

Covid-19 Business Recovery & Revitalisation Grant Scheme 2020/21

Guidance for Applicants

The Covid-19 Business Recovery and Revitalisation Grant scheme is funded by the Department for Communities (DfC), Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) as part of the Covid-19 Recovery Revitalisation Programme.

The Scheme is being administered by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

There is one rolling application process until all funds are spent.

Grants will be issued to eligible applicants on first come, first served basis.

If you have any queries or you wish to discuss your project with a member of staff before submitting your application, please contact

economic.development@fermanaghomagh.com

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1. Background

The Department for Communities (DfC) has allocated £221,000 for investment in urban settlements with a population of over 5,000 or more and funding of £121,000 from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) for investment in smaller settlements within the district. This funding package will be administered by Fermanagh and Omagh District under the Covid-19 Business Recovery and Revitalisation Grant Scheme.

The Scheme is a discretionary grant of up to 100% of eligible costs, min £500 up to max £2,500 grant per property, to assist businesses to adapt and implement social distancing measures to protect staff and customers in line with government guidance.

There is also an opportunity for businesses to apply as part of a collaborative project, one business must take the lead on any application, minimum of three properties.

On receipt of completed online applications, an eligibility check will be completed, and successful applications will be allocated funding on a first come first served basis.

There is one rolling application process until all funds are allocated.

2. Funding Objectives

Covid-19 Business Recovery and Revitalisation Grant Scheme aims to support local businesses address some of the operational challenges, assist businesses to adapt to and implement social distancing measures to protect staff and customers.

The objectives of the scheme are:

- To aid modification of the internal / external structure of business/commercial properties to assist with social distancing measures.
- To provide assistance towards equipment which would assist businesses to adhere to Covid-19 government guidelines
- To aid business recovery and revitalisation

3. Who can apply

Businesses must be:

- Urban and rural town businesses located within the settlement areas as outlined in the Fermanagh and Omagh district,
- An existing, registered private business that is actively trading commercially for at least the last 3 months,
- Able to provide HMC self-assessment number, company number or charity number,
- Able to provide a bank statement (or other financial institution account for the sole purpose of business, ie. Separate from personal financials) in the name of your business dated in the last 3 months must also be provided.
- Collaborative projects can apply by businesses. Applications must list all project partners details, Companies House and Company Numbers where applicable.

Please note:

- Properties that are **ineligible** to apply for grant aid include government organisations, political organisations, churches, community and voluntary groups, financial institutions and mainstream agricultural activities **are not eligible**. This list is not exhaustive.

4. What we can fund

This is a capital grant scheme for property owners/tenants of eligible business/commercial properties to apply for the purchase of new capital items including infrastructure between £500 - £2,500. Maximum project costs are capped at £9,999.99. Collaborative projects £7,500, maximum projects costs £15,000.

Eligible improvements may include (this list is not exhaustive).

- ✓ Infrastructure to meet social distancing requirements.
- ✓ Awnings/canopies to protect customers who may have to queue to enter business premises.
- ✓ Outdoor furniture such as covered seating (tables, chairs)
- ✓ External heaters
- ✓ Planters
- ✓ PA/Tannoy
- ✓ Digital screens and Signage
- ✓ Equipment to allow widening of footpaths to support social distancing and the safe movement of people through our town centres such as pedestrian safety barriers.
- ✓ Any adaptations necessary to the internal layout of the business premises to ensure compliance with Covid-19 social distancing protocols (e.g., flexi-panels/screens at counters, one way systems, building / remodelling works, etc.).
- ✓ Equipment to allow the business to operate safely and provide reassurance to customers, e.g. freestanding hand sanitiser stations, etc. Internal/external shopper collection points to avoid customers having to fully enter the business premises.

Please note:

Should your application be successful and if items include structural change to the property, the property owner must give consent at application stage, prior to commencement of works.

Adaptions and improvements must enhance and not inhibit accessibility.

Should your application be successful, and items require planning permission and/or building control approval, these approvals must be in place prior to commencement of works.

