



## **Delegated Officer Report**

**Decision Maker:** Cllr Shoab Akhtar, Cabinet Member for Employment and Enterprise  
Emma Barton, Director of Economy.

**Date of Decision:** 2 August 2021

**Subject:** Award of a Business Improvement Grant in Royton district centre

**Report Author:** Liz Whitehead, Principal Regeneration Officer

**Ward (s):** Royton South

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**Reason for the decision:** The purpose of the report is to seek approval to award a Business Improvement Grant in Royton District Centre.

**Summary:** The Council recognises the important role that independent businesses play in sustaining the vibrancy and vitality of our high streets. The Royton District Executive has developed a Business Improvement Grant scheme for Royton District Centre following the same model as the one recently closed in Shaw and Lees. However, the Royton scheme utilises District and Local Investment Framework (LIF) funds and has a maximum “pot” of £49,103.

The Royton grant scheme provides discretionary grants of 50% of the costs of improvements, up to a maximum of £3,000, within a defined boundary focused on Royton Centre.

An application has been received and for which approval is sought.

**Modern Line Bathrooms, 80 Rochdale Road, Royton, OL2 6QJ**

The owner of this business has applied. Modern Line Bathrooms is an existing bathroom showroom on Rochdale Road on the corner of Radcliffe Street and was founded in 1998. The grant applicant owns the whole building. The showroom is based on the ground floor and the upper floor is a flat which is rented out. The business supplies and installs

bathroom products and has one employee in the showroom plus three self-employed plumbers who fit the bathrooms. The business sponsors Santos AFC under 8's football club and bouts at Hamer Boxing club. They also do an annual Christmas card competition for local children.

The grant application is for new signage to the shop and installation of strip lighting to the front fascia sign, cleaning of the external brickwork, re-painting the external paintwork, replacing the tiles in the doorway, new side window and new first floor uPVC windows to the front elevation.

The current signage used to be on some canopies over the shop window and front door (which have recently been removed) plus a sign on the side elevation. The business is aware that Advertisement Consent will be needed for the new signage (due to the illumination) and that this will be a condition of any grant offered.

As mentioned above, the business owns the premises and are registered for Business Rates and are up to date as they currently get Small Business Rate Relief. The business is hoping to grow its operations and take on an additional plumber which will increase their capacity each month.

The business has provided three quotes for each aspect of the work, and based on the lowest quotes, the total of which is £4,256.50, the business would like to apply for a grant of £2,128.25.

The Royton Grant Advisory Panel made up of a minimum of 3 of the 6 ward councillors for Royton North and Royton South were consulted by email on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021. All 6 responded recommending approval of the application subject to Advertisement Consent being obtained for the illuminated sign.

***What are the alternative option(s) to be considered? Please give the reason(s) for recommendation(s):***

1. Do nothing. If the Council chooses to adopt this approach then the Council's regeneration aspirations for Royton District Centre would be delayed. There is potential that the appearance of these premises and Royton District Centre could decline.
2. Approve the award of the Business Improvement Grant. Business Improvement Grant applicants will enter into a conditional grant agreement 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.

**Consultation: including any conflict of interest declared by relevant Cabinet Member consulted.**

A local grant review panel consisting of at least 3 of the ward members for Royton North and Royton South has been set up to review grant applications. The panel provides recommendations as to whether to approve, vary or reject the grant applications.

This application was considered by the members of the Royton Grant Review Panel via email. In response to which, the recommendations to approve were received.

**Recommendation(s):**

Approve the Business Improvement Grant as follows:

- £2,128.25 to “Modern Line Bathrooms” in respect of 80 Rochdale Road, Royton.

**Implications:**

*What are the **financial** implications?*

There are sufficient funds to cover the request of £2,128.25 for the above Business Improvement Grant. This will be funded from the LIF-Royton High Street Grants budget, in which there is £44,407 available. (Owen Brierley)

*What are the **legal** implications?*

The grants will be made subject to the Council’s standard terms for Business Improvement Grants that provide for the grant to be paid after the works have been completed to the satisfaction of the Council’s surveyor. There will be claw back provisions for non-compliance with the grant terms which together with the relatively low amounts of the grants make the grants low risk transactions. If the grant applications meet the Council’s requirements and have been assessed in accordance with the Council’s procedures, Legal Services has no further comments to make. (Sukie Kaur - Solicitor)

*What are the **procurement** implications?*

N/A

*What are the **Human Resources** implications?*

N/A

***Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment***

N/A

*What are the **property** implications*

Improvement of privately-owned businesses will contribute towards the achievement of a vibrant Royton District Centre. (Bryn Cooke)

**Risks:**

Each applicant is checked for Business Rates registration and that they are up to date. The applicant is registered for Business Rates at the premises and are up to date. The grant is only payable on satisfactory completion of the works.

**Co-operative agenda**

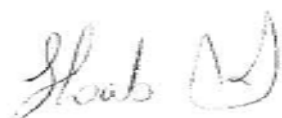
Business Improvement Grants are available to any independent business or property owner within the eligible areas. The grants can be the catalyst for local business to carry out improvement which they would not otherwise be

able to afford or consider doing. Working with independent businesses is particularly important to our cop-operative agenda and our District Centres as they help to create a strong sense of local identity and customer loyalty and trust. District Centres are often the location for family businesses that have been trading for long periods of time – many of them for several decades. Improvements to the exterior of key buildings including fascia’s and shop fronts can both uplift an area and the visitor’s perception of the District Centre and assist in attracting new independents.

Has the relevant Legal Officer confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution?	Yes
Has the relevant Finance Officer confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget?	Yes
Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council?	No

**There are no background papers for this report**

<b>Report Author Sign-off:</b>	
Signed:	Liz Whitehead
<b>Date:</b>	20.07.21



Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cabinet Member, Employment &  
 Enterprise

Date: 12<sup>th</sup> August 2021

In consultation with:



Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
 Director of Economy

Date: 2 August 2021