

7. MICROBUSINESS GRANT SCHEMES

REPORT OF: Programme Manager, Burgess Hill Growth Area
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Wards Affected: All
Key Decision No

Purpose of the report

1. The purpose of this report is to present requests from two recipients of microbusiness grant awards to change the purpose for which they were allocated a grant. There have been no new applications since the Cabinet Grants Panel held on 3rd July.

Summary

2. A summary of the applications to be considered and the recommendations from the Grants Assessment Group are as follows:

Organisation	Area of Benefit	Purpose for which award is sought	Suggested decision
Ops Angel	Haywards Heath	Original award for the “purchase of a laptop and projector”. Requested change to allow funds to buy a second laptop rather than a projector.	Agree to the change
Fine Baps	Haywards Heath	Original award for “the creation of an online ordering system along with associated marketing materials and advertising”. Requested change to allow some funds to go towards the purchase of a laptop/printer	Agree to the change

Recommendations

Members of the Panel are requested to

- a) consider and decide upon the recommendations for each of the above applications.***

Background

3. There have been no applications for grant funding since the July Panel. There is currently just £2,800 available so enough for one or two more recipients. We are waiting to hear from WSCC whether they will be running a similar scheme.
4. In the meantime, two applicants have requested to use their grant funding for a slightly different purpose than that of the original award. Both requests appear reasonable and the detail is set out below.
5. A full analysis of the allocation of the grants monies will be presented to the September panel.

Assessment and Policy Context

6. The requests received have been considered by Council Officers Rachel Ryan-Crisp and Gordon Reay (original assessments at annex A).
7. Fine Baps were awarded £2000 for the creation of an online ordering system along with associated marketing materials and advertising. They have subsequently requested whether some of the funds could be used to purchase a laptop with a printer in order to allow them to set the site up and launch it. This seems a reasonable request and mention of the need for a laptop was made in their original application.
8. OpsAngel received a total grant award of £2,000 - £1500 for an apprentice and a further £500 to buy a laptop and projector to facilitate offsite working. They have subsequently taken on an additional employee and have asked to use the grant funds to buy two laptops to enable both the apprentice and the new employee to work offsite. This also seems a reasonable request and within the spirit of the original request.

Financial Implications

9. As grants have already been awarded to the two businesses and they are not seeking a change in amount, there are no financial implications associated with this report.

Risk Management Implications

10. The main associated risk to the successful implementation of the decisions arising from this report is the inability of the funded organisations to carry out the services, activities or equipment purchase for which funding had been awarded.
11. To minimise this risk we have requested that recipient businesses provide proof of purchase of equipment or employment of the apprentice. We consider this a proportionate approach given the relatively small sums involved in this grant programme.

Equality implications

12. As part of the due diligence process all of the organisations for this funding from the Council have been assessed to be in compliance with the requisite policies/legislation.

Legal Implications

13. The Council is not obliged to provide grant funding, but by virtue of section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, it is able to do anything which it considers is likely to achieve the promotion of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of its area. This includes the incurring of expenditure, giving financial assistance to any person (or organisation) and entering into arrangements or agreements with any person.

Background Papers

14. Grant applications and associated documentation for the Microbusiness Grant Programme are held in the Burgess Hill Programme Management team.

Micro-business Grants Scheme

Town:	Haywards Heath
Project:	Purchase of laptop and projector; recruitment of an apprentice
Applicant:	Ops Angel
Type of business:	Business support
Grant Request to MSDC	£2000
Total project cost:	£1000 plus apprentice costs

Summary of project proposal and aims:

Assist with the purchase of a laptop and projector along with the recruitment of an apprentice.

Background

Ops Angel provides operational support to start-up and small businesses, helping them to establish appropriate internal systems and processes. They are seeking assistance with the recruitment of an apprentice to be located onsite in client premises and the purchase of a laptop and projector to allow the apprentice to deliver independently on-site without having to rely on client's equipment.

How does the project meet the stated criteria

Delivering wider outreach – by enabling direct on-site support through an embedded apprentice this project will help the business reach more customers.

Assisting with delivery of new business lines – not applicable

Enabling more employees to be taken on – the project will support the recruitment of an apprentice

Delivering community benefit – not applicable

Officer evaluation of the project

Ops Angel fits the criteria of a micro-business with just 1 full time employee. They have provided satisfactory proof that their company is properly constituted and are located within the District.

The grant funding will support the purchase of a laptop and projector along with the recruitment of an apprentice, which will allow the business to deliver services directly from their clients' premises. It will also enable the business to provide support to other small businesses in the area and help them to grow. This meets the overall aim of the grant programme (supporting the growth of microbusinesses and assisting micro-businesses with the recruitment of apprentices) and is therefore an appropriate project to receive support.

Recommendation

That a grant of £2000 is awarded to Ops Angel for the purchase of a laptop and projector along with the recruitment of an apprentice.

Micro-business Grants Scheme

Town:	Haywards Heath
Project:	New website including online ordering
Applicant:	Fine Baps
Type of business:	Catering and take-away food
Grant Request to MSDC	£2,000
Total project cost:	£4,000

Summary of project proposal and aims:

Upgrade of website to include an on-line ordering platform, along with the delivery of marketing materials including local advertising.

Background

Fine Baps provides a range of lunch foods as well as catering services. They are seeking assistance with improvements to their website to enable online ordering that will allow customers to order for delivery or collection, they are also seeking assistance with the development of marketing materials and local advertising in order to promote this new service.

How does the project meet the stated criteria

Delivering wider outreach – online ordering for delivery or collection will allow Fine Baps to reach a much wider customer base.

Assisting with delivery of new business lines – not applicable

Enabling more employees to be taken on – if the new approach generates the anticipated uplift in orders, the business anticipates taking on at least one more member of staff

Delivering community benefit – not applicable

Officer evaluation of the project

Fine Baps fits the criteria of a micro-business with 2 full time employees and 1 part time employee. They have provided satisfactory proof that their company is properly constituted and are located within the District.

The grant funding will support the delivery and marketing of an online ordering system which will allow the business to reach a wider customer base. This meets the overall aim of the grant programme (supporting the growth of microbusinesses) and is therefore an appropriate project to receive support

Recommendation

That a grant of £2000 is awarded to Fine Baps for the creation of an online ordering system along with associated marketing materials and advertising.