

Appendix 11 – Recommendation 6

ARG Schemes:

The Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) is a discretionary scheme and is targeted at businesses that; have been legally required to close due to local restrictions/ national lockdowns; or may not be required to close but have been severely impacted by local/national restrictions.

Round 1: Covering National lockdown (5th November –4th January 2021):

The business must be in one of the following categories:

Original criteria:

- Businesses who supply the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure and whose businesses are severely affected by restrictions.
- Businesses in the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure industry who are severely affected by the restrictions but who do not appear in the rating list with a rateable value but who have fixed costs such as business rent.

Extended to:

- Rateable businesses who are in the Supply Chain to an Industry that is forced to close and whose businesses are severely affected by restrictions; or
- Businesses who are required to close due to the restrictions (as defined on the Government website) but who do not appear in the rating list with a rateable value but who have business costs such as rent.

2nd December-30th December 2020 (Tier 3):

To qualify for this grant, your business must be paying business rates in the Borough of Stockton on Tees and has been:

- open as usual before the restrictions
- providing services in person to customers from the premises
- severely impacted by the local restrictions on socialising imposed by government

Businesses included in the scheme are:

Tier 3 restrictions

- leisure – such as leisure centres, gyms, swimming pools, fitness and dance studios, sports facilities
- halls and community centres
- wedding venues

31st December 2020- 4th January 2021 (Tier 4):

Business forced to close from 31st December 2020- 4th January 2021 due to the local lockdown restrictions and those who supply businesses in industries who have been forced to close.

Christmas Support for Wet-led pubs:

The Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs supports pubs that predominantly serve alcohol rather than provide food and have been severely impacted over the festive season due to temporary local restrictions.

Eligible businesses may be entitled to a one-off cash grant of £1,000 from their local council in areas under Tier 2 or Tier 3 local restrictions.

Round 2 - 5th January- 15th February 2021:

To be eligible you must meet one of the below criteria:

- Businesses who have been mandated to close due to the national restrictions (as defined on the Government website) but who do not appear in the rating list with a rateable value but who have fixed business costs such as rent, insurances, etc. (evidence required);
- Rateable businesses or businesses with fixed business costs, not forced to close but who can evidence they have been severely impacted due to national restrictions. (i.e. reduction in income of at least 30%) this does not include salaries/wages (evidence required);

A fixed cost is a cost that does not change over the short-term, even if a business experiences changes in its sales volume or other activity levels. This type of cost tends to instead be associated with a period of time, such as a rent payment in exchange for a month of occupancy. Applicants must be able to evidence a minimum of £100 monthly fixed business costs to be eligible for a grant. Any business with less than £100 monthly fixed business costs will be considered at the Council's discretion and may not fall into the grant amounts stipulated above. The purpose of this scheme is to support businesses to pay monthly fixed costs during lockdown periods.

Round 2, Cycle 2: Top-up payments made to those businesses eligible for round 2.

Round 3 Restart:

On 3 March 2021, Government announced the introduction of grant support for non-essential retail, hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym businesses in England. This support will take the form of a one-off payment and will support business rates payers.

We understand and recognise that not all businesses across the Borough are business rates payers and as such, we are supporting non-business rates payers to access Restart grants via our Additional Restriction Grant (ARG).

Eligibility:

- To support businesses within Leisure, Gym & Sport, Accommodation, non-essential Retail, personal care, or Hospitality (business mandated to close or supply chain to businesses mandated to close)

- Must be able to evidence business premise cost (evidence must be from the month of March 2021, businesses where premise cost has been subsidised will not be eligible, and if in receipt of a rent payment holiday, evidence of this must be provided)

Restart Top-ups:

The intention of the discretionary grant scheme (Round 3, Restart) is to support businesses who have been mandated to close or supply sectors mandated to close due to the national lockdown restrictions to re-open and restart. Our records show you have received this Restart payment, however, on 14 June 2021, the Prime Minister announced that step 4 of the roadmap out of restrictions was being delayed by a period of up to 4 weeks. We are therefore awarding businesses within the Leisure and Hospitality sectors with a one-off top-up payment to support the business throughout the delay period.

Strategic Grants: 1st June – 21st June 2021

Through our Additional Restriction Grants we have significantly supported businesses across the Borough that have been mandated to close, within supply chains to sectors mandated to close and those severely impacted by Covid-19. Particularly those businesses within non-essential retail, hospitality and leisure sectors, including those self-employed and home workers. In doing so we have tried to focus on sectors not eligible for the governments LRSG scheme.

However, we understand that not all sectors and businesses have been eligible for ARG grants and have now identified the following sectors as ones in which we'd like to support;

- o Manufacturing
- o Engineering
- o Energy
- o Environment
- o Life Sciences and Biotechnology
- o Digital and Creative Services
- o Logistics
- o Office Based Services
- o Chemicals and Process

If your business is within one of the above sectors, you have a Stockton-on-Tees business premise, you employ between 10-249 employees (evidence required) and you have been impacted by Covid-19, you may be eligible for a grant of up to £25,000.

