



Oversight and Governance

Chief Executive's Department

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Delegated Decisions

Delegated Executive/Officer Decisions

Delegated Executive and Officer decisions are published every Wednesday and are available at the following link - <https://tinyurl.com/ms6umor>

Cabinet decisions subject to call-in are published at the following link - <http://tinyurl.com/yddrql6>

Please note – urgent decisions and non-key Council Officer decisions cannot be called in. Copies of the decisions together with background reports are available for viewing as follows:

- on the Council's Intranet Site at <https://modgov/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx>
- on the Council's website at <https://tinyurl.com/jhnax4e>

The urgent decision detailed below may be implemented immediately.

Delegated Decisions

I. The Leader - Councillor Evans OBE:

- Ia. Urgent Decision: Local Authority Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme for businesses **(Pages 1 - 8)**

EXECUTIVE DECISION

made by a Cabinet Member



REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY BY AN INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER

Executive Decision Reference Number – L24 20/21

Decision				
1	Title of decision: Local Authority Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme for businesses.			
2	Decision maker (Cabinet member name and portfolio title): Tudor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council)			
3	Report author and contact details: Amanda Ratsey (Head of Economy, Enterprise and Employment) Amanda.ratsey@plymouth.gov.uk			
4	Decision to be taken: 1. To adopt the criteria for the Discretionary fund as set out in the report 2. To delegate the administration of the Fund to the s151 Officer in consultation with the Leader and Service Director for Economic Development			
5	Reasons for decision: The government has made available additional funding to support business recovery following the second national lockdown due to Covid19. This scheme is Plymouth City Council's approach to delivering the fund, following the government guidance. This is one of a number of support programmes that have been provided by government. The funding allocated to Plymouth is £5.242 million which can be spent at the discretion of the Local Authority from November 2020 through to March 2022.			
6	Alternative options considered and rejected: To not implement the fund. This would prevent further financial support to businesses who have been ineligible for support from other schemes.			
7	Financial implications: The funding allocated to Plymouth is £5.242 million which can be spent at the discretion of the Local Authority from November 2020 through to March 2022. This is fully funded by government. The cost of administering this scheme is currently being absorbed by the Council.			
8	Is the decision a Key Decision? (please contact Democratic Support for further advice)	Yes	No	Per the Constitution, a key decision is one which: in the case of capital projects and contract awards, results in a new commitment to spend and/or save in
			X	

				excess of £3million in total
		X		in the case of revenue projects when the decision involves entering into new commitments and/or making new savings in excess of £1million
		X		is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the local authority.
	If yes, date of publication of the notice in the Forward Plan of Key Decisions			
9	Please specify how this decision is linked to the Council's corporate plan/Plymouth Plan and/or the policy framework and/or the revenue/capital budget:	This decision supports the Growing Plymouth theme by ensuring impact on the economy from the Covid19 lockdown is minimised.		
10	Please specify any direct environmental implications of the decision (carbon impact)	None directly arising from the recommendation from this report		
Urgent decisions				
11	Is the decision urgent and to be implemented immediately in the interests of the Council or the public?	Yes	x	(If yes, please contact Democratic Support (democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk) for advice)
		No		(If no, go to section 13a)
12a	Reason for urgency: The Government announced further funding to support businesses that are forced to close or severely impacted by the current nationally imposed restrictions. This funding covers the period 5 November to 2 December.			
12b	Scrutiny Chair Signature:	Councillor Darren Winter	Date	26/11/2020
	Scrutiny Committee name:	Brexit, Infrastructure and Legislative Change		
	Print Name:	Councillor Darren Winter.		
Consultation				
13a	Are any other Cabinet members' portfolios affected by the decision?	Yes	x	
		No		(If no go to section 14)
13b	Which other Cabinet member's portfolio is affected by the decision?	Cllr Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) Cllr Tudor Evans (Leader)		

13c	Date Cabinet member consulted		27/11/2020						
14	Has any Cabinet member declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision?		Yes		If yes, please discuss with the Monitoring Officer				
			No	x					
15	Which Corporate Management Team member has been consulted?		Name		Andrew Hardingham				
			Job title		Service Director for Finance				
			Date consulted		27/11/2020				
Sign-off									
16	Sign off codes from the relevant departments consulted:		Democratic Support (mandatory)			DS69 20/21			
			Finance (mandatory)			akh.20.21.170			
			Legal (mandatory)			MS/27.11.20.			
			Human Resources (if applicable)						
			Corporate property (if applicable)						
			Procurement (if applicable)						
Appendices									
17	Ref.	Title of appendix							
	A	Executive Decision Briefing Paper for Additional Restrictions Grant scheme.							
Confidential/exempt information									
18a	Do you need to include any confidential/exempt information?		Yes		If yes, prepare a second, confidential ('Part II') briefing report and indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box in 18b below. (Keep as much information as possible in the briefing report that will be in the public domain)				
			No	x					
			Exemption Paragraph Number						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7

18b	Confidential/exempt briefing report title:						
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Background Papers

19 Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below.
 Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based. If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.

