

# Enterprising Town Centres

## Frequently asked questions

The following frequently asked questions provide information to those interested in applying for an Enterprising Town Centres grant.

### **Will my business be eligible to apply for an Enterprising Town Centres grant?**

We are targeting the grants towards businesses that we believe to be important to the future economic prosperity and vibrancy of our town centres. Please read our Eligibility Criteria document.

Your business must be a small or medium-sized enterprise (i.e. you must employ less than 250 staff), be trading primarily business to customer and be based within one of six North West Leicestershire town centres i.e. Ashby, Castle Donington, Coalville, Ibstock, Kegworth and Measham.

Maps of the boundaries of the six town centres can be found [here](#).

### **What about businesses outside these town centres?**

Alongside Enterprising Town Centres, North West Leicestershire District Council have launched a new Village Shops grants scheme. Village Shops grants will look to support local retailers based outside of six main towns to help ensure their future sustainability.

The grants will aim to improve the performance of Post Offices, village shops and other rural retail outlets selling essential fresh produce through enhancing existing services and introducing new ones.

### **Who can apply?**

Any individual, company or partnership that meets the Eligibility Criteria can apply. If it is a company or partnership making the application, the person completing the form must be authorised to apply on behalf of that business.

If the grant application is successful, the applicant (i.e. the individual, company or partnership) will have to enter into a legal agreement which will set out specific and general terms and conditions relating to the Enterprising North West Leicestershire grant. This agreement will be between the business and North West Leicestershire District Council.

### **How can I use the money?**

Grants are intended to fund investment projects that will help increase spend, footfall and occupancy within the town centre. Your investment could involve the following:

- New equipment to improve efficiency of business
- Improvements to your business property
- Improvements to sales area
- Internal modernisation
- New technology, IT or telecommunications
- Innovation (to be defined by each applicant).

The application process will require the applicant to explain the nature of the proposed investment project and how this will lead to the business growing, the creation of new jobs, how it will help increase spend, footfall and occupancy within the town centre, how it will create new jobs and other priority outcomes explained in the Eligibility Criteria.

## How much money can I ask for?

The Enterprising Town Centres grant initiative has three grant programmes open.

When applying for any of the grants you will be asked to explain how the grant money will help to support the growth of your business, enhance the unique character of the town centres and help increase spend, footfall and occupancy within the town centre.

### - Golden Hello grants: £500

Targeted for businesses taking on new premises within NWL town centres or a market stall at Coalville Market. Eligible businesses can apply for a small one off capital grant of £500 to help cover some of the start-up costs.

### - Enterprising Town Centre small grants: £1,000 - £4,999

Eligible businesses can apply for business grants from between £1,000 - £4,999. The grant would require the applicant to provide a minimum 50% match funding and to create new local jobs at a pro rata of one full time equivalent per £10,000 paid by the Council. For example a £5,000 grant will require 0.5 full time equivalent of new employment (2.5 days a week).

### - Enterprising Town Centre large grants: £5,000 - £25,000

Eligible businesses can apply for business grants from between £5,000 - £25,000. The grant would require the applicant to provide 66% match funding and to create new local jobs at a pro rata rate of one full time equivalent per £10,000 paid by the Council. For example a £20,000 grant will require 2 full time equivalents of new employment (10 days per week).

### - Village Shop Grants: £1,000 - £3,000

Village Shop Grant scheme offers grants of up to £3,000. The grant would require the applicant to provide a minimum 50% match funding and to create new local jobs at a pro rata of one full time equivalent per £10,000 paid by the Council. For example a £5,000 grant will require 0.5 full time equivalent of new employment (2.5 days a week).

## Can I apply for more than one grant?

No, a businesses will only be eligible to apply for one of the grant programmes. You will need to decide which grant programme best meets the needs for your businesses planned investment.

## What will the application process involve?

### - Golden Hello grants

Applications for an Enterprising Town Centre – Golden Hello grant will be submitted to the Business Focus team where it will be assigned to a dedicated Grants Officer. Your Grants Officer will review your application to make sure what you are proposing meets the agreed Eligibility criteria.

You can see the Golden Hello grant application [here](#).

### - Enterprising Town Centre small grants, large grants and Village Shop Grants

Applications to the small grants and large Enterprising Town Centre grants, also to the Village Shop Grants will be in two stages. You can see the Expression of Interest and Full Application [here](#).

Once you have submitted your Expression of Interest, we will review your project outline to make sure what you are proposing meets the agreed Eligibility Criteria. If we are interested in supporting what is proposed, you will be invited to complete the Full Application.

The Expression of Interest will ask you to provide some details of your business and the nature of the investment project that you are proposing. You will also need to provide a breakdown of the costs involved in the project, the sources of finance for the total investment amount and what economic benefits your project will achieve.

We will ask you whether you have received financial support from any public sector organisation within the last three years. There are limits to the financial support that can be offered to individual private sector organisations, and we need to make sure that you and the council stay within the law.

The Full Application will ask you to outline a plan for the investment project, such as:

- Stages in the project and dates
- How many new jobs will be created and when
- How the project will be good for the town centre
- How the project will support growth in your business
- the key people involved in your business and in the investment project.

You will be asked to provide copies of a number of documents that will be important during the review of your application such as:

- Financial and management accounts
- Three quotes covering the costs associated with delivering the project
- Confirmation of other sources of finance.

