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UK Shared Prosperity Fund - SME Business Energy Grant Guidance and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Broxtowe Borough Council is pleased to announce a grant funding round to help local businesses address their energy consumption. The UKSPF SME Business Energy Grant is available to businesses located and operating in Broxtowe Borough who have less than 250 employees.

Broxtowe Borough Council aims to support local businesses to start or accelerate their decarbonisation pathways to reduce their carbon emissions, so reduce their impact on climate change.

To achieve this, the grants aim to help businesses gain a better understanding of their carbon footprint and identify suitable energy efficiency measures to reduce their energy consumption. As well as financially supporting businesses to install energy efficiency measures, to support the reduction of the organisation's carbon footprint.

These grants are funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocated to Broxtowe Borough Council. The Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) is a central pillar of the UK Government's Levelling Up agenda, providing £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025. These grants are delivered under the theme of Supporting Local Business. [Find out more about the government's Levelling Up schemes here.](#)

The Grant Offer

There are two phases of support (energy audit and grant fund) for companies whose business premises, which the funding application applies to, are located and operate within Broxtowe Borough.

Phase 1

Businesses should complete this [online form](#) or call 0330 053 8639 to express their interest in a SPF business advisor supporting them to create an energy plan. The plan will ascertain an in-depth understanding of the business' carbon footprint. The energy audit will consist of three parts: a pre-site visit desktop study, a site visit, and a post-visit report. Information will be collected to enable consideration of the energy consumption and energy saving opportunities, at the building. The post-visit report will include potential energy saving opportunities. These opportunities will inform the works in Phase 2. We also plan to run local workshops find out dates by signing up to the Broxtowe Business Newsletter to hear more. [Email Me : Broxtowe Borough Council](#). **Phase 1 is fully funded as part of the UKSPF Intervention E29 and the resulting audit is a requirement to support your phase 2 grant application.**



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Phase 2

Phase 2 offers the provision of a grant of up to £5,000 to spend on energy efficiency measures to support the reduction of the organisation's carbon footprint. The proposed measures must be supported by a current carbon footprint, cost, and carbon savings calculations for before and after installation and a description of how the chosen measure will support the on-going operation or maintenance of the building. This information can be obtained via Phase 1 or have been previously obtained by the business.

How much is available?

Business can apply for an energy grant of:

- £500 - £2,000 – Match funding is not compulsory, but we would welcome any match that the business can put into the project.
- £2,001 - £5,000 – Match funding of 20% is required from the business.

You must show the full project cost within your application. Where a project exceeds the grant amount the company would need to demonstrate that they have match funding secured for the project to proceed.

Who can apply?

A business must be registered and have a business bank account. Registration can take the legal form of sole trader, partnership, limited company, or social enterprise / Community Interest Company (CIC). Charities that are registered with the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) or in addition to their charity status are also registered as one of the above legal entities can also apply to this fund.

Businesses must be registered and based within Broxtowe Borough Council and pays business rates to Broxtowe or be exempt from paying business rates.

Businesses must have traded for a minimum of 6 months.

The grant must be spent on new investment and cannot cover any costs already incurred.

The focus of these grants is on local businesses who own or rent local premises within the Borough.

Criteria for applications

Applications must be accompanied by a recent Energy Audit which clearly outlines how the funding can help to reduce the amount of Co2 that the company emits. Applicants must obtain at least 2 quotes (3 if the grant is project is above £3k) for



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any proposal (proving value for money) and must submit these to the Council before funding can be approved.

If funding is approved, all receipts and invoices must also be kept and submitted to the Council at the end of the project.

How will I access the Stage 1 energy audit?

The Energy Audits are being completed as part of the UKSPF-funded E29 Decarbonisation theme. To access this, you will need to complete an expression of interest form and engage with an SPF Business Advisor from East Midlands Chamber Nottinghamshire Accelerator Programme. You can find more information on the website [Accelerator - D2N2 Growth Hub](#) You must complete an online expression of interest form [here](#) and an advisor will be in touch with you.

How to apply for a grant (Stage 2)

Applications are open to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). For the purposes of this grant funding an SME is any registered business that has fewer than 250 employees.

Applications need to be submitted on the application form that is available to download on the Council website. This is available as a PDF and Microsoft Word document. This should be saved to your computer and submitted by email on completion to SPFGrants@broxtowe.gov.uk Please use the subject line Energy Grant and your business name.

A closing date has been set for Friday 15 December, however there is only a small amount of grant funding available, and we will close the grant scheme early if we have reached the maximum number of successful applications. **All projects must be completed by 31st March 2024.**

You must attach your completed energy audit in support of the items requested through this grant.

