

AGENDA ITEM NO 4

REPORT NO 167/16

SCHEDULE 2

ANGUS COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 26 APRIL 2016

RELAUNCH OF ANGUS BUSINESS GRANTS

ABSTRACT

This report provides details of the new Angus Business Grants criteria launched 1 April 2016.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Angus Council's Economic Development team have for many years offered grant support to businesses via 4 different grant schemes.
- 1.2 In 2015/16 over 50 grants were awarded and over 70 enquiries received. Enquiries and referrals to the grant schemes came from a variety of sources including the Business Angus website, Business Gateway Advisors and from Economic Development Sector Officers. Increased engagement with partners and external agencies has also raised awareness of the grant schemes and this is likely to continue.

2. REVIEW AND RELAUNCH

- 2.1 It is recognised that no detailed review of the grant criteria has been undertaken since the grants were introduced. Whilst the forms and process have been streamlined, no review of the actual eligibility criteria has been undertaken nor a review of available grant amounts.
- 2.2 Businesses have had to absorb increased prices, experienced difficulties in accessing finance and remain competitive during recessionary times. The maximum grant amounts have therefore been increased as a consideration of these pressures and to be more aligned to other national grant schemes.
- 2.3 The eligibility criteria has also been revised to align better with the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy priorities of Innovation, Internationalisation, Investment and Inclusive Growth as well as economic development's new focus in Angus on Key Sectors; namely Tourism, Food & Drink, Manufacturing & Energy and the Green Economy.

3. ONE GRANT SCHEME – 4 STRANDS

- 3.1 The new scheme has the following 4 strands:

4. INNOVATION

- 4.1 For businesses working together to a common business aim where innovation is a central part, are looking to develop a product or service and who can demonstrate collaborative activity e.g. we would welcome applications from those registered with Supplier Development Programme who work together to secure contracts via Public Contract Scotland tendering.
- 4.2 An individual company involved in innovative activity would also be considered and decisions would be made on a case by case basis.
- 4.3 Grant available: £500 if total spend over £1000, £1000 if spend over £2000.

5. INCLUSION

- 5.1 Available to a business recruiting their first PAYE Employee. Businesses must be Angus based. Employee must be Angus based. Funding: £1000.

6. INTERNATIONALISATION

6.1 To encourage and support Angus businesses or groups of companies to explore new markets, develop relationships with buyers or take stands at exhibitions. Priority will be given to key sector businesses.

6.2 Grant available: £500 if total spend over £1000, £1000 if spend over £2000.

7. INVESTMENT

7.1 To support the purchase of new equipment, stock or costs associated with fitting out new premises (where they have been vacant for a minimum of 12 months OR are a vacant Council property).

7.2 Grant available: £500 if total spend over £1000, £1000 if spend over £2000.

8. PROMOTION

8.1 Information and forms for the Angus Business Grants will be made available by contacting externalfunding@angus.gov.uk or via accessline@angus.gov.uk. Electronic versions will also be made available via www.businessangus.com.

REPORT AUTHOR: Alison Smith, Service Manager – Economic Development
EMAIL DETAILS: ECDEV@angus.gov.uk