We will also ask to see copies of documents related to your business premises, such as your lease agreement or title document.

### **Can the grants help pay for a project that has already started?**

No. The application process will require you to describe the nature of the investment project that you are planning.

You will need to be able to show that the project could not go ahead without the financial support from North West Leicestershire District Council and that the investment will enable the business to grow and lead to the recruitment of local people into new jobs.

### **How do I submit my application?**

Please send your completed Expression of Interest or Full Application (once invited) to

**[businessfocus@nwleicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:businessfocus@nwleicestershire.gov.uk)**

Alternatively, you can post your completed form to the following address:

Business Focus

North West Leicestershire District Council

Council Offices,

Whitwick Road,

Coalville,

Leicestershire, L67 3FJ

## How will North West Leicestershire District Council decide whether my application is successful?

### - Golden Hello grants

Applications for an Enterprising Town Centre – Golden Hello grants will be submitted to the Business Focus team where it will be assigned to a dedicated Grants Officer. Your Grants Officer will review your application to make sure what you are proposing meets the agreed Eligibility criteria.

We aim to give you a decision on your application within two weeks (ten working days) of submission of your complete an application and all necessary supporting documents.

The decision of the Grants Officer will be final. There is no opportunity to appeal against the decision.

If your application is not successful, we will give you feedback on the reasons behind the decision.

### - Enterprising Town Centre small and large grants and Village Shop Grants

Once your Expression of Interest has been submitted, we will check to make sure your business meets the agreed Eligibility Criteria and that your investment project is in line with the intended purpose of the grant scheme.

If we are satisfied with your Expression of Interest, you will be invited to submit a Full Application. If your Expression of Interest does not meet the Eligibility Criteria, you will be given feedback. We aim to give responses to your Expression of Interest within two weeks (ten working days) of submission.

Once you have submitted your Full Application and all of the necessary supporting documentation, we will review the information that has been provided.

Your Full Application will be considered by a panel of reviewers. Each panel will consist of a minimum of three people, at least two of whom will be external to the council (i.e. not directly employed by or elected to the council). For example the panel could be made up of representatives of North West Leicestershire District Council, local businesses, and other organisations involved in the economic development of North West Leicestershire.

There will be frequent panel meetings. We aim to give you a decision on your application within six weeks (thirty working days) of submission of your Full Application and all necessary supporting documents.

The decision of the panel will be final. There is no opportunity to appeal against the panel's decision.

If your application is not successful, we will give you feedback on the reasons behind the panel's decision. We may invite you to submit a revised application.

### When will the grant be paid?

The grant will be paid once you have submitted receipted invoices for the expenditure detailed in your Full Application proposal.

We will then pay the amount that has been agreed, or less, if the actual cost of the project is lower than the estimate.

### Is there a deadline?

We will give plenty of notice of the closure of applications to the Enterprising Town Centres grant scheme and the Village Shop Grants scheme. Up-to-date information about a deadline for submission of applications will be provided at [www.nwleics.gov.uk/businessgrants](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/businessgrants).

The scheme opened to applications in May 2017 and will close to new applications on 29 December 2017.

## Is there a risk of clawback?

Yes. During the application process, you will be asked to explain the nature of your investment and how it meets the eligibility criteria of the Enterprising Town Centres programme.

We will monitor the progress of your project to ensure the investment is made in accordance with your application and that you comply with all other conditions of the grant scheme.

We will consider whether to seek to recover some or all of the grant paid if you do not meet the conditions agreed with you when the grant was approved.

We will monitor the number of jobs created and all other conditions of the grant scheme.

## Are there any other restrictions?

We have already explained that you will be asked to confirm that the grant applied for will not result in breaking the laws about organisations receiving public money.

We will require your business and your investment proposal to comply with all regulations that apply to your business and the project for which the grant is requested.

If your project involves work on a property, in addition to planning permission, you will be expected to comply with all other usual legislation such as Building Regulations.

## What if I sell the property, or my business?

We will ask you to let us know if you have plans to sell the property or the business that has received a grant, for a period of three years after the grant was paid.

We will consider whether to seek to recover some or all of the grant paid if you sell your property or business.

## What about publicity?

We are very keen to generate good news stories about businesses that receive Enterprising Town Centre grants and the new jobs that will be created, so may require you to participate in publicity, ranging from press releases and social media activity to media interviews and filming.

We will encourage you to do your own publicity so that the Enterprising Town Centre grant does help your business to grow, to raise the profile of the town

We will ask you to mention your receipt of an Enterprising Town Centre grant from North West Leicestershire District Council.

## What if I change my mind?

You will be free to withdraw from the application process at any stage. Once your application has been reviewed and approved, you will be asked to sign to confirm your acceptance of the conditions that will apply to the Enterprising North West Leicestershire grant. Once you have signed the grant agreement we will expect the project to go ahead.

Once you have received the grant you will be expected to comply with all conditions set out in the agreement between your business and North West Leicestershire District Council. As mentioned above, there will be a risk of clawback in certain situations (such as your failure to recruit and sustain local people in new jobs).

## How much money is available?

North West Leicestershire District Council has allocated a maximum of £250,000 towards the Enterprising Town Centres scheme, to be spent before April 2018.

## Who should I contact?

Please contact Business Focus on 01530 454609 or email [businessfocus@nwleicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:businessfocus@nwleicestershire.gov.uk) if you have any remaining questions.