What a grant may cover

Funding is available to support the installation of small-scale measures to reduce energy consumption and costs. Examples of projects/activities that could be funded under this theme include:

- Installation of LED lighting
- Improved insulation
- Improved heating or cooling systems
- Upgrade to modern electronic thermostats
- Fit additional thermostatic controls
- Fit PVC strip curtains to reduce draughts



What a grant cannot cover

- General office or other equipment unless this is identified as being an energy saving device within the Energy Audit report.
- Furniture and the purchase/installation of computer systems.
- Security equipment and installation.
- Direct employment costs and running costs for the business.
- Vehicles, stock and consumables.
- Rental costs of units and associated bills.
- Business rates for premises or planning permission fees.
- Retrospective costs.
- Any other unsuitable improvements not advised within the energy audit report

Permissions

Some alterations may require the permission of a landlord or planning permission. It's important to check any proposal with our planning department **before you submit an application.** We will need to ensure that the owner of the building consents to works that may require structural changes. You can find out more about planning requirements on our Website [Planning : Broxtowe Borough Council](#)

Outputs and Outcomes

Funding awarded to Broxtowe Borough Council was based on our local investment priorities against a set of output and outcomes which government aim to achieve as part of the wider Levelling Up agenda. All grants funded must contribute towards this delivery.

We have asked you to indicate how your project will meet the outputs and outcomes in your application. You **do not** need to meet all of these.

For energy grants we are measuring against the following outputs and outcomes.

Output	Definition / recording	Recorded by
Amount of low or zero carbon energy infrastructure completed (m2)	Includes offices Low or Zero Carbon Infrastructure means any improvements to the units that reduce energy demand, promote the diversification of energy sources, or drive more appropriate use of energy.	Grant recipient
Number of low or zero carbon energy infrastructure installed	As above numerical value, no. of units	Grant recipient



Outcome	Definition / recording	Recorded by
Estimated Carbon dioxide equivalent reductions as a result of support	The estimate is based on the amount of CO2e saved in a given year, i.e. a projection of estimated savings of either one year following project completion or the calendar year after project completion through a methodology agreed by project appraisers.	EMC / Grant recipient via the energy audit
Increased business sustainability (number of enterprises)	Business sustainability refers to doing business without negatively impacting the environment, community, or society as a whole.	Grant recipient

Due Diligence

Broxtowe Borough Council will undertake due diligence checks and will hold the following information on all applicants:

Name of business, Business Trading Address including postcode.

Unique identifier (preferably Company Reference Number (CRN)) if applicable. If not applicable, VAT Registration Number, Self-Assessment Partnership Number, National Insurance Number, Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR), Registered Charity Number are acceptable)

Nature of Business

Date business established

Number of employees

Business rate account number (if applicable)

Cumulative total of previous funding received under all grants schemes.

Any outstanding debt to the Council

Broxtowe Borough Council will use the data submitted in grant applications in order to perform due diligence checks, which may involve sharing data with external fraud prevention agencies (including but not limited to the National Anti-Fraud Initiative, the National Anti-Fraud Network, credit-referencing companies and other Local Authorities).



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How will we decide who is awarded funding?

Each application will be judged on its own merits with regard to how well it meets the scheme's aims and eligibility criteria and its ability to be implemented and completed by **31st March 2024**.

A panel will make a final decision on funding. This will consist of local councillors, council officers and business advisors. The decision made by the panel is final.

Broxtowe Borough Council reserves the right to vary the level of grant or reject an application. Notification of decision on the application will be made in writing to the applicant. An offer of grant will be made by an offer of grant letter which you will need to sign and return to Broxtowe Borough Council as instructed.

How will successful applicants be paid?

- Grants are discretionary and Broxtowe Borough Council reserves the right to withhold payment of the grant in whole or part if any condition of the offer letter has been breached.
- No retrospective costs can be paid – do not place an order, pay for or commission any goods and services prior to receiving an offer letter
- The applicant must submit the claim (including invoices and evidence of payment) for grant assistance within one month of the completion date as stated in the offer letter.
- Payment will be subject to the applicant having satisfactorily completed the project and complied with all terms and conditions of the scheme
- Payment of the grant will only be made when Broxtowe Borough Council receives copies of invoices and evidence of payment for the approved grant from the applicant. Invoices dated before the date of the offer letter will not be eligible for payment
- Any changes to supplier must be agreed with Broxtowe Borough Council
- Payment of the grant will be made into the applicant's business bank account (or 'trading as' account) via BACS
- Grants will be paid against the agreed suppliers and works quoted, as stated in your application form
- You must pay 100% of the costs to the supplier – the grant is a reimbursement, for the value stated in the offer letter
- Only costs paid to legitimate businesses will be reimbursed – we cannot reimburse costs paid directly to individuals or via third parties.

