

REPORT FROM: HEAD OF ECONOMIC GROWTH

TO: NELSON, BRIERFIELD AND REEDLEY COMMITTEE

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PREMISES IMPROVEMENT GRANT SCHEME – SUMMARY 2024/25

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Committee on the progress made on the Nelson, Brierfield and Reedley Premises Improvement Grant Scheme in 2024/25 financial year and request funding allocation to allow the programme to continue in 2025/26.

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 2025/26 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 Grants Scheme so far in the 2024/25 financial year.
- (2) To allow the Premises Improvement Grant programme to fund future projects in 2025/26.
- (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 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. 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 thirty enquiries during 2024/25, twenty-nine of which were eligible, and one didn't fulfill the criteria.
2. The large number of enquiries received this year is due to the leaflet drop conducted by Economic Growth and Nelson Town Council to market the Scheme.
3. Seven enquiries of the twenty-nine have developed into applications. One has completed the grant paid out was £3,000. A second is due to be paid out in March, a grant offer of £3,000.
4. For 2025/26 the Team will continue to contact the remaining twenty-two outstanding enquiries to confirm their interest in the Scheme.

Premises Improvement Grants Summary - Brierfield

1. Brierfield received four enquiries in 2024/25, one has proceeded to application, been approved and now paid out. This grant was for £2,900.
2. There remains three enquiries for Brierfield.
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 2025/26 the Economic Development Team will then provide a further report request such.
5. So far in 2024/25 the Team would go contact the three remaining enquiries to confirm their interest in the Scheme.

Financial Summary – A total of £8,900 has been paid out for Nelson and Brierfield.

Request for Both Towns

1. That Committee agrees to a funding allocation of £15,000 for 2024/25 which will support the remaining outstanding enquiries for both towns with the additional funding from Nelson Town Council as confirmed in 2024 to assist Nelson businesses only.

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 and Brierfield town centres 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 centres.

APPENDICES: None.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS: None.