5. We will not fund

- ✗ Retrospective items i.e. work or items which already completed or underway
- ✗ Works which require planning permission which is not in place prior to works commencing
- ✗ Works/Renovations which do not assist the business to meet Covid-19 Government Regulations
- ✗ Hire Purchase of goods
- ✗ Consumable items such as: hand sanitiser, PPE, visors etc
- ✗ Websites cannot be funded
- ✗ Software must be purchased with hardware
- ✗ Statutory and Licencing fees (e.g. Building Control Approval, Planning Permission etc), etc. Insurances, Interest (on loans taken out to fund your building project)
- ✗ VAT (except if the applicant is not VAT registered)
- ✗ Salaries/Wages cost
- ✗ Professional Fees
- ✗ Works to vacant properties and/or residential properties

6. Preparing your application

This grant scheme accepts application in electronic form. Supporting documentation as detailed below should be uploaded with your application.

Supporting documents include:

- A bank statement (or other financial institution account for the sole purpose of business, ie. Separate from personal financials) in the name of your business dated in the last 3 months must also be provided.
- Public Liability Insurance.
- A before photo.
- A detailed specification for each item you are applying for.
- A minimum of 3/4 quotes/price-checks for each item you are applying for.

7. Collaborative applications

- Groups with a minimum of three businesses may apply which will enable them to create a shared outdoor space/trail.
- Collaborative projects £7,500, maximum projects costs £15,000.
- One business must take lead in applying.
- All businesses must provide their details and sign application form.
- All businesses must supply bank statement (financial documentation in name of business and registered to business address i.e. not personal account) dated in last 3 months.
- Please note each organisation must submit their individual public liability insurance documentation.
- Group projects must ensure they have appropriate Public Liability insurance in place to cover their project proposal. This can be obtained following successful application. Only one successful application (regardless of amount) can be held by any business/group.

8. Statutory Consents

Applicants must comply with all statutory obligations regarding the delivery of and access to their services/premises.eg. Disability considerations, environmental health, licensing, adhering to latest COVID-19 guidelines, etc. For proposed applications which include works that require statutory approvals e.g. planning permission, building control approval etc...it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure they have all necessary approvals in place.

For advice and guidance on these please contact;

Planning:

Telephone: 0300 303 1777

Email: planning@fermanaghomagh.com

Licensing:

Telephone: 0300 303 1777

Email: licensing@fermanaghomagh.com

Building Control:

Telephone: 0300 303 1777

Email: buildingcontrol@fermanaghomagh.com

Environmental Health:

Telephone: 0300 303 1777

Email: eh@fermanaghomagh.com

9. Match Funding

Match funding is the difference between the total project cost and the funding awarded. Applicants are required to contribute to the cost of implementing the project if the cost of the project exceeds the amount of grant awarded. Please ensure that you have sufficient resources to fund the project.

10. Procurement Guidelines

Completed applications must be accompanied with the required competitive quotations from bona-fide reputable contractors/companies.

If a contractor is not employed to complete all works, the appropriate number of quotations must be submitted for each element of the scheme: Please cost each element of work separately in the Application Form and enclose the appropriate number of quotes for each element of work with your application. Quotes must be for comparable elements. (Failure to do so will result in your application being deemed incomplete).

Total Value	Action
£0 - £999	At least 1 or 2 quotes / price checks.
£1,000 - £4,999	3 Written Quotations for project elements costing up to £4,999.99 (please note if one quotation is over £5,000, four quotations will be required.)
£5,000 - £9,999.99	4 Written Quotations for project elements costing from £5,000 - £9,999.99.
Maximum project costs are capped at £9,999.99. Collaborative projects £7,500, maximum projects costs £15,000	

Please ensure:

- Appropriate number of comparable quotes are provided in line with the procurement guidelines for each element of work.
- All quotations must be dated and on headed paper.
- All quotations will be assessed to check the validity and the costings of each quotation.
- The funding will be allocated accordingly.
- Failure to provide adequate numbers of quotations will result in the application being deemed incomplete and subsequently rejected.

Please note

An quotation will be deemed invalid if the applicant is deemed to have a conflict of interest (a personal, private or family interest) in respect of the Company/s quoting for work and/or deemed to be a 'linked company' (EU Recommendations 2330/361EC). Companies are linked if one of them directly or indirectly controls or has the capacity to control the affairs of the other.

11. Assessment of Applications

Each application received will be assessed to ensure the following:

- ✓ The business is eligible to apply to the Scheme.
- ✓ To ensure each applicant has the capability to deliver the project
- ✓ Ensure the project meets the objectives of the grant aid
- ✓ Applications demonstrate good value for money.

Applications will be assessed using the following criteria.

