

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
GEARING UP FOR GROWTH GRANTS PANEL
HELD ON 2ND FEBRUARY, 2015
AT NELSON TOWN HALL**

PRESENT –

Panel Members

*Councillor J. Cooney
Councillor D. Whipp
Julie Whittaker
Dean Langton
Kevin Clark*

*Economic and Housing Regeneration Manager (PBC)
Head of Central and Regeneration Services (PBC)
Enterprise Lancashire*

Also in attendance

*Councillor A. R. Greaves
Paul Collins
Hassan Ditta
Hanna Latty
Lynne Rowland*

*Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Economic Regeneration
Regeneration Officer (PBC)
Growth Graduate (PBC)
Business Development Officer (PBC)
Committee Administrator (PBC)*

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P. White.)



1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

AGREED

That, in the absence of the Chairman, Councillor D. Whipp be appointed as Chairman for this meeting only.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillors were reminded of the legal requirements concerning the declaration of interests. Other members of the Panel were also asked to declare any interest as appropriate.

3. MINUTES

AGREED

That the Minutes of this Panel, at a meeting held on 8th December, 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. APPLICATIONS FOR TOURISM GRANTS

Hanna Latty, the Council's Business Development Officer provided a summary of the Tourism Development Grants. She explained that, in general the grants were to help develop tourism businesses and the tourism product of the area. Those applying for a grant needed to

demonstrate that their project would make an impact on the local economy by bringing in money from visitors outside the borough. Grant assistance of up to 50% of the project cost was available, up to a maximum of £4,000.

The Panel was provided with a project summary and an overview of the business with regard to the following application. In reaching their decision, the members of the Panel considered the business plan and cash flow forecast for the business.

(a) Tracey Bolton – Lakeside Café

Tracey Bolton wanted to convert part of an unused barn in Ball Grove Park, Colne into a café which she would operate as a sole trader. To assist with the cost of renovating the building an application of £4,000 had been made for a tourism development grant.

The project would create one full time and one part time job.

Tracey Bolton had also applied for a start-up grant as referred to at minute number 5(a).

AGREED

That, subject to the relevant planning/building regulation compliance, a tourism development grant of £4,000 be awarded to Tracey Bolton in support of Lakeside Café.

REASON

- (1) *The applicant has a number of years' experience in the food sector.***
- (2) *The project will support the sustainability of the public toilets.***
- (3) *The grant will help generate £64,000 PA in to the local economy (estimate) via the 2000 estimated walkers visiting the new premises.***

5. APPLICATIONS FOR START-UP GRANTS

The Panel was provided with a project summary and an overview of the business with regard to the following applications for start-up grants. In reaching their decision, the members of the Panel considered the business plans for each business and received information on what the requested grant was to be spent on.

(a) Tracey Bolton – Lakeside Café

Tracey Bolton intended to open a child and dog friendly café within the grounds of Ball Grove Park, Colne for visitors of the park, walking groups and anglers. She also planned to create a community hub with a calendar of events each month which included pond dipping, cake decorating courses, arts and crafts and various other events.

The project would create one full time and one part time job.

Tracey Bolton had also applied for a tourism development grant as referred to at minute number 4(a).

AGREED

That a start-up grant of £2,000 be awarded to Tracey Bolton in support of Lakeside Cafe.

REASON

- (1) *The project will result in a number of outputs being met including buildings being brought back into use and area of floor space being refurbished.***
- (2) *The business will contribute to the Council's priorities of creating jobs and sustaining strong economic growth.***

(b) Rafal Kubicki – Sunbeds Planet

Rafal Kubicki had started the Sunbeds Planet business in June, 2014 and had submitted an application in November, 2014, within the first six months of trading, in line with the start-up grant criteria. The business would offer five tanning booths and limited retail of tanning lotions, creams and UV glasses from its premises in Nelson.

The business would create two jobs over the next two year period.

AGREED

That a decision on whether a grant be awarded to Rafal Kubicki – Sunbeds Planet be deferred to the next meeting of the Panel.

REASON

To allow for further information.

