

The Liverpool City Region Hospitality & Leisure Support Grant

Guidance Notes and Checklist

1. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic is unprecedented and has had an immediate and significant impact on the Liverpool City Region economy.

On Monday 12 October 2020, the Government announced that in order to curb rising infection rates, the Liverpool City region, which includes Liverpool, Knowsley, Wirral, St Helens, Sefton and Halton, has been placed into a Very High alert level which came into force on Wednesday 14 October 2020. From this date all social mixing indoors and in private gardens is prohibited and certain businesses must close. These are pubs and bars that do not serve substantive meals, gyms and leisure centres, betting centres, adult gaming centres and casinos.

As a direct response to the existing challenges facing the hospitality sector and the new measures imposed by Government, the Metro Mayor and the Mayor and Leaders of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's six local authorities have created a fund to support micro and small businesses in the hospitality and leisure sector.

The **Hospitality & Leisure Support Grant** is focused on supporting the retention of jobs in the sector during periods of difficult trading, thus creating a link between the amount of grant provided and the Government's new [Job Support Scheme](#), and providing an additional grant on top of the [Local Restrictions Support Grant](#) which is provided by the Government.

The grant fund will be co-ordinated and administered by the six local authorities that form the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

The allocation of funding for each Council is based on the most recent data from **Office of National Statistics** and is proportionate to the anticipated expenditure associated with hospitality jobs within their geographic area.

The Hospitality & Leisure Support Grant will be allocated quickly and efficiently, with the first funding to reach applicants within **10 days** of the application being approved (subject to the application being compliant, with all the necessary supporting evidence).

2. PRIORITY AREAS

The amount of funding available under the Hospitality & Leisure Support Grant is not expected to meet the demand from businesses, and unfortunately, not all applicants will be successful. Therefore, in determining the eligibility criteria, each Council has sought to balance the number of businesses they can support with the priority areas of the Council and the overall amount of money that is available.

In administering the grant, each Council will adopt the following priorities:-

1. Providing the greatest assistance to those eligible micro and small businesses which protect the highest number of jobs;

2. Providing support to as many businesses as possible within the available financial resource;
3. Providing support for businesses in the hospitality and leisure sector employing 1 or more full time equivalent (FTE) staff;
4. Delivering a grant application which is simple, straightforward and makes decisions as quickly as possible

3. OVERVIEW OF THE HOSPITALITY & LEISURE SUPPORT GRANT

The Hospitality & Leisure Support Grant will: -

- support businesses in meeting operational costs;
- make a contribution to staff wages; and
- help businesses maintain the necessary Covid secure measures.

It is available both to eligible businesses that plan to continue operating and, in a different way, to those that are required to close for the period of Very High restrictions (at least four weeks). The following table outlines the support that is available:-

Table One
Outline of the Government Support, Job Support Scheme and LCR Hospitality & Leisure Support Grant

	Hospitality & Leisure business able to remain OPEN	Hospitality & Leisure business ordered to CLOSE
Government Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business rates relief • Protected from eviction to Jan 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business rates relief • Protected from eviction to Jan 2021 <p>Local Restrictions Support Grant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible businesses with a rateable value of less than £15,000 the business will receive a cash grant of £667 for each 2-week period the business is closed • Eligible businesses with a rateable value of between £15,000 and less than £51,000, the business will receive a cash grant of £1,000 for each 2-week period the business is closed • Eligible businesses with a rateable value of £51,000 or above the business will receive a cash grant of £1,500 for each 2-week period the business is closed. • Grants will be based on the rateable value of the property on the first full day of local lockdown restrictions.
Job Support Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available from 1 November 2020 for six months (review Jan 2021) • Employees must be on an employer's PAYE payroll on or before 23 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available from 1 November 2020 for six months (review Jan 2021) • 67% of wages paid by Government • Up to a maximum of £2,100 per month

