

CABINET

DATE OF MEETING: 1st July 2021

TITLE OF REPORT: **ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS GRANT 5.0 – Extended Restrictions Grant July 2021**

Report of: **Head of Corporate Services**

Cabinet Member: **Councillor James Radley**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for a further Additional Restrictions Grant scheme targeted at specific businesses adversely affected by the extended restrictions as at 21 June 2021.

2 OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To approve the Policy for the payment of Extended Restrictions Grant detailed in Section 4 of this report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On the 14th of June 2021 the Prime Minister announced that Covid-19 restrictions would stay in place until the 19th of July and not end on the 22nd of June 2021 as previously anticipated.
- 3.2 The Government has strongly encouraged Local Authorities to prioritise a specific list of businesses and use any unspent Additional Restrictions Grant to support the following businesses. The guidance issued on the 17th of June 2021 says:

Local councils are encouraged to support:

- *businesses from sectors that remain closed or severely impacted by the extended restrictions, even if those businesses have already been in receipt of Restart Grants. This may include the travel and tourism sector, wedding industries, nightclubs, theatres, events industries, wholesalers, English language schools, breweries, freelance and mobile businesses including caterers, events, hair, beauty and wedding related businesses.*

4 THE EXTENDED RESTRICTIONS SCHEME

- 4.1 The proposal is that the Council implements an Extended Restrictions Grant scheme which will include the following business types where they are registered as trading from a postcode within the Hart District area:
- Travel companies and Agents
 - Wedding Venues – venues licenced for civil ceremonies
 - Hotels and Guest houses
 - Public Houses and Licensed Restaurants which cater for groups of 6 or more,
 - Community Halls which can be hired for events
 - Nightclubs

- Theatres,
- Businesses within event industries
- Wholesalers to event industries and caterers
- English Language Schools
- Breweries
- Caterers who provide for groups of more than 6 or more
- Hair related businesses
- Other wedding businesses defined as in pre-Covid more than 50% of turnover attributable to the wedding or events industry
- Beauty related businesses such as beauticians, nails and lashes but not businesses which only offer massages
- Vineyards and wine producers
- Any other business that can demonstrate through their accounts that they are significantly impacted by the extensions to the restrictions and are aligned with the scheme definitions and criteria for the non-essential retail, hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care or gym business sectors.

- 4.2 This scheme will be administered by the Council. Where applications were previously successfully paid as part of the Restart scheme which ran from April to the end of June, automatic push payments will be made provided the business is included in the business types of list at paragraph 4.1.
- 4.3 Where eligible businesses under this scheme did not previously receive grant under the Restart scheme an E-form will be available in the Grants and Funding section of the website where forms have previously been made available.
- 4.4 Where a business is not initially deemed eligible in that it is not clear that they are part of the list at paragraph 4.1 further evidence will be requested to demonstrate that large events accounted for greater than 50% of pre-Covid-19 turnover. Appeals will be dealt with on the same basis.
- 4.5 Payments are one-off, and the amounts are defined in the table below. The levels have been set to ensure that all successful business will receive payment from the remaining top-up funding that the Council holds.

Definition	Amount
Home based and mobile businesses	£500
Businesses with fixed property costs	£1,500
Businesses with a business rates account	£1,500

- 4.6 All payments are subject to the new domestic subsidy allowances which have replaced the previous state aid requirements.
- 4.7 Payments cannot be made where businesses are insolvent, in administration or have been struck off the Companies House Register.
- 4.8 Payments made to organisations who did not receive grant under the restart scheme will have to provide evidence of property costs where applicable, a recent bank statement and evidence of trading.

- 4.9 All businesses in receipt of funding will receive an email which states the terms of funding. If the business does not meet these terms, they are required to self-declare and return funding to the Council which in turn will be recovered by the Government.
- 4.10 The Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has provided its own list of FAQs for clarity. These will be adopted in the administration of this grant scheme.
- Businesses must have been trading on 1 April 2021.
 - Businesses must occupy hereditaments appearing on the local rating list on 1 April 2021. For the purposes of this grant scheme, occupied hereditaments that are mandated to close due to COVID-19 restrictions are considered temporarily closed.
 - Businesses must primarily offer in-person services where the main service and activity takes place in a fixed rate-paying premises.
 - Businesses must align with the scheme definitions and criteria for the non-essential retail, hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care or gym business sectors.
- 4.11 A dedicated email address for businesses to contact to obtain an update on their claim has been created BusinessGrants@hart.gov.uk and a separate email address for Members to request information as part of their individual casework MembersBGENquires@hart.gov.uk is also available.
- 4.12 It is expected that the Council will make approximately 400 payments of these grants.

5 NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 Following approval of this policy the scheme will be made live on the website on the 5th of July with a scheme end date of the 22nd of July to ensure that payments are made wherever possible in advance of further restrictions being lifted during the period of difficulty. This accords with the Government's expectations for all payments to be made by the 31st of July 2021.

6 GOVERNANCE, RESOURCE AND FINANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Approval for the scheme rests with Cabinet. Grant payments are within funding levels already received from Central Government. Resources requirements will be met from the Corporate Services Team and Economic Development Team.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This report requests approval of the extended restrictions grant scheme so that eligible business can be paid as soon as possible.

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