

## Lichfield District Start Up Grant Scheme

CLlr Iain Eadie – Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Leisure and Local Plan

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021

Agenda Item:

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Key Decision? No

Local Ward All

Members



**CABINET  
MEMBER  
DECISION**

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides information on the start-up grant scheme being delivered across Lichfield District and proposes the allocation of monies against the applications submitted in the third round.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the cabinet member approves the allocation of funding to the applicants from the Lichfield District Start Up Grant Scheme's third round to the projects detailed in **Appendix 2** to this report.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 The Lichfield District Start Up Grant Scheme was approved by Lichfield District Council's cabinet on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 and commenced in March 2021. The scheme is being funded by the Council's Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) allocation, offering one off grants of £3,000 to assist residents who have been made redundant or currently economically inactive and seeking to start up a business within the financial year 21/22 in Lichfield district. The overall allocation for the scheme is £215,138 with £10,000 of this being allocated to the Enterprise for Success Programme to provide two-day start up workshops which applicants are required to attend before making a submission.

To be eligible, applicants must be:

- An individual who has recently been made redundant and seeking to establish a business within Lichfield District.
- An economically inactive resident who is seeking to establish a business within Lichfield District.

- 3.2 Grant funding is available to meet the following types of costs:

- Capital equipment, excluding laptops, mobile phones and tablets.
- Marketing.
- Professional qualifications or training.

- 3.3 Residents who are seeking to access this funding must have first received support provided by the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) Enterprise for Success programme. The programme encourages new business start-ups and helps young businesses grow and thrive by offering a range of business workshops with individual business support sessions. The support provides valuable information for applicants to strengthen their business model and strategy, and develop a strong business plan to positively influence the company's long term survival.

- 3.4 Alongside a completed application form, applicants must submit the following supporting documents:

- A personal Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- A detailed business plan
- Financial forecast for the next year, providing a breakdown of income (cash sales, credit sales, bank loans, grants etc.) and outgoings (cash purchases, wages, utilities, marketing etc.) to provide a more detailed, in depth analysis of the businesses growth in its first trading year.

Each application is assessed against a scoring criteria, detailed in **Appendix 1** based on meeting the aim of the scheme which is to support resident's seeking self-employment to become economically active.

3.5 Overall eight applications were submitted within this round, with 54 expression of interests being received up until the end of November 2021. Unfortunately one application has been deemed ineligible due to the proposed business is seeking to be set up in Hednesford by a Cannock Chase resident. The eligible applicants are seeking to start businesses within childcare, cosmetics and personal care, interior design, beauty treatment, mobile app design, confectionary gifts and handwoven textiles.

The project items being applied for vary, through paid for advertising/marketing, operational equipment to deliver services or create products, establish the infrastructure for the business and to gain professional accreditation or qualifications.

3.6 Within round three, the amount of grant allocated overall, if approved, would be £21,000.

3.7 **Appendix 2** provides details of the applications submitted within round three.

Alternative Options	1. The Council could decide not to fund this application however this would not be in line with the schemes intended purpose.
Consultation	1. Consultation on the formulation of the Start Up Grant Scheme was undertaken prior to agreement of the proposals by Cabinet and feedback/outcomes from the predecessor of the scheme, the Small Business Grant Scheme.
Financial Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The scheme is funded by the Additional Restrictions Grant allocation provided by Central Government, with a total funding pot of £205,138 to be spent by March 2022. The scheme has been split into quarterly bidding rounds and shall continue until all funding is allocated or reallocated if the scheme underperforms before the deadline of March 2022.</li> <li>2. Officer time is required with regards to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Answering enquiries and administration of the scheme</li> <li>- Processing applications</li> <li>- Marketing and promotion</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The start-up grant scheme will contribute to the priorities of Enabling People and Developing Prosperity as it supports opportunities for self-employment and job creation.</li> <li>2. The priority of healthy and safe communities is supported through local resident's economic wellbeing being improved by the financial resource strengthening local employment, less unemployed residents and business growth creating less financial concern for local residents involved within the businesses.</li> </ol>

Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	1. The start-up grant scheme by Lichfield District Council provides the opportunity for job creation and supporting residents to become economically active by receiving support from the scheme. The initial process for the scheme of receiving strategic business support, pre or post start, from the Enterprise for Success programme assists the long term growth and survival of local businesses.
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Crime & Safety Issues	1. None.
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	Risk Description	How We Manage It	Severity of Risk (RYG)
A	Lack of uptake within the grant scheme by local businesses.	By promoting the scheme on all communication platforms, to local business groups and strategic partners to establish wide publicity, and making sure it's a simple process for businesses looking for support.	Yellow
B	Popularity of the scheme and grants requested overall being greater than the allocated amount per annum.	Grant allocation shall be established with the proposals which provide the most realistic positive impact on the local economy being recommended and granted, in line with the allocated amount per annum.	Yellow
C	Cost of administering and delivering scheme outweighs the benefits accrued to the economy.	By simplifying the administering of applications and undertake measures which will support the increase in popularity of the scheme to benefit the economy.	Yellow

**Background documents**

**Relevant web links**

Lichfield District Start Up Grant Scheme - <https://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/business-advice/lichfield-district-start-grant-scheme/1>

## **Appendix 1**

### **Scoring criteria details**

#### **Employment**

- To create job opportunities, inclusive of the applicant's role.

#### **Growth**

- That the equipment being applied for supports the businesses outcomes.
- That the proposed business activity relates to the applicant's previous experience and qualifications, showing an understanding of the activities.
- That there is a thorough plan to generate income and increase the businesses cashflow.
- That there is an increase in income and cashflow.

#### **Business Plan**

- That the financial projections are realistic in relation to the planned growth of the business, outlined within the business plan.
- That the applicant has undertaken in depth market research and within their application shows a thorough understanding of their sector/area of work through their business plan.

## Appendix 2

### Third Round Applications and Assessments

#### Blossoms Childcare

Business name: Blossoms Childcare

Location: Fazeley

Business background and project proposal:

The applicant recently registered with Ofsted and Childminding UK, gaining all the necessary qualifications to become a home based childcare provider. They are aiming to offer an outdoor forest school to give minded children the best developmental start in life, working in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. The applicant has a psychology qualification with a homebased childcare and development diploma and has received a local authority safeguarding children award.

Costs the grant is to go towards:

Project items and costs which the £3,000 shall go towards:

- Baby equipment
- Technology for learning
- Learning resources and storage
- Forest school and physical activity equipment

Appraisal comments:

*That the equipment being applied for supports the businesses outcomes*

The equipment being applied for shall help the applicant operate the childcare element of the business, through purchasing learning resources, material resources such as a playpen, prams and physical activity resources for younger children. Whilst also purchasing equipment for the forest school in an outdoor area, providing children with a fun and challenging learning environment to partake in physical activity.

*That the proposed business activity relates to the applicant's previous experience and qualifications, showing an understanding of the activities*

The applicant has a qualification in psychology with a homebased childcare and development diploma, with relevant and essential membership in place to undertake the business activities set out. They have experience of caring for children in their own homes creating a good foundation of knowledge for child care and understanding through personal experience and qualifications gained.

*That there is a thorough plan to generate income and increase the businesses cashflow*

The applicant aims to promote the business through word of mouth and speaking with local schools, nurseries and playgroups within walking distance. A combination of physical and digital marketing shall take place through business cards and flyers placed in the above settings and utilising social media platforms. They will also register on the local authority childcare website and through the childcare.co.uk website.

*That there is an increase in income and cashflow*

A consistent income is shown with year 1, with the largest outgoings being in wages and supplies. They have outlined the insurance required and advertising/promotion cost, mainly through paid advertisement but using social media for free.

