

REPORT FROM: HOUSING, HEALTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES MANAGER

TO: COLNE AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

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**COLNE PREMISES IMPROVEMENT GRANTS
2017/18 SUMMARY**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Committee on the progress made on the Colne premises improvement grants Scheme in 2017/18 financial year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Committee notes the summary of the premises improvement grant scheme.
- (2) That the Committee agree to a funding allocation of £10,000 (Separate capital programme bid) and the carryover of £5,936 from current funding. Total funding which will be available for the grants will be £15,936.
- (3) It is requested that the Colne 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 2017/18 financial year.
- (2) To allow the Premises Improvement Grant programme to continue.
- (3) To allow Members to have a greater involvement in the allocation of Premises Improvement grants.

ISSUE

Premises Improvement grant scheme: Background

1. All businesses within the Colne 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 administered by Economic Development staff. The Economic Development Team supports the applicant throughout the application process.

Premises improvement grants summary

3. A total budget of £15,434 was available for Premises Improvement Grants in 2017/18. There was spending of £9,497.66. This leaves an amount remaining to spend of £5,936.34.

Completed Premises Improvement Grants 2017-18

4. Turners, 82 Albert Road. Turners relocated into Colne from Barrowford and occupied a building that remained vacant for a number of years. A grant of £1888 helped to fund external signage to the building and create an outdoor seating area.
5. XLCR, 35-43 Albert Road. This long standing Colne business used a grant of £3,000, toward the repair and repainting of the existing external railing/fencing, as well as the cleaning of the external stonework of the property.
6. Food 2 Go, Skipton Road. A grant of £2075 was used to replace the windows to the property much improving the appearance of its frontage.
7. Indigo Financial Advice, Albert Road. A grant of £1515 was used to replace the partly-rotten wooden shopfront, and the front re-painted, much improving the look of the premises.
8. Tax Assist, Church Street. A grant of £660 was used to re-paint a very worn frontage.
9. Inspired Interiors, Albert Road. The business received a grant of £407 to repaint its frontage, giving it a much fresher and attractive feel.
10. Stell's Pet Store, Colne. The business received a grant of £282 to make new signs. On a non-descript building with very few windows this will help to announce the business better to its customer and create the "shopfront" that was lacking.

Allocated/ De-allocated Premises Improvement Grants 2017/18

11. Allocated - None so far.
12. De-Allocated. Grants for Live Like the Boy (£3000) and an unconverted property at 4 Skipton Road (£1500) have been de-allocated as they had not been defrayed after a year. Both

applicants have been contacted in writing to confirm the de-allocation and notified that they would be welcome to apply again in future.

Outcomes of premises improvement grants 2017/18

13. As well as the investment in property improvements the grants have helped to safeguard 21 jobs in Colne and generate 6 new jobs. Businesses had invested an additional £9,970 with a public to private sector leverage ratio of nearly 1 to 2. One new business has taken on a long term vacant gateway building.

Premises Improvement Grants 2017-18

14. It is recommended that £15,936 be allocated to Premises Improvement Grant for Colne in 2018-19 financial year. This to be made up of a bid to the capital programme for 2018-19 of £10,000 and a carryover of £5,936 from 2017-18. There have been enquiries from 9 businesses, and we received applications from 8 of those businesses, of which 7 had grants given them.
15. It is requested that the Colne Committee nominates two Members to be on a Premises Improvement Grant Panel. The Premises Improvement Grants Panel will provide comment and make approval decisions prior to a Premises Improvement Grant been 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.
16. The Colne Committee had previously nominated Councillor D. Lord and Councillor P. White to sit on a Premises Improvement Grant Panels for the 2017/18 financial year.

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 Colne 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