

RECORD OF INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE DECISION MADE BY A CABINET MEMBER

Decision Maker	Decision Type	Date
CLlr Sean Fielding	Delegated Decision in relation to Business Grants	22/10/2019

Award of a Business Improvement Grant in Lees district centre

Decision (s)

Approve a max award of £8,000 Business Improvement Grant to:

Assure Certification Ltd in respect of 96 High Street, Lees

Exempt/Confidential Report		No
Key Decision		No

Reasons for the decision(s)

The purpose of the report is to seek approval to award a Business Improvement Grant in Lees District Centre.

The Council recognises the important role that independent businesses play in sustaining the vibrancy and vitality of our high streets and has developed a Business Improvement Grant scheme for Lees District Centre. Discretionary grants of 50% of the costs of improvements, up to a maximum of £8,000, are available.

Assure Certification Ltd, 96 High Street, Lees.

This relates to the former Barclays Bank premises at 96 High Street, Lees. It has been vacant since the bank closed and has recently been purchased by Assure Certification Ltd who currently rent the ground floor at 103 High Street Lees.



Oldham
Council

The building occupies a prominent position on the corner of High Street and Thomas Street and is probably one of the most recognisable buildings in Lees centre. They have registered for business rates at the premises and currently receive Small Business Rate Relief.

The works to bring the building into use will include the installation of new windows and doors, a complete electrical re-wire, installation of boiler, heating and plumbing including toilets upstairs and downstairs and kitchenette facilities.

Planning permission has been granted for the change of use. A further planning application (PA/343773/19) has been applied for the changes to the building, as well as an initial notice for Building Regulations approval and any grant approved would be subject to both these being approved.

The business currently has 2 employees working at their existing offices in Lees. The works being carried out at 96 High street are for two separate areas. The upstairs will mainly be offices for the certification business, who are currently growing rapidly and foresee additional staff will be needed in this part of the business.

The downstairs part of the property will become a boardroom/Meeting room. The plan is to rent this meeting place to local business for meetings and events. This will generate income for the training division of the business and should also create a job for somebody to manage the bookings. They have already spoken to a number of local business to supply catering for the meeting room which should also benefit the local economy.

The applicant has submitted 3 quotes for each aspect of the works and based on the total of all the lowest quotes – the works come to £19,033.41 (exc VAT). The applicant is therefore applying for the maximum grant of £8,000.

Options/Alternatives considered

1. Do nothing. If the Council chooses to adopt this approach then the Council's regeneration aspirations for Lees District Centre would be delayed. There is potential that the appearance of these premises and Lees District Centre could decline further.
2. Approve the award of the Business Improvement Grant. Business Improvement Grant applicants will enter into a contract with the Council, to ensure that works are being undertaken satisfactorily with claw back arrangements for non-compliance. Funding takes place once the contract is completed and the works completed to the satisfaction of the Council.

Conflict of Interest declared

None

(Councillor Signature and portfolio)

In consultation with

Helen Lockwood, Deputy Chief Executive People and Place

Hlockwood.

(Signature)

Decision made pursuant to:

- a) Delegation to Cabinet Member under the Council's scheme of delegation. Contract £100,000 - £400,000 and Key decisions.**

