



**Melton
Borough
Council**

UKSPF & REPF

**DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS GRANTS
FUND**

GUIDANCE NOTE

Contents:

	PAGE
APPROVALS:	3
DISTRIBUTION.....	3
1. Background to Business Grants	4
2. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund	4
3. Total Funding Available	5
4. Who Will Benefit from the Grants?.....	5
5. Who Cannot Benefit from the Discretionary Scheme?.....	6
6. Application Process and Timescale	6
7. How Will the Value of Grants be Calculated?	7
8. Managing the Risk of Fraud.....	8
9. Guidance Note Review	8
Annex A to Business Grant Guidance Note – Business Grant Schemes*	9
Annex B to Business Grant Guidance Note	12

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1. Background to Business Grants

- 1.1 Following the successful submission of a United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Investment Plan and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) addendum to the UK Government, Melton Borough Council has been successful in securing £1.59m of funding from both the UKSPF and the REPF. These funds will support, amongst other things, our local businesses and wider economy in the borough.
- 1.2 One of the ways Melton Borough Council is able to achieve this is through providing grants to businesses that meet certain criteria and eligibility, if they are able to demonstrate they can deliver specific outputs and outcomes. The purpose of this Guidance Note is to highlight the grant priority areas that will be available, provide an overview as to the eligibility and criteria to access the grants and to provide further information on how grants will be assessed and awarded.

2. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund

- 2.1 On 13 April 2022, the Government announced the [UK Shared Prosperity Fund \(UKSPF\)](#), which was a national non-competitive fund that allowed Local Authority areas to submit Investment Plans to national government to put a case forward as to how their share of funding would be used to enhance the local area. Following significant consultation with partners and stakeholders, The Council was successful in obtaining £1.19m on 16 December 2022. A further £400k was successfully obtained following the successful submission of a REPF addendum to national government. Up to £300,000 has been set aside for business grants, whilst the remaining funding will support interventions relating to business support, community projects, skills development, town centre projects and supporting people and communities in our rural hinterland.
- 2.2 The REPF is complimentary to the UKSPF and tops up UKSPF for certain additional criteria. For ease the Council has decided to integrate the Rural Fund with the UKSPF. This approach aligns with the Government's commitment to streamline the funding landscape.
- 2.3 The UKSPF and REPF fund for the Melton Borough area is being managed by Melton Borough Council. The Council, as the accountable body, must follow the guidance set by the Government and is responsible for ensuring value for money and compliance with areas such as procurement (where applicable), subsidy control and other regulation and legislation of relevance to the UKSPF and REPF.
- 2.4 Whilst not a requirement, Melton Borough Council has decided to set out the scope of the business grants that will be funded via the UKSPF to provide clear guidance on how to access these grants, which types of business are being prioritised, as well as the rationale for determining grants under the specific schemes that will be delivered through this programme.

2.5 Potential applicants will be/are asked to note that:

1. Any of the grant priority areas identified in this document will be competitive. Therefore, submission of an application to any of the grant's schemes does not guarantee award of a grant nor place any obligation on the council to award funding should all relevant criteria be met.
2. Grants under this fund could be subject to tax in line with the applicant's tax arrangements, so the Council would advise seeking advice on this matter, should you be unsure what implications this may have on your business.
3. The Council reserves the right to ask for clarifications throughout the grant process up to the point of a final decision being made. Failure to respond to these requests may result in applications not being fully processed and funding not awarded.

3. Total Funding Available

- 3.1 The amount of funding available for each of the grant priority areas varies by year. There are four grant priority areas that attract a total grant pot of almost £300,000, allocated over the next 2 years. The Council reserves the right to alter these during end of year or in-year reviews if required and increase the maximum grant amount in exceptional circumstances.
- 3.2 Further information for each grant priority area is shown at Annex A to this document. Due to the limitation of funding available, the 4 priority areas for which grants will be awarded are:
 1. Business Startups.
 2. Developing Tourism Economy.
 3. Supporting Business Growth.
 4. Retail/High Street Grants.
- 3.3 As is likely to be the case, over subscription to the funding available for these grants will require the Council to prioritise which types of businesses and/or applications will be awarded funding. There will be no penalty for local authorities because of their use of discretion to prioritise some business types.

