What is the ‘Chorley Shop Front Improvement Grant’ scheme?

In 2010, Chorley’s Economic Regeneration Strategy was refreshed. An Action Plan was prepared subsequently to deliver the Strategy’s priority theme on creating a thriving ‘Contemporary Market Town’. The priority is about maintaining Chorley’s position in the retail hierarchy, growing the quality of its offer and providing a distinctive and attractive town centre environment. The Council understands that local businesses are key partners in achieving this goal.

In March 2011, Chorley Council’s Executive Cabinet approved investment to provide a package of improvement proposals for the town centre; including the Shop Front Improvement Grant scheme. The investment criteria for the scheme have now been reviewed and refreshed in 2012 as outlined in this Guidance Note.

What can the grant be used for?

This grant scheme provides financial support to shop owners and leaseholders to facilitate investment in improving the visual appearance of their shop fronts. This fund is managed by Chorley Council.

The grant is for comprehensive capital works rather than routine maintenance, and works may include new windows (as part of an overall scheme) exterior treatment, lettering, fascias, signage, and lighting on the principle ground floor trading elevation of the property. Physical improvements to a shop entrance to improve disability access are also eligible for grant support. The grant may also pay towards the planning and building regulations application fees where relevant.

Am I eligible for support?

The funds can support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) operating as retailers, and geographical eligibility for the scheme now covers all of the existing town centre boundary as defined by Chorley Council. Also eligible will be those parts of Pall Mall and Bolton Street which will be opposite the new Asda store.

An SME is a company which employs fewer than 250 persons (full time equivalent), and has a turnover of less than 50 million Euros and/or has an annual balance sheet of less than 27 million Euros.

No more than 25% of the company’s capital or voting rights may be held by a parent company which is not itself an SME.

In order to comply with EU state aid regulations Chorley Council is unable to provide a shop front improvement grant to companies in the transport sector, or those involved in the production of agricultural equipment.

Is this state aid?

Yes. This grant scheme is public money, and is therefore a state aid. It will be given to SMEs under the EU de minimus rules. This means that an SME can receive up to 200,000 Euros of state aid over a three year period.

Duration of scheme

The scheme is open from May 2011. Funds will be allocated on a first come first served basis.
How much can I apply for?

Businesses may apply for up to 75% of the total eligible project costs, up to a maximum grant of £10,000.

All grants are paid on defrayed expenditure, i.e. grant payments are claimed once the money has been spent.

Are there other sources of match funding?

Yes. Potentially you may use any of the sources below as match funding.

- Banks or other financial institutions
- Lancashire County Council Rosebud (www.lancashire.gov.uk/rosebud)
- Business Solutions
- Bolton Business Ventures loan fund (www.bbvonline.net)
- Lancashire Community Finance (www.lancashirecommunityfinance.co.uk)

Are there any standard conditions to receiving the grant?

Grant assistance is conditional to receiving business advice and support (supplied free of charge) from Chorley Council to promote the sustainability of the business.

Applicants will be encouraged to follow the ‘Shop Fronts and Signs – A design guide for Chorley’ leaflet. Grant assistance is conditional on receiving design advice (supplied free of charge) from Chorley Council to achieve good quality design.

How do I apply?

In the first instance please contact our Head of Economic Development for an initial discussion.

        Cath Burns, Head of Economic Development
        Civic Offices
        Union Street
        Chorley
        PR7 1AL
        01257 515305

You will be supplied with the contact details for the business support and design advice as mentioned above.

Once the project work has been identified, you will be asked to formally request a grant using the attached application form. In addition you will be asked to send:

- Evidence of funding to deliver the project (e.g. Bank statement or letter from Bank)
- 2 written quotes for projects with a total value less than £10k; 3 written quotes for projects with a total value more than £10k.
- A copy of your business plan/viability report
- A copy of your accounts from the previous financial year
- A cash flow forecast for three years
- Planning permission (if required)
- Confirmation of a submitted application for building regulations (if required)
- Landlord’s permission (if applicable)

A decision will be made within eight weeks of submitting the application form.

Grants will be paid within 30 days of presenting the Council with evidence of expenditure.
Chorley Shop Front Improvement Grant

Application Form

ALL APPLICATIONS WILL BE TREATED AS RESTRICTED-COMMERCIAL

Project Title

Company Name

Company Registration No

Postal Address

Telephone No

Email

Website

Has your company received design advice from Chorley Council as part of this application?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Is your company receiving business advice from Chorley Council as part of this application?

Yes [ ] No [ ]
Project Details

**Project Address**
(If different from postal address given above)

**Project Description**
Describe briefly what the project work will entail, your estimated timescale for starting/completing the project, and the benefits it will provide. Attach plans if available.

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**Project Funding**

**Project Funding Profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Funding</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Applied For</th>
<th>Secured</th>
<th>Date when funds will be received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chorley Shop Front Improvement Grant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lancashire County Council Rosebud Business Solutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Private (e.g. Bank loan) (Specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Own Funds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Chorley Shop Front Improvement Grant Application Form
### What would happen without a Chorley Shop Front Improvement Grant?

Would the project proceed in a reduced form, at a reduced pace or not proceed at all? If it would not proceed, what would be the impact on your business?

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### Project Expenditure Profile including labour (costs should relate to quotes received)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Cost (ex VAT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Outputs and Other Benefits

**Project Output Profile (As applicable)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Date Output to be achieved (Month &amp; Year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of Shop Front Improvements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of Businesses Supported (if an existing business)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of New Businesses Started (if a new business)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of Jobs Created</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of Businesses Safeguarded (if an existing business)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of Jobs Safeguarded (if an existing business)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of Private Sector Investment in the project (£)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What are the other benefits?
Describe any other benefits for your business and for the Chorley economy as a result of this project. Will your project help to increase more visitors and shoppers to Chorley town centre? Is it helping to reduce vacant town centre floorspace?

Measuring Impact
How will you monitor the benefits to your business and to the Chorley economy arising out of this project?

Project Monitoring

Project Milestones
Please give a date when the main project milestones shown below will take place

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestones</th>
<th>Date (Month &amp; Year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Place order(s) for the works</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Works start</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works complete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment of invoices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimate of other benefits over a 12 month period</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chorley Shop Front Improvement Grant Application Form
**Management and financial monitoring**
Describe the accounts system that you use, how the projects costs will be easily identifiable in your accounts, and how you will monitor the project’s progress.

**Deliverability**

**Applicants track record and credibility**
Provide information on your ability to successfully undertake the project proposals. What other projects have you been involved in?

**Risk Assessment**
What are the risks involved delivering this project and how will you minimise these risks?
State Aid

I confirm that this grant will not result in this SME receiving more than 200,000 Euro of state aid over the last 36 months.

Signature

Please sign and date this application

If you have completed the form electronically you will need to print a hard copy to sign

Signature

Name (Block Capitals)

Position in Organisation

Date

Please check that you have included the following with your application:

- Evidence of funding to deliver the project (e.g. Bank statement or letter from Bank)
- 2 written quotes for projects with a total value less than £10k; 3 written quotes for projects with a total value more than £10k.
- A copy of your business plan/viability report
- A copy of your accounts from the previous financial year
- A cash flow forecast for three years
- Planning permission (if required)
- Confirmation of a submitted application for building regulations (if required)
- Landlord’s permission (if applicable)

PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED SIGNED APPLICATION FORM TO:

Cath Burns
Head of Economic Development
Civic Offices
Union Street
Chorley
PR7 1AL

Tel: 01257 515305
Email: cath.burns@chorley.gov.uk

Chorley Shop Front Improvement Grant Application Form