

UK Shared Prosperity Fund High Street Boost Grant

December 2024

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1 Introduction

In April 2022, Central Government published the UK Shared Prosperity Fund at www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus.

UKSPF provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025.

The total allocation to Stafford Borough Council was £4,673,295. It covers a three-year period to 2025 and focuses on two investment themes:

- community and place
- supporting local economy

2 High Street Boost Grant

Stafford Borough Council has launched a new fund to support micro, small, and medium sized independent businesses based in commercial premises located within the town centre 'high streets' of Stafford, Stone or Eccleshall town centres as part of the High Street Boost campaign.

An independent business is one that is:

- Not controlled by a corporate entity
- Is for-profit
- Is privately owned and not a public company
- Is free from outside control
- Operates autonomously and is not affiliated with larger corporations or chains

A limited fund of £125,000 is available with grants available at 80% of project costs, providing grants ranging from £2,000 to £20,000.

Applications are open until 28 February 2025, subject to funds still being available. Products and services must be delivered before 21 March 2025.

Examples of eligible projects:

- Website design and digital projects
- Marketing materials, advertising and publicity, social media campaigns
- Specialist Advice to help grow the business
- Capital equipment such as new kitchen equipment, furnishings, IT kit, office equipment.
- Funding for training and skills

- Costs associated with taking on new or additional business space such as refurbishment, display equipment, furniture and fixings

Businesses applying:

- Must be independent businesses based in commercial premises in the 'high street' or adjoining streets of Stafford, Stone or Eccleshall town centres.
- Must be currently trading and can provide one years certified trading accounts or 12 months management accounts.
- Must employ **less than 250 full-time equivalent persons**
- Must have an annual turnover of **less than £36 million**.
- Must not have received more than £315,000 in public subsidies in the current and previous two financial years (financial year being 1 April to 31 March including the expected level of grant they are applying for.
- Must not have already received a UKSPF grant directly from Stafford Borough Council since the programme started.
- Must not have already purchased the service/product before grant application approval via a fully signed funding agreement.
- Must ensure their project is delivered before 21 March 2025.

You can contact a member of the Business Growth Team at Stafford Borough Council about your application - email economy@staffordbc.gov.uk or telephone 01785 619584

Application Process

Funding will not automatically be offered. Applications will be assessed first come first served and based on eligibility and impact on the local economy e.g. attracting visitors to the high street, raising awareness of the town centre, creating jobs etc.

Documents required to support full application

- Completed Application form
- 1 years certified accounts
- Companies House number or a Unique Tax Reference (UTR) code if sole trader/self employed
- Bank statement clearly showing name of bank, account name, number and sort code for grant to be paid into

- For items/services less than £2,499 only one quote will be required. Three quotes are required from different suppliers for products/service to be funded for one item or the sum of many items from one supplier if between £2,499 and £24,999. A tender process will need to be in place for values above £25,000.

NB: Quotes should not be from people or businesses connected to your business, directors or shareholders.

Payment of grant

- Following receipt of the fully signed and dated funding agreement, successful applicants can go ahead and place their orders
- Expenditure incurred prior to the date of the fully signed funding agreement, will be ineligible for consideration.
- Any expenditure committed or incurred prior to accepting and signing a grant funding agreement is entirely at the applicant's own risk.
- Successful applicants following the fully signed funding agreement are then expected to fund 100% of the project costs.
- The eligible grant amount awarded will be reimbursed on production of supplier invoices showing date of delivery. Evidence of payment from a business bank account is also required.
- Grant payments will be made in a single payment.

3 Appeals Process

UKSPF Grants are paid at the discretion of the Council with awards being determined within the Economic Development Business Growth Team. No formal right of appeal exists, but an applicant who is dissatisfied with a grant determination may request that it be reviewed by a more senior officer.

4 How we use your personal information

The information provided will be used by Stafford Borough Council, as the data controller, to allow us to administer grant applications. We will only share your information, when necessary, with agencies involved in the processing of grants or where the law requires or allows us to. For further information, please see www.staffordbc.gov.uk/business-grant-applications-privacy-notice.

5 Terms and Conditions

Stafford Borough Council (SBC) has been allocated funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund by Central Government to be used specifically to provide support for the agreed project.

- The recipient shall use the grant only for the delivery of the project and in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in this policy and the funding agreement.
- The grant shall not be used for any other purpose without the prior written agreement of the SBC.
- The recipient shall not make any significant change to the project without SBCs prior written agreement.
- The recipient agrees and accepts that it shall not apply for duplicate funding in respect of any part of the project or any related administration costs that the grant is supporting.
- The recipient shall promptly repay to SBC any money incorrectly paid to it either as a result of an administrative error or otherwise.
- SBC shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, demands or expenses in connection with any non-receipt, reduction or withdrawal of grant funding.

Monitoring

- The Recipient shall closely monitor the delivery and success of the Project throughout the Grant Period to ensure that the aims and objectives of the Project are being met and that this offer is being adhered to.
- The Recipient shall provide SBC with a final report on completion of the Grant Period which shall contain a detailed breakdown of all expenditure for the Grant Period and shall confirm whether the Project has been successfully and properly completed.
- Evidence of the defrayal i.e. supplier invoices and bank statements showing payment will be required.

Publicity

The Recipient shall not publish any material referring to the Project or SBC without the prior written agreement of SBC. The Recipient shall:

- Acknowledge the support of SBC in any materials that refer to the Project and in any written or spoken public presentations about the Project, and such acknowledgements (where appropriate or as requested by SBC) shall include the SBC name and logo using the templates provided from time to time.
- Comply with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund branding and publicity guidelines, which can be found at www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-branding-and-publicity-6.
- In using the SBC and UKSPF names and logos, the Recipient shall comply with all reasonable branding guidelines issued by SBC from time to time.
- The Recipient agrees to participate in and co-operate with promotional activities relating to the Project that may be instigated and/or organised by SBC.
- SBC may acknowledge the Recipient's involvement in the Project as appropriate without prior notice.
- The Recipient shall comply with all reasonable requests from SBC to facilitate visits, provide reports, statistics, photographs and case studies that will assist SBC in its promotional and fundraising activities relating to the Project.

Withholding, suspending and repayment of grant

SBCs intention is that the Grant will be paid to the Recipient in accordance with the approved application. However, without prejudice to SBCs other rights and remedies, SBC may at its discretion either terminate the offer and/or withhold or suspend payment of the Grant and/or require repayment of all or part of the Grant if:

- Without the express written permission of SBC, the Recipient uses the Grant for purposes other than those for which they have been awarded.
- The delivery of the Project is not completed within the Grant Period and the Recipient has failed to provide SBC with a reasonable explanation for the delay.
- SBC reasonably considers that the Recipient has not made satisfactory progress with the delivery of the Project.
- The Recipient obtains duplicate funding from a third party for the Project.