

## Individual Executive Decision Notice

<b>Report title</b>	Omicron Leisure and Hospitality Business Grants	
<b>Decision designation</b>	GREEN	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Ian Brookfield Leader of the Council	
<b>Wards affected</b>	(All Wards);	
<b>Accountable Director</b>	Claire Nye, Director of Finance, David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer	
<b>Originating service</b>	Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Accountable employee</b>	Tracey Richards	Head of Revenues and Benefits
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<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>		

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### Summary

In accordance with the Special Urgency Decision 14 April 2021, authority is delegated to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Director of Finance to establish supplementary budgets funded by grant and make payments to businesses, in line with Government guidelines, which are announced for 2021-2022.

On 21 December 2021, a new grant scheme to support businesses was announced.

### Recommendation for decision:

That the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Director of Finance:

1. Approve the establishment of supplementary budgets totalling £1,350,072, fully funded by Grant.

2. Approve the payment of mandatory business grants by the Council, in line with Government Guidance.

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Signature  
Councillor Ian Brookfield  
Leader of the Council

Date: 14 January 2022

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Signature  
Claire Nye  
Director of Finance

Date: 14 January 2022

## 1.0 Background

1.1 On 21 December 2021, the Government announced the introduction of a new grant scheme to support businesses that are experiencing difficulties because of the Omicron variant, and the dual impact of staff absences and lower consumer demand.

## 2.0 Grant Scheme

2.1 Grants will be available for specific businesses identified as hospitality (defined as food and beverage services), leisure and accommodation premises.

2.2 Recipients of the grants must be solvent businesses and ratepayers in the hospitality and leisure sector.

2.3 Grants will be payable to the ratepayer responsible for business rates at 30 December 2021, per business assessment and a variable amount depending on the rateable value:

Rateable Value	15,000 and under	Between 15,000 to under 51,000	51,000 and over
Value of grant	£2,667.15	£4,000	£6,000

2.4 Grant awards will be made in accordance with eligibility detailed in guidance of criteria published by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

2.5 All grants will amount to a subsidy and therefore compliance with the UK's domestic and international subsidy control obligations. This will be monitored through an application process and by undertaking pre and post payment checks against the business.

2.6 Businesses who are in administration, liquidation or subject to a strike off notice will not be eligible to a grant.

## 3.0 Evaluation of alternative options

3.1 The Council could choose not to award Business Grants on behalf of the Government. This option has been discounted as the Government funding provides an opportunity to provide financial support to businesses.

## 4.0 Reasons for decision

4.1 The Council has legal and moral duties in relation to several aspects arising from Covid-19. This decision gives the authority to provide grant support to businesses fully funded by Government against a set criterion.

## **5.0 Financial implications**

- 5.1 Government funding is to help support businesses adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 5.2 The Government has also announced funding to support Hospitality and Leisure Businesses. 90% of the grant allocation for Wolverhampton has been identified provisionally as £1,350,072, however, the Council will be fully reimbursed by Government for all grants paid which satisfy the criteria.
- 5.3 This report seeks approval to build in supplementary budgets totalling £1,350,072 fully funded by grant and make payments to businesses in line with the grant criteria.

[AS/04012022/E]

## **6.0 Legal implications**

- 6.1 The Council must comply with the terms of the Business Grants as directed by BEIS. The Council will take steps to ensure that the rules in terms of Subsidy Control are complied with.

[SZ/11012022/P]

## **7.0 Equalities implications**

- 7.1 Equalities considerations will be included in the monitoring of the grant awards to ensure that it is one that will be able to demonstrate that they are awarded fairly. In this way, Councillors can be confident that the approach will meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty as established by the Equality Act 2010.
- 7.2 Alternative arrangements will be available for businesses who are unable to complete an online application and/or who require support in a different language.

## **8.0 Covid Implications**

- 8.1 The approach set out above seeks to address the Covid-19 impact on businesses.

## **9.0 Schedule of background papers**

- 9.1 14 April 2021 – Special Urgent Decision notice
- 9.2 [Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant: guidance for Local Authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)