

For publication

The Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme Addendum (January 2022)

Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Customers
Date:	04 January 2022
Cabinet portfolio:	Business Transformation and Customers
Directorate:	Digital, HR and Customer Services

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To approve the Local Authority Additional Restrictions Grant scheme addendum (January 2022) for Chesterfield Borough Council.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Chesterfield Borough Council's Local Authority Additional Restrictions Grant scheme addendum (January 2022) is approved and implemented.
- 2.2 That the Service Director – Digital, HR and Customer Services carries out a further review of Chesterfield Borough Council's Local Authority Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Customers, on receipt of any additional grant funds which may be allocated by Central Government to ensure that they are appropriately spent by 31 March 2022.

3.0 Reasons for recommendations

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

4.0 **Report details**

- 4.1 Central Government allocated Chesterfield Borough Council £3,029,832 of Additional Restrictions Grant funding to be used during the financial years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, to provide extra support to local businesses who have been adversely affected by the Coronavirus pandemic.
- 4.2 £2,805,569 of the Additional Restrictions Grant funding received has already been awarded to Chesterfield businesses. £224,263 of this funding stream remains, enabling a further round of grants to be distributed to Chesterfield businesses.
- 4.3 This report sets out the eligibility criteria for the new round of Additional Restrictions Grant funding, in the form of an addendum to the original scheme. The revised scheme is attached at Appendix A.
- 4.4 On 21 December 2021, Central Government also announced that Local Authorities would receive a further top up of Additional Restrictions Grant funding, to be used to support local businesses who remain severely impacted by coronavirus and the rise of the Omicron variant. Chesterfield Borough Council will review the Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme again to determine eligibility for the additional funding and ensure that it is defrayed prior to 31 March 2022.

5.0 **Alternative options**

- 5.1 Consideration has been given to retaining the current scheme eligibility criteria. However, this does not allow the Council to allocate the remaining funds quickly enough to businesses who may be in urgent need of additional support.
- 5.2 The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has also recently written to council Leaders urging councils to pay out any remaining funds as quickly as possible.

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 been allocated £3,029,832 in Additional Restrictions Grant funding to support Chesterfield businesses and our local economy. £224,260 of this funding remains and must be defrayed by 31 March 2022. The new scheme eligibility criteria will enable these remaining funds to be immediately allocated to local businesses who have been impacted by the Omicron variant of the virus.
- 7.2 New burdens funding has been provided to support the administration of the Additional Restrictions Grant scheme.
- 7.3 An additional top up of Additional Restrictions Grant funding will be provided to local government in January 2022. The scheme will be reviewed and updated with further changes made to eligibility criteria (as required) once the additional level of funding is received.
- 7.4 Chesterfield Borough Council provides regular reports to Central Government detailing how the Additional Restrictions Grant scheme funding has been awarded.

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.

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. 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 businesses eligible for the remaining grant funding	High	High	The scheme provides clarity on eligibility. Regular review mechanisms are built into the administration of the scheme ensuring that as many 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, funded by new burdens administration payments from central government	High	Low
Grant payment is made to ineligible people	High	Medium	The scheme provides clarity on eligibility. The application is clear	Medium	Low

			that ineligible payments will be subject to recall and possible fraud investigation. Payment assurance processes are in place.		
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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 remaining Additional Restrictions Grant scheme funding will be prioritised to supporting hospitality businesses within the borough, who have been adversely affected by the latest wave of covid-19 due to footfall into their establishments being significantly reduced.

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 as many Chesterfield businesses as possible 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

Key decision number	
Wards affected	All wards

Document information

Report author	
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Background documents	
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
Appendices to the report	
Appendix 1	The Additional Restrictions Grant Discretionary Scheme Addendum (January 2022)