4. Who Will Benefit from the Grants?

- 4.1 The grant will be available to any business that falls within the Melton Borough area.
- 4.2 Whilst all businesses can submit an application, due to the suspected over demand, these grants will be primarily and predominantly aimed at:

1. Businesses who can demonstrate they meet or are able to contribute to the required deliverables as outlined in the evaluation section of this document.
 2. Businesses that can demonstrate deliverability of the proposals within a 12-month period.
 3. Businesses that can, to the satisfaction of the council, demonstrate growth as a result of the investment.
 4. Businesses which can provide match funding (whilst match funding is not a prerequisite of grant approval, the more private sector contribution and value for money demonstrated gives additional weight to the application).
- 4.3 Further information on each specific grant scheme and what they will be looking to fund is provided in Annex A.
- 4.4 **Important.** All UKSPF and REPF grants are classed as Capital Grants¹ and are therefore to be used to help realise a project or improve business performance. They must not be used for wages, debt repayments, personal items, etc.

5. Who Cannot Benefit from the Discretionary Scheme?

- 5.1 The Council has prescribed that businesses who fall into the following categories will not be considered eligible for this scheme:
1. Businesses that are not trading as of the date of application submission.
 2. Companies in administration, are insolvent or where a striking-off notice has been made.
 3. Businesses that are not registered within the borough.
 4. Applications where the grant will go towards an item or project that will predominately operate or benefit areas outside of Melton Borough.
 5. Applications that are not directly signed off by an appropriate decision maker within the relevant business.
- 5.2 Businesses who will exceed [Subsidy Control](#) limits because of any previous grants received will also not be considered for funding. It is the businesses' obligation to self-certify whether this will be the case or not. Should a business falsely certify or inadvertently exceed the subsidy control limits the Council will claw back funding and escalate this issue to the relevant Government departments.

6. Application Process and Timescale

- 6.1 To manage the workload and expectations, the Council is planning on running a maximum of three rounds of applications per year. Should the money run out prior to a round commencing, it will subsequently be cancelled. Whilst the Council reserves the right to change this process upon review, it is expected that the process will be adhered to per round of grants, with each round lasting approximately 3 months. A visual guide to the Process and Timeline can be found

¹ A sum of money given by a government to an organisation to buy buildings, land, equipment (not vehicles), etc or to make improvements to them. Examples of capital grant spending can be found on the [Government website](#).

at Annex B to this Guidance Note.

- 6.2 The council invites applications via its [website](#). Any applicant who is unable to apply via the website should contact businessgrant@melton.gov.uk.
- 6.3 As per the above, applications will be open for 4 weeks. Potential applicants should assume that this window will not be extended. It is expected that the Council will undertake 1 assessment of all applications received to that date once the deadline has passed during the evaluation and clarification phase.
- 6.4 The Council's website will set out the information required from applicants, which will be the minimum reasonably required to establish eligibility and enable a fair and equitable assessment of grant entitlement.
- 6.5 Applicants would also be asked to confirm that by accepting payments they are in compliance with subsidy control rules, that to the best of their knowledge they are eligible for the scheme and acknowledge that the Council reserves the right to recover any funding made in error or as the result of misleading/mistaken information being submitted. The application form will require applicants to confirm acceptance of various compliance statements through tick boxes.
- 6.6 For successful applications, the council will undertake post project monitoring and evaluation to ensure the expected deliverables (what the grant was for), have been secured. By signing the Grant Agreement and receiving the grant, the applicant confirms they are willing to engage in this process and provide any information required by the council, stated in the agreement. Failure to do so may lead to the Council clawing back funding.
- 6.7 There will be no automatic right of appeal against a decision not to award a grant, or against the value of any grant. All businesses, either successful or unsuccessful for funding, will be eligible to apply for further funding, subject to the total amount of funding for both applications, does not exceed the maximum capped amount of £15,000.

7. How Will the Value of Grants be Calculated?

- 7.1 As the funding available to the Council is fixed and the demand is unknown, the value of grants cannot be determined until the application window has closed and all applications have been assessed.
- 7.2 In order to ensure maximum impact is felt by our local economy it is likely that each grant scheme will have a maximum grant amount allocated to it. These amounts are shown at Annex A and will be updated on the Business Grant webpage.
- 7.3 The emphasis of these funds will be on making meaningful payments to those in significant need, rather than paying small amounts to as many businesses as possible. Due to this, grants will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the awarding panel, following careful consideration of the information provided.

Therefore, an application for these grants does not guarantee the full amount requested, or any grant amount will be received.

- 7.4 This Guidance Note is intended to provide guiding principles against which applications will be processed to inform applicants during the submission stage. Details may be subject to change during the course of the scheme following reviews to ensure the grant schemes continue to have maximum impact. A Local Advisory Board (LAB) has been formed with local business and community experience to ensure UKSPF is delivered appropriately and with local needs in mind.

8. Managing the Risk of Fraud

- 8.1 The Council and the Government will not accept deliberate manipulation and fraud. Any business or person caught falsifying their records or the information submitted to gain a grant award will face prosecution and any funding issued will be subject to clawback, as may any grants paid in error.
- 8.2 The Council also reserves the right to use any details submitted by businesses to check against national records and databases to highlight potentially fraudulent activity.

9. Guidance Note Review

- 9.1 This Guidance Note has been written in line with Government guidance. It will be subject to dynamic review as circumstances dictate and in line with future clarifications and changes that may be announced by the Government or following internal recommendations made by the Council.

Annex A to Business Grant Guidance Note – Business Grant Priorities*

Priority Areas (UKSPF Intervention)	Min Grant Amount	Max Grant Amount**	Eligibility***	Outcomes as a result of the grant (will be monitored, and evidenced at end of grant period)
Business Startups	£2,000	£15,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any business in Melton Borough area. • Priority to be given to Retail or B2C businesses. • Must be in good standing with MBC (ie; not in debt). • Must have a full Business Plan or have been in business no more than 24 months at point of application submission. <p>Note: On application form, insert date from your Business Plan if your start-up has not yet begun trading.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of jobs created • Number of jobs safeguarded
Developing Tourism Economy	£2,000	£15,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any business in Melton Borough area. • Businesses that operate predominantly within the tourism sector. • Must have a business bank account. • Must have been in business for more than 12 months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of jobs created • Number of jobs safeguarded • Number of tourism, culture or heritage assets created or improved • Increase in visitor spending
Supporting Business Growth	£2,000	£15,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any business in Melton Borough area. • Businesses that can demonstrate high growth potential. • Must have a business bank account. • Must have been in business for more than 12 months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of jobs created • Number of jobs safeguarded • Increase in sales
Retail/High Street Grant	£2,000	£15,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses in BID area for Melton Mowbray. • Businesses that fall within centre of a rural village or town in Melton Borough. • Must have a business bank account. • Must have been in business for more than 12 months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of jobs created • Number of jobs safeguarded • Increase in footfall

Match Funding Requirement

Match funding is not a prerequisite of funding for an application to be successful, however businesses are encouraged to contribute as much private sector match as possible. Applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine suitability for the grant scheme but also value for money achieved in terms of growth created by the award of the grant, match contributed and other factors.

Required Information (For all grant applications)

- Business Name.
- Business Address.
- Business bank account (unless pre-startup).
- Companies House number.
- SIC code (if applicable).
- Number of employees.
- Outcomes (in numbers or percentages) expected from successful grant award.
- Evidence of grant match (with a relevant bank statement).
- 3 x quotes required for each item to be purchased/procured as part of the grant request (must be on valid letterheaded paper, to include supplier details).
- Project Overview – In no less than 500 words, describe what the project aims to deliver (the outputs and outcomes) and how it meets the UKSPF criteria for grant funding.
- Outline business case for the proposal (if grant request is £10,001 or over) – to include: What the project aims to achieve, the benefits to the company, options considered, timescales, costs and expected return on investment, anticipated risks and their mitigation.
- [Business plan](#) (additional requirement if a proposed new start-up business only, demonstrating the next 2 years of business activity).
- Evidence of approvals being secured (if required) such as planning, landlord consent, licensing, or regulatory approvals.

*Information is correct at date of the document being published, grant details are under dynamic review and may be subject to change.