	<p>September 2020. This means that a Real Time Information (RTI) submission notifying HMRC payment to that employee to HMRC must have been submitted on or before 23 September 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A grant to employers for employees who are working a minimum of 33% of their contracted hours. • Government contributes a third towards the unworked hours only, in conjunction with the employer who will also pay a third. • For employees who work flexible hours, usual working hours can be calculated using previous 12 months of employment (not including any furlough period). • Government contribution will be capped at £697.92 a month. • Employers must pay NI and pension contributions • Using the Job Support Scheme employers will also be able to claim the Job Retention Bonus if they meet the eligibility criteria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers must cover pension and NI • Employees must be off work for a minimum of seven consecutive days • Paid in arrears with first payment December 2020 (subject to tax) • The employee need not have been furloughed but a Real Time Information (RTI) submission notifying HMRC that a payment to that employee to HMRC must have been submitted on or before 23 September 2020. • Employees cannot be made redundant or put on notice of redundancy the during the period within which their employer is claiming the grant for that employee
LCR Hospitality & Leisure Support Scheme	<p>In addition to the above, eligible businesses may receive (subject to the availability of funds):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1,200 per FTE * job sustained by the business • Such grants will be paid in phases. First payment (50% of grant), followed by two monthly grants of 25% • Grant instalments subject to evidence of each FTE employed and State Aid compliance <p>An eligible business may also receive (subject to the availability of funds) a one off payment if the business has a property with a rent/rateable value as follows (whichever is lower):-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £2,000 if RV up to £15,000 • £5,000 if RV is £15,001 to £51,000 • £10,000 if RV over £51,000 	<p>In addition to the above, eligible businesses may receive (subject to the availability of funds):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £800 per FTE * job sustained by the business • First payment (50% of grant), followed by two monthly grants of 25% • Grant instalments subject to evidence of each FTE employed and State Aid compliance <p>An eligible business may also receive (subject to the availability of funds) a one off payment if the business has a property with a rent/rateable value as follows (whichever is lower):-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1,300 if RV up to £15,000 • £2,000 if RV is £15,001 to £51,000 • £3,000 if RV over £51,000

*A Full Time Equivalent ("FTE") is equal to the number of hours a full-time employee works for an organisation. The concept is used to count "hours worked" rather than the number of employees in order to budget, forecast, staff and calculate wages. For the purpose of the Hospitality & Leisure Support Grant the FTE is 35 hours per week for a full-time employee.

Note:

The intention of the grant for businesses required to close is to **top up employees' salary** under the national programme and to maintain the business as a going concern. The grant providers reserve the right to modify and/or withdraw each grant award and its associated conditions, particularly to ensure that public money is spent well. This may be in response to changes in national legislation, local economic and health conditions and changes in funding circumstances.

All grant recipients will submit a Covid-19 safety plan that demonstrates highest standards of safety. Environmental Health Officers will inspect a portion of grants recipients. Any grant recipient found in material breach will have its grant cancelled. Should more than 5% of recipients overall be found in material breach, the Combined Authority will consider cancelling the Programme.

Businesses that are excluded from Government Support grants include:-

- businesses that are able to continue to operate during the lockdown because they do not depend on providing direct in-person services from their premises
- businesses that have chosen to close, but have not been required to close as part of a local lockdown
- businesses that have reached the state aid limit

4. PAYMENT OF THE HOSPITALITY & LEISURE GRANT

Grant payments are subject to confirmation that the FTE is employed by the business throughout the four-month period i.e. October 2020 to January 2021. If, during the grant period, the number of people a business employs reduces, the grant provided in future months will decrease on a pro rata basis. The maximum award will be based on 50 FTEs, even if the business employs more than 50 FTEs.

For businesses that are continuing to trade and those that are compulsorily closed the Hospitality & Leisure Support Grant will be paid in three instalments as follows:-

- the first payment will include the property related grant, and 50% of the total grant award for the FTE jobs; then
- two further payments each of 25% of the grant for the FTE jobs, will be paid at agreed monthly intervals. These will be paid on a pro rata basis for the FTE jobs that are evidenced by the business.

All grant payments beyond the first are subject to the satisfactory receipt of:

- PAYE information showing the number of FTE jobs sustained by the business.
- an independent chartered accountant's letter confirming the business is still trading and continues to employ the profiled number of staff
- confirmation that the business is able to accept the grant under State Aid regulations

5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

An eligible business must be able to demonstrate that the business:-

1. Is small or micro business in the hospitality and leisure sector and employs one or more employees (FTE)

2. Trades its goods or services directly with the general public in the Liverpool City Region and can demonstrate that its trading activities have been significantly and negatively impacted by Covid-19 restrictions. Grants will only be paid to customer facing businesses rather than businesses in the hospitality or leisure supply chain.
3. Occupies commercial premises that have a rateable value within the Liverpool City Region.
4. Was considered a 'non-essential' business during the first period of lockdown.
5. Has been trading as of 1st October 2020, is intending to continue to trade, or has been instructed to close by the Government. The grant, or any portion of the grant remaining, will be discontinued if a business ceases to trade or will be reduced if redundancies are reported.
6. Has a relevant certificate(s) to show compliance with laws and regulations relevant to its trade, for example a food hygiene certificate, a licence to sell alcohol, permission to operate a pavement seating area.
7. Does not owe money relating to Business Rates or relating to rent arrears associated with Council owned property **prior to 11 March 2020**.
8. Is not subject to enforcement action by the Police or a Regulatory Authority for an order for non-compliance with Covid-19 regulations or food hygiene standards.
9. Is State Aid compliant.
10. Has taken all reasonable steps and measures to mitigate the financial impact of Covid-19. This could include, but is not restricted to, a Bounce Back Loan, a Small Business Grant, a Retail, Hospitality and Leisure grant or a Discretionary Business Grant, or some other form of grant, loan or financial support.
11. Was trading on or before 1 October 2020 i.e. continuing to trade with a view to making a profit or surplus (not a dormant company). This will ensure the grant is targeted at businesses whose owners/directors have demonstrated that they believe the business remains viable after the first period of lockdown.

