



Delegated Officer Report

Decision Maker:	Cllr Shoab Akhtar, Cabinet Member for Employment and Enterprise Emma Barton, Director of Economy.
Date of Decision:	October 2021
Subject:	Award of a Business Improvement Grant in Royton district centre
Report Author:	Liz Whitehead, Principal Regeneration Officer
Ward (s):	Royton South

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.

Skin Clinic, 70 Rochdale Road, Royton, OL2 6QJ

The owner of this business has applied. Skin Clinic (Modern Aesthetics by Laura Hatton) is an existing Skin Clinic and Beautician on Rochdale Road located in a mid-terraced property. The grant applicant is a tenant and has consent from her landlord for the works in her application. She has a lease until 2025. The business engages and interact with several business owners in Royton, promoting their services

and supporting them, she is always happy to promote community events in the shop and share leaflets promoting the work of other local businesses within the area. Her sons play for a local football team, and she is looking into sponsoring their kits to support their involvement in this community sport.

The grant application is to replace and upgrade the appearance of the shopfront. Currently the front window is failing, which has made the front window look cloudy; and looks like the window isn't clean, but as it is inside the glass, cleaning the glass has no effect. The grant would help to enhance and improve the premises externally as well as removing the current unsightly window frame and door.

The business has already paid for a new shop sign and illumination at a cost of £1540 and have the front brickwork painted around once a year to make the shop look more appealing and attractive to local people passing through Royton. The business has been made aware that Building Regulations approval will be needed for the new window and door and that this will be a condition of any grant offered.

The business is registered for Business Rates and are up to date as they currently get Small Business Rate Relief. The business has obtained three quotes for the work, and based on the lowest quote, which is £2,500, the business would like to apply for a grant of £1,250.

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 8th October 2021. All 6 members responded recommending approval of the application subject to a Building Regulations Completion certificate being obtained for the works before any grant is paid.

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:

- £1,250 to “Skin Clinic (Laura Hatton)” in respect of 70 Rochdale Road, Royton.

Implications:

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

There are sufficient funds to cover the request of £1,250 for the above Business Improvement Grant. This will be funded from the LIF-Royton High Street Grants budget, in which there is £42,279 available. (J Kara)

*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

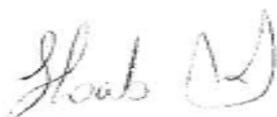
Business Improvement Grants are available to any independent business or property owner within the eligible areas. The grants can be the catalyst for local business to

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

Report Author Sign-off:	
Signed:	Liz Whitehead
Date:	26/10/2021



Signed _____ Date: 28th October 2021
 Cabinet Member, Employment & Enterprise

In consultation with:



Signed _____ Date: 28 October 2021
 Director of Economy