

Ipswich Borough Council

Additional Restrictions Grant Phase 6

Business Hardship Policy.

1. Introduction

1.1 In response to the coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19), the Government has provided a total of £4,790,073.00 discretionary additional restrictions grant (ARG).

1.2 Since the introduction of this ARG funding, the Council has sought to support businesses through the introduction of an ARG policy. There have been 5 previous iterations of this policy.

1.3 It is proposed that under Phase 6 of the Council's ARG policy, the funding will cover 2 elements. These are:

- Allocating £350,000 for a business growth and innovation grant scheme.
- Allocating £150,000 for a business hardship grant scheme.

1.4 The remainder of this document explains the detailed eligibility criteria for the Business Hardship Grant Scheme.

2. Business Hardship Grant Scheme.

2.1 Who is eligible for the grant?

The Council is looking to support strategic small local businesses in the Ipswich economy where there is evidence that the restrictions and regulations related to Covid measures place the business at risk.

Almost every business has had challenges under the Covid regulations and there have been grants available, however some businesses have circumstances that have been far more adversely affected by Covid regulations and require additional support.

2.2 Qualifying criteria

The hardship scheme is for businesses that:

- Have commercial premises within the Ipswich Borough Council boundary
- Are a small business (2-49 employees).

- Have – and continue to be - significantly impacted by Covid-19 (losses of at least 15% - up to and including summer 2021 (when compared with comparable months in 2019))
- Have premises or operational costs that cannot be reduced or mitigated and have suffered losses as a result of closure or reduced trade.
- Have been trading since the 1st September 2020

2.3 Exclusions

- Businesses that predominantly trade online;
- National chains
- Businesses outside the Ipswich Borough Council boundary;
- Companies in administration, insolvent or where a striking off notice has been made;
- Businesses that have exceeded the Government subsidy rules;
- Businesses who apply for the grant after the application closure date
- Businesses who have more than 49 employees
- Businesses who operate from home addresses

2.4 Evidence to be provided

- An overview of business's role in the Ipswich economy.
- Details of financial measures already implemented (including Covidrelated schemes such as Bounceback loans, Job Retention Scheme, Council run grant schemes – including previous phases of ARG).
- Scale of hardship.
- Scale of financial support required to ensure sustainability.
- Likely outcome for the business if funding not obtained, including the impact on Ipswich residents and businesses.
- A copy of a bank statement dated within the last 2 months in the business name.
- Government subsidy rules are met.
- Assessment of impact of a Hardship Grant on probability of business survival provided by a third party financial expert (e.g. accountant or bank)

2.5 Amount of Grant

- Successful applicants will receive a one-off payment of up to £10,000. Where exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated, the Council reserves the right to consider awarding a grant of a higher value.
- The Council reserves the right to close or vary the terms of the scheme at any time, and without notice, should it be necessary to do so (for instance if the scheme is fully subscribed).

- If the scheme is over-subscribed not all applications will be successful.
- Closing date for applications 26th November 2021

2.6 Appeals

There are no rights of appeal under this scheme, the Council's decision is final.

2.7 Managing the risk of fraud

Neither the Council, nor the Government will accept deliberate manipulation of the scheme of fraud. Any application caught falsifying information to gain grant money will face prosecution and any funding will be recovered from them.

Applicants should note that, where a grant is paid by the Council, details of each individual grant will be passed to Government and its departments for the purpose of analysis and to prevent fraud.

2.8 Recovery of amount incorrectly paid

If it is established that any award has been made incorrectly due to error, misrepresentation or incorrect information provided to the Council by an applicant or their representative(s), the Council will look to recover the amount in full.

2.9 Data Protection and use of data

All information and data provided by applicants shall be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Data Protection policy and Privacy Notices which are available to view on the Council's website.