

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

meeting date: 21 JUNE 2022
title: COVID 19 BUSINESS GRANTS PAID
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
principal author: JANE PEARSON

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform members of the total of covid 19 business grants paid by this council following the closure of the final grant scheme.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In response to Coronavirus (Covid-19) the Government announced time limited Grant Schemes to support businesses. Funds were provided to Local Authorities across England under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 which were then distributed by local authorities to eligible businesses and/or activity within their geographic area in line with published Scheme Guidance.

- 2.2 The first grant schemes known as the Small Business Grant Fund and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund were announced in March 2020 shortly after the start of the pandemic. The final grant schemes were required to close on 31 March 2022

3 GRANT SCHEMES AND PAYMENTS MADE BY RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

- 3.1 **Small Business Grant Fund (SBGF)** was established to support small and rural businesses with their business costs during coronavirus. Guidance was first published on the 1 April 2020
- 3.2 **Retail Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund (RHLCF)** was established to support businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors with their business costs during coronavirus. Guidance was first published on the 1 April 2020
- 3.3 **Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund (LADGF)** was announced on the 1 May 2020 to support small businesses that were out of scope of the Small Business Grants Fund (SBGF) and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants Fund (RHLCF). Guidance was first published on the 29 May 2020
- 3.4 **Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) (LRSG)** for businesses that were still open but severely impacted by Local Covid Alert Level 'High' (LCAL 2) and 'Very High' (LCAL 3) restrictions. This support was announced on 22 October 2020 for businesses that were not legally required to close but were severely impacted by the restrictions under LCAL 2 and 3. Guidance was first published 12 November 2020
- 3.5 **Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) (LRSG)** for businesses that were required to close under Local Covid Alert Level 'High' (LCAL 2) and 'Very High' restrictions (LCAL 3). This support was announced on 9 September and 9 October 2020 for Businesses that were legally required to close due to formal publication of local restrictions guidance by central Government that resulted in a first full day of

closures on or after the 9 September. Guidance was first published on the 3 November 2020.

- 3.6 **Local Restrictions Support Grant (Sector) (LRSB)** for businesses that were required to close nationally on a sector basis in all 314 business rate billing Local Authorities. This strand of LRSB support was announced on 9 October 2020 and applied from 1 November 2020.
- 3.7 **Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) Addendum** was announced on 31 October and covers a 28-day period of national lockdown from 5 November.
- 3.8 **Local Restrictions Support Grants (Closed) Addendum: Tier 4** support was to provide support to businesses mandated to close under Tier 4 restrictions from 19 December 2020.
- 3.9 **Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) Version 2** was announced on 22 October and was applicable from 2 December 2020 when revised Tiers were introduced across England. This support was for businesses who were not mandated to close but are severely impacted by local restrictions.
- 3.10 **Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) Version 2** was announced on 22 October and was applicable from 2 December 2020 when revised Tiers were introduced across England. This support was for businesses who were mandated to close by Government.
- 3.11 **Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) Addendum: 5 January onwards** was part of the Business Support Scheme for January 2021 lockdown. This support was announced on 5 January 2021 and was available until 31 March 2021.
- 3.12 **Christmas Support Package for Wet led Pubs (CSP)** was for Wet Led pubs who were severely impacted by local restrictions in December 2020. This support was announced on 1 December 2020 and covered the period from 2 – 29 December 2020 inclusive for eligible pubs in Tier 2, 3 and 4.
- 3.13 **Closed Businesses Lockdown Payment** was part of the Business Support package for January 2021 lockdown and was announced on 5 January 2021.
- 3.14 **Restart Grant** was announced on 3 March 2021 and was available for businesses from 1 April 2021. This was a one of payment of up to £18,000 for eligible sectors as set out in the fund guidance.
- 3.15 **Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG)** to support businesses in their local economies and to provide additional support to grant funding under the Local Restrictions Support Grant. This support was announced on the 31 October 2020 and published guidance applies from 14 October 2020 - prior to that date ARG was negotiated on an individual Local Authority basis.
- 3.16 **Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant** was announced on 21 December 2021 to support hospitality, leisure and accommodation businesses that have been impacted by the Omicron variant. Local Authorities will receive funding to be allocated in one-off grants to businesses. Grants of up to £6,000 per premises, will be paid to hospitality, leisure and accommodation businesses in England.

