

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

OFFICER DECISION REPORT

Report Title	Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) 5 – Discretionary Business Grant Scheme			
Purpose of Report	To record the decision made with regards to adopting the scheme			
Decision(s)	A decision has been made to: a) Adopt the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) 5 – Discretionary Business Grant Scheme b) Section 151 officer is authorised to make technical scheme amendments			
Consultation and Feedback	Group Leaders of all four parties have been consulted together with the Chief Executive and Section 151 officer			
Report Author	Simon Killen, Revenue and Benefits Manager Email: simon.killen@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	None			
Background Papers	Government Guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-restrictions-support-grants-lrsg-and-additional-restrictions-grant-arg-guidance-for-local-authorities			
Appendices	Appendix A - Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) 5 – Discretionary Business Grant Scheme			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	No

1. Background to the Additional Restrictions Grant

- 1.1 The ARG is the discretionary business support fund introduced by Central Government for local authorities. It was first awarded to SDC in the second national lockdown period and a policy was put in place to distribute.
- 1.2 The ARG has continued throughout the local and national restrictions. This is the 4th scheme to be introduced to coincide with the lifting of restrictions.
- 1.3 The allocations awarded to SDC to date are in the table below.

	Allocation
“Lockdown 2”	£2,399,280
December Tiers	£1,065,646
Top Up	£1,034,343
Total	£4,498,639

- 1.4 The full allocation of funding from Lockdown 2 and December Tiers has been awarded from ARG 1 2 & 3 which has unlocked a further top up allocation of funding of £1,034,343

- 1.5 The ARG is discretionary in nature and is intended to support businesses through this time of severe economic stress. Local Authorities have the freedom to decide their own policies and determine how the money is spent.
- 1.6 The council has £453,232 left of the ARG funding, which is being made available to help those businesses most impacted due to the spread of coronavirus during December 2021.

2. Eligibility Criteria

- 2.1 For the purpose of this scheme the Council has decided that the following eligibility criteria must be met in order to receive an Additional Restriction Grant.

Hospitality

For the purpose of this scheme, a hospitality business can be defined as a business whose main function is to provide a venue for the consumption and sale of food and drink.

The Council will use the following criteria to assess whether a business is eligible for a ARG payment.

- Businesses offering in person food and drink service to the general public
- Businesses that provide food and/or drink services to be consumed on the premises, including outdoors

The following businesses are considered eligible as hospitality:

- Public houses and pub restaurants
- Wine Bars
- Restaurants
- Cafes
- Food Courts
- Roadside restaurants

For the purpose of this scheme, the following businesses are considered as not eligible as hospitality.

- Food kiosks
- Businesses whose main service is a takeaway

3. Award Levels

- 3.1 The Council has decided the following grant award levels
 - Hospitality businesses occupying hereditaments on the local rating list with a rateable value of exactly £15,000 or under on 07/12/2021 will receive a payment of up to £1,600
 - Hospitality businesses occupying hereditaments on the local rating list with a rateable value over £15,000 and less than £51,000 on 07/12/2021 will receive a payment of up to £3,100

- Hospitality businesses occupying hereditaments on the local rating list with a rateable value of exactly £51,000 or over on 07/12/2021 will receive a payment of up to £4,600

3.2 Payments will be made once the application has been checked and assessed.

3.3 The Council has complete discretion to determine and change the amount of grant award to businesses and there will be no right of appeal against the amount.

4. Excluded businesses

The following businesses will not be eligible for an award:

- a) Businesses in areas outside the scope of the localised restrictions, as defined by Government and not subject to a widespread national restriction;
- b) Businesses which have already received grant payments that equal the maximum levels of State aid permitted under the de minimis and the COVID-19 Temporary State Aid Framework; and
- c) Businesses that were in administration, are insolvent or where a striking-off notice has been made at the date of the local restriction or widespread national restriction.
- d) Businesses whose premises are not in the rating list.
- e) The council reserves the right to withhold payment and has discretion to determine which businesses to support

5. Recommendation

The scheme is adopted and implemented by Stroud District Council with immediate effect.

6. Financial Implications

The scheme is fully funded by central government.

Andrew Cummings – Strategic Director of Resources

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7. Legal Implications

This is a discretionary scheme to apply funding provided by Central Government and the discretionary element is covered by a policy which has been drafted by officers based on government guidance. Officers will need to apply the policy when administering grants, but a discretionary policy should not be treated as a rigid or strict rule and every case will be assessed on its particular circumstances.

Stephen Taylor – Monitoring Officer

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8. Equality Implications

There are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision.

9. Environmental Implications

There are no significant implications within this category