Title of background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Cabinet Member Signature

20 I agree the decision and confirm that it is not contrary to the Council’s policy and budget framework, Corporate Plan or Budget. In taking this decision I have given due regard to the Council’s duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not. For further details please see the EIA attached.

Signature		Date of decision	27/11/2020
Print Name	Tudor Evans OBE		

ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS GRANT FUND FOR BUSINESS

(ARG)



What is the purpose of the Additional Restrictions Grants?

Government has announced further funding to support businesses that are forced to close or are severely detrimentally impacted by Covid 19 and nationally imposed restrictions put in place to manage coronavirus and save lives.

The Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) is a discretionary grant which will be administered, by Plymouth City Council within the Unitary Authority area. The criteria and payments set out in this document have been aligned with Devon.

The grant will offer a lifeline to businesses which are struggling to survive nationally imposed restrictions and resulting in loss of trade and income due to the Covid 19 crisis.

The funding allocated to Plymouth is £5.242 million, it can be spent at the discretion of the Local Authority from November 2020 through to March 2022. This will be insufficient to help all businesses detrimentally impacted and therefore it is necessary to prioritise.

It has specifically allocated to respond to businesses suffering during the pandemic. It is the only discretionary funding to support business which are:

- legally required to close under national lockdown, but are not eligible for the LRS (closed) as they do not pay Business Rates, or
- not legally required to close but have suffered a loss in turnover as a result of the national restrictions. We would anticipate supporting businesses whose losses are 30% or more.

This may take the form of direct grants to businesses or it may support economic recovery or actions which support businesses which have been impacted

Funding

Funding can flow to business in two ways. It may be:

- Direct grants to businesses, which would reflect how much funding they would have received if they are in the LRS scheme. This will depend on whether they can evidence fixed costs such as vehicle lease agreements or property agreements.
- Funding of wider economic support, at the discretion of the Council and the section 151 officer, which specifically helps businesses who have been impacted by Covid.

Phasing of funding

The £5.242 million is the total funding available to Plymouth. In order to ensure fairness, the grants will be split into 3 tranches. By delivering in tranches, it ensures there will be some support if there is a subsequent lockdown. The proposed initial allocation is split between these tranches:

- Up to 33% of LA allocation is available immediately from 30th November
- Up to 33% of LA allocation available Jan-Mar 2021
- Up to 33% of LA allocation available Fin. Year 2021/22

These allocations will be reviewed regularly in line with demand and future government guidance. Any decision to change will be delegated to the S 151 Officer in consultation with the leader of the Council and the Service Director for Economic Development.

Funding Allocations

It is proposed that 66% (£3.459 million) will be allocated directly to businesses, in line with the LSRG grant Scheme. The remaining 34% will be allocated to supporting wider economic development activity providing business support during the pandemic and one-off discretionary grants for exceptional circumstances where the impact to the Plymouth economy extends beyond the individual business. Awards direct to businesses will be done by an online application similar to the LSRG process awards to the remaining 34% of the fund will be at the discretion of a panel comprising of the Section 151 officer and Service Director for Economic Development.

A responsive fund.

The discretionary fund needs to be able to respond quickly to changing circumstances and business need and as with the previous discretionary fund this will be done by a regular review process using the authority of the councils s151 Officer. Any changes will also take into account the views of the chamber of commerce.

This split between tranches and businesses/wider economic development, will therefore be reviewed on a monthly basis by the leader of the Council, Section 151 Officer and Service Director for Economic Development. The monthly review meetings will provide us with more information on the demand for the scheme, any revisions needed will be updated and incorporated into the guidance held on our website. We will also communicate any changes in our business newsletter.

