

## For publication

### **Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme Addendum (April 2021)**

<b>Meeting:</b>	Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Customers
<b>Date:</b>	09 April 2021
<b>Cabinet portfolio:</b>	Business Transformation and Customers
<b>Directorate:</b>	Digital, HR and Customer Services

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

- 1.1 To approve the Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme Addendum (April 2021) for Chesterfield Borough Council.

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme Addendum (April 2021) for Chesterfield Borough Council is approved and implemented.
- 2.2 That the Service Director – Digital, HR and Customer Services, in conjunction with the Service Director – Economic Growth and the Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Customers, is given delegated authority to complete regular reviews of the scheme, ensuring Grant funds are fully utilised for the benefit of local businesses.

#### **3.0 Reasons for recommendations**

- 3.1 To enable Chesterfield Borough Council to distribute Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme funding, to the benefit of local businesses and the local economy.

#### **4.0 Report details**

- 4.1 Chesterfield Borough Council has been allocated a total of £3,029,832 to enable it to provide additional support to businesses which are

under national and local restrictions as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. The Government had originally advised that the funds were to be used across two financial years, 2020/2021 and 2021/2022.

4.2 In March 2021, however, the Government advised that further Additional Restrictions Grant funding would be made available to Local Authorities from 1 April 2021 on the proviso that existing grant allocations had been fully allocated to local businesses.

4.3 Chesterfield Borough Council had resolved to retain £1,000,000 of Additional Restrictions Grant funding to support Chesterfield businesses in the event that further national or regional restrictions were implemented in 2021/2022 and to fund bespoke business support and advice to help invigorate the local economy as Chesterfield borough recovers from the coronavirus pandemic. In order to maximise the availability of further Government grant support to Chesterfield businesses, it is recommended that the current scheme is revised and that the retained grant funds are made available immediately to eligible local businesses.

4.4 Appendix A of this report sets out revised eligibility criteria for the Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme.

## **5.0 Alternative options**

5.1 Consideration has been given to continuing to provide regular monthly grant payments to affected businesses during 2021/2022, but taking this approach would mean that the Council would not receive further funding from the Government and Chesterfield businesses would not benefit from the Council being able to access the maximum amount of Government grant support available to it. This approach has therefore been disregarded.

## **6.0 Implications for consideration – Council Plan**

6.1 Delivery of the Additional Restrictions Grant scheme will support our Council Plan priority to make Chesterfield a thriving borough, by providing financial support to local businesses who have been adversely impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.

## **7.0 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money**

- 7.1 Chesterfield Borough Council has to date been allocated £3,029,832 in Additional Restrictions Grant funding to support Chesterfield businesses and our local economy. The funding had originally been allocated to enable the Council to provide support to Chesterfield businesses up to March 2022. However, the Government has since resolved to make available further grant money on the proviso that the original allocation is fully defrayed prior to June 2021.
- 7.2 Appendix A of this report provides further detail of how the £1,000,000 which had been set aside, will be used to further support businesses.
- 7.3 Delegated authority is sought for the Service Director – Digital, HR and Customer Services, in consultation with the Service Director – Economic Growth and the Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Customers, to complete regular reviews of the scheme, ensuring Grant funds are fully utilised for the benefit of local businesses.
- 7.4 New burdens funding will be provided by the Government to support the administration of this scheme.

## **8.0 Implications for consideration – Legal**

- 8.1 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides Local Authorities with the powers to make these grant payments.
- 8.2 Privacy notices and Data Protection impact assessments have been completed for this new process.
- 8.3 Chesterfield Borough Council provides regular progress updates to Central Government with regards to the development and implementation of its Additional Restrictions Grant scheme.

## **9.0 Implications for consideration – Human resources**

- 9.1 Responsibility for implementation of the scheme rests with the Service Director – Digital, HR and Customer Services, supported by several officers from across the Council, who have been brought together to form a temporary business grants team. Temporary recruitment may be required to sustain timely and sound administration of the scheme as the Council's Customer Services Centre reopens to the public.

These posts will be funded via the new burdens funding that the Council has received.

## 10.0 Implications for consideration – Risk management

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action	Impact	Likelihood
Over subscription of the grant	High	High	The Policy provides clarity on the eligibility for the scheme. Regular review mechanisms have been built into the administration of the scheme, ensuring that as many Chesterfield businesses as possible can benefit from funding.	High	Low
Administration backlogs will delay grant payments made to Chesterfield businesses	High	High	Adequate resources have been identified to support this process, with the ability to scale the team where necessary	High	Low
Grant payment is made to ineligible people.	High	Medium	The policy provides clarity on grant eligibility. The process for grant payment requires supporting evidence to be submitted. The application is clear that ineligible payments will be subject to recall and possible fraud investigation.	Medium	Low

## **11.0 Implications for consideration – community wellbeing**

11.1 The provision of financial support to eligible businesses during this challenging period will go some way towards strengthening their ongoing viability and therefore, may help to limit unemployment levels within the borough. Taking this action should have a positive impact on the mental wellbeing of the men and women that make up our business community, many of which are already asking for additional support to keep their businesses afloat.

## **12.0 Implications for consideration – Economy and skills**

12.1 The Additional Restrictions Grant scheme is directed at those businesses which are not eligible to receive the Local Restrictions Grant, but which have been significantly impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.

## **13.0 Implications for consideration – Climate Change**

13.1 The Council has developed an online application form and will ensure that grant payments are credited directly to business bank accounts. This will reduce the need for paper transactions and travel between business premises and council offices.

## **14.0 Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity**

14.1 The scheme has been developed to ensure that businesses excluded from the Local Restrictions Grant scheme within Chesterfield borough can receive support during the Coronavirus pandemic, subject to meeting the scheme's eligibility criteria.

14.2 Eligibility for the scheme will be regularly reviewed to reflect the impact of national and local restrictions.

## Decision information

<b>Key decision number</b>	<b>Decision taken under delegated authority granted by the Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Customers on 13 November, 2020</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	<b>All wards</b>

## Document information

<b>Report author</b>	
<b>Damon Bruce, Head of Operations</b> <b>Rachel O'Neil, Service Director - Digital, HR and Customer Services</b>	
<b>Background documents</b> These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
<i>This must be made available to the public for up to 4 years.</i>	
<b>Appendices to the report</b>	
Appendix 1	Additional Restrictions Grant Addendum (April 2021) for Chesterfield Borough