

CABINET MEMBER DECISION

20/12/19

KEY DECISION: No

Lichfield District Small Business Grant Scheme, Round 5 allocations

1. Decision:

- 1.1 That the cabinet member approves the allocation of funding for the Lichfield District Small Business Grant Scheme's fifth round to the project bids detailed in the report.

2. Statement of Reasons:

- 2.1 The Lichfield District Small Business Grant Scheme commenced on the 21st November 2018, offering grants of between £500 to £1,500 to assist local small businesses and start-ups looking to overcome financial barriers to growth.
- 2.2 The scheme is planned to operate for an initial three year programme with £20,000 being allocated per annum for the period 2018/19 to 2020/21. The annual allocation has been subdivided into quarterly bidding rounds of £5,000. Each application for funding is assessed against a scoring criteria based on meeting the aims of the scheme - to support business and employment growth and helping to deliver the priority of a vibrant and prosperous local economy.
- 2.3 To qualify for consideration under the initiative, each applicant has had to have previously attended a course of business support provided for under the GBSLEP Enterprise for Success programme.
- 2.4 The scoring criteria – detailed in **Appendix 1** – cover the following areas:
-Employment
-Growth
-Business Plan
- 2.5 Overall six applications were submitted within this round with businesses located throughout the district applying. The types of businesses who applied ranged from photography, consulting, craft workshops, a recovery and rehabilitation clinic, a contemporary party shop and tours and talks. Each business applied for varying project costs to be supported by the grant, from marketing documents such as paid for social media advertising, branded workwear, website creation, to equipment to support business growth and training courses to offer new services.
- 2.6 The following summary paragraphs provide information on why it is recommended that monies are allocated to the following respective bids:

Life Through a Lens

Life Through a Lens is a photography business offering weddings, family shoots and commercial photography. The owner is looking to develop the businesses brand through rebranding and creating a new website to raise the profile of the business, generating new clients and bookings online. Through an increase in clients and business growth, more space is needed to store photos, backing up clients work and to be stored for 12 months in case of loss. Having reviewed the company's current bookings and their proposed forecast, two new hard drives are needed to be able to store all these documents.

Child Development Consulting

The business is starting up which will provide services towards child development consulting, social and emotional development therapeutic work and translation work for the Japanese community. They are looking to develop their digital and physical presence to generate leads through creating a website and buying a laptop with specific built in Japanese keyboard. Although laptops are ineligible, the laptop requested contains a built in Japanese keyboard to provide translation work, being of professional use and essential to providing the translation service. The two courses for facilitating groups and infant mental health shall enhance the owner's theoretical understanding of therapy and child development consultation by offering practical experience for these services. The individual membership to the 'social, emotional and behavioural difficulties association' shall allow the owner to benefit from the CPD and masters level training courses on offer whilst seeing the most up to date research and attend national conferences on social and emotional wellbeing.

The Handcrafted Party

The Handcrafted Party is a contemporary party shop for children's parties, celebrations, weddings and events, currently selling bespoke personalised gifts and run wood sign workshops but are looking to expand their offer with the new retail space they occupy in January. With their new space they are looking to offer a one-stop-shop by providing a party prop hire service, event planning and decoration services in the future, running alongside their retail supply and teaching/workshops already on offer. The ambition with the grant is to purchase items or materials to expand their hiring service, developing an increase in revenue with the hiring aspect not just generating 'one off' purchases but constant interest in hiring these items.

Jono's Tourism

Jono's Tourism provides tours and talks to visitors and tourists on all aspect of Lichfield's history. The owner is looking to purchase branded workwear to market the business on the ground when hosting talks and tours through Lichfield City with visitors and residents noticing the companies name and logo when passing by. A lot of the knowledge and research undertaken by the company is through archival research, whether that be physically within libraries or online. Whilst spending hours researching, organising and creating talks and tours, comfort is essential, as if the owner has an injury due to being at a desk for a long period of time, it could be detrimental to the businesses revenue by not being able to provide tours. An ergonomic chair is needed to try and mitigate an injury when researching and organising tours and talks. A printer with a high resolution scanner supports the owner with archival research by being able to enhance the company's knowledge to develop greater interest on tours, this item can also be used to generate revenue by offering a scanning service.

Crafty Soul

The Crafty Soul is a retail shop and craft workshop with locally produced gifts, cards and jewellery offered in the retail unit, & craft classes for birthday parties, corporate events and children's craft classes. The business is looking to purchase items to invest more into the craft

workshops, eight sewing machines to offer home craft classes, vinyl flooring to provide a more professional look to the craft shed, a mitre saw to increase the amount of wooden items to be created and run wooden craft workshops, an ImpressArt starter Kit to growth product range offered in store and online and paediatric first aid training to grow the craft workshops into the holidays. All the items bought above shall enhance the retail shops stock or support the delivery of more workshops (both adding variety and increase the amount of workshops), generating more revenue for the business. Paid for social media marketing is also essential to reach a wider audience online to book onto and publicise these additional workshops.

Regen, Replenish & Performance


Regen, Replenish & Performance is a recovery and rehabilitation clinic for active people and athletes offering treatment methods, such as pneumatic compression, cupping therapy, electric bed and percussion gun to help people get back to or maintain their optimum fitness. The owner would like to purchase a 'Game Ready' ice compression machine. An additional service for clients which is a more effective treatment to help people recover and be able to treat a greater amount of clients.

2.7 Overall round grant request breakdown

<u>Project costs</u>	<u>Grant requested</u>
<i>Life Through a Lens</i> £2,909	£1,500
<i>Child Development Consulting</i> £2,446.84	£1,223.42
<i>The Handcrafted Party</i> £2,985.22	£1,500
<i>Jono's Tourism</i> £849.17	£424.58
<i>Crafty Soul</i> £2,167.42	£1,083.71
<i>Regen, Replenish & Performance</i> £3,252	£1,500
Total: £14,609.65	£7,231.71

3. Any Alternative Options:

3.1 The Council could decide not to fund any or only some of the applications however this would not be in line with the agreed purpose of the scheme or the judgements reached having assessed the bids against the agreed criteria.

Signed: 
 Cabinet Member for Investment, Economic Growth & Tourism
 Date of Decision: 6/1/2020

Appendix 1: Scoring criteria details

Employment

- What is the potential to growth the number of people employed by the business over the next two years?

Growth

- Does the equipment applied for support delivery of the expected outputs & outcomes?
- What is the expected increase in cash flow in the next two years?
- How do they plan to increase cash flow?
- Does the application demonstrate a real barrier to growth?

Business Plan

- How do you view the projections (cash flow) in relation to the planned growth of the business?