Eligibility

The grants are for businesses based in Plymouth and are predominantly with fixed costs and a significant downturn in business due to covid. If businesses can secure funding from other grant schemes, we will redirect them towards those pots. This fund is designed to try and plug the gaps and the payment is on a par with other comparable schemes.

To be eligible businesses will need to meet the following criteria:

- The business must have been trading on or before 4th November 2020.
- Must be a micro or small business with up to 50 employees.
- Businesses should have ongoing fixed monthly business costs in Plymouth, such as mooring fees, rent, rates, wages, insurances, utilities, equipment rental etc.
- Have suffered significant loses. We anticipate a minimum of 30%
- Businesses that have already received grant payments that equal the maximum levels of State Aid permitted under the EU State aid De-Minimis Regulation and the Covid-19 Temporary State Aid Framework, are not eligible for funding under this scheme.
- Businesses that are in administration, insolvent or where a striking off order has been made, are not eligible for funding under this scheme
- Plymouth home-based businesses are eligible but must be registered with HRMC and provide their Company Unique Taxpayer Reference. And a copy of their most recent tax return.

For Plymouth, examples of eligible businesses will include:

- Leisure and hospitality
- Fishing businesses (with restaurants closed the price of fish has dropped)
- Childcare providers (number of children in childcare reduced due to unemployment or furlough)
- Language schools (clients not able to travel)

- Trades people and businesses who supply businesses that are required to close (e.g retail and hospitality)
- Creative and event businesses who work from home and their venues are ordered to shut
- Businesses who are located in packaged rent and rates who are required to shut or who supply businesses that are required to close

We do not envisage that this fund will support the following types of business

- Any premises where the Council consider that a Bed and Breakfast business is “home sharing” and advertised solely online through “home sharing” websites will not be eligible for this fund.
- Storage containers, which are only used for storage are not eligible. Where a storage container is used to run a business (e.g. a café run out of a shipping container), that would be eligible.
- Buy to let properties
- SBRR premises for which are only used for personal use e.g. riding stables
- Those that have already received significant support for the second national lockdown

Only one Discretionary Business Grant will be awarded to any business during the national lockdown (5 November to the 2 December), however if businesses operate from multiple Plymouth premises, they may be eligible for additional payments at the discretion of the I51 Officer.

How much grant will be payable?

Total payment for businesses not required to close but have suffered a loss, per 28 days of National Lockdown:

Non Rate payer	
Rateable Value	Amount
N/A	£934
Rate payer	
Rateable Value	Amount
£0 – 14,999	£934
£15,000 - £51,000	£1,400
£51,000 +	£2,100

If you are a closed rate payer not eligible for the LSRG (closed) grant because you pay packaged rent and rates the payments would be structured so that you would not be disadvantaged:

Closed rate payer – not eligible for the LRSB (Closed) grant	
Rateable Value	Amount
£0 – 14,999	£1,334
£15,000 - £51,000	£2,000
£51,000 +	£3,000

How will grants be administered?

The Council has to gather data to administer these funds, information supplied will be kept confidential. Data will be retained so that we can undertake regular reporting to Government. The process to administer this grant include:

- An online application form - we will have a separate ARG application process, we have designed this to be as simple as possible, in line with the governments reporting requirements
- Businesses may have to provide an up to date bank statement (for the account used by the business – this must contain name of account, SC and ACC no for verification purposes) This is to reduce fraud
- Spotlight and NFI checks must be undertaken before payment is released.
- All applications for under £3000 will be verified by PCC officer team. Grants over £3000 will be verified by the Section 151 officer and Service Director for Economic Development, a separate application form must be used to assess value for money, which will include the number of businesses assisted. It is envisaged organisations such as Business Improvement Districts would be beneficiaries for recovery activity.

When will business be paid?

- Evidence of need required therefore retrospective payments only
- Scheme open 30th November, payments end of that week and onwards

Exceptional awards

Exceptional awards will be invitational, there will be an application process and appraisal process. These applications will then be taken to a panel comprising of s151 Officer and the Service Director for economic development for consideration.

These applications may include additional discretionary support to extend funding provided to businesses under the LRSG (closed) grant scheme. The Council may also look to support businesses through activities such as supporting key organisations which have a wider economic multiplier effect (e.g. support to Business Improvement Districts to fill empty shops)

Review of decisions

The Council will operate an internal review process only. The grant application process will remain open until all funds are committed. We reserve the right to close the scheme at short/no notice – potential applicants should apply without delay.

Unsuccessful applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application by email. There is no right to appeal a decision