

London Borough of Enfield

**Regeneration & Economic Development Scrutiny Panel
9th September 2021**

Subject: Business Support

**Cabinet Member: Cllr Caliskan, Cllr Maguire
Executive Director: Sarah Cary**

Purpose of Report

1. For Information
2. To update members on Business Support delivered through Covid and advise on plans moving forward

Relevance to the Council Plan

3. The Council Plan identifies that ‘the Covid-19 crisis has placed unimaginable pressure on Enfield’s local economy and many of our Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) businesses are facing great uncertainty. The local authority is working directly with local businesses to understand the pressures they face and give them the support they need during this critical time. We are also looking ahead with businesses to establish a solid platform from which they can recover and develop for the future, ensuring our local economy bounces back with renewed strength and focus.’

Background

4. As set out above the Council has committed to support local businesses through and beyond the Covid Pandemic in the Council Plan. This is developed further in the Council’s Economic Development Strategy which will be published shortly following an update to reflect Covid.

Financial support to date

5. As at the end of July the Council had distributed the following funding to Enfield Businesses: -

**COVID 19 FINANCIAL SUPPORT PROVIDED BY ENFIELD COUNCIL AS OF
END JULY 2021**

Business	£46.5m
Rates Relief	

Small Business Grant	£19.9m
Retail Hospitality & Leisure Grant	£23.6m
Discretionary Grant	£2.5m
Local Restrictions Support Grant	£10.3m
Restart Grant	£9.4m
Additional Restrictions Grant	£9.6m
TOTAL	£121.8m

6. As part of this process an enhanced business support team within the Economic Development Team was set up with secondees from across the Council and around 3000 business were provided with financial support, advice and or guidance and around 9000 businesses received regular information on the availability of support. We are maintaining a regular continuing dialogue with many of these businesses.
7. A dedicated team lead by Sam Buckley was also set up to manage grants and the associated governance and reporting.
8. Around 15,500 different grant payments have been managed to nearly 2,500 different business.
9. In addition, the majority of local businesses that are tenants of Council commercial properties received a rent holiday between the March and June quarter days in 2020.

10. Events and other support

11. Early in the first lockdown Enfield Council partnered with the Federation of Small Businesses to provide free and subsidised membership and access to a range of business support and guidance. Several business seminars were also arranged jointly with FSB to provide advice on grant applications.
12. Again during the first lockdown the Council partnered with ShopAppy to provide access to an online sales and delivery platform for small businesses not previously online to enable them to continue trading during lockdowns. This programme is continuing and is currently being expanded to support a 'bricks and clicks' programme for small business.

13. A range of cultural activities and events have been coordinated in town centres to support a return to trading and increase footfall. The most recent of these 'a Month of Sundays' attracted close to 40,000 participants across 5 events.
14. Working closely with colleagues in licensing the team have supported additional outdoor trading for cafes, restaurants and bars across the borough.

Ongoing Grants and programmes

15. Enfield Council has now qualified for a further 2.3 million pounds of government funding through the ARG Scheme which will provide further financial help for businesses. A range of proposals have been collated from officers on how to best spend this funding and will be agreed with portfolio holders shortly
16. Building on the success of the earlier business support programme together with the Federation of Small Business we have developed a unique '1000' business club to help business survive, thrive, and pivot to success. The partnership is a proactive response of the needs of the small businesses to provide a fully paid membership model, access to professional network, advice, and support which includes
 - Supporting 1000 businesses to develop unique membership model to engage with bespoke business support to develop new models of operation and becoming lean in operating
 - Business support to supply chain businesses seeking to expand and develop in the economy and thus providing an ideal environment for inward investment in the local area
 - An opportunity for small businesses to engage with the Economic Development team to have a platform and influence and interaction.
 - Provide an ethical approach and practice associated with supporting members to grow and develop and support one another
 - Business support provided via workshops/Focus groups/briefings & Masterclasses which will look to support the green economy and getting business owners to have practical action plans around the
 - Tackling youth unemployment – The ED team have worked with FSB to work towards having 300 kickstart placements which will allow businesses to work with young people from 16-24 and bring in innovation and creativity
 - Tackling unemployed – for those people are not eligible for the Kickstart scheme the FSB will work with business to have 50 work experience placements for young people
 - Tackling over 50's unemployment – FSB will work with businesses to develop work experience/career tasters for people ages over 50's who are seeking to develop key skills in the world of work

- Events – FSB and Enfield council will be working on weekly and monthly events to support businesses. The events will be designed with 'key speakers' experts and models of agile working
- Forums – FSB and Enfield council will be working on developing forums on Green/BAME/ Creativity/ Young Entrepreneurs

Main Considerations for the Panel

17. To note the extensive support given to businesses over the last 18 months

Conclusions

18. Extensive support has been given to Enfield businesses during covid with regular communication with around 9000 business and specific support to approaching 3000. The Council has had a level of contact with businesses that far exceeds previous levels and the team is now working to build and develop these relationships and develop programmes tailored to meet the needs expressed by business.

19. The Economic Development Strategy has been updated to reflect this and will be published shortly.

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Appendices **None**

Background Papers **None**