

Grant policy

Purpose of the scheme and background

1.0 The purpose of this document is to determine eligibility for a payment under the Council's Social Enterprise Accelerator Fund. The Council, as the Business Rates Billing Authority is responsible for payment of these grants under the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) guidance.

1.1 This discretionary grant scheme has been developed by Maldon District Council in response to an announcement made by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy made on 3 March 2021 which set out the basic circumstances whereby an additional restriction grant payment may be made by the Council to an eligible business which has to close or are severely affected due to localised or widespread national restrictions being put in place to manage coronavirus and save lives.

1.2 Whilst the awarding of grants will largely be at the Council's discretion, the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has set down criteria which must be met by each business making an application.

1.3 Funding under the ARG scheme is only available for the 2021/2022 financial year and all grants will be paid by 31st March 2022 in accordance with the Government guidance.

1.4 This ARG scheme will provide grant funding to eligible applicants meeting the eligibility criteria and activities which will develop a resilient social economy for the benefit of residents and local communities.

Funding

2.0 Under the ARG scheme provisions, local authorities have received limited funding from Central Government.

2.1 In view of that, should funding be exhausted, the Council reserves the right to either reduce the awards available or to close the scheme.

2.2 Applicants who have not been successful in obtaining a grant will be notified accordingly.

Eligibility criteria and awards

3.0 For the purposes of this scheme the Council has decided that the following businesses will be a priority for the fund:

Businesses that are;

- a. Social enterprise - An organisation that earns 50% or more of its income through trading, is registered/incorporated, has its social values written into its constitution, its surpluses and assets are used to support the social purpose and there is an asset lock. Social enterprises include co-operatives, community businesses and trading businesses owned by charities.
- b. Professional voluntary organisation - A registered charity but earns some income or wants to develop sustainable trading activities. Has paid staff and the majority of its income is from grants and service level agreements.
- c. Community organisation - Might have a constitution as an unincorporated association or be a charity, mostly dependent on volunteers and derives its income from small grants, donations and fees
- d. Social entrepreneur - Might be constituted as a Community Interest Company or Company Limited by Guarantee, but might also be a sole trader, could be trading but also seeking grant money. Will have a social purpose.
- e. Traditional business with corporate social responsibility - Many privately owned businesses do good things in their communities. To be eligible for this fund, if you are not one of the business types described above, the business must have a written CSR policy and be able to show how the money will be spent only on the social activities proposed.
- f. Town and Parish Councils.

3.1 In all cases the business must:

- Be based or primarily operate within the Local Authority area of Maldon District Council
- Be currently trading
- Be seeking grant funding to support the development of a resilient social economy to deliver activities that either directly benefit local people and communities and/or contribute towards the District's Climate Action Strategy.

Award Levels

4.0 Applications will be assessed individually against the above criteria, successful businesses who are deemed eligible by the council for Social Enterprise Accelerator Fund will receive a grant of the requested amount subject to all eligibility criteria being met and appropriate evidence being provided.

4.1 Applicants for grants of over £5,001 will be required to demonstrate that they have met standard commissioning requirements (such as getting three quotes for commissioned work). These will require a more detailed application and further supporting evidence.

4.2 Applicants for grants of over £10,000 must attend a meeting (likely to be by phone or online) with our programme managers. No bid of over £10,000 will be considered if you have not had an interview with our Partners, Social Enterprise East of England.

Exceptional cases

4.3 In exceptional circumstances we will consider bids of over £50,000 but this must be subject to an early discussion about your intentions with our Partners, Social Enterprise East of England.

Excluded businesses

5.0 Only one Social Enterprise Accelerator Fund grant will be awarded to any eligible business. This will also apply if more than one organisation Company has the same director (s) or where more than one business has the same proprietor (either sole trader or partnerships).

5.1 The following businesses will not be eligible for an award:

- Businesses that have already received grant payments that equal the maximum permitted levels of subsidy will not be eligible to receive funding; and
- For the avoidance of doubt, businesses that are in administration, insolvent or where striking-off notice has been made, are not eligible for funding under this scheme.

Who can receive the grant?

6.0 All businesses that are trading and meet other eligibility criteria may apply to receive funding under this scheme. There is no starting date from which businesses must have been trading in order to qualify for grant funding.

6.1 Where the Council has reason to believe that the information it holds about the business at the effective date is inaccurate, it may withhold or recover the grant and take reasonable steps to identify the correct ratepayer.

6.2 Where, it is subsequently determined that the records held are incorrect, the Council reserves the right to recover any grant incorrectly paid.