Businesses that are Eligible to Apply for the Hospitality & Leisure Grant

Amusements and visitor attractions (family entertainment centres)	Outdoor Pursuits Centre
Art Gallery / Museum (privately owned)	Play Centre /Soft Play Centre
Bars	Private Golf Courses and Driving Ranges
Bowling Alley	Public House
Café with indoor / outdoor seating	Registered bed and breakfast accommodation (not Airbnb accommodation)
Bookmakers	Restaurant
Camping and Caravan sites	Sports Club (e.g. football, rugby)
Gyms, yoga / dance centres	Theatre / Cinema / Event Spaces
Hotel	Trampoline Centre
Ice Rink	Urban farm
Leisure centres	

6. BUSINESSES THAT ARE EXCLUDED FROM THE GRANT

A business will be excluded from applying for a grant if, on the date it makes the application it:-

- is dissolved or about to be dissolved
- is insolvent or if insolvency action had been instigated against it
- is dormant as of the 1 October 2020, ie. not trading but not insolvent

- has ceased trading or has closed without being required to do so as part of a Government and local restrictions

Further, a business will be excluded from applying for a grant if, on the date it makes the application for this grant, it is counted as an “essential business” under previous Government COVID-19 regulations and/or is unlikely to have been negatively affected by Covid-19 restrictions. For example, supermarkets, takeaways, corner shops and off-licenses would be ineligible for support under this programme.

7. APPLICANT’S RESPONSIBILITIES

Businesses are responsible for providing true and accurate information, and applicants are asked to note that:-

1. The business for which the application is made must be currently experiencing financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 crisis and must have an evident need for financial relief under the terms and conditions of the Hospitality & Leisure Support Grant.
2. The business must commit to continue to trade and to retain the numbers of FTE staff whose details have been submitted as part of the evidence base, including those on the new job support scheme
3. Providing wrong or misleading information is a criminal offence and any such information may be used against applicants in any subsequent criminal investigation. The information provided on the online application form may be made available to other departments/agencies for the purposes of preventing or detecting crime.
4. Any grant received by a business must be declared to HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) as appropriate as part of the tax return for the business. For further information, you can contact HMRC's Coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline.
5. Any grant received by the business will be used only for the purpose intended ie. to help alleviate the financial pressure of the recipient business and to the exclusion of any other individual or third-party gain.
6. The applicant will be asked to certify that the information provided on behalf of the business is true and correct to the best of the applicant’s knowledge and belief, and should it be subsequently determined that the grant was awarded on the basis of wrong or misleading information, the grant will be subject to recovery in full.
7. The applicant accepts that in applying for a grant an officer of the Council may at a reasonable time enter the premises to interview the applicant and inspect, copy, record and remove any accounting or other record, including original documents, as may be required for the purposes of confirming the eligibility of the business.
8. The applicant understands that an officer of the Council, including Planning, Environmental Health, Public Health and/or Trading Standards, may undertake spot checks of the premises. If there is non-compliance with regulatory requirements, the grant, or any portion of the grant, may be withheld, or will be repayable by the business.
9. The applicant understands that the information provided on the online form will be made available to other government departments and their agencies for the purpose of detecting and preventing crime.
10. The applicant understands that if the Council approves the application, the terms and conditions shall be enforceable on the basis of the Terms and Conditions of the grant scheme

8. THE GRANT PROCESS

It is anticipated that the grant funding available will not satisfy the combined amount of funding requested by applicants. Therefore the following application process has been adopted:-

1. Applications **can only be made online**. Therefore, before you apply there are some steps that you will need to take. Please read the eligibility criteria and checklist first to find out if you qualify.
2. A 'grant application window' will open at **10.00 am on Friday 16 October 2020** and will close at **5.00 pm on Friday 30 October 2020**.
3. During this window the Council will only accept fully completed online applications and the required evidence to support each application. An application made during the 'grant application window' **does not guarantee** approval for payment.
4. On receipt of the online application and evidence, the Council will send an email to acknowledge receipt and a **Unique Reference Number (URN)** will be allocated to the application.
5. If the application is not accompanied by all necessary supporting evidence, the Council will email the applicant to advise that information is missing. The application will not be processed until this evidence is received, ie. the onus is on the applicant to provide the evidence in a timely manner. If the applicant does not respond within 3 working days of the email from the Council your application will not be considered.
6. The grant is only available to businesses in the hospitality and leisure and sectors as defined in **Section 5**.
7. Unsuccessful applicants will be advised of the outcome of an application by email. There is no right to appeal a decision.
8. Should there be sufficient funds after the first 'window', a further 'window' may be opened but this is not guaranteed.
8. The Council will seek to reach a decision within 10 working days of receipt of a completed application that has all the required evidence attached. Successful applicants will be notified by email, and payments will be made by BACS (payments usually takes three working days to arrive in accounts).
9. The Council will prioritise consideration of grant applications and will not respond to canvassing.
10. Canvassing any officer responsible for the execution of this grant's process or elected individual will render the applicant disqualified from this process.
11. The maximum file size of each attached document is 3MB.

