

**REPORT FROM: HEAD OF ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**TO: NELSON, BRIERFIELD AND REEDLEY COMMITTEE**

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## **PREMISES IMPROVEMENT GRANT SCHEME 2024/25**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update the Committee on the progress made on the Nelson, Brierfield and Reedley Premises Improvement Grant Scheme in 2023/24 financial year and request funding allocation to allow the programme to continue in 2024/25.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) That the Committee notes the summary of the Premises Improvement Grant Scheme.
- (2) That the Committee agree to a funding allocation of £15,000 for the 2024/25 year.
- (3) That the Committee agree 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 Grant Scheme in the 2023/24 financial year.
- (2) To allow the Premises Improvement Grant programme to fund future projects in 2024/25.
- (3) To allow Grant Panel members to be decided by the Members of the Committee.
- (4) To allow Members to make decisions that support the ongoing Regeneration of Nelson and Brierfield Town Centres.

## **ISSUE**

### Premises Improvement Grant Scheme: Background

1. All businesses within the Nelson and Brierfield town centre boundaries 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 take-up of vacant properties.

2. The grant 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. 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 - Nelson

1. Nelson received six enquiries during 2023/24. Four of which were eligible and two didn't fulfill the criteria.
2. Due to Area Committee's decision at the start of 2023/24 year to not allocate funding for this scheme, no enquiries were able to proceed to application.
3. Nelson continues to show healthy interest in the Grant scheme, if more funding is required due to further applications in the next year of 2024/25 the Economic Development Team will then provide a further report request such.
4. So far in 2024/25 the Team has received three enquiries for Nelson.

#### Premises Improvement Grants Summary - Brierfield

1. Brierfield received one enquiry in 2023/24, which was out of the criteria area.
2. Brierfield had no applications for 2023/24 but due to Area Committee's decision at the start of 2023/24 year to not allocate funding for this scheme, no enquiries would have been able to proceed to application.
3. On average it would be expected by the team to process two applications in a year for Brierfield
4. Brierfield continues to show moderate interest in the Grant scheme, if more enquiries are received than expected and more funding is required due to further applications in the next year of 2024/25 the Economic Development Team will then provide a further report request such.
5. So far in 2024/25 the Team has received two enquiries for Brierfield.

#### Request for Both Towns

1. That Committee agrees to a funding allocation of £15,000 for 2024/25 which will support five applications from businesses in Nelson and Brierfield Town Centres.
2. That Committee agree to nominating two Grant Panel members.

All towns will continue to be targeted through our digital newsletter in promotions and the Economic Development team have received enquiries across Pendle.

## **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 Nelson 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.