

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Report Title:** Additional Restrictions Grant - Business Recovery Support

**Name of Committee:** Council

**Date of Meeting:** 25 August 2021

**Report Director:** Executive Director

**Portfolio:** Growth and Investment

**Ward Relevance:** All

**Prior Consultation:** Finance, Assurance, Legal & Governance, Equality & Diversity

**Contact Officer:** David Moore, Economic Development Manager  
david.moore@rugby.gov.uk

**Public or Private:** Public

**Report Subject to Call-In:** No

**Report En-Bloc:** No

**Forward Plan:** No

**Corporate Priorities:** This report relates to the following priority(ies):  
 Rugby is an environmentally sustainable place, where we work together to reduce and mitigate the effects of climate change. (C)  
 Rugby has a diverse and resilient economy that benefits and enables opportunities for all residents. (E)  
 Residents live healthy, independent lives, with the most vulnerable protected. (HC)  
 Rugby Borough Council is a responsible, effective and efficient organisation. (O)  
[Corporate Strategy 2021-2024](#)  
 This report does not specifically relate to any Council priorities but

**Summary:** The Borough Council has been awarded a further round of Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) funding amounting to £916,176 for business support. This report describes how the scheme policy and how the fund will be awarded to businesses

<b>Financial Implications:</b>	<p>The Council has been allocated a further total Additional Restrictions Grant ARG fund allocation of £916,176.</p> <p>This is a discretionary fund to enable the provision of business support and the award of grants to business in the period to 31 March 2022. Any part of the fund that is not used will need to be returned to the Government.</p>
<b>Risk Management Implications:</b>	<p>Governance arrangements to minimise risk will be agreed with the Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub taking into account advice from legal services, corporate assurance and finance</p>
<b>Environmental Implications:</b>	<p>There are no environmental implications arising from this report.</p>
<b>Legal Implications:</b>	<p>The proposed scheme is in accordance with guidance issued by MHCLG. The necessary legal agreements will be entered into between the Council and the Growth Hub to support the proposed recommendation.</p> <p>The Council is able to exercise its General Power of Competence as set out within the Localism Act 2011 in respect of the implementation of the scheme.</p>
<b>Equality and Diversity:</b>	<p>An Equality Impact Assessment (attached as Appendix 2) on this policy was undertaken on 13 August 2021 and will be reviewed on 15 December 2021.</p>
<b>Options:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To adopt the proposed ARG Scheme Policy as stated</li> <li>2. To amend the proposed ARG Scheme Policy</li> </ol>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The proposed Additional Restrictions Grants (ARG) Scheme Policy for deployment of the Additional Restrictions Grant, as at Appendix 1 to the report, be adopted;</li> <li>2. a supplementary budget of £85,000 financed from the ARG Fund be approved for payment to the Coventry and</li> </ol>

Warwickshire Growth Hub for administering applications to the Fund; and

3. a supplementary budget of the ARG Fund balance of £831,176 be approved for the deployment of grants from the Fund.

**Reasons for  
Recommendation:**

To ensure that the Additional Restrictions Grant can be best used to support business recovery and growth.

**Council - 25 September 2021**

**Additional Restrictions Grants - Business Growth Support**

**Public Report of the Executive Director**

**Recommendation**

- (1) The proposed Additional Restrictions Grants (ARG) Scheme Policy for deployment of the Additional Restrictions Grant, as at Appendix 1 to the report, be adopted;
- (2) a supplementary budget of £85,000 financed from the ARG Fund be approved for payment to the Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub for administering applications to the Fund; and
- (3) a supplementary budget of the ARG Fund balance of £831,176 be approved for the deployment of grants from the Fund.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In response to COVID-19 and further to previous allocations of additional restrictions grant (ARG) funding, the Government announced a further allocation of ARG funding to Rugby Borough Council on 23 June 2021 of £916,176.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to propose an ARG scheme policy for adoption by Members.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 In response to COVID-19 and further to previous allocations of ARG funding, the Government announced a further allocation of ARG funding to Rugby Borough Council on 23 June 2021 of £916,176 which can be awarded to businesses in the discretion of the Council as grant awards until 31 March 2022.
- 2.2 The Council had been previously allocated a total of £3,146,646 to 349 businesses that were not covered by Local Restrictions Support Grants or Restart Grants.
- 2.3 The award of ARG discretionary funding has made a significant difference to those businesses not otherwise reached by direct-to-sector Government funding. The Council has to date awarded £3,146,646 to 349 Rugby businesses and a small selection of the comments received are as follows:

“Thank you so much to Rugby Borough Council for helping my business out during the pandemic with the ARG Grant. This grant has been very much appreciated.”

“Many thanks: my [machinery] had just packed up & I was really thinking that this was finally "Game Over". This final payment will get them sorted much to my relief! “

“Good evening, I must thank you so much, this has been a God-send, thank you very much for your help in this matter”

“That's great news, thank you very much. This will help enormously with our continued recovery”

“Thank you very much for the latest ARG Restrictions Grant, this will certainly help with the recovery of our business and allow us to look at future growth”

“Oh my goodness, I am so honestly grateful! I was not expecting this at all, I had absolutely no idea. It certainly makes up for everything last year”

“Thanks very much for this. It'll certainly help us work towards getting back up and fully “on our feet” as it were now the restrictions are easing. Your support is much appreciated”

“Wow - thanks so much. This grant will make a huge difference to us going forward and rebuilding”

### **3. Application of fund and Scheme administration options**

- 3.1 The previous ARG funds have been applied to help priority businesses with emergency funding during lockdown or restriction periods to address severe impact on their revenues.
- 3.2 The removal of COVID legal restrictions allows the Council to properly target this new ARG fund at assisting Rugby businesses to recover and grow.
- 3.3 The deployment of this funding to those businesses focused upon recovery and growth requires additional level of business support knowledge and due diligence review work. This will be conducted on each application to best prioritise use of the fund.
- 3.4 Unfortunately, the Council does not have sufficient internal resources to undertake this efficiently and effectively with the required due diligence on grant applications.
- 3.5 The Council has engaged with the Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub (CW Growth Hub) to establish a scheme for it to administer the target and application review process for Rugby businesses and make business award recommendations to the Council. The CW Growth Hub proposes a charge of £85,000 for managing the scheme. The administration of this scheme can be funded from the ARG fund itself and will incur no additional cost to the Council.

- 3.6 Stratford-upon-Avon District Council already has in place an agreement with the CW Growth Hub to manage their scheme exclusively for Stratford District.
- 3.7 Following officer discussions with CW Growth Hub, the proposed Scheme Policy and Agreement set out in Appendix 1 is recommended to administer the new ARG Fund.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The proposed recommendation is overall in the interests of both the Council and businesses across the Borough. The administration of the scheme by the CW Growth Hub will ensure it is able to use its already established knowledge of Rugby businesses to target use of this ARG funding allocation to prioritise businesses that can best utilise these funds to recover and grow their businesses.

**Name of Meeting:** Council

**Date of Meeting:** 25 August 2021

**Subject Matter:** Additional Restrictions Grant - Business Growth Support

**Originating Department:** Growth and Investment

**DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY**       YES       NO

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Doc No	Title of Document and Hyperlink

The background papers relating to reports on planning applications and which are open to public inspection under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, consist of the planning applications, referred to in the reports, and all written responses to consultations made by the Local Planning Authority, in connection with those applications.

---

Exempt information is contained in the following documents:

Doc No	Relevant Paragraph of Schedule 12A

## **Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) – Business Recovery Support Scheme Policy**

### **What is it?**

A fund that is to be strategically allocated to support businesses across all sectors and across the entire Rugby Borough that have been severely impacted by the effects of Covid-19 and to assist in their recovery strategies.

