

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

TO: BARROWFORD AND WESTERN PARISHES COMMITTEE

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BARROWFORD PREMISES IMPROVEMENT GRANTS: 2022/23 SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Committee on the progress made on the Barrowford Premises Improvement Grants Scheme in 2022/23 financial year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Committee notes the summary of the Premises Improvement Grants Scheme for 2022/23.
- (2) That the Committee agrees to a funding allocation of £3000 for the 2023/24 financial year.
- (3) That the Committee agrees to nominate a minimum of two 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 in the 2022/23 financial year.
- (2) To allow the Premises Improvement Grants programme to continue for 2023/24.
- (3) To allow Grant Panel Members to be decided by the Members of the Committee.

ISSUE

Premises Improvement Grants Scheme: Background

1. All business premises within the defined town centre boundary were eligible for a 50% grant up to a maximum of £3000, for improvements to their premises.

2. 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
3. Premises Improvement Grants are promoted, targeted and administered by Economic Development staff. The Economic Development Team supports the applicants throughout the application process.
4. Having financial assistance available to businesses can be a contributing factor when making a decision on their business location. This could have a positive impact on vacancy rates in a town and help fill the current vacant properties.

Premises Improvement Grants 2022/23

1. Barrowford has had no applications for the year 2022/23. Leaving £3000 unspent.
2. Barrowford has received 6 enquiries over 2022/23 that have not progressed to applications.
3. An agreed funding allocation from Committee of £3000 for 2023/24 will cover 2 potential applications.
4. On average it would be expected to process 2 applications for Barrowford.
5. Barrowford continues to show healthy interest in the Grant scheme, if more funding is required due to further applications in the next year of 2023/24 the Economic Development Team will then provide a further report request such.
6. All towns will continue to be targeted though our digital newsletter in a forthcoming promotion.

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 Barrowford 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: None.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS: None.