

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
GEARING UP FOR GROWTH GRANTS PANEL
HELD ON 31ST AUGUST, 2016
AT NELSON TOWN HALL**

PRESENT –

Councillor M. Iqbal (Chairman, in the Chair)

Panel Members

Councillor D. Whalley (Substitute for Councillor Nawaz Ahmed)
Councillor A. R. Greaves (Substitute for Councillor D. M. Whipp)
Julie Whittaker Housing, Health and Economic Development Services Manager (PBC)
Kevin Clark Enterprise Lancashire

Officers in attendance

Hanna Latty Business Development Officer (PBC)
Hassan Ditta Employer Engagement Officer (PBC)
Paul Collins Regeneration Officer (PBC)
Deborah McCarthy Assistant Economic Development Officer (PBC)
Joanne Eccles Committee Administrator (PBC)



1. 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.

2. MINUTES

AGREED

That the Minutes of this Panel, at a meeting held on 27th June, 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. 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) Patrick Williams

Patrick had been a keen amateur astronomer for over 6 years. The business offered tours of the night sky around the Wycoller area. He also sold photographs/cards of the night sky at Colne Market Hall. Patrick intended to create an online presence through a website and social media.

Gearing up for Growth Grants Panel (31.08.2016)

The application was for the purchase of additional equipment to allow Patrick to photograph and view objects of the night sky in greater detail.

The project would use part of the Colne Market Hall unit (which was currently unoccupied) and create one full time job.

AGREED

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

REASON

This is more of a hobby than a business and would therefore not contribute to the Council's priorities of creating jobs and sustaining strong economic growth.

(b) Christine Murray – Barlick Arts and Crafts (BACC) Drop-In CIC

Christine had established an arts studio in a former mill building offering a “drop-in” facility from 9a.m. to 10p.m. The key focus was on creativity within the community, providing arts in residence workshops, a good range of equipment, affordability and long opening hours.

It was anticipated that users of the studio would include the retired, unemployed, artists who needed studio space and young people to help with their studies.

No new jobs were to be created. Christine had set up a cleaning company with the specific aim of using the profits to support the BACC studio until it became self-sustaining. She had financed all the work and purchasing so far from her own funds and help from the local community to help with decorating and building works. Users would be able to trade volunteer hours for studio time, space or courses, enabling those with low financial means to enjoy the studio.

The Studio was registered as a community interest company (CIC) with a limited guarantee.

AGREED

That Christine Murray be awarded a start-up grant of £1489.41 in support of Barlick Arts and Crafts (BACC) Drop-In CIC and she be asked if she had approached the Arts Council for further funding.

REASON

Although no jobs are created this will be a useful resource for the community and seemed like the sort of project the Arts Council might award a grant to in the future.

(c) Sam's Beauty Box

Sameera's Beauty Box would be based in the unit within Pendle Rise shopping centre in Nelson and offer a variety of services including facials, massages, nails as well as full bridal and party make-up. Sameera had an extensive marketing plan, including local press and media as well as the wedding sector. The business would offer training opportunities such as apprenticeships working with local providers.

Gearing up for Growth Grants Panel (31.08.2016)

Sameera's business was successful in winning the Pendle Rise win-a-shop campaign, which was run in conjunction with Pendle Rise/Pendle Council and 2BR. Her business plan and cash flow had been approved by Enterprise Lancashire.

The project would create 4 full time jobs.

AGREED

That Sameera be awarded a start-up grant of £2,000 in support of Sam's Beauty Box.

REASON

A vacant town centre property will be brought back into use in Nelson and will contribute to the Council's priorities of creating jobs and sustaining strong economic growth.

(d) Paige Carole Ann Gallery T/A the Beauty Gallery

Paige Gallery was in the process of setting up a hair and beauty salon on Leeds Road, Nelson on the first floor of an existing hair salon which has been trading for over twenty years. She would be offering treatments and selling beauty products to her customers.

The project was to purchase equipment which Paige would use on a day to day basis in business once it was established. It was proposed that a small portion of the grant would cover advertising costs, including signage.

The business would create one full time post.

AGREED

That Paige be awarded a start-up grant of £1,141 in support of the business, including signage.