*To create job opportunities, inclusive of the applicant's role*

Additional employment shall be provided in the second year of trading, to support building up the customer base and growth. They will require a full DBS checking, child protection training and first aid.

*That the financial projections are realistic in relation to the planned growth of the business, outlined within the business plan*

The projected cashflow is realistic in comparison to the planned growth, with a consistent client based established in year one that is able to be sustained and provide the required income to operate. The additional staff in year two shall support new clients being brought in at the end of year one and into year two.

*That the applicant has undertaken in depth market research and within their application shows a thorough understanding of their sector/area of work through their business plan*

The applicant has undertaken face to face market research and through online research of childcare, especially in terms of flexible shift patterns and the requirement for childcare. They are currently in a network of other local childminders and is already receiving requests for the proposed offer. Due to the applicant's background in child development, there are clients awaiting the business to commence operating.

## **The Magic Bottle**

Business name: The Magic Bottle

Location: Wall

Business background and project proposal:

The applicant is seeking to manufacture, package and sell aromatherapy products for wellbeing. The products are all handmade, refillable and to support anxiety, stress, panic attacks etc. The target audience is all ages, male and female, as the products shall support the wellbeing of all customers. They have previously worked in a similar role and have qualifications supporting the public with mental health support and undertaken the businesses activities as a hobby before becoming self-employed, understanding the market and clients.

Costs the grant is to go towards:

Project items and costs which the £3,000 shall go towards:

- Stock
- Office furnishings
- Office space
- Packaging
- Crystals

Appraisal comments:

*That the equipment being applied for supports the businesses outcomes*

The applicant is seeking to purchase stock and packaging to finalise the products to look professional for sale and be labelled with the required information and ingredients. Without the stock and packaging the applicant won't be able to sell the items. The office furnishings and space shall allow the owner to have the required space to store stock and include more ranges to sell. The office furnishings shall support creating a professional environment, especially when marketing to live audiences and clients who visit the site.

*That the proposed business activity relates to the applicant's previous experience and qualifications, showing an understanding of the activities*

The applicant has worked within sectors which sell similar products, having learnt which are the most popular and gaps in the market. They have gained qualifications supporting people's mental health whilst also learning about aromatherapy and spirituality.

*That there is a thorough plan to generate income and increase the businesses cashflow*

A combination of e-commerce and physical marketing is utilised, through social media, their own website, blogs, EBay and Amazon. Also selling at craft fairs and from their own office space. They already have support from the spiritual community which they are involved in with positive responses and once a stronger brand has been established will sell the products at a commercial premises.

*That there is an increase in income and cashflow*

There is steady growth outlined throughout year one with a high overhead due to production and packaging of the items. A thorough plan has been provided in terms of outgoings with the yearend showing promising growth with more clients purchasing stock. Whilst the high production and packaging costs are a concern, they are required for the business to compete in the market and meet trading standards in terms of outlining ingredients.

*To create job opportunities, inclusive of the applicant's role*

No additional roles shall be created.

*That the financial projections are realistic in relation to the planned growth of the business, outlined within the business plan*

With several marketing opportunities available focussing on physical and digital platforms the planned growth is sensible with the variety of products supporting consistent sales, especially with clients already identified and interested. There is a concern in terms of the cost of production and packaging but these are essential to be able to trade.

*That the applicant has undertaken in depth market research and within their application shows a thorough understanding of their sector/area of work through their business plan*

The applicant understands their competitors and the natural products they will be selling doesn't conflict with products already on the market. They have established questionnaires and received positive feedback from target groups and networks. The primary research shows that the applicant has a grasp of the sector/market and provides confidence in the business plan.



