

REPORT FROM: Head of Economic Growth

TO: West Craven 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 West Craven premises improvement grants scheme in 2024/25 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 the Committee agrees to carry forward the 2024/25 funding allocation of £6,000 for Barnoldswick to the 2025/26 finance year. And agrees to carry forward the remaining 2024/25 funding allocation of £4,670.83 for Earby into 2025/26.
- (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 so far in the 2024/25 financial year.
- (2) To allow the premises improvement grant programme to continue for Barnoldswick and Earby in 2025/26. 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 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 the grants scheme assists new businesses either setting up or moving into the area and helps to bring previously vacant units back into use, 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 seven applications this year.
2. None of these enquiries have developed into applications this year. The team have contacted the enquiries and at least half of them have informed the team they wish to proceed.
3. A funding allocation of £6,000 would allow support to be given to four applicants in 2025/26.
4. Barnoldswick continues to show healthy interest in the grant scheme. If more funding is required due to further applications in the next year of 2025/26 the Economic Development Team will request this in a further report.

Earby

1. Earby has received four enquiries during 2024/25, all eligible from within the town high street.
2. From these enquiries Earby has received two applications that have been approved; one has been paid out of a grant offer of £600 and the second is awaiting payment of £1,500. Both are hairdressers.
3. A funding allocation of £4,670.83 would allow support to be given to three applicants in 2025/26.
4. 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 2025/26 the Economic Development Team will then provide a further report to request additional funding.

The team would like the Committee to agree to carry forward the remaining funds for Barnoldswick and Earby from 2024/25 into 2025/26 to support the outstanding enquiries.

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 None

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS None