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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Environment and Regeneration</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>14 March 2024</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Director, Environment &amp; Regeneration</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>ENV021/24/SJ/JH</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Jennifer Horn</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712402</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Business Support Interventions</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1  For Decision  For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to seek agreement from the Environment and Regeneration committee in respect of reallocation of unspent funds from COVID allocation in support of Business Development interventions.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Environment and Regeneration Committee support the interventions highlighted in Para 3.3.

**Stuart Jamieson**  
**Director, Environment & Regeneration**

### 3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 During the pandemic a number of support interventions were identified to support business with budget allocations made. Whilst there was success on some interventions others did not result in a full spend. The unallocated portion is £342,000.
- 3.2 As part of the budget process a right back exercise was undertaken and officers were asked to develop potential business support interventions in light of the current marketplace.
- 3.3 Officers have considered a number of interventions which are set out below:-

#### **Incubator 'Test the market' Space**

Within the town centre location of Port Glasgow and Greenock in which the Council will allocate a vacant shop premise, potentially a long term vacant property, the intervention will offer support to businesses to 'test the market' with their business ideas for a period of 4 months each, supported by the Business Development Team. Cost will include rent, rates, small changes to the commercial property, marketing, temporary signage, and support for the business.

Cost of intervention £100,000

#### **Export Grant**

This discretionary fund can provide an Exporting grant to businesses that are trading in the area. The grant can be used to cover up to 100% of eligible costs (excluding VAT) of exporting activities up to a maximum contribution of £5,000.

What can the grant be used for?

To assist with the cost associated with entering overseas markets, including

- Development and implementation of the company's exporting plan
- Attendance at overseas exhibitions and trade shows
- Production of documentation

Cost of intervention £15,000

#### **Digital Assistance Grant**

Support for businesses enhancing their digital presence e.g. websites with a grant which would be 100% of eligible costs up to a maximum contribution of £2,500.

Cost of intervention £25,000

#### **Commercial Premises Start Up Grant**

Introduce a grant of £2,000 for those setting up in commercial premises. The grant will be a contribution to the set up costs for a business and would compliment other grants offered e.g. Property Assistance Grant. This grant recognises that those starting up a business in a physical premise have higher costs of starting up.

Cost of intervention £32,000

#### **Enhance Start-up grants**

Change the offer from a grant of £500 to £750 for those not setting up in commercial premises.

Cost of intervention £10,000

**Business: Employee Wellbeing Grant**

100% of costs up to a maximum contribution of £250 for wellbeing activities to support both the mental and physical health of staff. This could take a various forms eg paying for an instructor to provide some exercise classes or a practitioner to provide training sessions on managing stress.

Cost of intervention £10,000

**4.0 PROPOSALS**

4.1 The Environment and Regeneration Committee support the proposals identified and supports the write back of £150,000.

**5.0 IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children & Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X

**5.2 Finance**

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
Reserves			192		

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

**5.3 Legal/Risk**

N/A.

#### **5.4 Human Resources**

N/A.

#### **5.5 Strategic**

N/A.

### **6.0 CONSULTATION**

6.1 None

### **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 None.