

REPORT FROM: MANAGEMENT TEAM

TO: COLNE AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

DATE: 7th January 2016

Report Author: Management Team

Tel. No:

E-mail:

**PREMISES IMPROVEMENT GRANTS
AT 12 CHURCH STREET, COLNE**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To outline the process and procedures in place for dealing with premises improvement grants and to consider the process for 12 Church Street Colne.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That no further action is taken in respect of 12 Church Street.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To inform members that the processes for dealing with premises improvement grants are robust.
- (2) No planning enforcement is recommended in relation to 12 Church Street.

ISSUE

In the 2014/15 financial year Live like the boy, 12 Church Street Colne received a Premises Improvement Grant for changes to the business premises, which included replacing the existing shop front. The applicant undertook the works without the relevant planning permissions in place. The planning issues relating to this are the subject of a separate report.. This report outlines the procedures in place to ensure that the applicant has all relevant permissions in place.

Premises improvement grants: application process.

In brief, businesses must complete a grant application form, to be submitted with three comparable quotations for work that is to be carried out to the property.

Once the application form is fully completed and Grant Panel approval is given (Councillor Lord and Councillor White in Colne) an offer letter is issued stating that funding is conditionally approved subject to various caveats and timescales. Any work undertaken prior to an offer letter is ineligible.

Once the work has been completed and paid for in full by the applicant, grant funding of 50% (maximum of £3,000) can then be released to the business/landlord.

Application Form

The application form has a section specifically relating to whether planning permission would be required. Each applicant must complete this as part of the application process.

Is Planning Permission Required? Yes [] No [] Has this been confirmed with the Council's planning dept? Yes [] No [] Have you applied? Yes [] No [] Name of planning officer Date contacted

The application form also comes with guidance notes which include:

3.If Planning Permission or any other consent is required for the proposed works, then such permissions should be secured before works begin.

Throughout the process it is made extremely clear that any planning approvals need to be sought separately from the grant application process.

Offer Letter

The Premises improvement grant offer letter is issued once approval has been sought from the Councillor panel, the project costs and detail are outlined and the panel make a decision as to whether or not the business should receive a Premises improvement Grant.

The Premises improvement grant offer letter clearly states, that it is the applicants responsibility to ensure that any works undertaken have the relevant permissions:

Extract from Grant offer letter.

“The grant will only be paid if the Council is satisfied that the work has been carried out in accordance with any planning or building regulation consents and in accordance with all relevant statutory provisions. It is your responsibility to ensure that all necessary approvals have been obtained prior to the carrying out of the work”

Colne Committee – 5th February 2015

The Colne Committee requested a report which looked in detail at the Premises Improvement Grants issued within a three year period. In total 27 businesses received financial support for improvements to their properties. The report detailed that in the significant majority of cases planning permission is not required. Of those remaining only 12 Church Street had not got the requisite permission

12 Church Street

The process for 12 Church Street followed that outlined above. An application for a grant was received and approved by the Panel. The application form stated that planning approval wasn't required for the work.

A grant offer was made and within the offer clearly indicating that all relevant statutory provisions needed to have been met.

The work was completed without planning permission having been sought. A partial payment was made relating to the other parts of the grant that were not related to the shop front.

No payment was made for the shop front until the Committee instruction to do so as per the resolution detailed above.

Conclusions

The process of offering a grant is a robust one which has clear caveats in it that it is for the grantee to make sure that any relevant consents for work are in place. This has worked well with no issues arising other than for 12 Church Street.

In respect of 12 Church Street the offer of grant was conditional that planning permission, alongside any other consents, was obtained for the work. No payment was made for the shop front element of the grant prior to the instruction of Committee on 5th February 2015.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: None

Financial: None

Legal: None arising directly from the report.

Risk Management: None arising directly from the report.

Health and Safety: None arising directly from the report.

Sustainability: None arising directly from the report.

Community Safety: None arising directly from the report.

Equality and Diversity: None arising directly from the report.

APPENDICES

None

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS