steps

- ❖ Secure the Funding
- ❖ Finalise Gateway procedure that contractors must follow
- ❖ Finalise FBC Data Collection, Eligibility checks, Contractor payment checking processes
- ❖ Design of Vouchers
- ❖ To be advertised on website and via business newsletter in July 2021