

REPORT FROM: Economic Growth

TO: West Craven Area Committee

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Premises Improvement Grant Scheme – Summary 2023/24

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Committee on the progress made on the West Craven Premises Improvement Grants scheme in 2023/24 financial year and funding allocation to allow the programme to continue.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Committee notes the summary of the Premises Improvement Grant scheme.
- (2) That Committee agrees to a funding allocation of £3,000 for Barnoldswick in the 2024/25 finance year. And agrees to a funding allocation of £3,000 for Earby in the 2024/25 finance year.
- (3) That the Committee agrees to nominate a minimum of two Grant Panel members for the year and reviews the criteria in relation to quotes.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) To allow Members of the Committee to see the outcomes of the Premises Improvement Grants scheme so far in the 2023/24 financial year.
- (2) To allow the Premises Improvement Grant programme to continue for Barnoldswick and Earby in 2024/25 year. To allow for all existing approved grants to be given to businesses within a reasonable timeframe.
- (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 Barnoldswick and Earby Town Centres.

ISSUE

Premises Improvement grant scheme: Background

1. All business premises within the defined town centre boundary are eligible for a 50% grant up to a maximum of £1,500, for improvements to their premises. Premises Improvement Grants are promoted, targeted and administered by Economic Development staff. The Economic Development Team supports the applicants throughout the application process.
2. The Premises Improvement Grants scheme allows businesses to make physical and aesthetic improvements to their businesses, creating a more attractive town centre street scene, and adding vibrancy to the town centre.
3. As well as encouraging additional investment into the area that grants scheme assists new businesses either setting up or moving into the area and helps to bring previously vacant units back into use, and in turn creating a more vibrant town centre.
4. Members also recently approved the use of Premises Improvement Grants for improving access to buildings for disabled people.

Premises improvement grants - Barnoldswick

1. Barnoldswick received zero applications this year.
2. Barnoldswick received four enquiries during 2023/24, all eligible within the town High Street.
3. A funding allocation of £3,000 would allow support to be given to two applicants in 2024/25.
4. On average it would be expected by the team to process two applications in a year for Barnoldswick.
5. Barnoldswick 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.

Earby

1. Earby has received and grant assisted one new application from David Hartley Family Funeral Service in 2023/24. The grant amount was for £729.17 and has been paid out.
2. Earby has received five enquiries during 2024/24, all eligible from within the town High Street.
3. A funding allocation of £3,000 would allow support to be given to two applicants in 2024/25.
4. On average it would be expected by the team to process one application in a year for Earby.
5. Earby continues to show healthy 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.

Criteria for both towns.

1. That Committee agree to amending the criteria to allow two quotes for item of work rather than three. Applicants are struggling to always achieve three quotes for each item of work, and this can result in delayed applications.

Both towns will continue to be targeted through our digital newsletter in promotions.

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 Barnoldswick and Earby 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

Premises Grant Criteria

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS