

**Minutes of the Economic Development Committee
22 March 2022**

Present:

Councillor C.F. Barnard (Chairman)
Councillor V.J. Leighton (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

A. Brar	T. Fidler	L. E. Nichols
S. Buttar	A.C. Harman	
J.T.F. Doran	H. Harvey	

In Attendance: Councillors C. Bateson and M. Beecher

12/22 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2022 were agreed.

13/22 Disclosures of interests

Agenda item 8 – Additional Restrictions Grant Monitoring

Councillor Harvey declared that her business had applied for a grant.

14/22 Questions from members of the Public

There were none.

15/22 Ward Issues

There were none.

16/22 Capital Monitoring Report Q3 (Oct-Dec 2021)

There were no capital projects for this committee to consider.

17/22 Revenue Monitoring Report Q3 (Oct-Dec 2021)

The Committee requested that future reports identified where posts were being funded through grants.

The Committee noted the draft forecast outturn for 2021/22 as at 31 December 2021 and the aggregate variances by cost centre as reported in Appendix C5.

18/22 Additional Restrictions Grant Monitoring

The Additional Restrictions Grants (ARG) were due to end on 31 March 2022, with any awarded grants needing to be paid to recipients by this time. Officers were confident that there would be very little ARG funding remaining at the deadline due to the number of businesses applying for grants.

Businesses had been provided with a comprehensive range of support including training, improvements to shopfronts and equipment. Grants aimed to ensure that businesses were able to develop their offerings and be in a position to recover strongly now that Covid-19 related restrictions were being relaxed. Small businesses had been the primary recipients of grant funding, although some larger businesses had also benefited.

Details about a Shared Prosperity Fund were expected to be made available by the government later in the year.

The Committee thanked the officers involved in ensuring that grants reached the borough's businesses.

The Committee noted the report.

19/22 Monitoring of Economic Development of Corporate Recovery Plan

The economic development section of the Corporate Recovery Plan (CRP) was presented, along with an overview of each section of the plan. Various lessons that had been learned from the ARG process were being applied to the CRP.

The Staines Business Improvement District ballot was due to close at the end of March 2022. It was hoped that this would garner the support of local businesses due to the additional resources that it attracted.

The proposed popup shop was discussed. There was limited vacant space in the Elmsleigh Centre. There were also various considerations for landlords which limited their interest in supporting a popup shop in particular energy usage and the accrual of business rates whilst a premises was occupied.

It was hoped that some business operators would be welcomed to a future Economic Development Committee.

An update on the Spelthorne Business Hub and associated incubator would be considered at a future meeting.

The Committee noted the report.

20/22 Forward Plan

The forward plan was noted.

21/22 Urgent business

There was no urgent business.