



Reading
Borough Council
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DECISION BOOK

Issue: 633 Date: 7 JUNE 2021

Decisions set out in the book have been made under delegated powers by the Chief Executive, Executive Directors or the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer, in consultation either with the relevant committee or Lead Councillor.

The Decision Book process has been altered to suspend the current Councillors' call-in arrangements within the 10-day period after its publication and replace it with the ability during that period for three Councillors to request a retrospective review of the decision in writing to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

The decision book can be accessed on the Council's website - <https://democracy.reading.gov.uk/mgListOfficerDecisions.aspx?bcr=1&BAM=0>

The officer reports accompanying the decisions are attached.

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DECISION BOOK - ISSUE 633 - 7 JUNE 2021

1. ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS GRANT FUND

<u>DECISION</u>	<u>LEAD</u> <u>COUNCILLOR(S)</u>	<u>WARDS</u> <u>AFFECTED</u>	<u>PAGE</u> <u>NO.</u>
1. ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS GRANT FUND	COUNCILLOR BROCK	BOROUGHWIDE	1

This report sets out the decision to amend the Additional Restrictions Grant Fund Scheme.

It is the decision of the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council that an Additional Restrictions Grant Fund Scheme in respect of 3 priority business types and a hardship fund for businesses located in the Reading Borough meeting the following criteria is introduced:

- up to £6,000 per premises for non-essential retail businesses not in the rating system (as defined - Annex A)
- up to £18,000 per premises for hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym businesses not in the rating system (as defined - Annex A)
- £5,000 to support individuals licenced in the Hackney Carriage and Driving Instructor professions that have not received support under any grant scheme administered by the Council
- A hardship' fund for rate-paying and non rate-paying businesses who have not received support under any grant schemes administered by the Council and require support due to demonstrable financial vulnerability. Businesses will where appropriate need to demonstrate fixed building related costs outside of their residential property costs and provide significant evidence of financial vulnerability. In determining these applications, we will consider the impact that the failure of these businesses would have on the economic development of the borough and on the business rates revenue of the Council.

That a tiered payment approach is introduced as follows in respect of the 3 priority business types:

Non-essential retail businesses not in the rating list which can demonstrate fixed property costs (outside of normal residential property costs and staffing costs), aligning with the Restart Grant Scheme for those properties in the rating system:

- £2,667 with annual rental/mortgage value of £15,000 or under
- £4,000 with annual rental/mortgage value of over £15,000 and less than £51,000
- £6,000 with annual rental/mortgage value of exactly £51,000 or above

Non-essential retail businesses not in the rating list which can demonstrate other fixed costs (outside of normal residential property costs and staffing costs):

- £1,778 with fixed annual costs of £15,000 or under
- £2,666 with fixed annual costs of over £15,000 and less than £51,000
- £4,000 with fixed annual costs of exactly £51,000 or above

Hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym businesses not in the rating system which can demonstrate fixed property costs (outside of normal residential property costs and staffing costs), aligning with the Restart Grant for those properties in the rating system:

- £8,000 with annual rental/mortgage value of £15,000 or under
- £12,000 with annual rental/mortgage value over £15,000 and less than £51,000
- £18,000 with annual rental/mortgage value of exactly £51,000 or above

Hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym businesses not in the rating system which can demonstrate other fixed costs (outside of normal residential property costs and staffing costs):

- £5,333 with fixed annual costs of £15,000 or under
- £8,000 with fixed annual costs of over £15,000 and less than £51,000
- £12,000 with fixed annual costs of exactly £51,000 or above

Individuals licenced in the Taxi and Driving Instructor professions that have not received support under any grant scheme administered by the Council:

£5,000 Self-employed driving instructors resident in the Borough that can demonstrate fixed costs

£5,000 Self-employed licenced (by Reading) Hackney Carriage owners that are actively working the rank as at 1st April 2021 that can demonstrate fixed costs

That the level of individual award from the hardship fund will be determined on a case-by-case basis upon closure of a 1-week application window, to enable demand to be established and support to be awarded to the maximum number of eligible applicants. The application window may be extended should funding remain available.

