

**REPORT FROM: PLANNING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
REGULATORY SERVICES MANAGER**

TO: NELSON COMMITTEE

DATE: 6th JULY, 2020

Report Author: Deborah McCarthy
Tel. No: 01282 6619673
E-mail: deborah.mccarthy@pendle.gov.uk

**FOR INFORMATION
PREMISES IMPROVEMENT GRANT - UPDATE**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Committee on the progress made on the Nelson premises improvement grants Scheme in the current financial year.

ISSUE

Premises Improvement grant scheme: Background

1. All businesses within the Nelson 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. The working balance at the start of 2019/20 was £5,457.
4. For 2019/20, the Committee approved additional funding of £9,500 in June to bring the total unspent to £33,169. Of that, £18,211.73 had previously been committed and was awaiting spend. That left a working fund of £14,957.27.

5. During the course of the year, we spent £5,900 on two projects. Both had already been listed as commitments but with a slight underspend of £95, which gave a revised balance of £15,052.27.
6. So far in 2020/21 we have spent £5,300. Both projects were already listed as commitments and therefore do not affect the balance.
7. In addition we now have one further project which was agreed. So as a new commitment, we deducted £1,462 from our balance to give a working fund of £13,590.27.
8. Currently we have three grant applications that are ready to be put forward for decision to the Nelson Grant Panel.
9. Going forward we will report back to the Committee on the spending of this balance.
10. There continues to be strong interest and demand from businesses in Nelson for these grants, and there are currently 4 grant enquiries for Nelson, which we hope to take forward. If all of these come to fruition we will request further funding.
11. All towns have been targeted through our digital newsletter in a recent promotion and the Economic Development team have received enquiries across Pendle.
12. In light of recent circumstances of Covid-19 we would request that the money is continued to be allocated to help Economic Development Team support our town centre shops

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.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None