



# HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

## MANAGING DIRECTOR'S DECISION RECORD

Date of Decision: 15/10/2021

Department: Resources and Development

Division: Finance

Officer Making Decision: Managing Director, in consultation with the Leader (or in his absence the Deputy Leader), Chair of the relevant Committee (or in his absence Vice Chair) and Monitoring Officer.

Subject / Description & Reason for Decision: Following a grant award from Government, the Council introduced its Discretionary ARG scheme in November 2020.

This has been successful in getting out to local business £3m of funding to help with both the impact of Covid-19 and also to help businesses with restarting after easing of lockdown measures.

The final payment of grant has been received from Government and, of the £439,675 awarded, we have approximately £100,000 left unallocated to be spend by the end of March 2022.

The final unallocated figure will be confirmed at the end of October – a small number of Restart grant applications were made / identified after the deadline; where the criteria is met it is proposed to use ARG to fund these payments.

With businesses now firmly back open and recovering it is proposed that this £100,000 of funding be used to assist businesses with investment and growth to help build the local economy back up.

Grants of up to £10,000 would be offered on at least a 50% match funding basis to support local businesses that fulfilled the criteria of investing for growth.

Applications would be assessed and processed using the existing Council's Business Grants scheme that the Economic Growth Team already manage and administer as set out below. All grant awards will be made on the basis that drawdown can be made by March 2022.

### **Priority Sectors**

These are strategically aligned to the Hartlepool Council Economic Growth Strategy and TVCA SEP.

- Manufacturing (up to £10k)
- Process chemicals and energy (up to £10k)
- Logistics (up to £5k)
- Digital and Creative (up to £5k)
- Culture & Leisure (up to £5k)
- Business & Professional Services (up to £5k)

### **Priority Locations**

- Industrial Estates/Business Parks
- High Street/Town Centre
- Regeneration Areas

### **Priority Accommodation**

- Empty Property/or due to become empty (up to £5k)
- Industrial/Business Units (up to £5k)

The applicant will also need to demonstrate one or more of the following eligibility criteria:

- At least 50% private sector leverage
- Projected business growth
- Business relocation to Hartlepool
- Employment opportunities for Hartlepool residents
- Job safeguarding in Hartlepool

### **Grant Uses**

The proposed areas that grant can be used for include:

- Capital investment in plant and equipment
- Business premises improvement (new signage /internal improvements / external improvements / security)
- Business process improvement
- Administration costs (legal, financial, survey)
- Business rates relief if expanding floorspace
- Job creation or retention
- Relocation costs of business moving to Hartlepool

### **Outputs**

The proposed outputs for each project where grant support is awarded will include one or more of the following:

- Jobs created
- Jobs safeguarded
- Business relocation to Hartlepool
- Private sector leverage
- Leverage ratio
- Number of vacant units/buildings improved
- Number of vacant units/buildings occupied
- Business floorspace created
- Value added

Should any small residual balance be left unallocated by March 2022 this will be used to fund alternative Business Investment initiatives in line with the grant conditions.

Type of Decision: In accordance with Article 12 – 12.3 - the decision is not defined as a Key decision for the following reason:-  
The Expenditure is inevitable as a result of the Government providing a Section 31 grant ('New Burden' Funding) to help fund the impact of specific legislative commitments where there is no in year cost, or future commitment for the General Fund. Details of any Section 31 grants and the commitments which need to be funded will be reported to the Finance and Policy Committee and the relevant Policy Committee as soon as is reasonably practicable thereafter.

Nature of Delegation Being Exercised: Constitution Reference – CE15 – urgent decisions normally reserved to a Committee. The Managing Director (or in his/her absence the Director of Resources and Development) may take a decision normally reserved to Full Council or a Committee where:  
(a) Failure to take the decision quickly would, or would be likely to, harm the interests of the Council and the public.  
(b) The decision is so urgent that it cannot wait until the next meeting of the Committee at which the decision would normally be taken.

Alternative Options Considered & Rejected: A number of options were considered to support Hartlepool Businesses. The final proposals to assist businesses that are investing and growing were considered to give the best outputs to stimulate and grow the local economy beyond the Covid-19 pandemic.

Any Declared Register of Interest No

Signatures for retained copy only

Managing Director – Denise McGuckin

Decision made in consultation with:

Leader of the Council - Cllr Shane Moore

Chair of Economic Growth & Regeneration Committee –  
Cllr Paddy Brown

Chief Solicitor and Monitoring Officer – Hayley Martin