**Tameside Discretionary Grant Fund**

Tameside Council has today launched the [Discretionary Grants Fund to help Tameside small businesses](https://liveworkinvest.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c82daebd778d6cd9667beed7e&id=c5e2f9788c&e=7ab728a9f9) with high fixed property costs and loss of income due to COVID19. It is important that any business considering an application reviews the [Tameside guidance prior to applying](https://liveworkinvest.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c82daebd778d6cd9667beed7e&id=394dbc3d33&e=7ab728a9f9).

The [Government guidance of 13 and 22 May 2020](https://liveworkinvest.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c82daebd778d6cd9667beed7e&id=88183ba19f&e=7ab728a9f9) gives the Council some discretion over allocating grants so that we can issue them based on local insight and economic need.  There is limited, fixed funding available to the Council from the Government (£2.345m) for this scheme and we aim to support as many businesses as possible with mainly grant allocations of upto £10,000 (grants of £25,000 will be made only in exceptional circumstances).

In order to ensure all eligible businesses have the opportunity to apply for the scheme, the Council will administer a phased approach over 2 Rounds to the grants scheme to assess and quantify the level of demand for funding from businesses that fall within the priority areas set out in the Government guidance.

**If the fund is oversubscribed with the applications received, the Council reserves the right to amend the grant levels to a pro-rata basis, based on the applications received and approved, as a way of dealing with this situation, should it arise. The Council reserves the right to vary the terms of the scheme at any time, and without notice, should it be necessary to do so.**

After the Council has processed and decided on grant allocations for all applications from Round 1, there will be an assessment of whether there is any Government funding left for Round 2. If there is no funding remaining Round 2 will not take place (see guidance for more information on Round 2 detail).

Round 1 will include any businesses falling within the following categories:

* Small businesses in shared offices or other flexible workspaces. Examples could include mills, units in industrial parks, science parks and incubators which do not have their own business rates assessment; Exclusions include Businesses operating from domestic settings (including Airbnb operators) or those that do not have fixed, property related costs.
* Regular market traders with fixed building costs, such as rent, who do not have their own business rates assessment;
* Bed & Breakfasts which pay Council Tax instead of business rates; and
* Charity properties in receipt of charitable business rates relief which would otherwise have been eligible for Small Business Rates Relief or Rural Rate Relief.

To be eligible (please review Tameside Guidance in detail) to apply for a grant under this scheme, a small business must:

* Be a trading Business in Tameside
* Have been trading on 11th March 2020
* Be small, with fewer than 50 employees
* Have a Rateable Value below £51,000
* Have relatively high ongoing fixed property-related costs (over £1,000 per annum) in Tameside, and
* They must also be able to demonstrate that they have had a significant drop of income due to Coronavirus restriction measures (10% fall in income in the period since 11 March 2020).

In order for the application to be considered, we require businesses to demonstrate that they meet the eligibility criteria above. We anticipate that to do this, you will need to provide per business, per hereditament (Where an eligible business has more than one qualifying property in the borough, they will be eligible for 1 payment per property. Where multiple businesses operated from the same property, each distinct eligible business can receive one payment for their costs incurred at that property).

* Evidence of Tameside property costs such as rent, rates, utility or mortgage payments above £1,000 per annum. This should take the form of leases/agreements showing an obligation to pay and bank statements showing that payments have actually been made
* Evidence to demonstrate a substantial loss in income as a result of the current situation (10% fall in income in the period since 11 March 2020). This is likely to be in the form of filed accounts for previous years and management accounts/bank statements for the current period and or evidence that the business was to close to members of the public as a result of COVID19 by Government Guidance. Where a company does not have filed accounts for the previous years management accounts and bank statements will be used.
* Evidence of complying with the definition of a Small or Micro Business
* Confirmation that the business has not received any grant under the grant schemes mentioned in Section 6 above.
* Confirmation of State Aid compliance

The timeline for round 1 of the scheme is:

* Applications open – Thursday, 4th June, 4pm.
* Application window closes – Thursday, 18th June, 5pm.
* Payment of grants – from Monday 22nd June onwards.