

Business newsletter (29 March 2022)

COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) for businesses

Further funding is available solely for local businesses who have been adversely affected by the pandemic and is aimed for businesses outside the retail, hospitality, and leisure sectors.

The Government's CARF will distribute £1.5 billion to eligible businesses across the country. Fareham has been allocated £2,640,130 of this fund to help support certain ratepayers in the Borough by reducing their 2021-2022 business rates bill by 25%. Where the bill has already been paid, we will be refunding this amount to the business.

Businesses in the retail, hospitality, and leisure sectors, are not eligible for CARF as they have already benefited from significant rates relief. The Council has contacted businesses who may be eligible for CARF and the eligibility criteria for this funding include:

- Businesses must have been in occupation of the rateable premises on 1 April 2021, even if the business has since vacated the premises.
- Where a business has left its premises, the 25% will be applied based on the revised business rate bills for the occupied period.
- Businesses must confirm that they have been adversely impacted by the coronavirus restrictions at their premises either through social distancing, government recommendations to work from home, or reduced demand and have been unable to adequately adapt to that impact.
- Businesses must confirm their Subsidy Allowance/State Aid position.

Please note, we must have a completed application before the relief can be applied. If you think you may be entitled, click [here](#) for full eligibility criteria and to apply for the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund.

(All other the business grants schemes are now closed to new applications, and we will be finalising the last applications that are in the system by the end of March 2022).

Skillslabs

Fareham College is leading on an exciting project called 'Skillslabs'. Skillslabs will comprise of two bespoke business centres (one at Fareham College's Bishopsfield Road campus, the other at the Isle of Wight College) and will bridge training and

Fareham's Business Newsletter

skills gaps in clean growth/carbon reduction, netzero, marine technology and digital futures in the Solent region.

Working in partnership with seven other further education colleges in the Solent region, Skillslabs has been successful in obtaining the funding required from the Department for Education's Strategic Development Fund for the design and development of the new business centres.

The aim of the project is to create the Solent region's first hub where local businesses can directly inform skills training and education to improve economic activity. This will be particularly for small to medium enterprises (SMEs) and micro-businesses where Skillslabs will be able to nurture and develop incubation activities giving the best chance of success.

Skillslabs' award-winning Director of Business Centres, Beverley Poole, is keen to engage with as many businesses in the area as possible to inform the development of training programmes that create, retain and upskill a quality, local workforce for years to come. Beverley and the Skillslabs team would love to hear from businesses in the Solent region about training, skills and recruitment needs.

To find out more and engage with the project please contact hello@skillslabs.co.uk or call 01329 815110 extension 5400.

Sponsor wanted for Queen's Platinum Jubilee event

Fareham Borough Council is offering a local business the opportunity to promote themselves to the Fareham Community by acting as headline sponsor for a special event to mark The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Following an incredibly successful beacon lighting event in 2016 to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday, another beacon event is planned this year to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

On Thursday 2 June 2022, it is anticipated that more than 1,500 beacons will be lit across the UK at 9.15pm and Fareham is set to host its own beacon event from Portchester Castle.

This free event will provide live music, food and drink concessions and children's activities so that the whole community can come together to pay tribute to the Queen at this momentous time.

For £1,000 +VAT the headline sponsor for this event will receive:

- Logo on marketing materials for the event
- Logo on stage backdrop at the event
- Recognition as sponsor on the Fareham Borough Council website including name and website address

Fareham's Business Newsletter

- Logo on the header banner on the Facebook event page
- Social media promotion on the Council's social media channels whenever the event is mentioned (10,987 followers) and Twitter page (6123 followers)
- Free pitch space, with a gazebo provided, to display your service/product
- Right to use event name and logo in conjunction with sponsorship in all advertising before event
- Recognition as sponsor on the PA announcements during the event
- Name, logo and link (where applicable) on all press releases positioned as sponsor
- Recognition as sponsor in Fareham Today magazine

To sign up as our headline sponsor please contact the Leisure and Community Team on 01329 236100 or email leisure@fareham.gov.uk

Other sponsorship opportunities are available, including for this year's Christmas lights switch on event. [Click here](#) for details on all sponsorships and to get involved.

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