

**Trafford Town Centres Business Growth Programme
Town Centres Marketing Loan
Key Facts Summary –Effective from 1st January 2020**

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| Loan Purpose | <p>Effective marketing is crucial to business survival and growth. This scheme aims to help new and existing businesses to develop and continue to invest in their marketing operations in order to expand and grow, take advantage of new marketing tools and remain competitive in light of increasing online activity, changing technology and consumer trends.</p> <p>The loans can pay for activity such as IT, software, marketing/ PR collateral and new signage.</p> |
| Eligibility | <p>Both existing businesses and new businesses which are in Altrincham, Sale, Stretford and Urmston town centres will be considered (see maps of coverage areas). Eligible applicants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly demonstrate how this marketing will assist business growth or increase sales. • offer value for money. <p>The Council will have ultimate discretion in determining the types of business that are eligible for loan funding assistance. This will be assessed on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Non-eligible uses include, but not limited to: payday loan companies; betting/gambling shops; charity shops; pawnbrokers; adult shops; pound shops; and temporary shops. A lease must be in place for the period of the loan.</p> <p>An applicant/ business will only be eligible to receive one individual award in any 12 month period.</p> |
| Loan Amounts | <p>We offer loans of between £1,000 and £5,000 to support new-start and existing businesses in developing and investing in their marketing collateral.</p> <p>The scheme has a limited budget and applications will be considered on a 'first come first served' basis. Therefore loan funding may not be available to support all proposals.</p> |
| Loan Term | <p>Unless otherwise agreed, repayments will be monthly in 24 monthly instalments.</p> |
| Loan Interest Rates | <p>The loan will be interest free, unless in the instance of default, where the rate of interest will be charged at 4% plus the Bank of England Base Rate.</p> |
| Arrangement Fee | <p>An administration fee of 5% will be added to the loan amount, which will be repaid first from the monthly repayments.</p> |
| Repaying Your Loan Early | <p>The outstanding loan amount can be repaid in full at any time without penalty.</p> |

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Guidance Notes – Effective from 1st January 2020

Who can apply?

The Applicant must be the business described in the application. A guarantor will not be accepted.

Applications will be assessed as a personal loan to the proprietor of the business.

Trafford Council will not loan money to any Applicant who has existing debts to the Council including Council tax or Business Rates arrears, or has been declared bankrupt. The applicant must provide permission for the Council to check these records.

If demand exceeds the amount of funding that is available, priority may be given to those businesses which are likely to create more jobs and footfall; are investing a larger amount of their own funds; or are located in areas that the Council deems to be of greatest priority for assistance.

Priority will also be given to those applications that are committed to improving accessibility for all. There are legal obligations a business owner has to fulfil, but there are also additional actions that can be taken, above and beyond these, that will illustrate an applicant's commitment to this key priority for the Council. See the links below for further information and initiatives.

The Equality Act 2010: Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

Gov.uk: Accessibility and Assisted Digital - <https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/helping-people-to-use-your-service>

Equality & Humans Rights Commission: Advertisements & Marketing - <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/multipage-guide/advertisements-and-marketing>

Purple Tuesday - <https://purpletuesday.org.uk/>

Visit Britain: Make Your Business Accessible - <https://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/make-your-business-accessible>

What can the loan pay for?

The offer of loan funding assistance will be based on a quotation provided from a reputable supplier and submitted as part of the application. Significant changes must be agreed in advance.

The following table should be used as a guide to items that could be funded through the scheme:

Potentially eligible items

- Marketing software/systems, apps, and social media.
- Signage.
- Direct marketing activity.
- Website development.
- PR consultancy.
- Advertising.
- Consultancy support.
- Development of marketing materials.
- Exhibitions/trade events.

What statutory and legal consents do I need?

Some physical works, such as signage, must comply with Planning and Building Regulations and some proposals may require licenses/permissions.

All consents must be in place before the first loan payment can be made. If a business receiving loan funding is later held to account for any breaches relating to those improvements, the Applicant may be asked to repay the entire loan paid to date.