Criteria		
	Weighting	Max Score
The application will be assessed against 3 criteria, with each criterion attracting a score between 0-5. Each question is weighted, and the score obtained will be multiplied by the weight to get an overall score out of a possible 100. The criteria and weighting are:		
How the improvements will assist the business to meet Covid-19 social distancing measures.	7	35
How the support will help assist with business recovery.	7	35
Works are in a state of readiness (permission in place / property owner/statutory agencies)	6	30
A minimum score of 60 must be achieved to be eligible		100

Application scoring is based on the below table. Total score will be determined by multiplying score provided (from 0 – 5) by the weighting as detailed above

Band	Comments
5	Fully detailed evidence provided, very minor concerns on detail, relevance or complexity
4	Detailed evidence provided, some concerns on detail, relevance or complexity
3	Satisfactory evidence provided, lacks some detail, relevance or complexity
2	Limited evidence provided, significant concerns on detail, relevance or complexity
1	Little or no evidence provided, very significant concerns on detail, relevance or complexity

12. Successful Applications

If your application is successful, you will be issued with a '**Letter of Offer**'. This is a form of contract that states:

The amount of grant awarded,

The terms and conditions associated with the grant.

Important, please note: no works can commence and no products can be purchased until a signed letter of offer is returned to Fermanagh and Omagh District Council within the timeframe noted on the Letter of Offer, and appropriate statutory approvals are in place, if applicable.

Please note all successful applicants issued Letters of Offer must have works completed and claimed by 31 March 2021.

13. Payment and financial considerations

100% of grant funding will be paid directly to the applicant within 28 days of the Council receiving the applicant's complete and satisfactory claim form with all requested evidence/ documentation verifying spend against the Letter of Offer requirement, including;

- Completed Claim Form
- Electronic invoices for each item purchased
- Copy of bank statement showing payment for each item being paid from the bank account

If the requested documentation is not supplied, payment will be withheld.

Please do not apply for funding if you cannot supply these items.

Payment of grant will be made to applicant via direct BACS payment.

Cash payments by applicants are not acceptable and will not be eligible for any refund from the Council.

Applicants are responsible for paying the contactor(s) and claiming back VAT, if applicable.

14. Insurance, Liability, Indemnity and Risk

The applicant shall maintain such insurance policies, as are necessary for the Letter of Offer, to the extent that such insurances are reasonably available on the insurance market. These include, where appropriate, Employers' Liability Insurance, Buildings and Contents Insurance (to include IT equipment) and Public Liability.

The applicant, his/her/its agent(s) and/or contractor is/are responsible for all risks in connection with public or employer liability associated with any works funded by a grant under the Scheme.

The Council and the Department do not, and will not accept liability or responsibility in respect of any grant-aided work carried out to the applicant's property/premises; accordingly the applicant cannot and should not rely on the payment of grant monies by the Council as any proof or guarantee that the contractor engaged to execute the works has completed said works to a proper standard prior to payment. All successful applicants should satisfy themselves that all work has been carried out to a satisfactory standard and meets all statutory requirements.

Ongoing and future inspection, maintenance or repair of any items purchased under the scheme are the responsibility of the applicant. The Council accepts no responsibility, financial or otherwise, for expenditure or liabilities arising out of any work carried out by or on behalf of an applicant under the scheme. Any financial commitment incurred by the applicant which exceeds the amount of any approved grant, shall be the sole responsibility of the applicant.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that it is appropriately insured (including satisfactory building, contents and public liability insurance). The applicant must confirm that insurance is in place as part of their application.

15. How do I apply

The link to the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Covid-19 Business Recovery and Revitalisation Grant online application form can be accessed by [clicking here](#). All applications forms need to be completed and submitted online, along with the required supporting documents. Please ensure all relevant documentation is uploaded prior to submitting your application.

It is anticipated that there will be a high demand for this grant and calls for applications will close as soon as all the funding is allocated. This grant is allocated on a on a first come first served basis. You will receive an acknowledgement to state that your application has been received.

Following completion of eligibility check on your application a Council Officer will make contact with the applicant to advise of the outcome and next steps.

16. Disclaimer

The Council accepts no liability in respect of any loss, damage, charges or expense which are incurred by any applicant and are attributable to any delay in payment under the Scheme or due to any suspension, reduction or cancellation of funding.

17. Further Queries

If you need any assistance on any aspect of the Covid-19 Business Recovery and Revitalisation Grant Scheme, please contact Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Economic Development Department by email at;
economic.development@fermanaghomagh.com or telephone 0300 303 1777.