

REPORT FROM: Planning, Economic Development and Regulatory Services
Manager

TO: Colne & District Committee

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Premises Improvement Grants: Update

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Committee on the progress made on the Colne Premises Improvement Grants Scheme in 2020/21 financial year, and request an additional funding allocation to allow the programme to continue.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Committee notes the summary of the Premises Improvement Grants Scheme.
- (2) That the Committee agree to a further funding allocation of £15000.
- (3) That the Committee agree to nominate 2 Grant Panel members for the year.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To allow Members of the Committee to see the outcomes of the Premises Improvement Grants Scheme so far in the 2020/21 financial year.
- (2) To allow the Premises Improvement Grant Programme to fund future projects.
- (3) To allow for all existing approved grants to be given to businesses within a reasonable timeframe
- (4) To allow Grant Panel members to be decided by the Members of the Committee.

ISSUE

Premises Improvement Grants 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. In this financial year (2020/21) a budget of £14,437 was available for Premises Improvement Grants. A total of 3 grants were allocated in 2020/21 at a total of £9000, leaving £5437. These were to Dockray Street, La Villa and Unique Clean. All will or have benefitted from £3000 each. The 3 properties once the work has been completed will create 6.5 jobs, safeguard 5 jobs and will bring 1 empty property back into use (Dockray Street). The monies for Dockray Street and La Villa have yet to be paid out so we ask that it is noted their allocations are carried forward in addition to the remainder of £5347. We ask that the remainder is carried forward and added to by £9563 to make a total allocation of £15000 for 2021/22 financial year.
4. There continues to be strong interest and demand from businesses in Colne for these grants, there is currently 6 grant enquiries for the Colne. To name 2, Ocean Baths and the former Blockbuster building.
5. All towns will continue to be targeted though our digital newsletter in promotions and the Economic Development team have received enquiries across Pendle.
6. In light of the impact 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