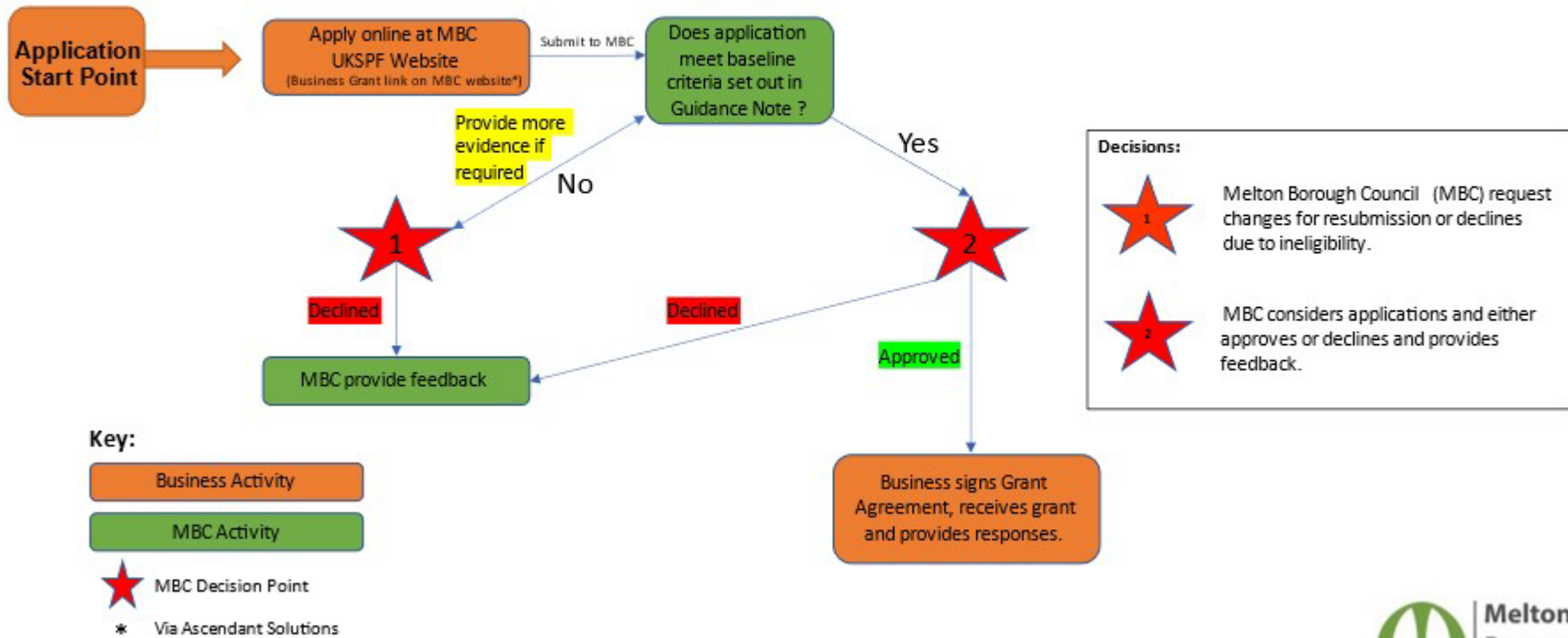
**The total pot is split between 2 years (2023/24 & 2024/25) and therefore funding will be allocated to each of these grant funds on a yearly basis (Capital).