6.3 Where any business misrepresents information or contrives to take advantage of the scheme, the Council will look to recover any grant paid and take appropriate legal action. Likewise, if any ratepayer is found to have falsified records in order to obtain a grant.

How will grants be provided to Businesses?

7.0 The Council is fully aware of the importance of these grants to assist businesses and support the local community and economy. The Social Enterprise Accelerator Fund will aims to support and enhance growth, resilience and transformation after the Covid pandemic.

7.1 Details of how to obtain grants are available on our Partners website, Social Enterprise East of England Ltd www.seee.co.uk/maldon.

7.2 The closing deadline for applications is 15th March 2022.

7.3 In exceptional circumstances we will consider bids of over £50,000 but this must be subject to an early discussion about your intentions with our Partners, Social Enterprise East of England. The closing deadline for applications is 15th March 2022.

7.4 The Council and our Partner reserve the right to request supplementary information from organisations, and they should look to provide this, where requested, as soon as possible.

7.5 An application for a Social Enterprise Accelerator Fund grant is deemed successful when a fully completed application form with required evidence is received by our Partner via the online procedure, or where necessary, hard copy.

7.6 All monies paid under this scheme will be funded by Government and paid to the Council under S31 of the Local Government Act 2003.

7.7 Data supplied within the application may be shared with BEIS. The BEIS privacy notice, setting out BEIS will handle personal data across all [COVID-19 business grant schemes](#)

COVID-19 business grant subsidy allowance requirements

8.0 Grants under this Scheme will be given one of the Subsidy Allowances. In calculating allowance limits; applications are required to include any other De Minimis state aid or aid received under the EU Commission Temporary Framework for State Aid published 19th March 2020. The applicant will be required to declare to the Council if they have received any other State Aid or Subsidy Allowances.

8.1 The applicant may receive a grant under this Scheme using one of the following Subsidy Allowances:

A) Small Amounts of Financial Assistance Allowance: applicants may receive financial assistance up to £335,000 in any three-year period, calculated over the current year and two previous ones;

B) Covid-19 Business Grant Allowance: applicants may receive financial assistance of up to £1,600,000. This allowance includes grants previously received under the Covid-19 business grant schemes and any State Aid previously received under the EU Commission's Temporary Framework;

C) Covid-19 Business Grant Special Allowance: if the applicant has reached its limit under the Small Amounts of Financial Assistance Allowance and the Covid-19 Business Grant Allowance, it may be able to access a further allowance of funding. The applicant must meet a number of conditions before any subsidy can be received. Further advice on the gov.uk website.

Scheme of delegation

9.0 The Council has approved this scheme. Officers of the Council will administer the scheme and the Section 151 Officer is authorised to make technical scheme amendments to ensure it meets the criteria set by the Council and in line with Government guidance.

Notification of Decisions

10.0 Applications will be considered on behalf of the Council by an Internal Awards Panel.

10.1 All decisions made by the Council shall be notified to the applicant either in writing or by email. A decision shall be made as soon as practicable after an application is received.

Reviews of decisions

11.0 The Council will operate an internal review process and will accept an applicant's request for a review of its decision.

11.1 All such requests must be made in writing to the Council within 5 working days of the Council's decision and should state the reasons why the applicant is aggrieved with the decision of the Council. New information may be submitted at this stage to support the applicant's appeal.

11.2 The application will be reconsidered by a senior officer, as soon as practicable and the applicant informed in writing or by email of the decision.

Complaints

12.0 The Council's 'Complaints Procedure' (available on the Council's website) will be applied in the event of any complaint received about this scheme.

Taxation and the provision of information to Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC)

13.0 The Council has been informed by Government that all payments under the scheme are taxable.

13.1 The Council does not accept any responsibility in relation to an applicant's tax liabilities and all applicants should make their own enquiries to establish any tax position.

13.2 All applicants should note that the Council is required to inform Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) of all payments made to businesses

Managing the risk of fraud

14.0 Neither the Council, nor Government will accept deliberate manipulation of the schemes or fraud. Any applicant caught falsifying information to gain grant money or failing to declare entitlement to any of the specified grants will face prosecution and any funding issued will be recovered from them.

14.1 Applicants should note that, where a grant is paid by the Council, details of each individual grant may be passed to Government.

Recovery of amounts incorrectly paid

15.0 If it is established that any award has been made incorrectly due to error, misrepresentation or incorrect information provided to the Council by an applicant or their representative(s), the Council will look to recover the amount in full.

Data protection and use of data

16.0 All information and data provided by applicants shall be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Data Protection policy and Privacy Notices which are available on the Council's website.