## **Nanuskas**

Business name: Nanuskas

Location: Lichfield City

### Business background and project proposal:

The applicant is seeking to start up a design consultancy company, providing high quality decorating and design services, incorporating the following:

- Interior design consultation
- Planning and project management
- Standard painting and decorating
- Carpentry

The target audience is both the residential and commercial sectors, e.g. residents who wish to renovate or are in the process of renovating and need further interior decorating support & developers who are embarking on renovations to existing buildings or new developments and need interior fit out solutions.

The applicant has relevant qualifications and experiences in architectural technology, consultancy experience and utilised previously the software and hardware for the role.

### Costs the grant is to go towards:

#### Project items and costs which the £3,000 shall go towards:

- Chair
- Table legs
- Walnut desk
- Colour printer
- All in one PC
- Paint brushes
- Power drill
- Belt sander
- Drill bit set
- Table saw
- Router
- Mitre saw
- Corded planer
- Paddle mixer
- Angle grinder
- Nail gun
- Combi ladder
- Foldable platform
- Manual mitre saw
- Plunge saw
- Spanners set
- Multi detector
- Spirit level
- Self-levelling laser
- Laser tripod
- Adhesive trowel
- Wash boy kit
- Stripping knife

- Safety goggles
- Trolley work centre
- Pouch/belt
- Sumup card reader

Appraisal comments:

*That the equipment being applied for supports the businesses outcomes*

The equipment being applied for shall support the businesses practical work with the relevant tools to create products with a functioning home office to operate the business from. By being able to undertake carpentry with the equipment being applied for & offering standard painting and decorating. The PC shall support the businesses interior design, project and planning management elements.

*That the proposed business activity relates to the applicant's previous experience and qualifications, showing an understanding of the activities*

The applicant has a breadth of qualifications focusing on digital design, physical decorating and design. They have operated as a property and marketing consultant and trained students in design schools. Their experience of supporting design projects and upskilling members of the public shows their good customer relationship experience which is vital for this type of business activities.

*That there is a thorough plan to generate income and increase the businesses cashflow*

The applicant has provided a thorough marketing action plan through a combination of utilising physical marketing in terms of business cards, leaflets, flyers and journals and digital promotion in terms of free networking, social media marketing, inclusive of costings and the seasonality of when improvements occur. They shall strategically focus on networks/platforms which focus on home improvements to gain clients.

*That there is an increase in income and cashflow*

The seasonality of home improvements has been taken into account through the cash sales with the summer period they are seeking to grow through the months and utilise this development to generate an increased customer base in the winter period. They have provided a thorough breakdown of outgoings, inclusive of tax amounts and marketing/promotion aligned with their marketing plan.

*To create job opportunities, inclusive of the applicant's role*

As the applicant seeks to take on larger projects with the third year of trading, they will require additional support in terms of business administration and physical labour support.

*That the financial projections are realistic in relation to the planned growth of the business, outlined within the business plan*

The financial projections are realistic and viable through showing slow growth initially in the winter period then a greater amount of income at the end of the summer period. Their outgoings, especially in terms of material costs is aligned with this growth in work.

*That the applicant has undertaken in depth market research and within their application shows a thorough understanding of their sector/area of work through their business plan*

The applicant has experience in and knowledge of the market and also undertake market research with professionals in the sector. They have also undertaken secondary research by reviewing interior design market reports showing the demand for the industry and career prospects.

## **Mitchell Hammond Aesthetics Clinic**

Business name: Mitchell Hammond Aesthetics Clinic

Location: Burntwood

### Business background and project proposal:

The applicant is seeking to provide non-surgical aesthetic treatments for a range of clients, including:

- Botox/Anti-Wrinkle Treatments - anti-ageing non-invasive injectable.
- Hyperhidrosis Treatments – the use of Botox helps control the symptoms of severe underarm sweating.
- Dermal Filler Treatments - to help reduce signs of ageing, add contour and volume to the face including lips and revitalise the skin
- PRP (Platelet Rich Plasma) Treatments – use of the client’s blood plasma to promote collagen production, hair growth, promote and accelerate scar healing and injured joints and tendons.

