

Report Title	Premises Improvement Grants
Meeting	Barrowford & Western Parishes Area Committee
Meeting Date	8 th July 2026
Report Author	Mike Williams
Directorate	Economic Growth
Lead Executive Member(s)	Cllr Asjad Mahmood
Wards Affected	The designated Premises Improvement Grants Area within: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrowford and Pendleside • Fence and Higham
Public. Part Exempt, or Fully Exempt	N/A
Appendices (if any)	None

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the progress made on the Barrowford premises improvement grants Scheme in the 2025/26 financial year and request an additional funding allocation to allow the programme to continue.

2. Recommendations

For the reasons set out in this report, Barrowford & Western Parishes Area Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the summary of the premises improvement grant scheme.
- 2.2 That the Committee agree to a funding allocation of £3,081 for the 2025/26 year.

3. Information: the Rationale & Evidence for the Recommendations

- 3.1 To allow Members of the Committee to see the outcomes of the premises improvement grants scheme so far in the 2025/26 financial year.

- 3.2 To allow the Premises Improvement Grant programme to fund future projects in 2025/26. To allow for all existing approved grants to be given to businesses within a reasonable timeframe.
- 3.3 To allow Grant Panel members to be decided by the Members of the Committee.
- 3.4 To allow Members to make decisions that support the ongoing Regeneration of Barrowford Town Centre

Premises Improvement grant scheme: Background

- 3.5 All business premises within the defined town centre boundary were eligible for a 50% grant up to a maximum of £3,000, for improvements to their premises.
- 3.6 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
- 3.7 Premises improvement grants are funded by the Area Committees and administered by the Economic Growth Team
- 3.8 Having financial assistance available to businesses can be a contributing factor when making a decision on their business location and has a positive impact on vacancy rates in towns to help fill the current vacant properties.

Summary of Premises improvement grants 2025/26.

- 3.9 Barrowford received funding of £3,000 for 2025/26. This was on top of £1,143 carry over. Consequently the total the amount for 2025/26 was £4,143
- 3.10 One business was approved for £1,224 and this grant was paid out as part of the 2025/26 budget. Therefore the remaining budget was £2,919
- 3.11 Three new enquiries were received in 2025/26 but unfortunately none of them came to fruition

3.12 The Head of Economic Growth requests the Committee carry over the £2,919 from 2025/26 and it is requested that the Committee allocate a further £3081 from the Committee's 2026/27 budget to these grants. This will bring the budget for these grants for the 2026/27 finance year to £6,000. At a maximum of £3000 per grant this would mean two businesses could be supported in Barrowford up to the end of March 2027

4. Link to Council Plan Priorities: (Providing High Quality Services and Facilities, Proud and Connected Communities and Places, Good Growth and Housing and Healthy Communities)

4.1 Encouragement of Economic Growth (Service Plan) and assisting local businesses as part of the current Economic Development Strategy

5. Implications

5.1 Financial Implications

As advised in this report. Head of resources has been consulted

5.2 Legal and Governance Implications

None. Head of legal has been consulted

5.3 Climate and Biodiversity Implications

None. Head of Economic Growth has been consulted

5.4 Human Resources Implications

None. HR & Payroll Manager has been consulted

5.5 Equality and Diversity Implications

N/A

6. Consultation

6.1 Businesses within the designated Premises Improvement Grant area

7. Alternative Options Considered

N/A

8. Statutory Officer Sign off (please put an x in the relevant box below)

Section 151 Officer	X
Monitoring Officer	X

9. Background Documents

None

Contact Officers

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