Qualifying businesses can apply for a discretionary grant of between £1,000 and £50,000 although larger amounts may be considered for well thought out and supported applications where a significant economic impact will be felt.

In addition, Local Councillors and/or elected members will be able to nominate viable and suitable businesses to benefit from the scheme. These businesses will be subject to the standard appraisal process and eligibility criteria.

All selected businesses will be invited to apply following a thorough diagnostic review to be completed by the Coventry & Warwickshire LEP Growth Hub.

This discretionary scheme will be funded by Rugby Borough Council's already received allocation of £916,176 of Additional Restrictions Grant. This will be distributed by Rugby Borough Council

### **How?**

It is proposed that the scheme be administered in three tranches to allow for identification and diagnostic of suitable applicants and the appraisal process. It is suggested that these tranches are:

- September to November 2021
- December 2021 to January 2022
- February to March 2022

All grant awards must be allocated no later than March 2022. Further time will be allowed for the defrayal of grant awards by Rugby Borough Council.

### **Priorities:**

Applications that consider National, Sub-Regional and Local Rugby Borough priorities as well as those that fall within, or have links to, Agriculture will be favoured.

These priorities are:

National:

- Creation of new higher skilled or higher paid jobs
- Business growth – increase of turnover and profitability
- Improve productivity through innovation
- Open new product markets
- Exports



Sub-Regional (Coventry & Warwickshire):

- Create and grow businesses in Advanced Manufacturing and engineering, Creative Industries and ICT and intelligent mobility.
- Create and grow food and drink businesses

Local (Rugby Borough Council):

- Any aspect of business development/recovery for any business that has suffered as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic across all sectors and the entire district.

### **What projects qualify?**

Examples of projects that will be considered could include, but are not limited to:

- Access to specialist professional advice e.g. human resources, accountants, legal, financial, Marketing, IT /digital, etc...
- Capital Purchases – including equipment, machinery, IT/Telecoms/EPOS
- Purchase of minor equipment to adapt or adopt new technology in order to continue to deliver business activity or diversify
- eCommerce projects – enhancing digital operation
- Adaptations to allow for social distancing measures for staff and clients
- Property purchase costs that will result in additional employment
- Commercial property renovations or expansions
- Property downsizing support – ie: moving costs, legal fees

### **Eligibility:**

Each application will be reviewed individually and on its own merits. Applicants that have received previous COVID grant support will not necessarily be precluded and preference will be given to those that can demonstrate a clear COVID recovery strategy and those where jobs are created.

Grants will be awarded entirely at the discretion of Coventry & Warwickshire LEP Growth Hub and Rugby Borough Council. There will be no appeals process and decisions are final.

Grants cannot be awarded retrospectively for projects that have already commenced or where materials or goods have already been ordered. Projects must not commence prior to the receipt of a grant offer letter.

Only businesses that are based within Rugby Borough can apply and where the recovery or job growth impact is on the local business operation.

### **Communications:**

Dedicated Growth Hub account management will identify and target potential applicants and progress.

## **Growth Hub Operations:**

1 x FTE “Account Manager” to work within the Growth Hub team to conduct a full diagnostic, assessment of need and understanding of an applicant’s project.

Rugby Borough Council agree to make a payment of £85,000 to the Coventry & Warwickshire LEP Growth Hub to undertake the project. Cost elements include:

- Recruitment Costs
- Salary
- Travel Expenses
- Project Administration (including allocation of resource from existing support teams)
- Targeted Marketing
- IT Equipment and Licensing Fees
- Overhead Costs and Contingencies

## **Process:**

Identification of prospects. How?

- Data analysis – RBC Rate payer info
- Exploit Growth Hub Customer Relationship Management (CRM) data and intelligence
- Councillors’ recommendations
- Targeted marketing to existing Growth Hub clients
- Client Calls and Canvassing
- Business to Business referrals – word of mouth

Initial consultation, business overview and Growth Hub diagnostic. Understanding of COVID recovery strategy and identification of project to support recovery. Growth Hub Finance Specialist to conduct initial snapshot of financial viability.