Start-up:

New business or those that have been trading less than 12 months, (grants up to £5,000). Businesses will be referred to NEEAL to engage in workshops and one-to-ones and will be referred for a grant if they are eligible.

Isolation Grants:

£500 for personal care, leisure, retail

£1000 for hospitality (i.e. restaurants to cover additional costs of perishable stock items)

Must have business premises in Stockton

Grants will support fixed business costs for the 10-day isolation period

There won't be an application process as such, it will be at our discretion based on asking the business several questions to determine business closure, such as:

- o Number of employees?
- o How many isolating?
- o Has there been a positive case with staff or customer?
- o Evidence of PCR test for a member of staff
- o Evidence of isolation notice
- o Evidence of closure- Visit to premises may be carried out

Any businesses outside these sectors will be considered on an exceptional basis.

The scheme will be available from 19th July 2021 until further notice and paid retrospectively to those who have been recently affected.

Round 4- Omicron (21st December 2021-18th March 2022):

This scheme is aimed at supporting businesses who have a fixed business premise within Stockton-on-Tees and can evidence rent payment or business rates account (for Travel, Personal Care and Supply Chain businesses only. Business within the rating list within Leisure, Accommodation and Hospitality should apply for the Government Omicron grant scheme found here, <https://www.stockton.gov.uk/our-economy/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-businesses/omicron-hospitality-and-leisure-grant/>) that have been impacted by restrictions, or the Omicron variant including businesses within the following sectors: Hospitality, Leisure, Accommodation, Personal Care and Travel or a business that supplies one of these sectors.

Eligibility:

Original:

- Business within Hospitality, Leisure, Accommodation, Personal Care or Travel
- Supply Chain business to Hospitality, Leisure, Accommodation or Travel sector that can evidence more than 50% of sales/income is from supplying one of these sectors (evidence required)
- Have a fixed business premise in Stockton-on-Tees and can evidence rent payment (domestic premises not included)

- The business premises must be occupied, trading on 30 December 2021 and providing in-person services in the hospitality, leisure, accommodation, personal care or travel sectors. (evidence will be requested)

Extended/widened:

- Business within Hospitality, Leisure, Accommodation, Personal Care, Travel, Driving Instructors, Taxi Drivers/Private Hire
 - Supply Chain business to Hospitality, Leisure, Accommodation or Travel sector that can evidence more than 50% of sales/income is from supplying one of these sectors (evidence required)
 - Have a fixed business premise in Stockton-on-Tees and can evidence rent payment (domestic premises not included) or evidence of fixed costs relating to business vehicles (only applicable for driving instructors/taxi drivers)
 - The business premises must be occupied, trading on 30 December 2021 and providing in-person services in the hospitality, leisure, accommodation, personal care or travel sectors. (evidence will be requested). Evidence relating to vehicles must be prior to 30th December and most recent fixed cost payment.
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Recovery Scheme

Business support the aim of the business support scheme is to support Stockton based businesses to identify needs/requirements to recover from the pandemic, this could include;

- Investing in new developments that increase efficiency,
- Enhance access to new markets i.e. through marketing/promotion campaigns improving competitiveness to enhance sustainable business growth,
- Workforce development through skills and training,
- Recruitment support
- Adaptations to premises

All businesses will be required to undertake a business diagnostic via our business specialist (EMS). Business specialists will work with businesses to conduct a SWOT analysis/diagnostic which in-turn will create an action plan setting out key requirements to support business recovery. If the business would benefit from a grant referral to be made back to the Council for consideration.

Indigenous Growth Fund - Stockton-on-Tees Business Investment & Growth Fund:

Business Investment & Growth Fund is a scheme to help businesses innovate and grow. Supported by TVCA's Indigenous Growth Fund the scheme provides grants to support inward investment and business growth, where a business has not been in receipt of funding through the Council's Business Recovery Support Scheme or TVCA's Growth Fund. The main aim of the Council's business investment & growth fund scheme is to promote area regeneration and enhance inclusive economic growth.

Targeted at small and medium enterprise businesses, alongside sole traders and freelancers, they will be able to apply for the fund to help them grow their business or implement innovative ways of working to enhance sustainability and productivity. Examples include investment of business accommodation and fit-out such as floorspace improvement/expansion, shop front improvements, marketing and promotion and making use of new technologies to support growth including increasing automation/digitisation. As well as the regeneration of vacant and derelict land and property.

Grants from £10k to £50k are available only in conjunction with projects that create new jobs (evidence of such will be required). Jobs should provide local people with long-term prospects, including sustainable employment that allows access to learning and coherent pathways with progression pathways (linking to Local Skills Plans).

Key employment locations such as Wynyard Business Park, Teesdale Business Park, Durham Lane Industrial Park, Teesside Industrial Estate and Belasis Business Park as well as the major industrial areas of North Tees and Seal Sands are each home to major international business specialising in petro-chemicals, energy, biotechnologies and advanced manufacturing. Alongside these, specialist business incubation facilities such as Fusion Hive on North Shore which serve the emerging digital and creative sector, are priority sectors and locations identified for support through the Council's Business Investment & Growth Fund scheme.