REASON

Paige has a number of years' experience within this business sector and will have access to onsite business mentors to support her during the initial set up period. It will also contribute to the Council's priorities of creating jobs and sustaining strong economic growth.

(e) Declan Cuttell & Emily Carlile T/A Jolly Hoggers Catering Company

Declan Cuttell and Emily Carlile were going to set up a catering company operating initially from home. The business would provide a range of products from buffets to slow roasted meats. They would cater for private functions, festivals, birthday parties and street parties at the weekend whilst targeting offices and businesses during the week with buffet lunches.

The project was to purchase equipment which the business would use on a day to day basis once it was established.

The applicants had had previous experience successfully running and growing a business in the same sector. This business would create one full time job. Enterprise Lancashire thought that the business was likely to grow.

AGREED

That Declan Cuttell and Emily Carlile be awarded a start-up grant of £1,357 in support of the Jolly Hoggers Catering Company.

REASON

The business will contribute to the Council's priorities of creating jobs and sustaining strong economic growth.

4. GRANTS FOR GROWTH

The Panel was provided with a project summary, including information on the background of the company with regard to the following applications –

(a) Blackburn Distribution Ltd

Blackburn Distribution Ltd was established in 2004. The company was a leading supplier and partner to the supplement, healthcare and pharmaceutical industries specialising in the supply and manufacture of bulk sports supplements, raw pharmaceutical ingredients and herbal products.

The project was to install a new clean room and purchase relevant equipment to allow them to produce their product. This would enable them to increase production capacity at their site in Nelson and to continue growing over the coming years.

The project would result in 4 full time jobs over the next 2 years whilst also safeguarding an additional job.

AGREED

That a grant of £6,122 be awarded to Blackburn Distribution Ltd.

REASON

The project will contribute to the Council's priorities of creating jobs and sustaining strong economic growth.

(b) Leggett and Platt Components Europe Ltd

The company was established in November 2007. It had two sites in the UK, one in Barnsley and one in Barnoldswick, manufacturing bed springs for mattresses. They had a number of large clients, but all the work at Barnoldswick site was currently provided to the Silent Night Group. The company employed 34 full time staff.

The company wanted to add another line of manufacturing to the Barnoldswick site adding another range of products for manufacturers. The project involved installing the machines, improving the electric supply, making the building watertight and installing new IT equipment. The project would result in 20 full time jobs being created.

AGREED

- (1) That a grant of £8,371 be awarded to Leggett and Platt Components Europe Ltd.
- (2) That the company be asked if they would agree to be involved in some future publicity about the Grants for Growth programme.

REASON

The project will contribute to the Council's priorities of creating jobs and sustaining strong economic growth.

5. BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAMME

The Housing, Health and Economic Development Services Manager submitted a report that was submitted to the Executive on 25th August on the achievements of the Gearing up for Growth Programme in 2015/16. It also proposed activity and budget allocations for a three year programme in 2016/19.

Kevin Clark referred to the 2 hour workshops that the Council used to run for small businesses which he thought worked as a really good filter for eliminating some business ideas and progressing others. He noted that officers from Pendle and Burnley Councils were due to meet the following week to talk about joint working and said he would be willing to run joint workshops for the Councils. It was suggested that some funding earmarked for Growth Lancashire might be used to fund the workshops.

AGREED

- (1) That the programme's achievements during the last financial year be noted.
- (2) That the proposed activity and respective budget allocations for the programme over the next three years 2016/19 be approved.
- (3) That the Business Development Officer be asked to report back to the next meeting following discussions with Burnley Council about opportunities for joint working and the possibility of having a number of joint workshops for small businesses.

6. COLNE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Following discussions at the last meeting, the Regeneration Officer reported that Chris Kolek Consulting had been appointed to undertake a feasibility study for establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) in Colne. He circulated an update with details of the consultation process which would take approximately 8 weeks.

The final report would be completed by the end of October 2016. It would include the findings and analysis of the survey (from around 10% of the businesses in Colne); potential BID priorities, the willingness to pay and overall support for the BID and suggested levy options.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

That the next meeting of the Panel be held in 8 weeks' time, date and time to be agreed.