

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
GEARING UP FOR GROWTH GRANTS PANEL
HELD ON 19TH APRIL, 2017
AT NELSON TOWN HALL**

PRESENT –

Councillor M. Iqbal – Chairman (In the Chair)

Panel Members

Councillor D. Whipp

Julie Whittaker

Housing, Health and Economic Development Services Manager (PBC)

Officers in attendance

Hassan Ditta

Employer Engagement Officer (PBC)

Paul Collins

Business Support Team Leader (PBC)

Judith Stockton

Senior Regeneration Officer (PBC)

Ashleigh Smith

Economic Promotion Graduate (PBC)

Lynne Rowland

Committee Administrator (PBC)

(Apologies for absence were received from Kevin Clark and Councillor M. Arshad)



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 22nd February, 2017 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 application for a start-up grant. In reaching their decision, the members of the Panel considered the business plan and received information on what the requested grant was to be spent on.

(a) Adam Davies - AMD

AMD was a mobile auto installation service that had been operating since 6th April, 2017. The aim was to obtain subcontracting work and target the commercial sector such as heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), public service vehicles (PSVs) and blue light vehicles.

Gearing up for Growth Grants Panel (19.04.2017)

The requested grant was for the purchase of equipment.

The project would create two full time jobs over the next two years.

Enterprise Lancashire had approved the business plan and cash flow.

AGREED

That a start-up grant of £2,000 be awarded to Adam Davies in support of AMD.

REASON

The business appears sustainable and 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) Bees Boutique

Bees Boutique was a retail business that created bespoke couture and was established in 2013. The business also supplied bespoke jewellery and offered a tailoring service.

The project was to purchase two new sewing machines which would allow the company to produce up to 90% of the garments in house to a much higher quality and detail. The machines would also enable further customisation of garments.

A second element was to develop an ecommerce website.

The project would create 1.5 full time equivalent jobs.

AGREED

That consideration of this application be deferred to the next meeting of the Panel.

REASON

To allow for further information.

(b) Life Line Care 4 U Limited

Life Line Care 4 U Limited (LLC4U) was a company that provided home care for people who struggled to manage key aspects of their daily living. It started trading in November 2014.

The business had outgrown its current premises and had purchased a larger building for increased office space and to allow it to offer additional services.

Gearing up for Growth Grants Panel (19.04.2017)

The project involved the refurbishment of the new building to make it fit for purpose. It would create 6.5 full time equivalent skilled jobs, bring two buildings back into use and improve 743m² of floor space.

AGREED

That a grant of £4,837 be awarded to Life Line Care 4 U Limited.

REASON

The project will bring two vacant town centre premises back into use. It will also contribute to the Council's priorities of creating jobs and sustaining strong economic growth.

(c) Fresh and Simple Limited T/A Turners

Fresh and Simple Limited, trading as Turners, had operated in Barrowford for seven years. The lease on their current site was coming to an end and the business had secured new premises in Colne.

The project involved the refurbishment of the new building to make it fit for purpose. It would create five full time equivalent jobs; safeguard an additional ten jobs; bring one building back into use; and improve 500m² of floor space.

AGREED

That this application for a growth grant be refused.

REASON

It would not represent a sound investment.

5. BROWNFIELD SITES GRANT FUND

(a) Applications for consideration

The Panel was provided with a brief project description and a summary of the assessment against agreed criteria with regard to the following application –

Haverholt Close, Colne

The vacant site at Haverholt Close, Colne had planning permission for six, two-bed bungalows and a block of five, two-bed apartments.

The Panel had previously refused an application from a prospective purchaser of the site as the application failed to meet the agreed criteria. This new application had been submitted by the current site owners.

AGREED

That –

- (1) this grant application be refused;
- (2) the applicant be directed to the Homes and Communities Agency Home Building Fund.

REASON

- (1) *The application fails to meet the agreed criteria.*
- (2) *To see if they could benefit from the scheme.*

(b) Employment sites

The Panel received a report which sought approval of the criteria to be used to assess employment site applications to the Brownfield Sites Fund.

The proposed criteria were largely the same as those previously agreed for housing sites, but with the addition of some 'value for money' conditions.

AGREED

That the criteria for assessing employment site applications to the Brownfield Sites Fund be agreed as set out in the report, subject to an amendment to the criterion relating to previous experience and the addition of appropriate caveats.

6. BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAMME

At an earlier meeting of the Panel, reference had been made to small business workshops that had previously been run by Pendle Council. It had been suggested that these be reinstated, with the possibility of running joint workshops with Burnley Borough Council.

The Business Support Team Leader advised that discussions were currently ongoing with Burnley Council. It was proposed that eight workshops could be held across the year, with four in each borough. An example of workshop options was circulated at the meeting.

AGREED

That further information on the proposal to run joint workshops with Burnley Borough Council be submitted to the next meeting of the Panel for consideration.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be agreed.

CHAIRMAN _____