Additional Restrictions Grants paid	Paid in 2020/21	Paid in 2021/22	Total ARG paid		
Period 1 - Additional Restrictions Support Grant	66,954.00	4,404.00	71,358.00		
Period 2 - Additional Restrictions Support Grant	171,100.00	14,936.00	186,036.00		
Period 3 - ARG Closed	25,690.00	267.00	25,957.00		
Period 3 - ARG Open	44,176.00	3,569.00	47,745.00		
Period 4a - ARG Closed	177,761.00	4,500.00	182,261.00		
Period 4a - ARG Open	350,722.00	40,876.00	391,598.00		
ARG Top Up		547,000.00	547,000.00		
Restart Grant Top Ups		316,125.00	316,125.00		
ARG - LRS (Open) Overspend		8,029.00	8,029.00	1,776,109	ARG spent as at end of July 21
ARG - Recovery Scheme		34,384.00	34,384.00		
ARG - Travel Agents		32,900.00	32,900.00		
ARG - Growth Scheme		262,772.00	262,772.00		
Omicron Hospitality & Leisure Grant Top-up Only		138,767.00	138,767.00		
Omicron Additional Restrictions Grant (OARG)		226,811.00	226,811.00		
ARG Overspend moved to CDFCO		-17.31	-17.31	695,634	ARG spent Jan-March 22
	836,403.00	1,635,322.69	2,471,725.69	2,471,726	

Payment of all Covid Business Support Grants
as at 31/03/22

Local Restrictions Support Grants/Additional Restrictions Support Grants	<15k	£	15k-51k	£	>51k	£	Total Grants Nos.	Total £ Grants Paid
Business Support Grants since LCAL from 22 September								
Additional Restrictions Support Grant (ARG) total							932	2,471,725.69
Local Restrictions Grant - Sectors							2	3,930.00
Local Restrictions Grant (Open)							311	594,562.00
Local Restrictions Grant (Closed) pre 5 November	28	23,244	16	21,355	0	0	44	44,599.00
Local Restrictions Grant (Closed) Addendum 5 November - 2 December	530	707,020	93	186,000	44	132,000	667	1,025,020.00
Local Restrictions Grant (Closed) 2 December - 30 December	179	247,378	57	117,376	39	121,173	275	485,927.00
Local Restrictions Grant (Closed) Tier 4 31 December - 4 January	533	126,854	94	33,558	45	24,120	672	184,532.00
Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs							37	37,000.00
Local Restrictions Grant (Closed) Addendum 5 January - 31 March	536	2,181,605	94	577,442	45	414,630	675	3,173,677.00
Closed Business Lockdown Payment	533	2,132,000	94	564,000	45	405,000	672	3,101,000.00
Restart Grant	523	3,240,059	94	912,000	44	756,000	661	4,908,059.00
Omicron Hospitality & Leisure Grant	151	402,717	48	192,000	33	198,000	232	792,717.00
							5,180	16,822,748.69
Grant Schemes in Operation April-August 2020								
Small Business Grants							1544	12,960,000.00
Retail, Hospitality & Leisure Grants								4,300,000.00
LA Discretionary Grants							135	867,000.00
							1679	18,127,000.00
Grand Total								34,949,748.69

4 OPERATION OF THE VARIOUS SCHEMES

- 4.1 All of the grant schemes have been administered on behalf of BEIS – the Department for Business, Energy and Innovation. Guidance surrounding how each scheme should operate was issued by them at the start of each scheme. Frustratingly there were many changes to the guidance even after we had started to pay out grants.
- 4.2 At the beginning of the schemes all local authorities were placed under huge pressure to pay out the grants as soon as possible with few if any detailed checks being required. League tables comparing the performance of local authorities were published in the national press frequently adding to the pressure to pay out grants speedily. As the grant schemes progressed however BEIS did somewhat of a U turn and issued retrospective instructions for authorities to carry out numerous pre and post payment assurance checks.
- 4.3 We are currently carrying out the post payment assurance work (PPAS) for sample grants notified to us by BEIS.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Almost £35m of covid business support grants have been paid to Ribble Valley businesses since the start of the pandemic.

DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

PF30-22/JP/AC
9 JUNE 2022