That a 1-week application window will run from 31 May 2021 to 6 June 2021 inclusive.

That the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Lead Councillor for Corporate and Consumer Services, review the policy in June 2021. The Council reserves the right to modify eligibility criteria, and funding thresholds, as a result.

2. LOCAL RESTRICTIONS GRANT SCHEME (OPEN) FUND

<u>DECISION</u>	<u>LEAD COUNCILLOR(S)</u>	<u>WARDS AFFECTED</u>	<u>PAGE NO.</u>
2. LOCAL RESTRICTIONS GRANT SCHEME (OPEN) FUND	COUNCILLOR	BOROUGHWIDE /WARD	39

This report sets out the decision to implement the Local Restrictions Grant Scheme (Open) Fund.

It is the decision of the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council that a Local Restrictions Grant Scheme (Open) Fund in respect of Businesses in hospitality, leisure, accommodation and retail sectors that have been suffering from reduced demand will receive backdated grants for the time spent in Tier 2.

Business types meeting the following criteria will be eligible to apply:

- Be operating in the hospitality, leisure, accommodation and retail sector, according to valuation Office records at the beginning of the lockdown period (see Appendix 1)
- Be registered for Business Rates
- Provide in-person services from the premises registered for Business Rates
- Have been actively trading from the premises prior to the Tier 2 restrictions coming into force (or if preceded by other restrictions, trading at the point of restrictions being imposed)
- Have not been required to close and be able to demonstrate that they have been severely impacted by the Tier 2 restrictions in place between 2nd December and 18th December 2020
- Not be in administration, insolvent or had a striking off notice

A three-tier payment approach will be introduced as follows:

£567.00 for the 17-day qualifying restriction period with a rateable value of £15,000 or under

£850.00 for the 17-day qualifying restriction period with a rateable value of over £15,000 and less than £51,000

£1,275.00 for the 17-day qualifying restriction period with a rateable value of exactly £51,000 or above

That an application window will run from 8 March 2021 to 31 March 2021 inclusive.

3. TEST AND TRACE DISCRETIONARY ISOLATION SUPPORT PAYMENT SCHEME

<u>DECISION</u>	<u>LEAD COUNCILLOR(S)</u>	<u>WARDS AFFECTED</u>	<u>PAGE NO.</u>
3. TEST AND TRACE DISCRETIONARY ISOLATION SUPPORT PAYMENT SCHEME	COUNCILLOR	BOROUGHWIDE /WARD	70

This report sets out the decision to amend the Test and Trace Discretionary Isolation Support Payment Scheme.

It is the decision of the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council that a Test and Trace Discretionary Isolation Support Payment Scheme is introduced in respect of residents meeting the following criteria:

- they have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive; or
- they are the parent or guardian of a child or young person in the same household and need to take time off work to care for them while they self-isolate. This is limited to one parent or guardian per household for the child or young person's self-isolation period; and
- they are employed or self-employed; and
- are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result; or
- cannot work from home while undertaking caring responsibilities and will lose income as a result, where the child or young person:
 - is aged 15 or under (or 25 or under with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC)) and normally attends an education or childcare setting; or
 - has been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace or by their education or childcare setting because they have been identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19; and
- they are on a low income (as defined below) and will face financial hardship as a result of not being able to work while they are in self-isolation; and
- are not currently in receipt of Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit; and
- are liable, or are the partner in the same household as someone who is liable, for rent or mortgage payments;

Low income is defined as less than £23,000 per annum and less than £5,000 in savings.

Applications must be received no later than 42-days (6-weeks) from the start date of the isolation period

Individuals in the same household can each make an application to receive a Test and Trace Discretionary Isolation Support Payment, if they each meet all the eligibility criteria in full.

An individual may make an application more than once but only:

- **if the individual is told to self-isolate multiple times; and**
- **they meet the eligibility criteria for each individual application; and**
- **the periods of self-isolation do not overlap**

Test and Trace Self Isolation Support Payments cannot be made to applicants whose income is lower than normal because they are furloughed. The payment is for individuals facing a reduction in income because they cannot work from home while self-isolating.