



Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council Business Recovery & Growth Grant Scheme

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Aim	1
3.	Funding Availability	1
4.	Eligibility Criteria	1
5.	Eligible Activities	2
6.	Application Process	2
7.	Grant Offer	3
8.	Post Assurance Checks	3
9.	Taxation and the provision of information to Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs	3
10.	Fraud or financial irregularity	4
11.	Data Protection and Use of Data	4
	Appendix A - Ineligible Costs and Activities	5
	Appendix B - State Aid Regulations.....	6

1. Introduction

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council is keen to ensure that the Additional Restrictions Support Grant (ARG), is used to its fullest potential to support businesses, both now and into the future. Our current ARG Policy, whilst complying with the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) conditions, was formulated with flexibility at the forefront. The Council has always recognised that a 'one size fits all' approach will not work for businesses in our borough, and as well as the immediate grant support provided during COVID restrictions, a longer term Recovery Fund would also be required.

Building upon the ARG Policy, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council has introduced a Business Recovery & Growth Grant Scheme and allocated funding of £300,000 for this scheme. This will be regularly reviewed to consider the effectiveness of the criteria and popularity of the scheme. Due to demand, the scheme may be extended, revised or ended based upon available funding.

2. Aim

The Business Recovery & Growth Grant Scheme provides funding to enable local businesses to implement changes and initiatives that will support their plans to invest, recover, sustain, diversify and / or grow, following the challenges experienced due to COVID-19.

3. Funding Availability

Grants will be available to all businesses based within the borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth. The grant payments will be made available for one-off costs, up to a maximum amount of £15,000 per business.

4. Eligibility Criteria

There is no restriction upon the upon the category of businesses who can apply. To qualify for this scheme, your business must:

- be located within the administrative area of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council. For sole traders, your home address must be within the borough;
- not be in administration, insolvent or in receipt of a striking-off notice;
- employ less than 50 full time equivalent (FTE) employees;
- have been adversely affected by COVID-19;
- provide quotations to carry out the proposed projects from businesses/ individuals who are independent from your business;
- ensure your project complies with current State Aid regulations and you must submit a State Aid Declaration as part of the application process.

Further details of the current State Aid regulations are attached at Appendix B.

- Businesses that have substantial financial reserves and that we consider can afford to fund the project without a grant will not be eligible.
- Applicants must satisfy us that their proposals are viable, realistic and deliverable.
- Applications will be assessed on their relative merits in terms of the outputs offered, in particular, the number of jobs safeguarded and/or the number of jobs created.

5. Eligible Activities

The Business Recovery & Growth Grant Scheme will fund both capital and one-off revenue costs. This scheme is deliberately non-prescriptive within this envelope, in relation to the activities that individual businesses require to support them to invest, recover, sustain, diversify and / or grow. Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council is keen to receive proposals directly from businesses.

Examples of eligible activities may include but are NOT restricted to:

- refurbishment / refit to business property or assets to support diversification and COVID safe operations and/or other social distancing measures;
- new equipment, including manufacturing machinery, IT equipment, outdoor furniture, etc;
- permanent fixtures to support social distancing;
- digital infrastructure / platforms, for example, transactional websites;
- consultancy support for marketing purposes.

There are a small number of ineligible activities and costs. A list of these is attached at Appendix A

Please note that this scheme will not reimburse for costs incurred or paid out by businesses, prior to your application submission.

6. Application Process

The application form must be **completed in full**, with the following **supporting information** supplied:

- **Up to date financial accounts for at least the last two years.** If your business has been trading for less than 2 years, your most recent business plan/management accounts must be provided. **You must be able to demonstrate that your business was financially viable prior to COVID-19.**

- You may wish to provide additional information to support your application, such as relevant research.

As part of the assessment process, the Council may need to share your business case with the Council's partners – commercial sensitivity will be protected, and your actual consent will be sought prior to the sharing of any information.

If successful for a Grant under this scheme, you consent to the participation in publicity, press releases, case studies and photographs (subject to commercial sensitivity), undertaken by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council.

7. Grant Offer

Successful applicants will be invited to enter into a **grant agreement** with Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council. This will explain when a project can start and all terms and conditions including any project specific conditions.

Payment will be made upon **receipt of a validated invoice** for the activities specifically funded and identified within the grant agreement.

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council reserve the right to withhold, vary or reclaim funding if any information supplied through the application and approval process proves to be inaccurate, misleading, or incomplete.

8. Post Assurance Checks

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council will undertake due diligence checks on information provided in support of applications, for example, for the prevention of fraud.

If it is established that any award has been made incorrectly due to error, misrepresentation or incorrect information provided to the Council by an applicant or their representative(s), the Council will look to recover the amount in full.

9. Taxation and the provision of information to Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC)

The Council has been informed by Government that all payments under this scheme are taxable. The Council does not accept any responsibility in relation to an applicant's tax liabilities and all applicants should make their own enquiries to establish any tax position.

All applicants should note that where a grant is paid by the Council, details of each individual grant may be passed to Government.

10. Fraud or financial irregularity

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council has a zero-tolerance approach to fraud, corruption, and other forms of financial irregularity. It will take any necessary steps where fraud is suspected, for example, full recovery of costs and/or referral to the police.

11. Data Protection and Use of Data

All information and data provided by applicants shall be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices. These are available on the Council's website.

Appendix A - Ineligible Costs and Activities

- The purchase of land or property.
- The speculative conversion of buildings into business premises.
- Internal staffing costs.
- Projects where the applicant cannot demonstrate a market demand (either new or existing).
- Notional expenditure.
- Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of assets purchased with the help of the Grant.
- Interest charges unless under an approved State Aid scheme.
- Service charges on finance leases, hire purchase and credit arrangements.
- Costs resulting from the deferral of payments to creditors.
- Reclaimable VAT.
- Expenditure supported from other government sources, local authority grants, charges, paid by leaseholders, or EC structural funds, to the extent that the combined grants and other support total more than 100% of the project or scheme costs.
- Any cost relating to insurance policies.
- Costs for any expenditure incurred prior to the award of the grant.

Appendix B - State Aid Regulations

Your project must comply with the new UK Subsidy Control Regime.

Any grant is given as aid under the Temporary Framework for State Aid Measures, to support the economy in the current COVID-19 outbreak published on 19th March 2020. This means that businesses receiving support under these provisions can receive up to €800,000 in aid over the preceding three years (being the current year and the previous two years).

Any grant awarded is required to comply with the EU law on State Aid. This will involve the applicant declaring to the Council if they have received any other de minimis State Aid or Aid provided under the EU Commission COVID-19 Temporary Framework.

Applicants must therefore declare how much public sector funding (including consultancy support) they have received under the De Minimis Regulation within the last three years. This may reduce the amount of grant available to support your project.

The State Aid declaration is included within the Grant application.