Important note: Full and complete applications must be submitted at least one month prior to the commencement of the activity.

How does the application process work?

- a) Council Officers will meet the Applicant to discuss the detail of the proposal and its eligibility.
- b) The Applicant returns the completed Application Form (plus the supporting documentation specified in the Application Form) to Trafford Council.
- c) The application will be assessed for eligibility and the suitability of the Applicant. This will include checks of financial records within the Council such as Council Tax and Business Rates.
- d) If the application is eligible, there are no queries on any supporting documentation and the Council is satisfied that the business proposition will generate sustainable business growth, the application will be sent to the Panel for assessment and will make a recommendation to the Council to approve or reject the application. The Panel's decision is final and the funding is awarded at the discretion of the Council.
- e) The Applicant will be informed of the decision. Successful applicants will receive an offer letter and loan agreement which must be signed and returned within 28 days from the date of the covering letter, or the offer of loan funding assistance may be withdrawn.
- f) The agreed loan will be paid following the loan approval.

How will Loan repayments be made?

A direct debit mandate must be set up to cover the monthly repayment of loans. The outstanding loan amount can be repaid in full at any time without penalty.

The loan will be interest free, unless in the instance of default, where the rate of interest will be charged at 4% plus the Bank of England Base Rate.

What are the requirements after receiving the loan approval?

Unless otherwise agreed by the Council, the loan must be fully spent on the agreed marketing activities within 3 months of the approval, or the offer of loan funding assistance will be withdrawn.

Receipts / evidence of payment must be provided within a maximum of 28 days of the payment being made.

Successful Applicants will be required to allow the Council to fully publicise the award of the loan, the loan amount and the works undertaken as part of its promotional activity for the scheme. This will include photographs of the applicant, internal and external photographs and the supply of quotes from the applicant.

The Applicant's business must remain in one of Trafford's four town centres for the period of the loan. Trafford Council must be informed if the business ceases trading or intends to relocate out of the area within the period of the loan funding assistance. The Council reserves the right to claw back financial assistance in such circumstances.

Trafford Council administers the loan fund and reserves the right to claw back loan funding assistance if the loan agreement conditions are breached.

State Aid De Minimis

In order to minimise distortion of competition the European Commission sets limits on how much assistance can be given without its prior approval to organisations operating in a competitive market. This letter sets out what is needed to ensure compliance with those limits. You should note carefully the requirements and obligations. If you have any queries please discuss them with the aid administrator (i.e. Trafford Council).

Under EC Regulation 1407/2013 (De Minimis Aid Regulation) as published in the Official Journal of the European Union 24 December 2013, the support provided by the Trafford Town Centres Business Growth Programme is classed as De Minimis aid. De Minimis aid has a ceiling of €200,000 (€100,000 for undertakings in the road freight transport sector) for all De Minimis aid provided to any one organisation over a three fiscal year period (i.e. your current fiscal year and previous two fiscal years). Any De Minimis aid provided to you under this scheme will be relevant if you wish to apply, or have applied, for any other De Minimis aid. Any amount of aid received under this scheme will need to be declared to any other awarding body that requests information from you on how much De Minimis aid you have received. For the purposes of the De Minimis regulation, you must retain this letter for 10 years from the date on which the aid is granted and produce it on any request by the UK public authorities or the European Commission. (You may need to keep this letter longer than 10 years.)

Please advise us now of any other De Minimis aid which your enterprise and any enterprises linked to it may have received during your current and previous two fiscal years as we need to check that any support added to that previously received, will not exceed the threshold of €200,000 (€100,000 for undertakings in the road freight transport sector) over the last three fiscal years. De Minimis aid includes not only grant but also assistance such as free or subsidised consultancy services, marketing advice etc. If you are in any doubt about whether previous assistance received classes as De Minimis assistance please include it.

Please ensure you complete the statement enclosed in the application form confirming your eligibility for support.