IMPORTANT No claims will be paid where payments to a supplier were made by cash, by a third party or by cheque. All payments to suppliers must be made from a business bank account. Payments made to suppliers by credit card will only be eligible for grant if the card is registered to the business and not a private individual.



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Other Requirements

Successful applicants must:

- Sign a contract with the Council for the proposed work, which will include timelines for grant completion and schedule of monitoring and reporting and confirmation of where your project will contribute to outputs and outcomes as defined by Government in support of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund 'supporting local business' objectives. You can find more information about UKSPF interventions [here](#)
- Obtain, keep, and submit all relevant invoices and receipts to release payment of the grant (in arrears)
- Allow their project to appear in Broxtowe Borough Council and relevant partners' publicity campaigns including future grant programme launches.
- Take part in periodic business surveys as well as signing up to regular Council business newsletters and engaging with local business clubs.
- Abide by the guidance for publicity and grant use as defined in the application and in the grant contract.



UKSPF SME Business Energy Grants - Frequently Asked Questions

What do I need to provide for the energy audit?

The SPF advisor will be able to give you full and accurate information on the requirements. However, we are aware that you will need to produce several energy bills and access to premises to do a visual check of equipment. The audit includes desk research, a site visit and a report produced at the end to support your request for funding. Request support from an advisor by visiting the website [Accelerator - D2N2 Growth Hub](#) completing this form [EOI: Nottinghamshire Accelerator project](#) or by telephone on 0330 053 8639

How long will it take the advisor to complete the work?

This will depend on a number of factors including how quickly the business can produce the information requested from the advisor.

We have an energy audit and want to apply for phase 2 – what is the closing date?

We have a small amount of funding to support this theme and would welcome applications as soon as possible from local businesses that can provide an energy audit. The fund will close on 15 December but expect that it will close sooner if we allocate all of the funding available. Please submit your application as soon as you have an energy audit to demonstrate the need.

We do not own our premises what do we need to do?

Your application needs to include a letter of support from the landlord if the work requires structural changes to heating and lighting systems which they own. Planning permission may be required, so please also check this. Smaller items like replacing LED bulbs etc would not require planning or landlord permission.

Do I need to provide quotes?

Yes. A minimum of 2 quotes is required for each item of expenditure

What will be accepted as a quote?

A quote should be in written form, addressed to the business, and detail the items to be purchased and clearly show the costs excluding any VAT. The grant will not support the VAT costs and is calculated on the cost excluding VAT.

If the items are being purchased from a retailer who is unable to provide a quote, please send a screenshot of the webpage and link to the website for the item you require that clearly shows the price. Buying goods or services from a linked company. i.e. one that has any shared directors with your company or that has directors that are close members of your family is not permitted.



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Do I need to include a business plan?

No but you will need to ensure that you complete the milestones that you have indicated for the project in your application.

What is match funding?

Match funding is cash that you will be contributing to the project. For example, you might want to buy equipment that costs more than the maximum amount of grant that can be awarded. Match will be the money you contribute to the purchase to make up the difference between the cost of the item and the maximum amount of grant that you can apply for. Match funding is not compulsory if your project and application is less than £2,000, however we would look favourably on applications that can provide some funding towards the cost.

My business has a recent energy audit which clearly shows the work / items needed to reduce our carbon footprint. Do we need to complete phase 1 to receive the funding?

No – if you have an up to date energy audit produced for you that clearly supports the items you are applying for you can complete the stage two application and submit this directly to SPFGrants@broxtowe.gov.uk

I don't want to buy the equipment and intend to lease it, can I apply?

No. Leased equipment is not eligible. All equipment must be purchased outright by the applicant.

Can I purchase second-hand equipment?

Yes, second-hand equipment can be purchased and, as with the purchase of new items, a quote addressed to the business should be submitted.

Will I need to pay the grant back?

No, the funding provided to a successful applicant is a grant and not a loan. However, businesses will be required to pay grant funding back if conditions in the grant offer letter and contract are not adhered to.

Where can the Business Rates Account Number be found?

Your Business Rates Account Number can be found at the top of any business rates bill you have been issued. Broxtowe Borough Council are unable to provide your account number to you to avoid cases of fraud.

Where can I get more information to help?

You can contact Broxtowe Borough Council if this guidance and FAQ does not answer your query using this email address SPFGrants@broxtowe.gov.uk We cannot advise on individual applications or assist with the writing of your application.