

Rannóg Cuntasaíocht Airgeadais, An Roinn Airgeadais,  
Oifigí na Cathrach, An Ché Adhmaid, Baile Átha Cliath 8, Éire

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## **Report to the Finance Strategic Policy Committee**

### **Restart Grant 2020**

#### **Introduction**

The Government agreed details of a new €250m Restart Grant, which will give direct grant aid to micro and small businesses to help them with the costs associated with re-opening and re-employing workers following COVID-19 closures.

The Grant will be available to businesses with a turnover of less than €5m and employing 50 people or less, which were closed or impacted by at least a 25% reduction in turnover up to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020. It is a contribution towards the cost of re-opening or keeping a business operational and re-connecting with employees and customers. The grant can be used to defray ongoing fixed costs, for replenishing stock and for measures needed to ensure employee and customer safety. The grant is to help SME's get back up running so that they can return to viability and contribute to the national economic recovery.

The grants will be equivalent to the rates bill of the business in 2019, with a minimum payment of €2,000 and a maximum payment of €10,000. There is numerous criteria in the scheme around eligibility. The scheme opened for applications on 22<sup>nd</sup> May and is administrated by Local Authorities. A list of FAQs has been prepared to ensure consistency of approach by all local authorities, copy attached.

#### **Dublin City Council Approach**

Due to the potential volume of grant applications in DCC (rate account 25,000) it was agreed that a grant system would need to be development to process the grant within the timeframe of the scheme. In conjunction with our IT partners, an application form with basic verification in-built was designed and launched on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020.

A backend technical solution was also developed which includes roles and responsibilities for processors, approver's, managers and system administration. Also included are further form validations and an improved method to identify applications with duplicate rate numbers. In order to approve the grant, the details on the application has to be crossed referenced with the Rates System. The rates staff have work to review all rate accounts against the criteria set in the Restart Grant Scheme to identify which rate account would potentially qualify for the grant and the amount of grant payable. The staff also produced files in relation to problematic accounts which would require further scrutiny.

Work in relation to automatically checking Revenue numbers of all applicants approved for the grant, checking that their bank details are correct and setting them up as a supplier in our Financial System is ongoing.

The Council received funds to the value of €27.6m on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 for the initial payment of the Restart grants

### **Current Statistics**

Phase	Current Amount	Previous Amount	Difference
Phase 0	584	488	96
Phase 1	423	362	61
Phase 2	638	562	76
Phase 3	765	680	85
Phase 4	544	484	60
Phase 5	487	430	57
Total	3441	3006	435

- As of 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020, there were 3,441 applications received, an increase of 435 on the previous week. The table above sets out the volume of application in each phase of the Government's roadmap to re-opening
  - 269 applications have been identified that failed the basic criteria and have been rejected. A standard email will be sent to the applicants stating the reason for rejection.
  - 141 Applications have been approved and an additional 62 applications have been rejected bringing the total number of rejections to 331.
  - 472 of the 3,441 applications (13.7%) have a "Final Decision", i.e. fully reviewed.
- As of 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020, there have been a total of 1,974 emails received, an increase of 521 since 15<sup>th</sup> June
  - Somewhat uptake in emails, 150+ received 22/06/2020.
  - All emails replied to, most resolving issue
  - 40 emails relate to specific applications, i.e. "I entered the wrong number" to be resolved, 26 completed.
- A Project Team has been established in Finance and has been resourced to manage and pay the Restart Grant in line with the scheme established by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation.
- The payment of approved grants commenced on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2020.

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**23<sup>rd</sup> June 2020**