



Doncaster Council

Report

26th October, 2020

To: Mayor Jones

Revised Local Restrictions Support Grant Scheme – Tier 3

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Mayor Jones	All	Yes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. From 24th October 2020, all four of the South Yorkshire authorities including Doncaster will move into Tier 3. A package of financial support for businesses and their employees has been agreed between central government and the South Yorkshire Mayor totalling £30 million. In addition to this, the government has made available a Revised Local Restrictions Support Grant (RLRSG) Scheme for any businesses required to close due to the local restrictions. This decision refers to that government grant only. Further decisions will follow regarding the allocation of the £30 million. In South Yorkshire's case, the following closures have been agreed from 24th October 2020:

- Pubs who do not serve meals;
- Casinos;
- Adult Gaming Centres;
- Betting Shops; and
- Soft Play Centres.

Also, nightclubs and sexual entertainment venues from 1st November 2020 and any other venues that the government deem to be covered by the RLRSG.

2. The level of payment is:

- Under 15,000 rateable value - £667 per 2 weeks, £1,334 a month;
- 15,000 to 51,000 rateable value - £1,000 per 2 weeks, £2,000 a month; and
- Over 51,000 rateable value - £1,500 per 2 weeks, £3,000 a month.

3. The scheme will be open from Monday 26th October 2020 for applications and will be payable for the period of closure starting 24th October 2020 and 1st November respectively. It is envisaged that this will be for 4 weeks in the first instance but the actual end dates for all is unknown at this point. The full cost is unknown at this point and will be met from the Local Restrictions Support Grant.

EXEMPT REPORT

4. This report is not exempt.

REASON FOR URGENCY

5. The decision is urgent in nature due to the need to start the application scheme on 26th October given business closures will start on 24th October 2020.
6. The nature and urgency of the decision means it would not be practical to provide the 28 days' notice normally required for a key decision or to wait for a call in period before implementation. This decision is therefore being taken in accordance with Access to information Rule 16 Special Urgency detailed within Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7. It is recommended that Mayor Jones:
 - Accepts the funding provided by Government in relation to this initiative; and
 - Approves the payment of the Revised Local Restrictions Support Grant - Tier 3 to eligible businesses in line with the issued government criteria and guidelines.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

8. From 24th October 2020, Doncaster citizens who own businesses in the categories mentioned in this report and are required to close due to Doncaster moving into Tier 3, will be in receipt of a government grant at the financial level also set out in this report.

BACKGROUND

9. The purpose of the Revised Local Restrictions Support Grant (RLRSG) – Tier 3 is to support businesses that were open as usual, providing services in person to customers from their business premises, but which have then been required to close due to local lockdown restrictions imposed by government.
10. A business may be eligible if it:
 - occupies property on which it pays business rates;
 - is in a local lockdown area and has been required to close because of the formal publication of local restrictions guidance; and
 - is unable to provide its usual in-person customer service from its premises.

11. In Doncaster, this includes the following from 24th October 2020:

- Pubs who do not serve meals;
- Casinos;
- Adult Gaming Centres;
- Betting Shops; and
- Soft Play Centres.

Also, nightclubs and sexual entertainment venues from 1st November 2020 and any other venues that the government deem to be covered by the RLRSG.

12. The level of payment is:

- Under 15,000 rateable value - £667 per 2 weeks, £1,334 a month;
- 15,000 to 51,000 rateable value - £1,000 per 2 weeks, £2,000 a month; and
- Over 51,000 rateable value - £1,500 per 2 weeks, £3,000 a month.

13. Eligible businesses will get one grant for each property liable for business rates within the lockdown zone. All evidence will be checked before payments are made. The full cost is not yet known until businesses apply and the full timescale of the restrictions are known.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

14. There is only one option. To award the business support grant in line with the government guidance detailed above. This is the recommended option.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

15. This scheme will financially assist Doncaster businesses with their costs and income whilst having to close.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

16.

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment 	<p>This business support grant will contribute to assisting businesses to meet their costs during closure and with other financial assistance, assist in maintaining jobs for local people.</p>
	<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster • More people can live in a good 	

	<p>quality, affordable home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport • Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage 	
	<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work 	
	<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	
	<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

17. There is a risk that fraud or error will occur. This risk will be mitigated by the verification and checking process that will occur as part of the process.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Initials: SRF Date: 23/10/20]

18. As set out in the body of the report, the Government has asked that the Council administer this scheme. Guidance has been provided on the operation and delivery of this scheme and this should be followed including the eligibility criteria set out in this report

19. As set out in the body of the report, the Council will be reimbursed for costs incurred through this scheme.

20. Further legal advice may be required as the scheme becomes operational.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Initials: AT Date: 23/10/20]

21. The costs of this scheme are not yet available but all the costs are expected to be met from the Government via the Revised Local Restrictions Support Grant for both elements of the scheme referred to in the body of the report. Payments will be made upfront and confirmation that they are closed will be required as part of the payment process.

22. In addition, New Burdens will be provided to the Council for administering the scheme. The extent of this funding is not yet available. The exact funding guidance and funding allocations have not yet been received but the scheme will be developed in line with that guidance to recover the costs and enable the required reporting and evidence to be supplied.

23. The general principle applies that Local Authorities are responsible and accountable for the lawful use of funds under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. The Section 151 Officer within the Local Authority is required to exercise their duties in line with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) guidance, ensuring their oversight of the proper administration of financial affairs within the Local Authority including these grants. Local Authorities must be satisfied that all State aid requirements have been fully met and complied with when making grant payments.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Initials: KM Date:23/10/20]

24. There are no immediate HR implications associated with this report.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Initials: JG Date : 23/10/20]

25. The digital solution to enable on-line applications has been developed and tested and will be ready for the 26th October start date for applications.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Initials: RS Date: 23/10/20]

26. The support grant scheme will go some way to mitigate the indirect health impacts of lockdown, which are required as part of tier to contain the spread of COVID-19.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Initials: JG Date: 23/10/20]

27. Businesses who do not have on-line access will have the ability to apply over the phone and drop in or post any required evidence. There are no other equality implications.

CONSULTATION

28. Consultation has occurred and will continue with central government to ensure the guidance and process are implemented correctly.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

29. There are no background papers to this report.

REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS

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