



## **Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council**

### **Cabinet**

**5<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

### **Report of the Head of Finance – Huw Jones**

**Matter for:** Decision

### **Extension of Grant Support to Non-Essential Retail Businesses affected by additional trading restrictions from 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

**Wards Affected:** All

#### **Purpose of report**

To enable the Council to make grant payments of £3,000 and £5,000 to eligible Businesses in Neath Port Talbot in line with the extended Welsh Government scheme.

This is an extension to the grant support scheme already announced by WG due to the continuation into February 2021 of the restrictions that initially came into effect on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

#### **Background**

The Welsh Government have announced grant funding to the Council in order to provide more grants of £3,000 and £5,000 to businesses affected by additional trading restrictions which came into effect on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and have now been extended into February 2021.

Those qualifying businesses who have already received a payment as a result of the December restrictions will receive a further instalment automatically.

Members will be aware that the businesses eligible for grants must meet one of the following criteria:

1. Non Essential Retail in the Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism sectors (NERHLT) in receipt of Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR)

and with a rateable value of £12,000 or less will be eligible for a **£3,000** payment. Supply chain businesses qualifying for SBRR will also be eligible for this support if they have greater than 40% reduction in turnover during the restriction period.

2. NERHLT businesses with a rateable value of between £12,001 and £51,000 will also be eligible for a **£5,000** payment if impacted by the restrictions. Supply chain businesses in the same rateable value bracket will also be eligible for this support if they have greater than 40% reduction in turnover during the restriction period.

An additional category has now been added for this round of grants:

3. NERHLT businesses with a rateable value of between £51,001 and £500,000 will also be eligible for a **£5,000** payment if impacted by the restrictions. Supply chain businesses in the same rateable value bracket will also be eligible for this support if they have greater than 40% reduction in turnover during the restriction period. This grant includes a new category of businesses that occupy properties with rateable value of between £150,001 and £500,000.

The application portal will remain open for any businesses who have not already been paid under the December restrictions scheme and for any which fall into the third category above.

The Council is required to adopt the scheme.

### **Qualifying Criteria**

A copy of the eligibility criteria for the grants are detailed in Appendix 1 to this report.

### **Financial Impact**

Welsh Government will reimburse the Council for all expenditure incurred.

### **Integrated Impact Assessment**

This report does not require an Integrated Impact Assessment.

### **Valleys Community Impacts**

Positive impact for business rates payers who fit the criteria for the relief and subsequent reduction in rates bill.

### **Workforce impacts**

There will be additional staff resource time required to review and process applications received.

### **Legal impact**

New applicants for the grant will need to provide a state aid declaration confirming that they will receive the funds within such rules. Payments made to previously paid applicants have already made such a declaration in the previous application.

### **Risk management**

There are no risk management implications associated with this scheme.

### **Consultation**

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

### **Reason for Urgency**

To allow grants to be paid to businesses who continue to be forced to close due to Covid-19 restrictions.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Members approve the making of grants to eligible Businesses for 2020/21 as set out in this report and in line with the guidance received from the Welsh Government.

### **Reason for proposed decision**

To enable the Council to make payments to eligible businesses in line with the Welsh Government Scheme

### **Implementation of decision**

The decision is proposed for immediate implementation.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Updated WG Grant Scheme Guidance Notes

### **List of background papers**

Local Government Finance Act 1988.  
Welsh Government Grant Scheme Guidance

### **Officer contact**

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### Eligibility Criteria

The new package consists of:

A further round of non-domestic rates linked grants.

Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) grants will be available for non-essential retail, hospitality, leisure and tourism (NERHLT) businesses. This is an extension of the Restrictions Business Fund to provide a single top up payment for businesses affected by national restrictions covering the period to the end of March. The grants themselves comprise:

1. NERHLT businesses in receipt of Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR) and with a rateable value of £12,000 or less will be eligible for a £3,000 payment. Supply chain businesses qualifying for SBRR will also be eligible for this support if they have greater than 40% reduction in turnover during the restriction period.
2. NERHLT businesses with a rateable value of between £12,001 and £51,000 will also be eligible for a £5,000 payment if impacted by the restrictions. Supply chain businesses in the same rateable value bracket will also be eligible for this support if they have greater than 40% reduction in turnover during the restriction period.
3. NERHLT businesses with a rateable value of between £51,001 and £500,000 will also be eligible for a £5,000 payment if impacted by the restrictions. Supply chain businesses in the same rateable value bracket will also be eligible for this support if they have greater than 40% reduction in turnover during the restriction period. This grant includes a new category of businesses that occupy properties with rateable value of between £150,001 and £500,000.

For businesses that registered for and received one of the above grants during the Firebreak period and/or the Restrictions Business Fund (which covered the December 2020 / January 2021 period), the local authority is being asked to process an automated one-off payment of the relevant amount into their bank accounts. For any qualifying businesses that did not register under either the Firebreak scheme or the Restrictions Business Fund, the local authority is being asked to keep open a registration process (using the pre-existing form) to enable these businesses to apply for a grant. The new cohort of businesses (RV between £150,001 and £500,000) will also need to complete the registration process.

The scheme guidance as co-developed between the Welsh Government, the WLGA and local authorities for the Restrictions Business Fund will remain in place unchanged and cover this extended period of operational delivery.

Those registered and eligible businesses should begin receiving payments into their bank account during February.