

Cherwell District Council

Budget Planning Committee

Date of Meeting – 25 January 2022

Covid-19 Business Grants

Report of Director of Finance

This report is public

Purpose of report

This report is to provide the Committee with an update on the total amount of grants paid out to businesses in Cherwell to support them during the pandemic up to 31 December 2021.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the number and value of Covid-19 Business Grants paid out by Cherwell District Council to local businesses during the course of the pandemic to 31 December 2021.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Covid-19 pandemic brought national lockdowns and restrictions that have affected many businesses. The government created a number of business support grant schemes to assist the industries and businesses most affected. These grant schemes were administered by Local Authorities following Government guidelines during 2020 and 2021.
- 2.2 The information in this report was prepared prior to the Government announcement of a further business grant scheme in light of the Covid-19 Omicron variant.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 The grant schemes were created by the Government to give financial support to those businesses most affected, in particular those in the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure industries. The first schemes were the Small Business Grants and as the pandemic continued, further grant schemes were created:

- The Local Restriction Support Grant (LRSG) schemes became available to businesses dependent on the tier or lockdown that the Cherwell district was in and whether the business was able to remain open or not.
- The Christmas Support grant was a one-off payment to “wet led” pubs to give support due to lost income over the Christmas period.
- The Closed Business Lockdown payment was a one-off top up grant in addition to the LRSG for those businesses forced to close during the January national lockdown.

As the restrictions began to get lifted per the Government’s roadmap a new one-off Restart grant scheme was set up to give eligible businesses support to aid recovery.

The Additional Restriction Grant (ARG) is a discretionary scheme that Local Authorities could decide themselves how to support local businesses. Cherwell District Council created policies that complemented the mandatory schemes to support eligible businesses that were not able to receive LRSG and Restart grant.

3.2 Across 2020/21 and 2021/22 the Council has paid 9,992 grants to businesses in Cherwell, totalling £54.1m (some businesses may have received multiple grants as they were eligible for more than one grant stream).

This table shows the breakdown of grants paid per scheme.

Grant Scheme	Total payments made in 2020/21 and 2021/22	
	Qty	£000s
Small Business Grants Schemes		
- Mandatory	2,041	26,805
- Discretionary	136	980
Christmas Support Payment	65	65
Closed Business Lockdown Payment	992	5,254
LRSG Open	354	360
LRSG Closed Addendum		
- LD2 5th Nov - 02Dec 20	1,027	1,813
- Tier 4	976	618
- LD3 5th Jan - 15Feb	1,011	2,626
- LD3 16th Feb-31Mar	1,035	2,871
Restart	929	7,066

ARG	1,395	4,976
ARG remaining fund*		647
Totals	9,992	54,124

*The ARG scheme has not finished. The council is currently looking at business support options for the remainder of the funds

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 In 2020 and 2021 Cherwell District Council have paid out almost 10,000 Covid-19 Business Grants and £54.1m to local businesses
- 4.2 The average grant awarded has been £5,400 with an average of 25 payments made each day.

5.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications – Mandatory paragraph

- 5.1 There are no Financial and Resource implications associated with this report

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance, 01295 221845,
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Legal Implications – Mandatory paragraph

- 5.2 There are no Legal implications associated with this report

Comments checked by:

Christopher Mace, Solicitor,
 Email: christopher.mace@cherwell-dc.gov.uk; Tel: 07702917916

Risk Implications - Mandatory paragraph

- 5.3 There are no risks associated with this report.

Comments checked by:

Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes 01295 221786
Louise.tustian@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Equalities and Inclusion Implications

5.4 There are no equalities and inclusion implications.

Comments checked by
Emily Schofield, Acting Head of Strategy 07881 311707
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Sustainability Implications

5.5 There are no sustainability implications

Comments checked by
Sarah Gilbert, Climate Action Team Leader, sarah.gilbert@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

6.0 Decision Information

Key Decision N/A

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

All

Lead Councillor

Councillor Tony Ilott

Document Information

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

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