

BUSINESS GRANTS DISCRETIONARY SCHEMES

Head of Service:	Judith Doney, Head of Digital and Service Transformation
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Local Restrictions Grant (Open) Scheme Appendix 2 – Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme

Summary

This report details discretionary grant schemes for businesses in the Council's area

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Agree the two discretionary schemes**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 Two new schemes that the government has introduced to support businesses have a discretionary element to be decided by the Council.

2 Background

- 2.1 During the pandemic the government has introduced grant schemes for businesses at various stages.

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- 2.2 The business grants introduced for the November 2020 lockdown consisted of a 'mandatory' scheme, the Local Restrictions (Closed) Scheme, to be paid to specified businesses who were legally required to close and who are business ratepayers. A discretionary scheme, the Additional Restrictions Grant, for businesses who were not required to close but whose business had been severely impacted by the National Lockdown in November was also introduced in November 2020. It is designed to continue while the area is in either the High Alert Level – Tier 2 or Very High Alert Level – Tier 3 and is available to both ratepayers and non-ratepayers.
- 2.3 The original business grant scheme which was introduced for areas that moved into Tier 2, the Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) Scheme was revised and details were published on 10 December 2020. Whilst the Council has discretion under this scheme the government has specified the type of businesses it expects all Councils to prioritise for these grants.

3 Proposal

- 3.1 The Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) Scheme which applies in Tier 2 and Tier 3 areas is to provide additional funding to businesses that are still open but have been severely impacted by the localised restrictions on socialising. Since Epsom & Ewell moved into Tier 2 on 2 December this scheme now applies to our area.
- 3.2 The government are asking local authorities to prioritise hospitality, hotel, bed and breakfast and leisure businesses for grant funding in this particular scheme.
- 3.3 The scheme at Appendix 1 is based on this requirement and details the eligibility criteria for ratepayers and the payment cycles for the grants. These have now been brought into line by the government with the Tier reviews which take place every 14 days.
- 3.4 The Additional Restrictions Grant applies to areas in national lockdown and Tier 2 and 3 areas.
- 3.5 The government has not specified particular business types that must be prioritised for these grants.
- 3.6 The scheme at Appendix 2 details eligibility criteria for both ratepayers and non- ratepayers and the payment cycles for the grants. These have now been brought into line by the government with the Tier reviews which take place every 14 days.

4 Risk Assessment

- 4.1 Legal or other duties

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4.1.1 The restrictions appropriate to these grants have been imposed using powers in Part A of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984.

4.2 Crime & Disorder

4.2.1 There are no specific crime and disorder considerations associated with this report.

4.3 Safeguarding

4.3.1 There are no specific safeguarding considerations associated with this report.

4.4 Dependencies

4.4.1 There are none for the purposes of this report

4.5 Other

4.5.1 There are none for the purposes of this report

5 Financial Implications

5.1 The government has allocated funding for the Additional Restrictions Grants of £1,612,540 which is to cover all payments made through to 31 March 2022. However, we have not yet had the funding allocations notice for the Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open). If this available prior to the meeting on 22 December it will be made available to the Committee.

5.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** The schemes will be funded by the ringfenced government grant.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 The legal implications are incorporated within the body of the report.

6.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

7.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** This report supports the themes of managing our resources and supporting our communities:

7.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

7.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None

7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None

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7.5 **Partnerships:** None

8 Background papers

8.1 None