***More in-depth information on the eligibility of each scheme will be provided on the Council's UKSPF grants webpage.

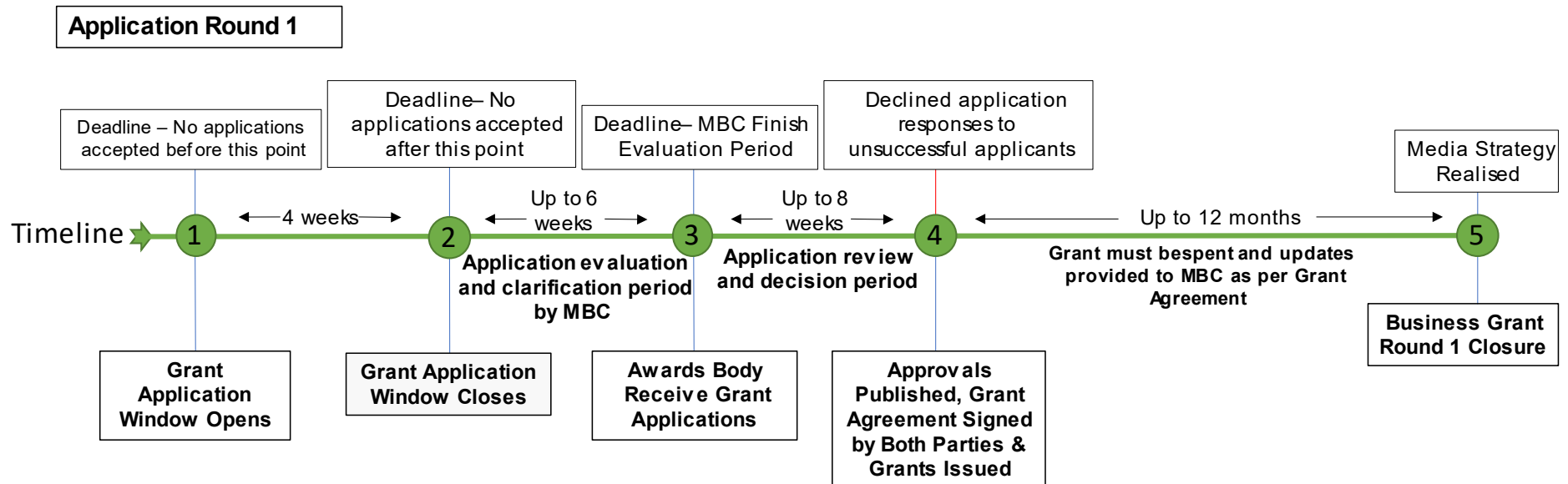
Notes:

- 1. All successful applicants must have signed a Grant Agreement in order to receive grant funding. The Grant Agreement will identify the outputs required for that project.**
- 2. As per the Grant Agreement, all project owners will have a responsibility to provide any related information as and when requested up to 36 months after the payment of the grant. This will enable effective monitoring of grant allocations and capture the effects of the grant to the business.**
- 3. Examples of requests for information include but are not limited to:**
 - **Evidence of quotes of machinery.**
 - **Evidence of costs incurred if promotional/ marketing etc.**
 - **SIC code (if available).**
 - **Acknowledgement from advisor that support programme has been accessed.**
 - **Evidence of any match funding required.**
 - **Evidence of quotes or expenditure to cover the grant.**
 - **Business Case for large projects.**
 - **Business Plan for new business start-ups.**

UKSPF Business Grant Application Process Flowchart



UKSPF Business Grant Application Process Timeline



NOTES:

1. Once grant pot has been exhausted, rounds will cease.
2. Otherwise, Round 2 will start no later than 24 weeks after Point 1 on the Timeline.
3. Grant Agreements will be tailored to applicant’s project and MBC requirements.

Annex B Accessibility Description

Flowchart 1 – UKSPF Business Grant Application Process.

- Application starts by applying online on the MBC website.
- Once submitted to MBC, we establish does the application meet the criteria?
- If application does not meet criteria:
 - Business to provide more evidence, if requested.
 - MBC request changes for resubmission or decline application.
 - MBC provide feedback.
- If application meets criteria:
 - MBC considers applications and either approves or declines and provides feedback.
 - Business signs Grant Agreement, receives grant and provides responses as agreed.

Flowchart 2 – UKSPF Business Grant Application Timeline.

- There will be a number of application rounds, this timeline description is for a single round.
- Point 1 – Grant application round opens. Applications before this point will not be processed. Window lasts 4 weeks.
- Point 2 – Grant application round closes. During this period, MBC evaluates and clarifies applications. Applications received after this point will be rejected. Window lasts up to 6 weeks.
- Point 3 – Evaluation period ends and MBC review eligible applications. Window lasts up to 8 weeks.
- Point 4 – Review period ends, and successful applications are processed, grant agreements signed and grants awarded. Unsuccessful applications declined and feedback offered.
- Point 5 – Grant recipients must provide feedback to MBC according to their grant agreement. This window lasts 12 months.

Notes:

1. Once grant pot has been exhausted, rounds will cease.
2. Otherwise, Round 2 will start 24 weeks after Point 1 on the timeline.
3. Grant Agreements will be tailored to applicant's project and MBC requirements.