Compile application and prepare for final Rugby Borough Council sign off and payment. A full application will consist of the following:

- Completed **application form**
- Last set of published **company accounts** and any management accounts kept to date
- 12-month **cash flow actuals & forecast** for the period April 2021-March 2022
- Up to date **business plan**
- **Procurement** – each applicant must demonstrate that they have explored the market for the procurement of goods and services for the proposed project. The number of required quotations depends on the value of grant being applied for, as follows:
  - for each item/contract that is less than £5,000 – 1 quote required
  - for each item/contract that is between £5,001 and £15,000 – 2 quotes required
  - for each item/contract that is greater than £15,001 – 3 quotes required

## **Data & Reporting:**

The Growth Hub will provide Rugby Borough Council with monthly recommendations for the payment of grants.

The Coventry & Warwickshire LEP Growth Hub will provide the following information on each report:

- The number of engagements
- The number of businesses invited to apply
- A brief synopsis of the project
- A brief outline of the goods and/or service
- The value of the grant applied for
- The number of businesses that were refused or rejected
- Reasons for refused or rejected applications
- The number of businesses that were successfully recommended for a discretionary payment

The Coventry & Warwickshire LEP Growth Hub will propose any suitable case studies/PR activity related to successful applicants ensuring Rugby Borough Council are correctly and suitably represented and credited and seek relevant client and Rugby Borough Council consent.

## **Governance**

David Moore will be the day-to-day contact for Rugby Borough Council for this project.

David Moore  
[david.moore@rugby.gov.uk](mailto:david.moore@rugby.gov.uk)

Gary Thyeson will be the day-to-day contact for the Coventry & Warwickshire LEP Growth Hub for this project.

Gary Thyeson  
[gary.thyeson@cwgrowthhub.co.uk](mailto:gary.thyeson@cwgrowthhub.co.uk)

## **Agreement to be signed:**

### **Coventry & Warwickshire LEP Growth Hub**

Signed:

Name: Craig Humphrey  
Position: Managing Director

### **Rugby Borough Council**

Signed:

Name: Mannie Ketley  
Position: Executive Director

Signed:

# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

## Context

1. The Public Sector Equality Duty as set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires Rugby Borough Council when making decisions to have due regard to the following:
  - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
  - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
  - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:
  - age
  - disability
  - gender reassignment
  - marriage/civil partnership
  - pregnancy/maternity
  - race
  - religion/belief
  - sex/gender
  - sexual orientation
3. In addition to the above-protected characteristics, you should consider the crosscutting elements of the proposed policy, such as impact on social inequalities and impact on carers who look after older people or people with disabilities as part of this assessment.
4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document is a tool that enables RBC to test and analyse the nature and impact of what it is currently doing or is planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.
5. The questions will enable you to record your findings.
6. Where the EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.
7. Once completed and signed off the EqIA will be published online.
8. An EqIA must accompany all **Key Decisions** and **Cabinet Reports**.
9. For further information, refer to the EqIA guidance for staff.
10. For advice and support, contact:  
Minakshee Patel  
Corporate Equality & Diversity Advisor  
[minakshee.patel@rugby.gov.uk](mailto:minakshee.patel@rugby.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01788 533509

## Equality Impact Assessment

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Economic Development</b>
<b>Policy/Service being assessed</b>	<b>Additional Restrictions Grant</b>
<b>Is this is a new or existing policy/service? If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment</b>	<b>New</b>
<b>EqlA Review team – List of members</b>	<b>David Moore Minakshee Patel</b>
<b>Date of this assessment</b>	<b>13 August 2021</b>
<b>Signature of responsible officer (to be signed after the EqlA has been completed)</b>	<b>David Moore</b>

A copy of this Equality Impact Assessment report, including relevant data and information to be forwarded to the Corporate Equality & Diversity Advisor.

