

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

February 28 2023

Grants of up to £75,000 on offer to Fenland businesses

Businesses in Fenland will have the chance to access grants of between £5,000 and £75,000 to grow and increase employment opportunities in the district.

Fenland District Council's 'Fenland for Business' team will be awarding grants totaling at least £600k over the next three years.

It comes after the council successfully secured cash from the Government's Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Shared Prosperity Fund.

Cllr Ian Benney, Fenland District Council's portfolio holder for Economic Growth, said: "We know that in Fenland we don't have enough high-skill, high-pay jobs.

"This funding is a chance for us to help Fenland businesses to grow and create employment opportunities that will help us attract and retain talent in the area.

"We're delighted the Government recognised the merit in our proposal and that local businesses will benefit."

Any business that is based in or operates out of Fenland can apply for funding. It can be used for a broad range of capital and revenue projects to cover up to 80 per cent of project costs.

Businesses must demonstrate their proposal will deliver in at least two of the following areas:

- improve competitiveness
- enable growth
- enhance productivity
- create sustainable jobs
- safeguard any jobs at risk of redundancy within the next six months.

To reflect Fenland District Council's economic priorities, the programme will prioritise businesses with significant operations in or supplying:

- agri-food, for example - food production, food processing, food packaging, food security, horticulture and food technology
- specialist manufacturing, electronics and advanced and precision engineering.

Examples of capital projects grants could support include:

- purchase of machines and associated tooling
- purchase of a printer e.g., Litho printer
- renovating existing buildings or building new business premises
- create sustainable jobs replacement of worn-out machinery/equipment

- IT hardware.

Examples of revenue projects grants could support include:

- website redevelopment
- training programmes
- marketing campaigns
- commissioning of research

Examples of what the grants cannot support include:

- paying off debts or refinancing
- salaries, travel or subsistence
- ongoing normal business costs (such as business rates, overheads etc)
- any statutory or legislative obligations, duties or requirements
- software unless integrally linked to the running of specific equipment.

Businesses need to submit an initial 'expression of interest' and those with a potentially eligible project will be invited to submit a full application.

The majority of the fund – a £456.5k slice - will be allocated in 2024-25.

For more information and to find the expression of interest form see:

www.fenlandforbusiness.co.uk/article/17231/Investment-in-Business-Programme

The Fenland for Business team works to encourage and support business growth and investment in the district. If you run a business in Fenland or are interested in creating one, the team can support with free advice.