

NEWS RELEASE

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk



PR 3471

For Immediate Release

Grants totalling £23.675m awarded to local businesses

Over £23m has already been paid to 1,991 local businesses by the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk in funding from the grants introduced by Government in response to the Coronavirus, Covid – 19.

The Chancellor set out a package of temporary, timely and targeted measures to support public services, people and businesses through this period of disruption caused by COVID-19.

This package included support for small businesses, and businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors. This support takes the form of two grant funding schemes, the Small Business Grant Fund and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund, both of which are administered by the local authority.

Since the first grants were paid out on 31 March, the borough council has paid out £23,675,000, which represents over 57% of the amount of funding available for eligible businesses from the money allocated by the Government and officials want as much of the remaining amount as possible to be awarded before the end of the month.

Cllr Graham Middleton, Cabinet Member for Business Development said: "A total of 1,991 businesses have received the grant money direct into their accounts. Each grant is worth either £10,000 or £25,000. We hope that by getting these grants out quickly it will really help those businesses cope through these unprecedented times.

"We are currently working our way through verification forms submitted on 8 April, so most payments are being made within about 7 working days of receiving the application. However, there are some delays to payments when we don't have the correct evidence uploaded with the verification form. It is vital that the forms are completed fully, with bank account details, and that evidence of that bank account is then included. This means the money can be paid swiftly. We really want to make sure all the money has been awarded by the end of April, so we are urging businesses to check they have given us the correct bank details and evidence.

"Anyone who has submitted their form, but hasn't received their money within around 7 working days, should check their email or mail to see if we have been in contact to request the evidence. Alternatively, they can go online, register for a MyRevenues account on the borough council's website and upload their evidence along with their Business Rates reference number.

"We understand how tough it is for everyone, and we want to ensure the businesses are getting the help they are entitled to as quickly as possible.

"Anyone that hasn't yet registered for one of the above grants should go to our webpage west-norfolk.gov.uk/coronavirus and click on business assistance page to check their eligibility for a grant and to complete the online verification form as soon as possible. We don't want businesses missing out on support to which they are entitled."

Further information about support for businesses from the government is available by going to: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support>

Businesses that qualify for the Expanded Retail Discount or Day Nursery Discount should have received new zero bills, meaning they do not need to pay any business rates for 2020/2021. Under these schemes 1097 businesses in west Norfolk have received a total in business rates relief of £21,301,459

Cllr Stuart Dark, Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk Cabinet Member for Emergency Planning, said: "Once the team had implemented the new guidance and legislation they have worked tirelessly to get these grants processed and in people's accounts as quickly as possible.

"I know how much these grants have been appreciated by local businesses and we hope they go some way towards protecting these businesses into the future.

"We hope that many more will use our eligibility checker on our website and complete the verification form. We really want to get this money awarded businesses before the end of April, so if you think you might be eligible, its worth checking now.

"We have shared this information with as many businesses as we can, along with the Chambers of Trade, LEP and BID. Any help people can give in getting this message to local businesses is very much appreciated."

Stay at home

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home
- Do not meet others, even friends or family.

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

Notes for editors

Small Business Grant

There is a £10,000 grant for qualifying small businesses in receipt of small business rate relief or rural rate relief.

Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant

There is additional grant money available for businesses who qualify for the Expanded Retail Discount.

Qualifying businesses with a rateable value up to £15,000 will receive £10,000.

Qualifying businesses with a rateable value between £15,001 and £50,999 will receive £25,000.