

Title of Report:	Enterprise Fund
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Leisure and Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	15th December 2020
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Accelerating our Economy and Contributing to Prosperity
Outcome	All people of Causeway Coast and Glens will contribute to and benefit from a thriving economy built on a culture of growth, entrepreneurship, innovation and learning
Lead Officer	Head of Prosperity & Place Business Development Manager Economic Development Officer

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£50,000 fund for 2020-2021
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the level of applications and scoring panel decisions in respect of the Enterprise Fund 2020 – 2021.

2.0 Background

The Enterprise Fund seeks to help those recent start-up businesses that need assistance in taking the next step in their growth plan. The fund is aimed at supporting new businesses, with a track record of two years or less, to address barriers to growth via innovative approaches.

Grants of up to £10,000 are available.

3.0 2020-21 Fund

The fund opened on 2nd November 2020 and closed at noon on Friday 20th November 2020, with expenditure to be completed and claimed by 19th March 2021.

Initial criteria as follows:

- All applicant businesses must be within the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area.
- All applicants must have completed the Business Start Programme – available through Causeway Enterprise Agency and Roe Valley Enterprises – within the last two years – or have a business plan from other sources completed within the last two years.
- All applicants must have a bank (or other financial institution) account for the sole purpose of their business – i.e., separate from personal finances.

4.0 Pre-Application Support

Guidelines were made available to all interested businesses and included full details in respect of levels of award, exclusions and assessment and scoring processes. Named contacts were also provided to potential applicants wishing to discuss their idea pre-application.

The Enterprise Fund was publicised in all local papers and on Council's social media platforms prior to the call opening.

There were 76 enquiries to the fund, via telephone and email, by businesses wishing to discuss criteria and requirements. Full support was given to all potential applicants during the funding call.

5.0 Enterprise Fund Scoring

Of the 39 applications received at closing, 12 were deemed ineligible and the remaining 27 progressed to scoring panel held w/c 23rd November 2020. Panel consisted of:

- Business Development Manager.
- Economic Development Officer.
- Economic Development Officer.

12 businesses scored above the 65% threshold and are eligible for funding as follows:

	Business I.D	Sector	Percentage Score	Award
1	6114	Food & Drink Manufacturing	87.5%	£8,813.80

2	6138	Tourism	82%	£10,000
3	6139	Retail/Wholesale	77.5%	£10,000
4	6163	Manufacturing	72.5%	£8,000
5	6104	Food & Drink Manufacturing	72.5%	£6,762
6	6032	Creative Industry	72.5%	£6,110
7	6144	Manufacturing & Engineering	72.5%	£7,781
8	6148	Food & Drink Manufacturing	70%	£10,000
9	6072	Retail/Wholesale	70%	£6,933.38
10	6186	Food & Drink Manufacturing	70%	£5,934.75
11	6182	Leisure/Fitness	67%	£9,340
12	6132	I.T/Communications	65%	£7,900
				£97,574.93

5.0 Recommendation

Underspend of circa £30,000 has been identified within other business support programmes that moved to virtual delivery in March 2020 and it is recommended that Council agrees to utilise this additional resource to award Enterprise Fund grants to businesses 1-10 as noted above, totalling **£80,334.93**, to support recovery and growth.

Further information in respect of this grant is attached – See **Annex A**.

Annex A: Levels of Award and Eligibility

1.3 Levels of Grant Award

Enterprise Fund	Maximum Grant Amount
<p>For example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Equipment linked to creating new jobs or introducing innovative approaches leading to increased profitability.• Developing I. T. systems for the business which can demonstrably lead to increased profitability or increased employment potential.• Implementing a significant marketing campaign which will lead to increased sales.• Product and design development.• Development of a marketing support programme or sales research which will lead to the business entering new markets	£10,000

This is a competitive process and all grant awards will be determined on the basis of merit. Applicants are advised that organisations that have been successful in securing Council funding in the past will not automatically be guaranteed funding in the future. Council reserves the right to reduce the amount of funding awarded if we do not consider that the amount applied for represents value for money.

Please Note: Successful applicants will have to provide all evidence requested once the project expenditure is complete. This will include original receipts, bank statements, or any other documentation deemed necessary. This list is not exhaustive. If requested documentation is not supplied, payment will be withheld. Please do not apply for funding if you cannot supply these items. Within the 2020 2021 Enterprise Fund, applications are not restricted to businesses within specific sectors.

1.4 General principles

In line with Council's Grant Funding Policy, the overarching principle for all Council grant funding is that of meeting local needs which have been identified and prioritised by Council or by others and acknowledged by Council. Any activity that cannot be shown to meet the following basic requirements will not be provided with funding:

- Have a clearly identified need i.e., the application addresses barriers to growth which the business faces.
- Can deliver outcomes which meet this need.
- In the case of this funding, deliver improved profits, increased employment, entry into new markets, cost effective and quality service provision, fitting with the purpose and remit of the funding.
- Be undertaken by a credible business with the capacity to deliver the project as stated.
- Reflect the statutory remit of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council aligning with the Council's Corporate Plan, the relevant Service Plan and that they can meet the specific criteria of the fund.
- Applicants must demonstrate their commitment to promoting Good Relations and Equality of Opportunity.
- In the interests of transparency, equality and accountability, all applicants will have a right of appeal should their application be rejected.

- While all applications are treated on the basis of merit, Council would particularly welcome applications from young people, women and under-represented groups from Section 75 groupings.

All expenditure must be completed and claimed before 19 March 2021. There is no provision for extending this deadline.

1.5 Who can apply?

The initial criteria for application are as follows:

- All applicant businesses must be within the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area.
- All applicants must have completed the Business Start Programme – available through Causeway Enterprise Agency and Roe Valley Enterprises – within the last two years – or have a business plan from other sources completed within the last two years.
- All applicants must have a bank (or other financial institution) account for the sole purpose of their business – i.e., separate from personal finances. **Only businesses that meet these criteria can apply to the Enterprise Fund. Please note, a business plan must be supplied at application stage.**

1.6 What can be funded?

Examples of expenditure that can be funded through this grant are listed under Section 1.3

1.7 What cannot be funded?

This funding programme will not award grants to the following:-

- Businesses whose address is outside the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area
- Businesses with charitable fundraising as their main focus
- Political Organisations
- Running costs
- Loan repayments
- Any business where there are ethical considerations – for example, betting shops, money lending, debt factoring, hire purchase financing; pyramid schemes; projects which have as their object the promotion of political or religious views; illegal or immoral activities.
- Any other business that the Council may from time to time deem to be ineligible.
- Mobile Assets

1.8 Exclusions

The purpose of this funding is to support innovation. In general, the following will not normally be eligible for funding:-

- Retrospective expenditure where services/items have already been obtained and paid.
- Applications received after the closing date specified in the promotional literature.
- Costs that are not auditable e.g. cash payments unsupported by an approved petty cash system.
- Costs towards ongoing running costs (e.g. electricity, rent, insurance etc.).
- Building costs
- Costs towards banking charges and / or repayment of debt.
- Costs that can be claimed back from elsewhere e.g. VAT.
- Activities which are party-political in intention, use or presentation.
- Salary costs will not be funded, unless in very exceptional circumstances.
- Alcohol, gratuities, gifts and prizes will not be funded.
- Rent, rates, general cash-flow or running costs.
- Purchase of stock for general trading purposes.