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**Vacant Property Grant Scheme**

**Tullow Street – Lower & Upper – Carlow Town**

**2018**

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**General Description**

Carlow County Council is providing a Vacant Property Grant Scheme to encourage the use of vacant property in the Tullow Street area in Carlow Town. The grant is being offered as a contribution towards fit out costs for start-up businesses. By encouraging the occupation of vacant properties, the Council is supporting the appearance and attraction of an area, thereby contributing indirectly to increased footfall for existing business.

The main driver behind the scheme is sustainable job creation, by developing new markets while supporting existing businesses.

**Eligibility**

(a) The scheme operates on Tullow Street in Carlow Town for 2018

(b) Having regard to the number of established businesses in place on Tullow Street, under the headings listed hereunder, it is not proposed to grant aid any of the following uses under this scheme:

* Betting shop
* Amusement Arcade
* Public Bar
* Nightclub
* Off-Licence
* Discount Retail Activities
* Fast Food Outlet
* Charity shop

(c) In addition, the following factors will be considered in the consideration of Grant Aid: -

1. The number and proximity of similar businesses already operating in the area
2. The scale of the proposed business
3. The physical impact of the proposed use on the internal structure of the building in which it will be located
4. The design of the business and associated signage shall be of high quality and be in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Local Area Plan and County Development Plan.

(d) Any non-retail business (i.e. office etc.) which applies for grant aid under this scheme will be judged on the anticipated economic impact same they may have in County Carlow e.g. number of jobs being created.

(e) The Economic Development Unit/Local Enterprise Office of Carlow County Council reserves the right to apply discretion on eligibility for this scheme.

**Use of Property**

The property that the application relates to must have planning permission for the proposed use or be compatible with the exempted development classes of use set out in the Planning & Development Regulations.

**Status of property**

To qualify for this Grant Scheme, the property must be vacant for circa 6 months on the day the application form is submitted.

Businesses relocating to similar sized premises within County Carlow will not qualify for grant relief under the scheme.

The operation of the Grant Scheme for vacant properties shall not result in the displacement of a business from one property to another and/or from the same property, however, should a proposed office use type be able to adequately demonstrate that they require a larger premise that will have a positive economic impact, consideration will be given to the inclusion of such a proposal under the terms of this scheme.

**Rates of Support - Grant Relief to be provided**

Grant Aid will be 85% of eligible start-up costs *(excluding VAT*) **subject to a maximum grant** equivalent to 1.5 times the 2018 assessed commercial rates on the property.  50% of the grant will be paid after six months of trading and 50% after twelve months of trading.

Payment of the grant will be subject to (a) full compliance with the terms of the scheme (b) tax clearance (c) commercial rates and local authority charges paid up to date.

In the event of closure of the business within the first two years of trading, the Council shall be reimbursed by the applicant with the full amount of the grant paid

**Qualifying Costs for Grant Relief**

Any reasonable costs associated with Fit-out/office improvement will qualify for grant relief subject to receipt of valid invoices and verification/approval that costs were incurred.

Working Capital Costs (i.e. stock / consumables) are not eligible costs for the purpose of this scheme.

No charges owing on vacant property, for which relief is sought, i.e. development levies, derelict sites levy etc. are eligible under this scheme.

A prerequisite condition of qualifying for the scheme is that there are no commercial rates, or any other Local Authority charges owing, by the applicant, on any other building within the Carlow County Council area.

**Approval & Appeal Process**

The Local Enterprise Office in Carlow County Council is responsible for the approval of the application subject to the guidelines and criteria for the scheme. Should anybody/individual wish to appeal this decision they may do so by stating in writing the basis for the appeal; this appeal should be addressed to the Local Enterprise Office, Carlow County Council, Enterprise House, O’Brien Road, Carlow. The decision of the Director of Services in respect of the appeal will be final.

It shall be a condition of the scheme that the applicant signs up for Standing Order payment of commercial rates.

The scheme will be effective from 1st January 2018. Only completed applications received from the adoption date of the scheme will be considered.

The scheme will operate until 31st July 2018 and will be reviewed at that date.

**Assessment of applications**

All Applications will be assessed under the above Guidelines and Criteria and any grant awarded will be further subject to the availability of the necessary funds being available to this Scheme. The decision of the Director of Services, Carlow County Council, shall be final in all matters relating to this grant scheme.