9. EVIDENCE AND CHECKLIST

The Council is relying on businesses to be honest and open, and to present evidence of need and eligibility for the Hospitality & Leisure Support Grant fund. If a business believes that it is eligible to apply for the grant the following **Eligibility Checklist** may be used to help gather evidence.

ELIGIBILITY CHECKLIST

Information	Evidence	Comment
Applicant details	Submit information on the online application form	Your business name, your contact name and number(s), your business trading address and postcode. Company registration number (if applicable) and your VAT number (if VAT registered). Business Rates reference number and a

		copy of a recent rates bill for example April 2020 onwards (if applicable). Proof of rental payments.
Payment details	<p>Your business bank account number and sort code (only provide bank account details where a BACS payment can be accepted).</p> <p>A copy of a business bank statement, clearly showing the bank account holder's name, sort code and account number and business address.</p> <p>A utility bill clearly showing your business address</p>	These details must match the name of the business or individual listed on the business rates bill or lease, licence or mortgage agreement
PAYE details	Your employer PAYE reference number, also known as an Employer Reference Number (ERN) and the number of staff on your PAYE payroll as of 30 September 2020 and evidence to support this. This must be a copy of your PAYE Real Time Information (RTI) return for the period ended 30 September 2020.	<p>This is given to every business that registers with HMRC as an employer.</p> <p>An ERN is made up of two parts: a three-digit HMRC office number and a reference number unique to each business</p> <p>If the payroll week does not fall exactly on 30 September 2020, you should submit your RTI Full Payment Submission (FPS) data for the period immediately before 30 September 2020, and no earlier than 31 July 2020.</p>
Evidence that you are a micro or small business	This will be done by way of self-declaration on the online application form	<p>Under the Companies Act 2006:</p> <p>A Micro business must satisfy two or more of the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turnover: Not more than £632,000 • Balance sheet total: Not more than £316,000 • Number of employees: a staff headcount of not more than 10 <p>A Small business must satisfy two or more of the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turnover: Not more than £10.2 million • Balance Sheet total: Not more than £5.1 millions • Number of employees: a staff headcount of up to and including 50

Evidence of a fall in income due to COVID-19	<p>You MUST submit evidence that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The turnover of your Small business, for the current Financial Year and the previous two years (the Turnover figure in each of those years, must not exceed £10.2M) OR • The Balance Sheet total for your Micro business, for the current Financial Year and the previous two years (the Balance Sheet totals in each of those years, must not exceed £5.1M) <p>Evidence can include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • loss of regular business income • comparative bank statements • turnover figures for September 2019 and September 2020 • management accounts • proof of loss of contracts / bookings / demand for services • proof of loss of ongoing income, • number of staff on furlough 	<p>Examples of proof in support of this point include, but are not limited to, documentation from your Bank, Accountant or Financial Adviser.</p> <p>Where a company was not trading in September 2019, we will accept another month's turnover.</p> <p>A free text box is available for the applicant to include details. It is at the discretion of the applicant what form this evidence takes but it must clearly show the turnover of the business for these periods.</p>
Evidence of eligibility under State aid rules	You will need to demonstrate this by way of self-declaration statement on the online application form.	If you are unsure whether State aid applies to your business, you will need to seek independent legal advice

10. HOW WE WILL USE YOUR INFORMATION

We will use your information to assess your application for financial support. We will confirm information about you and your account from credit referencing agencies to confirm account validity and your identity. If you provide false or inaccurate information, we will record this. If you would like full details on how we use your information, please refer to our privacy policy.

11. TAX

Grant income received by a business is taxable, therefore funding paid under the Hospitality & Leisure Support Grant will be subject to tax. Only businesses, which make an overall profit once grant income is included, will be subject to tax.

12. RIGHT TO UPDATE THIS POLICY

The Council reserves the right to update and change this policy without notification or prior warning in the event that the government updates or changes its guidance to us or in the event of an error or omission.

13. APPEALS

There is no right to appeal and the decision of the Council is final. The Council's interpretation of this document is at its own discretion and it will be the final arbiter of the definitions contained within this policy.

14. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Please read the Terms and Conditions that apply to the Hospitality & Leisure Support Grant.