They are a qualified phlebotomist, which not only qualifies them to take blood and be proficient in injectable, it also underpins the PRP offering for skin rejuvenation and hair loss treatments. A qualification they shall be completing soon is a pathway to aesthetics course which covers facial theory, anatomy and physiology, and as part of the grant they are seeking to complete the CPD accredited Advanced Aesthetic Training.

The applicant has experience of working within customer service roles focussing on skin treatment, whilst also having a sales and marketing background to support the businesses growth and operation.

### Costs the grant is to go towards:

#### Project items and costs which the £3,000 shall go towards:

- First aid training
- Advanced aesthetic training
- Marketing/stationary

### Appraisal comments:

*That the equipment being applied for supports the businesses outcomes*

The equipment being purchased shall support the business as follows:

First Aid Training – By completing a level 3 First Aid at Work course this will equip the applicant to apply first aid to an extensive range of specific injuries and illnesses including anaphylactic shock.

CPD Accredited Advanced Aesthetic Training – This course is an advanced training module designed to build confidence in carrying out bespoke treatments professionally and effectively.

Digital Stationary/Printed Items – This will give the applicant all the correct digital stationary, HTML email templates and branded business cards to position themselves amongst their competition and give a professional impression to their potential clients.

*That the proposed business activity relates to the applicant’s previous experience and qualifications, showing an understanding of the activities*

The owner has qualifications in the area and is seeking to grow these skills further whilst also having experience of delivering similar treatments and understands the sector well. They also have a wealth of marketing experience which will support the businesses growth and developing new clients.

*That there is a thorough plan to generate income and increase the businesses cashflow*

The applicant has set out a thorough marketing plan focussing on physical and digital platforms, they also have connections within the sector and understands the seasonality of the work. They have allocated set budgets against the platforms to be utilised.

*That there is an increase in income and cashflow*

The sales grow monthly with the outgoings being proportionate to the sales being made. They have acknowledged the operational costs against it and the need for increased stock and charges with the increase in sales.

*To create job opportunities, inclusive of the applicant's role*

There are plans to take on additional staff in year two aligned with their growth plans to a larger premises, once generating more clients.

*That the financial projections are realistic in relation to the planned growth of the business, outlined within the business plan*

The financial projections are very thorough and detailed, outgoings aligning with the growth of sales to take place. The projections are realistic with a greater amount of treatments per client being established as the business becomes more established and able to offer more advanced treatment.

*That the applicant has undertaken in depth market research and within their application shows a thorough understanding of their sector/area of work through their business plan*

The applicant has undertaken research into the sector, its growth and treatment patterns/trends, whilst also outlining the different demographic groups and their favoured treatment. They understand their competitors and undertaken a SWOT analysis to see how they can fit into the market.

## **D.Wedlock Designs**

Business name: D.Wedlock Designs

Location: Handsacre

Business background and project proposal:

The applicant is seeking to become self-employed as a UX/UI designer making unique web applications, whilst also producing sports memorabilia, including a mobile application. They have the qualifications within UX/UI design, inclusive of a google digital marketing certification, being able to carry out the tasks required by clients. The sports memorabilia element to the business collaborates the technology element with the owner's hobby, having reviewed similar applications and discussed with developers. The application will have a monthly subscription with various sports being covered for different target audiences.

Costs the grant is to go towards:

Project items and costs which the £3,000 shall go towards:

- Visual Design Course
- A2 Pro photo printer
- Social media campaign
- Picture frames

Appraisal comments:

*That the equipment being applied for supports the businesses outcomes*

The course being applied for shall support the applicant with advancing their design skills, especially in visual design, which will support establishing more advanced mobile applications. The printer and frames shall support creating enhanced quality with stock frames to sell the memorabilia within and providing a professional look. The social media campaign shall assist the applicant to generate new clients and interest within the two offers of the business.

