

Purpose

The overriding purpose of the Blackpool Business Loans Fund is to support the future economic development of Blackpool in a sustainable manner, in line with the Council's priorities.

Who can apply for loans?

The fund provides loans to private business and public sector organisations, including wholly owned companies of Blackpool Council and strategic public sector partners.

Any loan must be able to demonstrate a clear benefit to Blackpool in terms of investment and return on investment.

Who cannot apply for loans?

Any business can apply providing they do not fundamentally conflict with the Council's key priorities, its ethical values and any other situation which may bring the Council into disrepute.

Where funds are sought to relocate businesses and/or employment away from Blackpool.

Loans below £25,000 are not encouraged as there is an unsecured Start Up Loan Fund available from the government. The Council's Business Support Team has assisted numerous start-up businesses to access this over recent years (189 individuals and £1,022,849 start-up loans approved over the past 5 years).

Fund Priorities

The key priorities for the fund are as follows:

- To support the economic development and regeneration of Blackpool
- To create a range of high quality, well remunerated and sustainable jobs in Blackpool and the Fylde Coast area.
- To invest in businesses with growth potential, committed to the local community.
- To generate a return on investment as both a source of income for the Council and to replenish and grow the value of the fund.
- To manage the fund effectively so as to minimise risk to the Council and to protect the fund reserves.

Application Process

Expression of Interest/Eligibility Check

All applicants will be expected to submit an expression of interest. This will request basic information on the size of the loan requested, the preferred term, the status of the applicant and the proposed use for the loan amount.

Applicants not encouraged to full application stage will be offered guidance via the Council's Business Support Team on other loan finance available from alternate sources.

There is no upper limit on the amount of loan that could be requested other than the size of the available loan fund which has an approved ceiling of £100m.

Full Loan Application Stage

Detailed due diligence is undertaken at the full application stage in support of a loan request presented to the Business Loans Panel. It includes detailed checks on applicants/Directors, financial trading history and forecasts detailing ability to repay the loan and other funding sources secured; and levels of security offered. It may involve external advice such as specialist legal advice. The level (and cost) of due diligence is in accordance with the size of the loan requested with the main aim of minimising the risk to the Council. All Council loans are secured.

All loan cases are presented to the Council's Business Loans Panel for a decision. Recommended decisions on larger loans are referred to the Council's Leader or Executive subject to agreed financial delegation.

If a loan is approved and terms accepted by the applicant appropriate legal documentation is completed.