(c) Pawel Klys and Weronika Zimonczyk – Polish Taste

Pawel Klys and Weronika Zimonczyk planned to open a restaurant selling traditional Polish food and take-away on the fringes of Nelson Town Centre. They intended to create two jobs over the next two year period.

AGREED

That the application for a start-up grant be refused.

REASON

The business appears unsustainable and will not contribute to the Council's priorities of creating jobs and sustaining strong economic growth.

(d) Jordan Horsfield Plastering Perfection and Building Services

Jordan Horsfield had set up a new business which provided plastering, tiling and general building works to both domestic and commercial customers. He wanted to expand the number of private clients and planned to create two jobs over the next two year period.

AGREED

That a start-up grant of £552 be awarded to Jordan Horsfield in support of Plastering Perfection and Building Services.

REASON

The business has already confirmed a number of reliable clients/contracts in the local area, appears sustainable and will contribute to the Council's priorities of creating jobs and sustaining strong economic growth.

(e) Ashley Lownsborough (AL's Mobile Hairdressers)

Ashley Lownsborough would be starting-up a new mobile hairdressing business in February, 2015, which would provide unisex hairdressing services within clients homes. The business would be unique in offering a full family hairdressing package, including a gentleman's cut throat shave/beard trim. Ashley would operate the business as a sole trader.

AGREED

That a start-up grant of £568 be awarded to Ashley Lownsborough in support of AL's Mobile Hairdressers.

REASON

The applicant is offering a unique barber experience which is not offered by other mobile hairdressers. The business appears sustainable and will contribute to the Council's priorities of creating jobs and sustaining strong economic growth.

(f) Lancashire Beer Company – Micheline Howarth

Lancashire Beer Company (LBC) offered a specialist wine and beer supply service to wine bars, pubs and restaurants. LBC was trading as a beer, wines and spirit wholesaler and a company limited by guarantee.

The company planned to create two new jobs over the next two year period.

AGREED

That a start-up grant of £2,000 be awarded to Lancashire Beer Company.

REASON

The business has excellent client contacts and support from the sister company. It is in a growing sector of craft beers and wines, appears sustainable and will contribute to the Council's priorities of creating jobs and sustaining strong economic growth.

(g) Osama Feroz – Click My Property Ltd

Osama Feroz would be starting up an online estate agency along with Riasut Khan. The grant would contribute to the cost of building a website which would allow customers to log into an online portal and upload pictures and make payment for services. The website would also be developed to allow it to work well with Rightmove.co.uk.

The project would create two full time positions plus one additional member of staff after 12 months.

AGREED

That the application for a start-up grant be refused.

REASON

- (1) *The total cost of website creation and set up appears excessive.***
- (2) *The proposal is restrictive and relies on support from a third party in Rightmove.co.uk.***

(h) Sohail Iftikhar – Pendle Appliances Washer and Dryer Rentals T.A. Pendle Appliances

Sohail Iftikhar was in the process of setting up Pendle Appliances. He intended to purchase faulty washing machines, dryers and washing machine/dryer combos at a minimal cost, repair them and then rent them out to customers.

The project would create one job initially, plus an apprentice after six months.

AGREED

That a start-up grant of £1,727 be awarded to Sohail Iftikhar in support of Pendle Appliances.

REASON

The applicant has previous experience of domestic appliance repairs. His work is fitting with the demographics of the local area, allowing people to rent an appliance in cases where they may be struggling to purchase a machine outright. The business appears sustainable and will contribute to the Council's priorities of creating jobs and sustaining strong economic growth.

(i) Snowbar Suleman-Manzoor – Purple Learning

Purple Learning was a Pendle based company that offered class based and specialised online tutoring services for primary school students to achieve Levels 4, 5 and 6 by the end of primary school and for high school students up to KS3. The business would offer a mixture of individual and group tutorial sessions, as well as a web based service. Some of the initial focus was being placed on students from the Bradley ward of Nelson as the ward had been recognised as significantly under achieving in comparison with the rest of the UK.

AGREED

That the application for a start-up grant be refused.

