



North Devon Council

Report Date: **Strategy and Resources 1 March 2021**

Topic: **Business Grants**

Report by: **Head of Resources**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Government has announced a series of measures to support business impacted by Covid-19. These measures include payments of grants to businesses which have had to close due to localised or widespread national restrictions being put in place.

1.2 Whilst the awarding of these grants is the Council's responsibility, the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has set down the criteria which must be met by each business making an application for the following grants;

- **Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) Addendum) 5 November 2020**
- **Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) (from 2 December 2020 onwards**
- **Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs**
- **Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) Addendum 5 January 2021 onwards**
- **Closed Business Lockdown Payment**

1.3 The Department also issued guidance regarding the types of business which should be given these grants.

1.4 This purpose of this report is to seek approval of the five grant schemes which have been developed to award these payments.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. That members approve the adoption of the **Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) Addendum** with effect from 5 November 2020 as shown in **Appendix A.**

2.2. That members approve the adoption of the **Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) with** effect from 2 December 2020 as shown in **Appendix B.**

2.3. That members approve the adoption of the **Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs** as shown in **Appendix C.**

2.4. That members approve the adoption of **The Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) Addendum 5 January** as shown in **Appendix D.**

2.5. That members approve the adoption of **The Closed Business Lockdown Payment** as shown in **Appendix E**

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. In order to help support local businesses during the Covid-19 crisis it is essential that the Council applies available powers to offer the new measures announced by the Government when it is evident that this would be a real benefit to local businesses to do so.

4. REPORT

4.1. On 5 October 2020 the Government announced certain businesses and venues would be required to close from 5 November 2020 to 2 December 2020 and set out the circumstances where a grant payment should be made by the council to businesses affected by this period of National Lockdown. Whilst the awarding of these **Local Restrictions Support Grants (Closed Addendum)** is the Council's responsibility the Government set down the criteria which must be met by each business making an application. The document detailing the Council's administration of this scheme is shown in **Appendix A**.

4.2. On 23 November 2020 the Government's Covid-19 Winter Plan was published with changes announced to the tier system. Businesses which were forced to close in a localised restriction (LCAL 2 and LCAL3) were eligible for a **Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed)** from 2 December onwards. Again payment of these grants are the Council's responsibility but the criteria for their award is set down by Government. The document detailing the Council's administration of this scheme is shown in **Appendix B**

4.3. On 1 December 2020 the Government announced further support over the festive period for wet-led pubs in areas under LCAL2 or LCAL restrictions. Under this **Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs** scheme Councils were to award a one-off payment of £1,000 to all wet-led pubs in their area. The document detailing the Council's administration of this scheme is shown in **Appendix C**.

4.4. On 4 January 2021 the Prime Minister announced that from 5 January 2021 England would enter into a period of national restrictions. On 5 January 2021 the Government announced further funding to businesses that are legally required to close due to national restrictions. In addition to **the Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) Addendum 5 January** onwards businesses were also to receive a **Closed Business Lockdown Payment** which provided a one-off top off grant for all businesses mandated to close during national restrictions. The documents detailing the administration of these schemes are shown in **Appendices D and E**.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The additional measures announced by the Government as part of its response to Covid-19 will be reimbursed to the Council via a section 31 grant.
- 5.2. Further funding has been awarded to cover the additional administration and software burden on billing authorities.

6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

An Equality Impact Assessment has been produced for the measures announced within this report.

7. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

- 7.1. Article of Part 3 Annex 1 (1)(d)
- 7.2. Delegated power

8. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

- 8.1. This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1. The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, Guidance for Local Authorities for each of the grant schemes in this report which can be found on gov.uk
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-restrictions-support-grants-lrsg-and-additional-restrictions-grant-arg-guidance-for-local-authorities>

10. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

- 10.1. The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers: Julie Dark Revenues and Benefits Manager