



**Funded by
UK Government**

**UK Shared Prosperity Fund
Stafford Borough
Business Growth Grant**

July 2025



Stafford
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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1 Introduction

In March 2025, the latest allocation of UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF) was announced by central Government.

The total amount allocated to Stafford Borough Council for the period April 2025 to March 2026 is £1,528,851. This fund will focus on three investment themes:

- Communities and Place
- Supporting local economy
- People and Skills

2 Stafford Borough Business Growth Grant

Through UKSPF, Stafford Borough Council has launched a new fund to support micro, small, and medium sized independent businesses (SMEs) aged 2 years and upwards, based in commercial premises, located within the local authority area of Stafford Borough.

This fund is open to those businesses where a minimum of 75% of their business income is from sales to other businesses. Retailers are not eligible to apply but are directed to the High Street Boost Grant.

£200,000 has been allocated to the Stafford Borough Business Growth Grant funding stream.

This fund offers eligible businesses the opportunity to access grants from a minimum of £2,000 up to £25,000 to help them purchase specific products and services to help scale up their business.

The fund operates on an intervention rate of 80%, meaning the Council will cover most of the project costs, while businesses are required to contribute the remaining 20% as match funding.

Successful grant applications from businesses that are VAT registered will receive the grant based on eligible net costs (i.e. excluding the VAT), as this can be claimed back from HMRC. However, successful grant applications from businesses that are not VAT registered, will receive the grant based on eligible gross costs (including the VAT if applicable).

Eligible businesses will be funded where there is clear evidence of future growth as a direct result of the project.

Applications are open until 30 November 2025, subject to funds still being available. Applications will be assessed on a first come first served basis in terms of those who provide all supporting documentation required.

Examples of eligible projects:

- Website design and digital projects
- Marketing materials, advertising and publicity, social media campaigns
- Specialist advice to help grow the business.
- Professional services support for implementation of new processes and systems e.g. ISO9001
- Capital equipment such as machinery
- Fitting out of new or existing premises e.g. heating, lighting, cabling, telephone systems, furnishings, IT equipment.
- Upskilling of employees for short courses only.
- Funding towards decarbonisation including feasibility studies and consultancy.

Applicant eligibility:

- Must be an independent profit seeking business based in commercial premises, within the local authority area of Stafford Borough and have been trading for more than 2 years.
- Must not be controlled by a corporate entity.

An independent business can be defined as;

- Privately owned and not a public company (plc)
- Operates autonomously and is not affiliated with larger corporations or chains
- Must be currently trading and can provide 2 years of certified or management accounts or for self-employed people 2 years of self-assessment tax returns.
- Must employ less than 250 full-time equivalent persons
- Must have an annual turnover of less than or equal to £44 million or a balance sheet total of less than or equal to £38million.
- 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 purchased the service/product prior to grant application approval and prior to receiving a fully signed funding agreement from the Borough Council.

Application Process

Funding will not automatically be offered. Applications will be assessed on eligibility and impact on the business e.g. increase in turnover/profitability, job creation, entering new markets etc.

Each application will be individually assessed on merit and Stafford Borough Council has the right to reject applications that exceed financial conditions imposed as public subsidies. The grant is to facilitate the purchasing of key products or services, and the business must demonstrate that this support will help drive the business growth and ensure its future sustainability.

Requirements for application

- Completed application form - customers.staffordbc.gov.uk/business-growth-grant
- Last 2 years of certified or management accounts or for self-employed people, last 2 years of self-assessment tax returns.
- Bank statement clearly showing name of bank, account name, number and sort code for grant payment purposes
- Basic cashflow forecast of 12 months.
- Forecasted trading, profit and loss for the next 12 months.
- Evidence of any company insurance documents.
- Evidence of project funding balance if part of a bank loan or other grant.
- Signed Subsidy Control (public subsidies) declaration form
- A company letterhead which includes your business name, trading address, bank sort code and bank account number.
- Quotes for the items/services requested that the grant should support:
 - Any single item or items from one supplier submitted as part of this application process should not be less than £1,000.
 - Quotes should not be from people or businesses connected to the applicant business, directors or shareholders.
 - For products/services to be funded for one item or the sum of many items from one supplier, quotes required are as follows:

Value	Required
£1,000 to £10,000	Two written/evidenced quotes are required from different suppliers. This can be done by undertaking price comparisons on website
£10,000 to £30,000	Three written/evidenced quotes are required.
£30,000 to £60,000	Three written/evidenced quotes must be obtained through a formal tendering process

NB: For VAT registered businesses the project value will not include the VAT. For businesses not registered for VAT, the VAT will be included in looking at the quotes/project costs.

Payment of grant monies following application approval:

- Following application approval and receipt of a fully signed funding agreement, successful applicants should then take delivery of the relevant products and services and pay for them 100%, before drawing down the grant award from the Council.
- 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.
- Grants monies awarded should be claimed from the Council within 13 weeks from the date of their fully signed funding agreement.
- 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.
- Should the defrayal evidence above indicate that the project costs were lower than quoted for, then payment will be up to 80% of the actual project costs or the maximum of grant awarded whichever is the least.
- Grant payments will be made in a single payment.
- Successful grant applicants will be given three months in which to draw down their grant award; however, the final UKSPF deadline for spend is 31 March 2026.

The Business Growth Team at Stafford Borough Council can be contacted for further clarification on the above. Email economy@staffordbc.gov.uk or telephone 01785 619584.

3 Appeals Process

UKSPF Grants are paid at the discretion of the Council with awards being determined within the Economic Development Business Growth Team. If an applicant is dissatisfied with a grant determination, they may request that it be reviewed by the Head of Economic Development and Planning by emailing economy@staffordbc.gov.uk

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 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.

- Successful grant applicants will be given three months in which to draw down their grant award; however, the final UKSPF deadline for spend is 31 March 2026.

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 must respond to any requests by the Council for further information.
- 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.