REASON

The business plan is not viable. The demand for class based tuition has not been proven and the charge for this service appears unattainable for students in the target area.

6.

GRADUATE PROGRAMME

Hanna Latty presented the following requests for graduate placements –

(a) LBS Global Limited

LBS Global Limited had previously participated in the Graduate Placement Scheme, which had resulted in permanent appointments for two graduates. One had taken a position at LBS Worldwide and the other at Cloud 1990 (an LBS Global company).

LBS Global Limited had now made an application for two further placements – one in Marketing at LBS and one in IT/Project Management at Cloud 1990.

AGREED

That this application for graduate placements at LBS and Cloud 1990 be supported.

REASON

- (1) *LBS Global Limited has been successful in contributing to the Council's priorities of creating jobs and sustaining strong economic growth.***
- (2) *The skills and training required for these placements are matched by graduates registered on the Graduate Placement Scheme.***

(b) Denwa Communications

The Panel was advised that Denwa Communications was in the process of recruiting a number of graduates. In response to their request, details of two appropriate graduates registered on the Graduate Placement Scheme had been forwarded to them for consideration. Final paperwork was awaited.

AGREED

That, subject to the appropriate paperwork being received, this application by Denwa Communications be supported.

REASON

The skills and training required for this placement is matched by graduates registered on the Graduate Placement Scheme.

(c) Live Like the Boy

It was reported that the owner of the Colne based business Live Like the Boy was to develop a further business and wished to appoint a design graduate. The owner of the business had already identified his preferred placement.

AGREED

That this application for a graduate placement be declined.

REASON

There is no appropriate graduate registered on the Graduate Placement Scheme.

7. UPDATE ON PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

The Panel received an update on previous applications as follows –

(a) Anthony Stuart Lockwood ‘HUMBUG’

At the December, 2014 meeting of the Panel it was reported that a start-up grant of £896 had been awarded to Anthony Stuart Lockwood towards the cost of setting up a traditional sweet shop in Nelson Market. The Panel was advised that Mr Lockwood had since decided not to set up his business in Nelson Market, or alternative premises within the borough and therefore the grant was no longer applicable.

(b) Diana Frank – Soft Furnishing by Diana Frank

At the December, 2014 meeting of the Panel a start-up grant of £2,000 had been awarded to Diana Frank in support of Soft Furnishing by Diana Frank, subject to the appropriate planning consent. The Panel was advised that Diana Frank was currently in the process of applying for the required planning permission.

(c) Weighing Scales Limited

At the September, 2014 meeting of the Panel a grant of £4,024 was awarded to Weighing Scales Limited. The grant had been awarded to assist with the cost of renovating new larger premises, in order to allow the business to grow. It was reported that the work had now been carried out and, on receipt of the Building Regulations Certificate, the funds would be released.

(d) Interior Resource Ltd trading as A White Room

At the December, 2014 meeting of the Panel a grant of £7,000 had been awarded to Interior Resource Ltd trading as A White Room. The project had included three elements, two of which had now been completed. This included an agreed software and website package for a suitable E-Commerce system and the refurbishment of the warehouse.

8. TOWN CENTRE WI-FI – UPDATE

The Council's Regeneration Officer submitted a report which updated the Panel on progress with installing Wi-Fi in Colne and Barnoldswick town centres. Following agreement by the Panel, a company by the name of Clannet, along with Panel members and town centre stakeholders, had carried out a survey in the towns. Following the survey, a number of cost options had been supplied by Clannet, which were detailed in the report for consideration. However, it had since been established that, due to the limited capacity of the existing CCTV system in Barnoldswick, option one would no longer be possible in that town.

AGREED

- (1) That the proposed options for the installation of Wi-Fi in Colne and Barnoldswick be referred to the respective area committees for consideration, with a request that their local town council be fully consulted on the proposals.
- (2) That this Panel agrees to allocate the appropriate funding for the installation of Wi-Fi in Colne and Barnoldswick town centres, in accordance with the preferred option chosen by the respective area committees.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

AGREED

That the next meeting of the Panel be held on Monday 16th March, 2015.

CHAIRMAN _____