*That the proposed business activity relates to the applicant's previous experience and qualifications, showing an understanding of the activities*

The applicant has the qualifications, skills and experience to undertake mobile application design, whilst the additional training shall support creating a greater offer for the business. They have experience of working with clients within designing similar stock as sports memorabilia.

*That there is a thorough plan to generate income and increase the businesses cashflow*

The applicant has outlined utilising physical and digital marketing, through online advertising, flyers and brochures. They could specifically target certain networking groups or online groups which have an interest in certain sports for the memorabilia element, inclusive of local sports clubs, whilst also combining this offer with the mobile application design service.

*That there is an increase in income and cashflow*

The business starts with quite a high level of sales with slow growth from this. The slow growth is realistic, combined with the price per product. Once the applicant has attended the additional course, this shall support increased growth in the mobile application element of the business, developing new clients and offering a wider service.

*To create job opportunities, inclusive of the applicant's role*

No additional permanent staff members are expected with one off jobs being sub contracted to complete mobile applications when there is not enough capacity internally.

*That the financial projections are realistic in relation to the planned growth of the business, outlined within the business plan*

The financial projections start at quite a high rate in comparison to the planned growth but the growth is achievable when looking at the applicants marketing campaign and routes to promote the company.

*That the applicant has undertaken in depth market research and within their application shows a thorough understanding of their sector/area of work through their business plan*

The applicant understands the market and how their offer differs from the competition, with an understanding of seasonal spikes around the Christmas period. They could have gone further into detail about their competition and the changing market of mobile applications but as they have the relevant skills and understanding of their offer and the skills required, this provides confidence in their start up growth plans.

## **Kingfisher Gifts**

Business name: Kingfisher Gifts

Location: Kings Bromley

Business background and project proposal:

The applicant is seeking to establish a new venture focussing initially on personalised gifts, such as chocolate bouquets, luxury afternoon teas, gift baskets for new babies, dogs etc. which will be promoted through e-commerce.

Once the brand is in the public domain, the business shall operate from a small premises selling gifts and beverages. With gifts being made to order, the products can be created on site whilst the customer is waiting.

The applicant has experience of working within food, drink and confectionary production and supervisory roles, showing an understanding of the market and how materials/supplies become products to sell on the market.

Costs the grant is to go towards:

Project items and costs which the £3,000 shall go towards:

- CAT 7 Router
- Directional aerial
- Mount for aerial
- Air pillow machine
- Rolls for air pillow machine
- Desks
- Laser printer
- Printer bundle
- Heat press

Appraisal comments:

*That the equipment being applied for supports the businesses outcomes*

As the business shall be operated via e-commerce initially they require a good internet signal to be able to undertake online sales, showing the need for the router and associated aerials. The work desks shall provide a space to create the products in a production line manner quickly. The air pillow packaging machine is required to package up the products with the heat press, whilst the printer and associated equipment shall support producing marketing material in house.

*That the proposed business activity relates to the applicant's previous experience and qualifications, showing an understanding of the activities*

The applicant has experience of working within food, drink and confectionary production and supervisory roles so understands the process of creating the products and selling them. They have a good understanding of the market and the requirements from production to sale.

*That there is a thorough plan to generate income and increase the businesses cashflow*

The owner is seeking to utilise their e-commerce site, promoting through social media platforms and attending physical markets and fairs. They have set a budget per month but will amend as and when



required if one element of marketing isn't working. A blog shall also be updated, explaining upcoming brand offers and promotions whilst also looking strategically at local business discounts for staff gifts and packages.

*That there is an increase in income and cashflow*

They are seeking to utilise the Christmas period to commence offering special occasion gifts and shown a steady increase in income from March onwards. A breakdown on advertising and marketing costs is sensible looking at seasonal special occasions and also purchasing stock before these high popularity seasons. A thorough outline of e-commerce costs has been provided, making sure their platform is working and able to adapt to high demand.