If you require help, advice and support to complete the forms, please contact Minakshee Patel, Corporate Equality & Diversity Advisor via email: [minakshee.patel@rugby.gov.uk](mailto:minakshee.patel@rugby.gov.uk) or 01788 533509

**Details of Strategy/ Service/ Policy to be analysed**

<b><u>Stage 1 – Scoping and Defining</u></b>	
(1) Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the Strategy/Service/Policy (or decision)?	To provide Additional Restrictions Grant to businesses in Rugby to enable recovery
(2) How does it fit with Rugby Borough Council's Corporate priorities and your service area priorities?	To provide excellent, value for money services and sustainable growth To Promote sustainable growth and economic prosperity To Ensure that the council works efficiently and effectively
(3) What are the expected outcomes you are hoping to achieve?	To provide additional financial assistance to businesses as they recover from the COVID pandemic
(4) Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customers</li> <li>• Employees</li> <li>• Wider community or groups</li> </ul>	The policy will affect businesses
<b><u>Stage 2 - Information Gathering</u></b>	
As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).	
(1) What does the information tell you about those groups identified?	The scheme will be administered by the CW Growth Hub who will use their business intelligence research and target process to identify businesses needing recovery support

Appendix 2

<p>(2) Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the strategy/ service/policy you want to implement? If yes, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?</p>	<p>We have consulted with CW Growth Hub who will be using their business intelligence to identify relevant businesses</p>		
<p>(3) If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary.</p>	<p>This will be undertaken by CW Growth Hub through their business intelligence and targeting process, review of applications for the grant and discussions with those businesses and recommendation for grant awards will be made to Rugby Borough Council with details of those consultations</p>		
<p><b><u>Stage 3 – Analysis of impact</u></b></p>			
<p><b><u>(1)Protected Characteristics</u></b>                  From your data and consultations is there any positive, adverse or negative impact identified for any particular group, which could amount to discrimination?                   If yes, identify the groups and how they are affected.</p>	<p><b>RACE</b>  No</p>	<p><b>DISABILITY</b>  No</p>	<p><b>GENDER</b>  No</p>
	<p><b>MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP</b>  No</p>	<p><b>AGE</b>  No</p>	<p><b>GENDER REASSIGNMENT</b>  No</p>
	<p><b>RELIGION/BELIEF</b>  No</p>	<p><b>PREGNANCY MATERNITY</b>  No</p>	<p><b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b>  No</p>

Appendix 2

<p><u>(2) Cross cutting themes</u>                  (a) Are your proposals likely to impact on social inequalities e.g. child poverty, geographically disadvantaged communities? If yes, please explain how?                   (b) Are your proposals likely to impact on a carer who looks after older people or people with disabilities? If yes, please explain how?</p>	<p>No                   No</p>
<p>(3) If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>(4) What actions are going to be taken to reduce or eliminate negative or adverse impact? (this should form part of your action plan under Stage 4.)</p>	<p>The scheme will be operated with the HM Government Additional Restrictions Grant guidelines</p>
<p>(5) How does the strategy/service/policy contribute to the promotion of equality? If not what can be done?</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>(6) How does the strategy/service/policy promote good relations between groups? If not what can be done?</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>(7) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes how can they be overcome?</p>	<p>No</p>



**Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review & Monitoring**

If No Further Action is required then go to – Review & Monitoring

(1) Action Planning – Specify any changes or improvements that can be made to the service or policy to mitigate or eradicate negative or adverse impact on specific groups, including resource implications.

**EqlA Action Plan**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>	<b>Resource requirements</b>	<b>Comments</b>

(2) Review and Monitoring  
State how and when you will monitor policy and Action Plan

The Grant scheme will be monitored and reviewed regularly against the fund allocated. The scheme is being operated in three tranches which will enable review at the end of each tranche period as follows:

- September to November 2021
- December 2021 to January 2022
- February to March 2022

Please annotate your policy with the following statement:

**‘An Equality Impact Assessment on this policy was undertaken on (date of assessment) and will be reviewed on (insert review date).’**