

## **Retail Support Initiative Grant Application - (Executive Decision)**

*Service Manager:* Tim Cook – Locality Team Manager  
*Lead Officer:* Terena Isaacs – Locality Officer  
*Contact Details:* [terena.isaacs@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:terena.isaacs@southsomerset.gov.uk) or (01935-462268)

### **Purpose of the Report**

For Members to consider the Retail Support Initiative (RSI) grant request detailed below

### **Public Interest**

Supporting and helping to improve the retail offer in the towns and villages across Area East.

### **Recommendation:**

To award £1,500 from the Community Development revenue budget element ring-fenced or the RSI.

All grants are subject to the conditions as detailed in Appendix A.

### **Background**

This application is being considered under the scheme's operating criteria agreed in July 2014, a copy of which is attached at Appendix A.

### **Grant details**

Wincanton Post Office is a long-standing business in Wincanton which has been run by the same family for over 40 years. The proprietor wishes to keep the building in a good state of repair as it is one of the most attractive and prominent properties on the Market Place. Many loyal customers from both Wincanton and nearby local villages visit the Post Office on a regular basis. The business offers full Post Office services together with a wide range of quality gifts and cards.

This unit has been in receipt of the RSI grant support on one previous occasion over 5 years ago.

Shop front improvements.

- Total Project Cost – £3,901
- Amount requested – £1,500

The balance required to complete the project will come from the businesses' own fund.

Assessment score is 87 out of a max of 100. This figure exceeds the minimum level score of 50 required for grant assistance to be considered.

### **Financial Implications**

If Members choose to award this grant, the unallocated budget for Retail Support Initiative will be as follows:

	Revenue element	Capital
Unallocated budget 2019/20 as at May 2019	£2,581.50	£1,212

### **Corporate Priority Implications**

**Economy** - To promote a strong and growing economy with thriving urban, rural and land-based businesses, we will:

*Support our town centres in adapting to the changes in our high streets and consumer trends.*

*Promote and support commercial investment including inward investment, innovation and productivity.*

### **Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications**

This project does not cause any changes to carbon emissions.

**Background Papers:**   None

## **Appendix A - Retail Support Initiative Scheme**

### **Operating criteria**

Percentage contributions cannot exceed 50% of costs and no retrospective applications are eligible (i.e. in respect of works which have already been commissioned/started).

Applications over £1000 will be considered by Area East Committee on a monthly basis since the Community Regeneration Sub Committee quarterly meetings ceased. Amounts up to £1000 may be considered at any time as a delegated grant in consultation with the Chairman and Ward Member(s).

### **Grant levels:**

Maximum 50% of project costs as follows:

### **Eligible costs:**

Shop-front improvements, if they enhance the High Street

Business rates assistance – a contribution to the amount payable for new businesses (which do not compete with another business) in their first two years of trading

Exceptional projects which add to the viability of towns/villages

### **Process**

Applications for Grants are accessed and recommendations made on the basis of a fully completed application form and two 'like for like' quotes. Self-help/DIY schemes may complete the application form and supply a project budget with supporting information.

All grant recipients must accept that the grant may be used for publicity purposes by the District Council. Payment of the grant is done retrospectively, for a completed programme of works on the basis of receipted invoices. Exceptionally officers, in consultation with the Chairman, may release partial payments where there is clear justification for doing so.

The District Council will continue to claw back grants from businesses which cease trading on the following basis: 100% in year one, 75% in year two, 45% in year three.

The existing assessment and current scoring mechanism favours businesses:

- employing more than 2 people
- in prominent places
- key rural stores/Post Offices
- retailers

### **The award is subject to the following standard conditions:**

- The grant award may be used by SSDC for promotional/publicity purposes;
- Grants are paid for approved works/purchases on production of receipted invoices;
- Awards are subject to a summary of the benefit of the scheme being supplied;
- Applicants will normally be expected to draw down the grant within six months of the offer and if not will have to inform us of the reason(s) for the delay. If there is a valid reason, officers can provide a 6 month extension, but beyond this the grant would either be withdrawn or referred Area East Committee to be re-affirmed;
- That appropriate consents are obtained

- Works requiring listed building/planning consents or building regulation consent will be required to be signed off by the appropriate officer prior to the release of funds
- If, within 3 years of a grant award the business ceases to trade, the District Council reserves the right to reclaim the grant on the following basis: year one –100%, year 2 – 75%, year 3 – 45%