*To create job opportunities, inclusive of the applicant's role*

They are seeking to employ two members of staff in the first year to support attending markets and fairs, whilst someone assists with the business administration element on the website and updating physical and digital marketing platforms. I believe this is viable if the growth allows but can be costly so a suggestion is to bring in new staff temporarily or looking at potential incentives to help progress staff.

*That the financial projections are realistic in relation to the planned growth of the business, outlined within the business plan*

The financial projections represent a high amount of growth at the start and seasonally which is realistic as the physical marketing at markets and fairs will help promote the brand and potential clients to be referred to the website. The consistent income throughout the year is sensible with potential multiple, ongoing and new clients being achieved in the first year.

*That the applicant has undertaken in depth market research and within their application shows a thorough understanding of their sector/area of work through their business plan*

The applicant has reviewed competitor websites in depth, outlining the strengths and weaknesses of them, also trying to fill a gap in others offers where there is one. They've not only reviewed their offer but their marketing capabilities as well, what works, what doesn't and how they shall establish their branding to attract clients. The competition locally is through others attending markets and fairs, whilst nationally there is a focus on e-commerce use, by utilising both elements through the business this shall support gaining a larger client base.

## **Botanical Weaves**

Business name: Botanical Weaves

Location: Lichfield City

Business background and project proposal:

The applicant is seeking to create handwoven textiles using entirely locally sourced materials. The fibres used are raised and spun in the immediate area with plant dyes grown or foraged by the owner. The items woven will be high end baby carriers and complimentary products including scarves, yoga and lap blankets and towels.

Lichfield was the centre of Britain's dyeing and textile manufacturing trade during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century with the owner seeking to go back to Lichfield's historical legacy of local weaving and natural dyeing.

The target market for the handwoven baby carriers are parents and caregivers of young children, whilst the handwoven lap blankets, yoga blankets and neckwear are wider ranging – adults of all ages. The applicant has certification from Jane Stafford School of Weaving.

Costs the grant is to go towards:

Project items and costs which the £3,000 shall go towards:

- Louet Spring Floor Loom

Appraisal comments:

*That the equipment being applied for supports the businesses outcomes*

The floor loom being purchased is essential for the applicant to be able to weave the products to be sold. With a larger loom they shall be able to produce more items and different types of items.

*That the proposed business activity relates to the applicant's previous experience and qualifications, showing an understanding of the activities*

The applicant has two decades of textiles, knitting and weaving experience, understanding the market well and seeing a gap in it for baby carriers and complimentary products. They have certification from Jane Stafford School of Weaving and also a member of the London Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers.

*That there is a thorough plan to generate income and increase the businesses cashflow*

The applicant is seeking to utilise social media, a monthly newsletter and their website to promote the business. They shall also undertake word of mouth sales with their target audience and also as part of their memberships/local networking. They have good knowledge of the sector and understand customers preferred method of engagement.

*That there is an increase in income and cashflow*

Steady growth occurs, focussing on most sales during the autumn and winter period in the case of the blankets and neckwear but with the baby carriers and yoga blankets supporting the non-seasonal sales of the other products. A good breakdown has been provided of material costs, price per unit and the seasonality of stock.

*To create job opportunities, inclusive of the applicant's role*

They will seek to employ an admin role once the business has grown in year two, who shall focus upon administration and purchasing materials whilst the owner will continue weaving for clients.

*That the financial projections are realistic in relation to the planned growth of the business, outlined within the business plan*

The financial projections are realistic in terms of the amount of sales and seasonality of the sales with the owner showing a good grasp of the market and steady growth, especially with the equipment required to create every item.

*That the applicant has undertaken in depth market research and within their application shows a thorough understanding of their sector/area of work through their business plan*

The applicant has provided market reports outlining the most popular woven items for sale and their competition. A good grasp of the competition has been outlined and how they can fit into the market such as location, style and costings.