

Business grant update [released 21st January 2021]

Message from Birmingham City Council Business Rates

We remain aware of the need to pay all eligible businesses your grants as quickly as possible. This update is to explain how we are tackling this and where we have got to so far.

The council has received over 15,000 applications for support of which over 9,000 have been assessed. **Payments of over £8.6 million have now been made with a further £3.3m awaiting approval in the next batch meaning over 8,000 businesses will have received support.**

1. If your business has not received any payment at all

We are working through all applications in date order, with those received in December now being processed. Further staff have been trained to assist with processing and we expect first payments to be made within the next 2 weeks to all eligible businesses which applied before 1st January 2021. It will help speed up our payments further if enquiries could be limited in this time unless it is really urgent.

2. If you have received a payment already

We are aware that you will want to know when your next payment is on the way. Whilst working through the above cases, we are also processing payments for businesses which have had a payment, and then later Government guidance has been received meaning further entitlement to a grant (following the 2nd national lockdown). We will be making arrangements for payments for the period up to the 3rd national lockdown (on 5th January) over the next two weeks. There is no requirement for you to complete another application form for any of the new grant schemes as we intend to process payments from the original applications.

3. New Government grant schemes for the 3rd national lockdown (from 5th January 2021)

Details of the new schemes can be found <https://www.gov.uk/guidance>. The Council received the Government guidance for the new schemes on 13th January 2021. We are planning to make payments as quickly as possible and we expect to have the majority of payments made by early February. These will be made for the 42-day initial period of entitlement which commenced on 5th January.

4. Further guidance

We are acutely aware of the need to get these payments out to you as quickly as possible, and now have around 100 staff involved in this. Our website link will be updated with the very latest information as soon as it is available **and once known, we will also publish periodic payment dates as to ensure you are aware when to expect future eligible payments.** We are aware of some lengthy waiting times on the phones, so please use the website or check your Brum account before trying to call us. We are trying to maximise our staff resource to pay grants to lessen the need for phone contact. Thank you for your patience.