

## Herefordshire Coronavirus Discretionary Grant Fund

The Discretionary Grant Fund is aimed at small businesses and charities who were not eligible for the Small Business Grant Fund, the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Fund, or other similar government coronavirus funds. In line with government criteria applications are invited from Herefordshire based micro businesses, small businesses and registered charities in the following circumstances:

- a. Businesses that operate from a shared workspace where they do not have their own business rates assessment;
- b. Regular market/street traders with fixed building costs, such as rent or licence fees, who do not have their own business rates assessment;
- c. Bed & Breakfasts which pay Council Tax instead of business rates; and
- d. Charity properties in receipt of charitable business rates relief which would otherwise have been eligible for Small Business Rate Relief or Rural Rate Relief.

### How do I apply?

Due to the restricted level of grant funding and the expected high level of demand the council will be holding one or more funding rounds. The initial funding round will open on x and will be open for 10 days. Applicants should complete the application form linked here (insert hyperlink).

Depending on the level of successful grant awards the council may open future funding rounds the date and length of which will be published on the council website. In the event that any one funding round is over subscribed the amount of grant awarded within that round will be reduced proportionally for each successful grant application. The council reserves the right to amend the eligibility criteria and level of grant funding in any subsequent funding round.

### What are the eligibility criteria? <expanding heading>

Grants will be awarded to applicants who can demonstrate that they:

- a. Are a small or micro business, or a registered charity;
- b. Have suffered a significant fall in income due to the COVID-19 crisis;
- c. Have annual property related costs (e.g. rent/licence/mortgage) of below £15,001 for a single premises within Herefordshire;
- d. Were actively trading on 11 March 2020;
- e. Employed at least one full time equivalent employee on 11 March 2020;
- f. Are not eligible for other coronavirus-related grants (except the Job Retention Scheme or the Self Employed Income Support Scheme).

Circumstances that are not eligible include:

- a. Businesses or charities without dedicated business, or shared business, premises, such as home based or mobile businesses, with the exception of regular market or street traders;
- b. Car parks or other parking spaces, personal use, empty premises, occupation by precept authorities and national chains / organisations;
- c. Companies that are in administration, are insolvent or where a striking-off notice has been made.
- d. Business or charity main activities (above 50%) are not in fishery, aquaculture, forestry, horticulture and primary production and processing of agricultural products

## **How are Grant Awards made and at what level?** <expanding heading>

Funding for this grant is limited so the Discretionary Grant Fund is providing grants up to £10,000. This ensures that the council is able to maximise the number of businesses supported during the Covid-19 pandemic.

If an application to the Discretionary Fund is successful, grant awards will be determined by consideration of the following two factors:

- a. The number of full time equivalent (FTEs) employees on 11 March 2020; and
- b. The level of property costs (as defined in paragraphs 13-16) for the annual period that includes 11 March 2020.

The following calculation will then be applied to reflect:

$(\text{Eligible property costs} \times 50\%) \times (\text{FTE employees} \times 50\%) = \text{grant award}$

For example  $(£3500 \times 50\% = £1,750) \times (3 \text{ FTE employees} \times 50\% = 1.5) = £2,625$

The minimum grant paid to any one business or charity will be £1,000

The maximum grant paid out to any one business or charity will be £10,000.

In the event that any one funding round is over subscribed the amount of grant awarded within that round will be reduced proportionally for each successful grant application. The council reserves the right to amend the eligibility criteria and level of grant funding in any subsequent funding round.

## **What evidence and information do I need to provide?** <expanding heading>

The application form requires standard business information including the name and address, business registration number, number of employees, and bank details.

Evidence of number of full time equivalent employees on 11 March 2020 is required in the form of copy from the payroll system or return.

Evidence of property costs for the annual period that includes 11 March 2020 is also required, in the form of a lease, license or mortgage agreement and a copy of a bank statement showing payment for this period and trading on 11 March 2020.

## **What are the next steps after applying?** <expanding heading>

Following the submission, the council will review the application to ensure that eligibility is met. An evaluation of the number of FTE jobs and the property costs will then be undertaken and a score will be assigned to the application. The score will then be allocated a grant award that corresponds to this score on a predefined matrix.

Applicants that are not eligible will be informed by email or in writing.

For applications that are deemed eligible, the council will undertake proportionate post-payment checks that include reviewing the information and evidence used to support the application.