Approval or Refusal of the scheme will be provided in writing to the applicant within 14 working days of receipt of a completed application.

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**Vacant Property Grant Scheme**

**Tullow Street Area of Carlow Town Centre**

Please ensure that all required documents as outlined in the Checklist are submitted with your application form as failure to do so will delay the processing of your application form and may result in refusal of an application. If you require any assistance with the application please contact the Local Enterprise Office on 059/9129783 or e-mail [enterprise@carlowcoco.ie](mailto:enterprise@carlowcoco.ie)

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| --- | --- |
| **Personal Details** |  |
| **1. Name of Applicant** |  |
| **2. Address for Correspondence** |  |
|  |
|  |
| **3. Email Address** |  |
| **4. Contact Phone Number** |  |
| **5. PPS Number** |  |

**Overview of Business**

**Business Name:**

**Stage of Business i.e. Pre-Start-Up/StartUp( 18 months): Choose either the current year or the subsequent year as the starting point (year 1) for grant relief.**

**Date trading expected to commence:**

**List locations/address where currently trading (if applicable):**

**Proposed Start-up/investment date for vacant property which is the subject of this application:**

**Specify business type: Provide explanatory note outlining in detail the key features of the proposed business use:**

**Economic value of proposed business use i.e. no. of jobs to be created; overall benefit to street etc**.:

**Does the property in question have planning permission for the proposed use? (or is the proposed use compatible with the exempted development classes of use set out in the Planning & Development Regulations):**

**Is the building a protected structure?**

**Do you own the property?**

**Are you leasing the property?** Yes 🞏 No 🞏

*Note: A copy of the lease agreement must be included with your application.*

**Please indicate the period of lease (start date and end date).**

**Start Up Costs:**

*Note: Please provide details of proposed or incurred fit out costs (attach additional sheets if required). Please note, that only invoices where proof of payment is provided will be considered eligible costs.*

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| Description | Euro (Excluding VAT) |
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|  |  |
| Total |  |

**NB: No payments will be made until at least 6 months trading has been completed and rates paid in full for the relevant period.**

**Drawdown of Funds will be subject to presentation of paid invoices and receipts for the proposed start-up costs.**

**DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION – FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT**

Carlow County Council wishes to advise applicants that, under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 the information supplied in the application form may be made available on request, subject to Carlow County Council’s obligations under law. You are asked to consider if any of the information supplied by you in this application should not be disclosed because of sensitivity. If this is the case you should, when providing the information, identify same and specify the reasons for its sensitivity. Carlow County Council will consult with you about sensitive information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request received. However, if you consider that none of the information supplied by you is sensitive, please complete the statement below to that effect. Such information may be released in response to a Freedom of Information request. Name of Applicant (in block capitals):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ hereby agrees that none of the information supplied is sensitive, and any, or all, of the information supplied, may be released in response to a Freedom of Information request.

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Company/Organisation’s name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

DISCLAIMER - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

It will be a condition of any application for funding under the terms and conditions of the Grant Scheme for vacant property that the applicant has read, understood and accepted the following: 1. Carlow County Council shall not be liable to the applicant or any other party, in respect of any loss, damage or costs of any nature arising directly or indirectly from: a) The application or the subject matter of the application b) The rejection for any reason of any application. 2. Carlow County Council shall not be held responsible or liable, at any time in any circumstances, in relation to any matter whatsoever arising in connection with the administration of activities.

Declaration by Applicant (s)

We apply for a grant of €\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ towards the total cost of the Fit-Out/Shop Front Improvement costs of Vacant Property at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ On behalf of I/we have read and understood the guidelines and criteria as set out in Carlow County Council’s Grant Scheme for Vacant Property and agree to comply in full therewith. I/we certify that all information provided in this application, and all information given in any documentation submitted in support of the application is truthful and accurate.

Name: (in block capitals):

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of: (company/ organisation's name): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Application Process**

Completed Applications should be submitted by post to:

Head of Enterprise

Carlow County Council

Enterprise House

O’Brien Road

Carlow

Or via e-mail to [enterprise@carlowcoco.ie](mailto:enterprise@carlowcoco.ie)

**Closing Date for receipt of applications:** 30th June 2018

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| **Checklist** | **✓** |
| Completed Application Form |  |
| Letter from agent or landlord outlining last occupied date |  |
| Copy of lease if applicable |  |