

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

OFFICER DECISION REPORT

Report Title	Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) 4 – 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) 4 – 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) 4 – 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

1.3 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

1.4 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.

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.

- Businesses must demonstrate how they have been severely impacted;
- Businesses with high fixed business costs whether that be rent, rates, lease/hire purchase costs, insurance, franchise payments or other costs that they wouldn't save by not trading.
- Any business failing to meet the criteria or failing to provide sufficient information to determine whether they meet the criteria will not be awarded a grant.
- There is no right of appeal

2.2 Businesses must fall into one of the following sectors:

- hospitality
- travel and tourism sector, including group travel, travel agents and tour operators
- wedding industries
- nightclubs
- theatres
- events industries
- taxis
- wholesalers
- English language schools
- breweries
- freelance and mobile businesses (including caterers, events, hair, beauty and wedding related businesses)

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

3. **Award Levels**

- Eligible businesses will receive a one off payment based on the number of successful applications received. Priority will be given to those businesses required to remain closed.
- No payments will be made until the application deadline has passed and all applications have been assessed.
- The Council has complete discretion to determine the amount of grant awarded to businesses and there will be no right of appeal against the amount.

Only one payment will be made in respect of this scheme.

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 that have no premises or other on-going fixed business costs.
- 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

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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.

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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