

**REPORT FROM:** Housing, Health and Economic Development

**TO:** Barrowford and Western Parishes Committee

**DATE:** 9<sup>th</sup> May 2017

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## **Barrowford Premises Improvement Grants: 2016/17 Summary**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update the Committee on the progress made on the Barrowford Premises Improvement Grants scheme in 2016/17 financial year.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) That the Committee notes the summary of the Premises Improvement Grant scheme.
- (2) That the Committee agrees to an additional funding allocation of £6,000 (separate capital programme bid).
- (3) It is requested that the Barrowford and Western Parishes Committee nominates two Members to a Premises Improvement Grant Panel

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) To allow Members of the Committee to see the outcomes of the Premises Improvement Grants scheme in the 2016/17 financial year.
- (2) To allow the Premises Improvement Grant programme to continue.
- (3) To allow Member to have a greater involvement in the allocation of Premises Improvement Grants.

### **ISSUE**

#### Premises Improvement Grant Scheme: Background

1. All businesses within the Barrowford town centre boundary are eligible for a Premises Improvement Grant. The grant programme aims to improve the overall appearance of the town centre by assisting businesses to improve premises and encourage the use of vacant properties. The grants scheme is a tool used to encourage private investment in town centre buildings; the outcome of this investment is an aesthetic improvement to the town

centre and in turn increases retail and public confidence in the area. The grants can encourage the use of vacant buildings as they can reduce the overall cost of changing the exterior of the building to suit the needs of the incoming business

2. All business premises within the defined town centre boundary are eligible for a 50% grant up to a maximum of £3000, for improvements to their premises. Premises Improvement Grants are promoted, targeted and administered by Economic Development staff. The Economic Development Team supports the applicants throughout the application process.

#### Premises Improvement Grants summary

3. A total budget of £ £6,566 was available for Premises Improvement Grants in the 2016/17 financial year. The total budget included £3,000 contribution from 2016/17 financial year and slippage totalling £3,566.
4. In total £508.69 has currently been spent on one business, a further £6,000 has been allocated to two businesses, but the projects are yet to be completed. This leaves an unallocated sum of £57.

#### Completed Premises Improvement Grants 2016-17

5. Kimora, 108 Gisburn Road. This existing business has received a grant of £508.69. The funding was used to replace the existing shopfront signage, replace the cover and lettering on the shop's sun canopy and repaint the existing wooden shopfront.

#### Allocated Premises Improvement Grants 2016/17

6. Alongside the one completed grant, a further two businesses have received an offer letter and funding has been allocated but the works are yet to be completed.
7. The Lounge, 79-81 Gisburn Road. The property is currently vacant and undergoing extensive renovations in preparation for the opening of a new business in Barrowford. The Lounge has been allocated funding of £3,000. The grant will be used to replace the existing shop front with modern bi-folding doors, which are required for the needs of the business.
8. Scruples 85-87 Gisburn Road. A grant of £3,000 has been allocated to this long standing business that has been based in Barrowford for a long number of years. The grant funding will be used to replace the existing wooden windows with new timber frames, and to replace the existing external signage to the building.

#### Outcomes of Premises Improvement Grants 2016/17

9. Once all the Premises Improvement Grants have been completed, one previously vacant property will have been brought back into commercial use, and one new business will have moved into the town centre.
10. The three grants totalling £6508.69, will be more than matched by private sector investment of £11,609.23. As well as the investment in property improvements the grants have helped to create an additional fifteen jobs in Barrowford, and brought back into use 194sqm of commercial floor space.

## Premises Improvement Grants 2017-18

11. A £6,000 capital programme bid has been submitted to the Committee to continue the Premises Improvement Grant programme in Barrowford. The additional allocation added to underspend from 2016-17 will allow a total budget of £6,542 for the 2017-18 financial year.
12. It is requested that the Barrowford and Western Parishes Committee nominates two Members to be on a Premises Improvement Grant Panel. The Panel will provide comments and make approval decisions prior to a Premises Improvement Grant being formally offered to a business. Panel decisions are undertaken via email. The Economic Development team will send details of the application, prior to Members making an approval decision.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

**Policy:** None arising directly from this report

**Financial:** As outlined in the report.

**Legal:** None arising directly from this report

**Risk Management:** None arising directly from this report

**Health and Safety:** None arising directly from this report

**Sustainability:** Successful delivery of this scheme will enhance the image and appearance of Barrowford town centre and in turn encourage the use of local town centres

**Community Safety:** None arising directly from this report

**Equality and Diversity:** Grants are accessible to all businesses within the town centre.

## **APPENDICES**

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**