

<b>Notice of :</b>	Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism
<b>Decision Number:</b>	PH51/2020
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Alan Cavill, Director of Communications and Regeneration
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Gillian Campbell, Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism
<b>Date of Decision :</b>	2 December 2020

## **BLACKPOOL BUSINESS RECOVERY FUND**

### **1.0 Purpose of the report:**

- 1.1 To agree the creation of a discretionary scheme for targeted grant support to the Tourism Sector following the restriction that have been in place since September to be known as the Blackpool Business Recovery Fund.

### **2.0 Recommendation(s):**

- 2.1 To agree the Blackpool Business Recovery Fund grant allocation policy attached at Appendix A for the distribution of £4.2m of government grant support to the Tourism Sector.
- 2.2 To note that the scheme offers graduated support based on rateable value or equivalent to businesses that have been affected by the loss of tourism.
- 2.3 To agree that as outlined in paragraph 6.3 of Blackpool Business Recovery Fund grant allocation policy attached at Appendix A that the Director of Resources be able to approve, reject or defer applications for grants and deal with appeals.
- 2.4 To delegate further changes to the scheme to the Director of Communications and Regeneration after consultation with the Cabinet Members for Culture and Tourism and Business, Enterprise and Job Creation.

### **3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):**

- 3.1 Government has allocated some funding from Additional Restrictions Grant (£2.8m) and the Local Restrictions Grant (Tier 2) Open (£1.4m). The Council has had to design a scheme to allocate resources by the means of grant to businesses. The attached scheme aims to direct these funds to those most affected.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

**4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:**

4.1 To allocate the Additional Restrictions Grant to other uses (more general business support) and not allocate the smaller grants as per the Government formula.

To exclude businesses for which direct grant has not been allocated from Government for example Taxis, Supply Chain and Events Companies and Non Rated businesses.

**5.0 Council priority:**

5.1 The relevant Council priority is: "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool".

**6.0 Background information**

6.1 There are other grants from the Local Restrictions Grant which are mandated from Government and these are already in the process of being applied for and issued.

6.2 During the periods of COVID restrictions from September and then the Closures in Tier 3 and the period of lockdown the tourism sector suffered significant losses at a particularly, normally, busy period of the year. Government has allocated some funding from Additional Restrictions Grant (£2.8m) and the Local Restrictions Grant (Tier 2) Open (£1.4m). The Council has had to design a scheme to allocate resources by the means of grant to businesses.

6.3 The attached document describes the eligible businesses but the general approach has been to look at those businesses that were most affected by the loss of tourism trade. The proposed scheme also includes some non- rated businesses as well as supply chain and the events industry.

6.4 The application process will be through the Council's business support website, [www.blackpoolunlimited.com](http://www.blackpoolunlimited.com). For larger grants the Council will seek additional information to justify any payments made. For smaller grants the Council will try to allocate resources

based on applicants' details that have already been received to reduce the burden on business to provide further information.

6.5 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

7.1 Appendix A: Blackpool Business Recovery Fund.

**8.0 Financial considerations:**

8.1 The two allocations from Government Additional Restrictions Grant and Local Restrictions Fund (Tier 2) Open are both discretionary funds to support businesses are available to provide support to the Tourism and Entertainment industry with eligibility to be agreed at the discretion of the local authority.

8.2 The Council will ensure that the allocation offered by Government will cover the scheme costs as described in the attached document.

8.3 The Finance team will ensure all the above transactions are state aid compliant.

8.4 Sufficient information will be requested from businesses to negate the level of risk of grants being claimed fraudulently.

8.5 The project will be delivered by the Council's Economic Development and Revenues and Benefits Teams.

**9.0 Legal considerations:**

9.1 None.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 There is a risk of clawback of grant if the claim is fraudulent. Sufficient information will be gathered to mitigate this risk.

10.2 Some sectors may believe they should have been included in this programme who are not included. The funding is at the discretion of the Local Authority so there is no recourse for aggrieved applicants.

**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 All companies are eligible to apply from the tourism sector.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 None.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 Internal – Cabinet Member for Business, Enterprise and Job Creation, Resources Department, Corporate leadership Team and the Leader of the Council.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None.

**15.0 Key decision information:**

15.1 Is this a key decision? No

15.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number:

15.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No

15.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

**16.0 Call-in information:**

16.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

16.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE**

**17.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):**

Date informed:

Date approved:

**18.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):**

18.1 None.

**19.0 Executive decision:**

19.1 The Cabinet Member agreed the recommendations as outlined above namely:

1. To agree the Blackpool Business Recovery Fund grant allocation policy attached at Appendix A for the distribution of £4.2m of government grant support to the Tourism Sector.
2. To note that the scheme offers graduated support based on rateable value or equivalent to businesses that have been affected by the loss of tourism.
3. To agree that as outlined in paragraph 6.3 of Blackpool Business Recovery Fund grant allocation policy attached at Appendix A that the Director of Resources be able to approve, reject or defer applications for grants and deal with appeals.
4. To delegate further changes to the scheme to the Director of Communications and Regeneration after consultation with the Cabinet Members for Tourism and Culture and Business, Enterprise and Job Creation.

**20.0 Date of Decision:**

20.1 2 December 2020

**21.0 Reason(s) for decision:**

21.1 Government has allocated some funding from Additional Restrictions Grant (£2.8m) and the Local Restrictions Grant (Tier 2) Open (£1.4m). The Council has had to design a scheme to allocate resources by the means of grant to businesses. The attached scheme aims to direct these funds to those most affected.

**22.0 Date Decision published:**

22.1 2 December 2020

**23.0 Executive Members in attendance:**

23.1

**24.0 Call-in:**

24.1

**25.0 Notes:**

25.1